

The Torres Strait Islands Collection at the Australian Museum

Stan Florek



dibi-dibi, breast ornament, Mer, AM E.17346

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The **cover illustration** shows part of a breast ornament *dibi-dibi* from Mer (Murray Island, Torres Strait), see Fig. 46 (pp. 59, 60).

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Preface

This study traces its origins to a catalogue of the Torres Strait collection at the Australian Museum, compiled by David Moore (1993), former Curator of Anthropology at the Australian Museum. By the time Moore retired, poor health prevented him from amending and editing the typescript in preparation for publication. In 1996, the whole Torres Strait collection was comprehensively recorded on the Museum's electronic database. I was given the task of finally checking data recorded in this database against hand-written records and the artefacts themselves. Such work presented a perfect opportunity to revisit the idea of a Torres Strait catalogue.

This work evolved to encompass collection research, supported and encouraged by the consecutive Collection Managers and Heads of Anthropology at the Australian Museum. The study was inspired by David Moore and benefited from his research into the Museum's collections, as well as his research on the Torres Strait material culture in general (Moore, 1979, 1984). I wish to thank David for kindly sharing his expertise and his suggestions concerning the organization of records. The original research that Moore conducted on the Torres Strait collection yielded valuable data, especially in the fields of indigenous terminology and object use. This information is recorded in the manual and electronic documentation systems of the Museum. When compiling data for this study I consulted not only the documentation records, but also Moore's typescript catalogue, to follow closely his version of indigenous terms and, where appropriate, his indication of objects' usage.

While writing up the project in 2000, I met Dr Jude Philp¹ and Ms Anita Herle², who researched the collection and legacy of Professor Alfred C. Haddon's monumental fieldwork in Torres Strait in 1888–1889 and 1898 (Herle & Philp, 1998). We inspected the Torres Strait collection held at the Australian Museum on several occasions. These encounters and fruitful discussions, especially with Dr Philp, stimulated me to review some aspects of this project and contributed to its final form, with much more awareness about contemporary discourse between the more than a century old collections and present day Torres Strait Islanders. Dr Philp contributed enormously to this project by sharing with me her abundant knowledge and enthusiasm as well as reading several drafts.

My special thanks are extended to the Torres Strait Islanders for their interest and assistance in the consultation process in August 2003. I was given the opportunity to present the summary of the project to the Board of the Torres Strait Regional Authority, and to the Council of Murray Island. I discussed the prospect of the catalogue and the relationship between Islanders and the Australian Museum with Ron Day (Mer Island Council Chairperson), Terrence Whap (Chairperson for Mabuia Island Council until 2004), Leilani Bin-Juda (Arts Development Officer, Torres Strait Regional Authority), James Rice, and Ephraim Bani. My visit to Torres Strait was facilitated, with great hospitality, by Leilani Bin-Juda, Ron Day with his family, and Joe Fatafehi with his family.

In various stages of my research, I benefited from the assistance of Anthropology staff, volunteers and other people involved directly or indirectly in the project. I wish to thank Drs Jim Specht, Lissant Bolton, Val Attenbrow, Jude Philp, as well as Elizabeth Bonshek, Leanne Brass and Phil Gordon for their generous support, directions, comments and editing. I benefited greatly from conversations with Leilani Bin-Juda, who also guided me and supported in

¹ Currently working in Anthropology Branch, at the Australian Museum.

² Curator of Anthropology, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

consultations with Islander communities. The Australian Museum photographers Stuart Humphreys, Paul Ovenden and James King took the photographs of artefacts while Bill Evans, correspondent for *Tribal Art Magazine*, generously provided some financial support for images. I thank Ian Loch (Malacology, Australian Museum) for identification of shells, Dr Solomon Bard, David Bell and Caroline Guerra, for assistance in compiling the catalogue, Peter Dadswell for proofreading, and the staff of the Australian Museum Archives and Research Library for their prompt and always cheerful help in searching for a variety of publications, images and documents. The Australian Museum Society and the Branch of Anthropology financially supported the publication of this catalogue.

The large and well-documented part of the collection, over 60 per cent, is from Mer (Murray Island), and therefore this work focuses on Meriam people and their culture. The documents that provide a vital context for the collection contain personal views and opinions. These views often seek, in vernacular language, to express a sense of curiosity and astonishment. They frequently blend recording with personal and emotive commentaries. The comments, sometimes tinted with arrogance towards “natives”,³ also reveal the search for understanding other peoples and their culture. The field journal of Allan McCulloch is an excellent example. I quote liberally from this journal, not only to broaden the background for the collection of artefacts, but also to provide the reader with an insight into the process of attaining understanding. I also quote from Philip Parker King’s accounts of a journey to Torres Strait in 1836, which provides one of the earliest extended English language descriptions of the Islanders.

The voice of the Islanders is almost absent in the documents. However, their expertise, intentions and attitudes can be detected in the documents and the artefacts, their form, craft-work and intended function. Since many artefacts were made for outsiders they could be seen as the Islanders interpreting their own culture for the benefit of others. The set of ancestral figures from Murray Island is probably the best example of such interpretation (Catalogue nos. 163–168, Figs. 19–24). Many replicas and models, however, can be seen as interpretations as well. Since the time of Haddon’s studies, if not earlier, Islanders became well aware that their culture was valued and that related knowledge and objects were sought after by outsiders. This awareness initiated a long inter-cultural exchange or a dialogue where Islanders, the bearers of this knowledge and expertise, were constantly asked to share, reminisce, interpret and reinterpret their culture, language and customs. Explicitly, or not, such process of interpretation became a strong underlying current in all the encounters between the Islanders and various collectors, observers, scholars and ordinary curious visitors to the islands of Torres Strait. This study attempts to highlight such interpretation, silently present in the collection of artefacts.

The Islander names of the islands are used to organize the material in the catalogue. In the text, where numerous quotations are included, however, the use of Islander names proved very difficult and cumbersome. Therefore, the island names in the text are used as far as possible in accordance with their usage by the Torres Strait Regional Authority,⁴ with English or Islander version in brackets, except in quotations where the name used by the writer is retained.

³ Term “native”, considered offensive today is used through this text in quotations and where it directly relates to historical documents in which it was commonly used.

⁴ <http://www.tsra.gov.au/> accessed 9 January 2005.

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Introduction

The significance of the Torres Strait Collection

Torres Strait Islanders made an important mark on Australian cultural, social and legal history. In 1992, the High Court of Australia recognized that Mer (Murray Island) people had owned their land prior to annexation by Queensland, thereby establishing the legal fact of native title in Australia. This legal fact has had far-reaching implications for re-defining the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. This recognition of land title, known as the Mabo Case, however, had not sprung up in a vacuum; it grew in a specific social and political context. The Mer (Murray Island) community nurtured a strong sense of identity and, through self-government in early colonial times, acquired experience in political activism. Through western education, they developed skills and aspirations that made the successful land claim possible (Sharp, 1993, 1996), although the Islanders' legacy is much wider in the rich spectrum of Australia's cultural diversity.

Through a combination of factors, Torres Strait Islanders experienced the colonial impact differently to other indigenous peoples in Australia. Most importantly, they were never, by and large, forcibly removed from the islands. This contributed hugely to their successful transition from European contact to colonial realities. In spite of many adversities brought about by colonialism, some Islanders succeeded in maintaining their language, and many maintained their culture and identity. Such success must have its roots in the geographical, historical and political circumstances of contact and early colonial times; but these circumstances also formed a large part of their cultural condition. This cultural condition must be explored, to better understand the Islanders themselves and their artefacts. The artefacts collected from Islanders in the early colonial period were taken at face value and treated as such by the Australian Museum. These objects reflect, however, extraordinary events in the Islanders history and when considered in such historical and cultural contexts, are far more revealing.

This study highlights the need for more comprehensive research into museum collections. Such research fosters not only better understanding of indigenous cultures but uncovers cultural exchange and dialogue between Western tradition and the variety of indigenous views and experiences. The Torres Strait collection held at the Australian Museum is significant in many respects. Most importantly, however, it demonstrates that there is nothing self evident and obvious about the culture it reflects. A collection of objects cannot be taken at face value, silently implying that it represents an indigenous culture in its positivist, optimistic, "matter of fact" manner. In the post-modern era of Western scientific endeavour it must be at least acknowledged that there are multiple meanings and interpretations embedded in culture. Following this thought, the main thesis of the current study is that a large part of the Torres Strait collection held at the Australian Museum demonstrates a re-interpretation of Islanders' culture, by the Islanders themselves, for Westerners, as well as re-invention of the post-contact cultural traditions (Herle & Philp, 2000:157).

Besides Aborigines, the Islanders are the only indigenous people in Australia.⁵ At the time of contact, their culture differed significantly from that of Australia's Aboriginal communities. The Islanders made their living through sea hunting and fishing, harvesting wild-plants, and also cultivating domestic plants in gardens (Harris, 1977, 1978). They were accomplished sailors, maintaining an extensive trading network within the Straits and beyond. To the broader European and colonial public they were best known as headhunters, enticing the imagination of would-be travellers and writers, as well as stimulating demand for curiosities and artefacts. Yet this indigenous culture was merely glimpsed at by outsiders before it underwent rapid and fundamental transformation.

European colonization caused major changes in Torres Strait. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century the region underwent rapid cultural transition, with profound impact on the mode of existence, population, economy, technology, language and belief systems. In a single decade (1870s) the Torres Strait Islanders changed their status in a most profound way. From fully-independent gardeners, fishermen, sailors and warriors they became, at least officially, a Christian capitalist workforce and subjects of the Queensland colony.

Since the 1870s, Islanders have been involved in colonial business enterprises, have adopted Christianity, acquired experience in self-government within the colonial framework, and some have achieved a reasonable standard of Western education. Colonial authorities did not always achieve their goals. The Islanders often suffered devastating impacts from colonization; but they also took up uninvited challenges and seized unexpected opportunities. A number of coincidences of greater and lesser importance occurred during this process of change.

One of these coincidences was Professor Alfred C. Haddon's fieldwork in Torres Strait and his subsequent "conversion" to anthropology. As a result, one of the most comprehensive and innovative anthropological studies of the time was conducted in the Torres Strait.⁶ The research was undertaken by Haddon himself in 1888–1889, and was extended in scope by the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition under his leadership in 1898. While Haddon's intention was to document the rapidly vanishing "original" culture of Torres Strait Islanders, he encountered a reality where this culture was not at all forgotten but already significantly remoulded. By the 1880s, the Islanders had embraced Christianity, many had learned English and a creole language, developed an understanding of the commercial realities of the era, as well as some aspects of the political situation of the straits. Some Islanders became politically active.

Haddon's studies stand out for their humanistic attitudes, which for a long time were not replicated on the Australian mainland. This research appears to have been conducted in a friendly manner, largely prejudice-free, and with genuine curiosity about the Islanders' culture. The expedition team encouraged Islanders to participate and to contribute to a variety of research projects through sharing their knowledge. Haddon and his team were able to reconstruct some aspects of the old pre-contact

⁵ Pacific Islanders are not included as they were brought, often forcibly, to Australia in the post-contact period.

⁶ Among the innovations is the first anthropological film recording of Torres Strait Islanders. Although only a short footage survives from Haddon's recordings, he pioneered this medium in anthropological studies.

tradition through oral history, recounted stories, verbal explanations, drawings, genealogies, some old artefacts and their replicas. While Haddon relied to a large extent on the Islanders interpreting their own culture, the Islanders, on their part, “filtered in and out” what they considered relevant and appropriate (Herle & Philp, 2000:157). It is to his credit that Haddon allowed this voice to be present and often transparent in the *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*—a monumental publication of the expedition’s results.

The result was a rare, extensively documented insight into the society and culture of the Torres Strait Islanders. Part of this documentation was the massive collection of about 1,600⁷ artefacts, most of which are now held at the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and the British Museum. Haddon’s research became an exemplary case of scholarly, anthropological and cultural importance. The study focused on the pre-colonial tradition which, while not completely abandoned, was nonetheless extensively re-fashioned, as the Islanders were forging their new tradition in a colonial reality vastly different to previous decades and centuries. Haddon ostensibly excluded contemporary manifestations of Torres Strait culture, but the contemporary culture impacted on his research in a variety of ways. Most importantly, it was through the Islanders’ memory, verbal recounting and explanation that researchers gained some insight into the old, precolonial traditions. In addition, numerous replicas were made to illustrate material objects relating to former ceremonies and practices, while artefacts of contemporary life, not visibly linked to pre-colonial tradition, were apparently excluded from the collection (Moore, 1984).

While these studies may have had little influence on the course of Torres Strait political history, they could help to reinforce the sense of identity and unique cultural values of the Islanders.⁸ Haddon continued to correspond with European residents and Islanders for several decades, nurturing interest in the traditional culture and stimulating some introspection into a contemporary culture and identity. Anthropological interest also elevated Torres Strait Islanders to prominence in some educated circles in Australia and abroad. Haddon’s studies in Torres Strait prompted other scholars to follow in his footsteps. Thus, in 1907, nine years after the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition, Charles Hedley and Allan R. McCulloch from the Australian Museum went on a collecting expedition to Torres Strait, a “locality rendered famous by Professor Haddon” (McCulloch, 1907)⁹. They assembled the core of the Australian Museum collection from that region, with 167 artefacts. In 1908 this collection was further enriched through donation, by an additional 49 artefacts, assembled for Haddon at the turn of the century. Along with other acquisitions, the Australian Museum soon assembled the country’s largest nineteenth and early twentieth century collection from Torres Strait. This collection now comprises 280 artefacts that can be dated or inferred as acquired before 1910.

The Australian Museum collection from Torres Strait is uniquely important. Apart from being the country’s largest nineteenth and early twentieth century collection from the Torres Strait Islands it was assembled at a time of rapid cultural and social

⁷ Combining two Haddon’s expeditions in 1888–1889 and 1898.

⁸ The 6 volumes of *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits* are now regarded by Islanders as an important repository of their traditions.

⁹ Pages are not numbered and entries not dated in McCulloch’s 1907 journal.

change and thus bridges old, past traditions with current ones, the foundations of which were forged in the early colonial period. This collection, in large part, complements Haddon's collections chronologically. Together they provide a comprehensive sample of artefacts from Mer (Murray Island)¹⁰ for three consecutive decades (1880–1900).

Yet this collection is little known. For example, it is not even mentioned in the *National Inventory of Aboriginal Artefacts* in major Australian museums and galleries (Meehan, 1986)¹¹. A systematic photographic documentation of the collection was never undertaken. While several inventories were made in the past, the comprehensive and consistent documentation of the collection was compiled only in 1996, and further refined in the course of this study. A brief outline of the collection was recently published (Florek, 2003).

The aim of this study is to survey the Torres Strait collection held at the Australian Museum and to bring it to the attention of indigenous communities, students, scholars and interested members of the public. It also helps to clarify the origin and provenance of some artefacts but, more importantly, it demonstrates how the artefacts reflect the cultural changes that occurred so rapidly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and yet remained so strongly and uniquely the Islanders' tradition.

The significance of this collection cannot be fully comprehended without recognizing its various historical affiliations and, above all, some unique characteristics of Torres Strait Islanders and their culture. This study therefore explores these cultural and historical links of the collection. It focuses on, and emphasizes, the early colonial period, to which two-thirds of the artefacts in the collection trace their origin. Within the limitations of existing records it also surveys some aspects of the use and origin of the artefacts that place them in a meaningful context of the Islander culture and the collecting process.

The collection of artefacts principally reflects The Murray Group that comprises three (Mer, Dauar and Waier) small high volcanic islands with red fertile soil and dense vegetation. They are located at the eastern end of Torres Strait within sight of the Great Barrier Reef. Some aspects of anthropological and historical realities are rarely self-evident. They therefore need to be explained in broader geographical and historical contexts. Thus the next chapter briefly provides a background of the geography, population and early colonial history of the Torres Strait Islands, as an essential context for interpreting and understanding the artefacts.

¹⁰ Hedley and McCulloch collected only several items from other islands of Torres Strait.

¹¹ In spite of its title this Inventory includes Torres Strait collections in other museums and galleries.

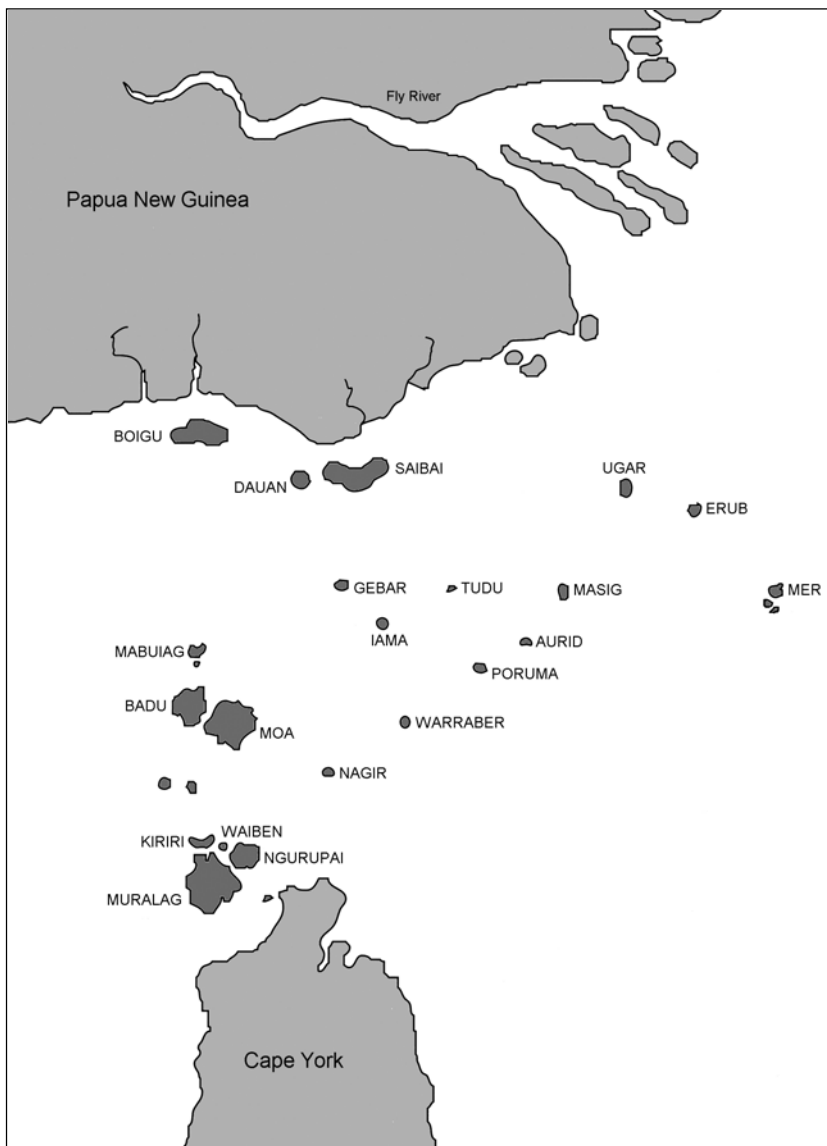


Fig. 1
Map of Torres Strait.
Traditional island names given in
upper case.

Torres Strait and its people

Geography and population

The Torres Strait, dividing the Australian mainland from New Guinea, is about 150 km wide (Fig. 1). Shallow waters of 15–35 m are dotted with some hundred islands, only about forty of which are large enough to be consistently marked on maps.¹² The total area of Torres Strait covers about 48,000 square kilometres.¹³ The marine explorations of the Portuguese in the seventeenth century to English sailors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries proved the Strait to be hazardous for navigation. Erratic tides and currents, combined with abrupt weather changes and complex patterns of atolls and reefs, made the Torres Strait a very difficult passage. “Reefs are so abundant in the Straits and the currents they cause are so erratic that it is necessary to have a good pilot before one can safely venture over any given area” (McCulloch, 1907). However, Islanders negotiated these obstacles successfully in their voyaging canoes long before European intrusion.

¹² For example in Draffan *et al.* (1983) amongst eighty islands listed 13 are about one hectare in area or smaller.

¹³ <http://www.tsra.gov.au/> accessed 9 January 2005.

The islands of the Torres Strait, on the basis of their geological structure and location, are often grouped into four major divisions (Beckett, 1987:26–28). These are: the western islands which are of old volcanic origin; the central islands which are mostly atolls and cays; the northern islands which are predominantly built of silt deposited by New Guinea rivers; and the eastern islands which resulted from more recent volcanic activity.

Presently there are 17 inhabited islands with 20 Islander communities (including the northern tip of Cape York Peninsula, with Bamaga and Seisia communities¹⁴).

Islands are grouped into five geographical clusters that also, to some extent, reflects past and current cultural groupings. *Top Western Islands* include Boigu, Duan and Saibai. *Western Islands* include Badu, Mabuiag and Moa. *Lower Western Islands* include Hammond Island, Muralug (Price of Wales Island), Ngurupai (Horn Island), Waibene (Thursday Island) and Nagir. *Central Islands* include Iama (Yam Island), Masig (Yorke Island), Poruma (Coconut Island) and Warraber (Sue Island). Eastern Islands include Mer (Murray Island¹⁵), Ugar (Stephen Island), Erub and (Darnley Island) (National Museum of Australia, 2001).

These divisions are often used as a handy reference in describing major social groupings and cultural differences. Thus the Meriam (Miriam)¹⁶ people, whose language is Meriam Mir associated with the Papuan language family, occupied the eastern group of islands. People affiliated with the Australian language family occupied the western, central, and northern islands (Ray, 1907). People of the eastern and northern groups cultivated crops and lived in permanent villages; while inhabitants of the other islands relied largely on gathering wild food, fishing and hunting. The people of the central group, due to resource scarcity, relied more than other groups on trade for their subsistence (Beckett, 1987:29).

The evidence concerning the population of the Torres Strait until about the middle of the nineteenth century is fragmentary and uncertain. However, reasonably good evidence for some of the islands can be put together to extrapolate to the total population at the time of contact. Islands with a strong component of plant cultivation supported much larger populations than other islands. For example, the principal village of Saibai Island (96 sq km) alone had about 600 inhabitants, who made their living from crop cultivation and fishing. Likewise, the garden-cultivating population of comparatively small Mer (Murray Island, 4 sq km) was estimated to be about 800–1000 people (Beckett, no date, p. 21; Beckett, 1987:113).

Oswald Walters Brierly, official artist on the H.M.S. *Rattlesnake* surveying expedition to the Torres Strait in 1848–1849, and the shipwreck survivor Barbara Thomson, who lived for nearly five years with *Kaurareg* people of *Inner Islands*, from 1844 to 1849, provide a wealth of information for the Western Torres Strait. It can be inferred from their accounts that Muralug (Prince of Wales Island, 196 sq km)¹⁷, the largest island in the Strait, was occupied by more than 100 people, hunting, fishing and gathering wild plants for their subsistence (Moore, 1979:260–

¹⁴ “Seisia, a Torres Strait Islander community, was first part of the Bamaga settlement which was established at Muttee Head about 50 years ago with the relocation of people from the island of Saibai just off the coast of Papua New Guinea. By 1954, the community had been relocated to its present site. ... Seisia has an estimated population of 139 (as of June 2001), with about 88 per cent of the total population being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.” <http://www.mcmc.qld.gov.au/community/seisia.php>, accessed 10/2/2005

¹⁵ Murray Island (or Islands) is a group of three closely located islands Mer, Dauar, and Waier <http://www.tsra.gov.au/>, accessed 9 January 2005. There is a degree of confusion between singular and plural form and what they refer to in historical references and journals. Singular form Murray Island usually, but not exclusively refers to Mer. In this text, for consistency I use singular form, Murray Island. I alert the reader when reference is made to the Murray island group.

¹⁶ The “Meriam” spelling used in accordance with Sharp (1993); in Haddon’s Reports it is spelled “Miriam” Ray (1907).

¹⁷ Size of the islands in this paragraph after Draffan *et al.*, 1983.

261). Anthropologist Jeremy Beckett (no date, p. 21) estimated that, before 1875, another large island—Moa (Banks Island, 170 sq km) was populated by about 500 people, supporting themselves by the same type of subsistence. He estimated the same figure for Badu (Mulgrave Island, 101 sq km; Beckett, 1987:149).

The total population of Torres Strait in the middle of the nineteenth century was about 5,000 people roughly the same size as the estimated pre-contact Aboriginal population of Tasmania. The Tasmanian Aborigines were removed from their land and almost totally exterminated in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Torres Strait lost more than the half of its indigenous population by the end of the nineteenth century. However, for the Torres Strait people circumstances were different to those of the Tasmanians. Most importantly, the Islanders were not, by and large, systematically removed from their islands.¹⁸ The Islanders responded differently to the upheavals brought about by European colonization.

Fishing and pearling

Bêche-de-Mer has been harvested along the coast of Arnhem Land by Macassan fishermen for several centuries, but the commercial fishing by Australia's colonial operators in Torres Strait was reported first in the 1840s (Toohey, 2001). This fishing intensified in the 1860s when the demand for pearl shells became strong in North American and European markets. The fishing industry brought foreigners, including Pacific Islanders, Japanese and Europeans to the Torres Strait Islands; it also brought demand for local labour, especially Torres Strait Islanders.

Pearls, valued for their exquisite lustre and rarity, were like gemstone jewels, worn as body decorations since ancient civilizations in the Middle East, Europe and Central America. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Europeans discovered pearl-bearing shells in the “South Sea” with the main centre of exploitation established in Tahiti. The last and the largest unharvested pearl shell region was along the northern coast of Australia, extending from northeast Queensland through to Torres Strait, Arnhem Land and the Kimberley, with Broome becoming an important local centre. The waters of the Torres Strait contained the largest Giant Pearl Shell *Pinctada maxima*, as well as the ordinary pearl shell *Pinctada margaritifera*, locally known as Black-lip (Hedley, 1924).

The first attempts to exploit the pearl shells of the Torres Strait were made in the 1860s. In 1871, ten vessels were engaged in harvesting some two hundred tons of shell annually (Hedley, 1924). As a result, the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century were immensely disruptive to the Islanders. While sporadic intrusions of Europeans to the Strait occurred during the nearly 300 preceding years, they were minor in comparison to the influx of pearl fishermen and women which caused massive disturbance to the Islanders' life by the late nineteenth century.

¹⁸ The reasons for this are complex, but the lack of pastoralists' interest in the islands, Government personalities, involvement of Islanders in fishing and pearling industries, and activity of missionaries must be taken into account.

Gathering pearl shells began in shallow coastal waters. The pearl-shellers soon depleted the easily accessible beds and, in 1881, moved to exploit the deep beds. These were, in turn, exhausted by 1885. What followed was a partial recovery followed by another onslaught of intense harvesting. The year 1905 marked the most serious decline in shells, when over 100 vessels were still operating in the area (Hedley, 1924).

When the pearl fishermen began exploiting the Australian waters in the 1860s it was not pearls they sought: the shell itself was a primary and a valuable commodity. “Now in the pearling industry, pearls are just a sort of throw in, the largest portion of the profits resulting from the shells” (McCulloch, 1907). Shells obtained from the Strait were used for the mass production of buttons, combs, buckles, knife-handles and a multitude of other decorative trinkets. The clothing industry in England and the United States demonstrated a strong demand for pearl shell as a raw material. The pearl shell harvesting enterprise was about quick immediate profit and, as so often happens, undermined its own viability. Early in the period, £400 could be obtained for a ton of shell. Even at the worst time, in 1894, one ton attracted the price of £79 (Hedley, 1924:9–11).

With big profits in mind, entrepreneurs engaged in ruthless practices and brutal competition. For the dangerous and hard job of diving, 10 to 15 m deep, Malay, Javanese and Polynesian people were initially recruited. Eventually more and more Torres Strait Islanders were voluntarily, or otherwise, drawn to the pearling industry.

The recruitment took many different forms. Rev. William Wyatt Gill tells us that “women make excellent divers; [... and some] women have been kidnapped and compelled to dive.” (Gill, 1876:297). Colonial official Captain Pennefather noted in 1882: “As soon as the [pearl] vessels were sighted, the men of Tutu [Tudu, Warrior Island] buried their women and young girls in the sand with only their noses showing” (Sharp, 1993:26). “Pearling was a wild business in those days, and the shellers were usually quite unscrupulous about their methods, so long as sufficient shell was obtained. ... The master of one of the pearling vessels habitually compelled natives to dive for shell at the point of the revolver. ... The demand for labour led finally to such ruthless exploitation of the Islanders that in 1872 the Imperial Pacific Islanders Protection Act, more popularly known as the Kidnappers Act, was passed.” (Yonge, 1930:163 in Haddon, 1935:14). Rev. Gill observed:

Many of these divers were lawfully engaged, and received £18 per annum and rations: but ... others of them were kidnapped for the most part from islands where there are no missionaries. Such divers are very inadequately recompensed. ... Let us hope that the new imperial act¹⁹ will be faithfully carried out, and an end put to this virtual slavery. (Gill, 1876:296).

While pearlers, fisherman and woman were preoccupied primarily with procuring sea resources, the damage extended far beyond the fisheries. The pearlers ransacked

¹⁹ Imperial Pacific Islanders Protection Act of 1872.

the islands for food, timber, women and water. Often gardens and fruit-bearing trees were destroyed.²⁰ The pearlers took away not only important food sources, but the Islanders' mode of life as well. The very existence of the indigenous population was in danger. Diseases brought by outsiders contributed significantly to rapid population decline. Within 30 years of the commencement of the pearling and fishing industry the Islands' population was reduced to less than half. For instance, in 1879, according to Captain Pennefather, Erub (Darnley Island) had only 80 inhabitants from an original 500 (Sharp, 1993:265). Smaller populations were decimated beyond recovery. Such was the case of Nagir (Mount Ernest Island), whose population "was almost wiped out" by 1900 (Haddon, 1901:180). Even the quite resilient population of Mer (Murray Island), estimated by the navigator Matthew Flinders to be more than 700 in 1802, declined to 374 by 1879 (Sharp, 1993:26).

In such economic and social circumstances some Torres Strait Islanders resolved to join the pearl-shell industry on a voluntary basis. While never making up more than a quarter of the workforce, the Islanders constituted its most valuable component. However, the industry suffered abrupt fluctuations in demand for material and availability of resources to be harvested. In difficult times boat crew and divers, contracted for long periods from distant countries, were an expensive burden. In contrast, Torres Strait Islanders were recruited for short times during prosperous years, and dismissed at short notice when demand and supplies dwindled. In addition, Torres Strait Islanders were paid the lowest wages (Beckett, 1987:36–37), despite providing the pearling industry with the flexibility it so badly needed.

Initially the Torres Strait Islanders worked as boat crew and divers but soon they began acquiring their own boats for pearling and fishing. In 1904, with the help of Rev. Frederic William Walker, the Papuan Industries Limited (PIL) was established with headquarters at Badu (Mulgrave) Island. The "Company" boats were owned by, and operated on the behalf of, the community, often competing successfully with outsiders. As the profit margin diminished, non-indigenous entrepreneurs lost interest in shell harvesting. However, Islanders persevered in the pearl shell industry, at a slower pace, making it into an alternative cash economy.

Christian missions and colonial administration

Concurrently with the fishing and pearling enterprises, the Christian Missions of the London Missionary Society were established throughout the Straits, with the first mission set up on Erub (Darnley Island) in 1871. Rev. Samuel McFarlane, Rev. Archibald Wright Murray and Rev. James Chalmers carried out pioneering work in establishing mission stations. By the mid-1870s, several missions were operating throughout the Torres Strait run by the Samoan and Lifovan missionaries (Mosby, 1998c:39).

The missionaries moderated the first, most violent, and unregulated period of commercial fishing and pearl shell exploitation. They provided a degree of protection and physical well-being but embarked on "weeding out" the former

²⁰ Hedley & McCulloch (1907:5) comments that "demand for fuel by the Bêche-de-Mer industry has almost denuded" local forests; see Stocker (1978) for overall vegetation pattern.

beliefs and sacred rites of the Islanders. With the best intentions and zeal, the missionaries engaged in the most systematic and sustained process of cultural dislocation and change. They “banned warfare and the taking of skulls. They burned and destroyed the Islanders’ sacred shrines and they re-educated them to bury their dead in cemeteries.” (Sharp, 1993:26). However, behind these savage-looking expressions of ritual was a sophisticated cosmological system, underpinning the whole social arrangement and identity of the Islanders, which was to be replaced by the Christian faith. On their part, and for a variety of reasons, the Islanders quickly embraced Christianity, developing their own forms of religious practices.

The colonial authorities were also tightening their grip on the area. In 1863, the Queensland Government established a settlement named Somerset on Cape York, an intended centre for colonial administration. The location impeded effectiveness of the administration and in 1877 the centre was established on previously unoccupied, small, Waibene island, now better known as Thursday Island, with a large harbour that rapidly attracted fishing fleets and commerce. In July 1879, the Torres Strait Islands were incorporated into the State of Queensland. In the same year, the colonial official, Captain C. Pennefather, made trips to the numerous Torres Strait islands to announce, on behalf of the Queensland Government, the act of annexation. For instance, at Tudu (Warrior Island) he “mustered” 85 inhabitants and delivered the following public notice. “I told them that in the future they would be amenable to the laws of the white man as the island now formed part of the territory of Queensland” (Sharp, 1993:27). Six years later, in 1885, Police Magistrate J. Douglas residing at Thursday Island reported: “Dangerous and savage as the people of these Islands were, they are now perfectly harmless and friendly. Even at Saibai where, not more than three years ago, the most confirmed skull hunters were in office, there has been a complete change of policy. For this we are chiefly indebted to the representatives of the London Missionary Society” (Sharp, 1993:27).

After the annexation of the Torres Strait Islands by Queensland, the colonial administration was relatively liberal. For example, from mid-1880 the Strait communities were governed, in day-to-day matters, by the local Islander councils and courts under the leadership of the *mamoose*—a locally elected head councillor. This system allowed the Islanders to exercise a degree of autonomy and was also prized by colonial officials of the time. Thus police official William Edward Parry-Okeden asserted that it was “the only rational attempt to govern natives by means of natives that has been known in Australia” (Mullins, 1998:5). Walter Edmund Roth, the first Northern Protector of Aborigines, held that because of this self-governing the Torres Strait Islanders “did not require protective legislation” (Mullins, 1998:5–6).

In comparison, during the same period, Aborigines in Queensland suffered far greater deprivation of human liberties as well as forced removal from their land. They suffered oppression by local officials and settlers with shocking impacts on their living conditions and health. This situation brought about the Queensland Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act of 1897. Ironically





it was this Act, equally applicable to the Torres Strait Islanders, that eventually furnished tougher measures concerning their administrative, economic, and personal autonomy. The 1901 federation of six separate colonies into a single political entity—Australia, was consolidated around the infamous White Australia policy, which set conditions detrimental to autonomy or indeed any aspirations of indigenous communities. By 1911 authorities had introduced the strict supervision of local councils by non-indigenous, government-appointed teachers, practically acting as magistrates and governors. In 1921 the colonial administration took control of the earnings, savings and movement of all Torres Strait Islanders (Mullins, 1995, 1998). With the growing trend toward reducing indigenous autonomy and administrative control, the Papuan Industries Company was forcibly bought out by the colonial authorities in 1929 (Haddon, 1935:17–18; Beckett, 1987:49–50).

Although subjected to similar external forces, different communities of the Torres Strait responded to the forces in their own individual ways. For example, from the beginning, the Badu (Mulgrave Island) community committed itself to success in the pearling and fishing industries, and in the pursuit of this goal was more likely to accommodate the demands imposed by the colonial authority (Beckett, 1987). People from Badu (Mulgrave Island), along with other Islanders in the central part of the Strait, had been accustomed, long before contact, to obtaining food from outside. With the growing influence of colonial commerce the newly established cash economy was vital for the acquisition of some European food items, which quickly became indispensable.

In contrast, the Meriam people of Mer (Murray Island) were more resistant to colonial rule and channelled their energies into political activities. Nonie Sharp (1993:42) argues that the roots of the Meriam peoples' inclination for political activity were in their especially cohesive society in pre-contact times. A strong sense of unity and identity combined with a large population equipped them well for sustained resistance to both the imposition of colonial rule as well as to other transgressions of their cultural unity. For instance, in 1885 the Meriam people expelled all South Sea Islanders from Mer (Murray Island), resettling them on then virtually uninhabited Erub (Darnley Island). Thus Meriam social cohesion and population size provided a context in which pre-contact tradition was better remembered and better accommodated into new cultural realities (Haddon, 1908:xix).²¹

As a part of larger design of conversion London Missionary Society initiated the education of Torres Strait Islanders, designed especially to propagate Christian values and appreciation of Gospel. The work on the ground was undertaken by missionary teachers, mostly recruited from the Pacific, Lifu and Loyalty Islands (Mosby, 1998c:39–42). These teachers were often left with little resources and compelled to rely on the support of respective communities. Some communities were less able or perhaps willing to provide such support. This western style education was subsequently taken over by colonial administration (Williamson, 1994).

²¹ This fact did not escape Haddon's attention when he selected Mer (Murray Island) as one of the core area of his anthropological research. Consequently the Mer (Murray Island) artefacts are well represented in Haddon's collection as well as the Australian Museum's collection from Torres Strait.

From the late nineteenth century, the residents of Mer (Murray Island) received the benefit of quality schooling unparalleled on other islands of the Strait. Complex factors contributed to this educational outcome, including economic, administrative and personal decisions (Williamson, 1994). This educational episode may have been accidental, but it contributed significantly to Meriam people gaining important roles in the political and cultural history of the region. Western education gave them a powerful tool necessary to operate in post-contact reality. It also reinforced the community's desire to pursue political goals.

The first "Training School" on Mer (Murray Island) was established by the London Missionary Society in 1879. In response to community demands, the colonial administration promised in 1886 to establish the Government School. The younger generation became bilingual and literate in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1897, Rev. James Chalmers from the London Missionary Society reported that "the progress in Mer (Murray Island) school had been astonishing" (Sharp, 1993:129). This school was compared favourably to the best schools in the Queensland Colony. The linguist Sidney Herbert Ray (1907:166), a member of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition, declared it equal to the level of English schools.

The quality of teaching was largely due to John S. Bruce, known as Jack, who was appointed Government schoolteacher in 1890. There is a discrepancy between Sharp (1993:267) and Haddon (1935:100) concerning Bruce's arrival to Mer (Murray Island) and his appointment as the government schoolteacher. Thus Sharp states 1890 for Bruce's arrival and 1892 for his appointment, while Haddon records 1881 and 1890 respectively. Nevertheless it seems that he came to Mer (Murray Island) without specific purpose, accompanying his brother Robert, a boat builder, who was employed as instructor by the London Missionary Society. Jack accepted his appointment reluctantly, yet through his personal qualities and commitment, he provided the Meriam people with a first-class education (Sharp, 1993). Practically, he became the government representative; however, he acted as a thoughtful patron and conciliator, "he was the beloved and respected '*Baba*': (Father) of the Murray Islands" (Haddon, 1935:100).

For a decade he had lived on the island in intimate association with the people—young and old. Under all conditions of life, from birth to death, in joy, sorrow, or perplexity, one and all appeal to "Jack," and never in vain. (Haddon, 1908:xx).

The schooling was successful but it was not unanimously recognized. School inspectors were not particularly impressed with the progress and the general conduct of schooling, including liberal approach to school attendance at the time of harvest or other communal events (Williamson, 1994). In January 1903 the Mer (Murray Island) school was removed from the Department of Public Instruction but apparently not closed. This step effectively prevented the Islanders from gaining access to higher education as their schooling would not be formally recognized.

John Bruce carried on his excellent work for nearly three decades. He retired in 1923 and afterwards lived in Sydney. Aged 80, Bruce died in 1928. At his own request his cremated remains were taken back to Mer (Murray Island) in 1930, where 400 Meriam people performed an elaborate mourning ceremony (Haddon, 1935:100–101).

Collections in context

Collecting enterprises

Europeans collected the artefacts of Torres Strait from the time of first recorded contact. Luis Vaez de Torres, the Spanish Commander after whom the Strait was named, collected objects in 1606. The English marine explorers, possibly William Bligh but also Matthew Flinders and Owen Stanley, made various collections in the first half of the nineteenth century (Haddon, 1935; Moore, 1979). Some of the important, surviving collections from this period from the surveying voyages of HMS *Fly* (1844–1845), and the explorations of HMS *Rattlesnake* (1848–1850), are housed at the Bristol Museum and the British Museum. There are also the Rev. Samuel McFarlane's collection stored at the British Museum and Dresden Museum, and Robert Bruce's collection held at the Glasgow Museum and Art Gallery. Furthermore, little known in Australia, collections from Torres Strait are in many other museums around the world, as for example in New Zealand and Russia (Cooper, 1989).

The whereabouts and the histories of many other collections made in this early period are, however, virtually unknown. A small portion of them could have survived and have made their way into various private and public collections. It is often stated that no artefacts collected before the 1870s exist in Australian public collections²² (Reynold & Stacey, 1992:12). Those artefacts indeed are rare in Australia, but are present in the Queensland Museum, the Macleay Museum at the University of Sydney, and the Australian Museum. In addition, a few artefacts can be found in other public collections. A few documented collections of this pre-colonial and early colonial era kept in Australian museums have been brought to public attention (Bani, 1998). The need for thorough research into Torres Strait collections held in Australia is obvious (Reynold & Stacey, 1992) and this study contributes to this broader requirement.

The early overseas collections provide the necessary context against which Australian collections can be appraised. It is important to realize that the relatively small collection held at the Australian Museum is comparatively large when measured against other nineteenth and early twentieth century collections in other museums in Australia.

Systematic ethnographic observations and the collection of Torres Strait artefacts commenced in the 1870s, mainly due to the prolonged or permanent presence of Europeans on the islands. The history of this early engagement is outlined in Haddon (1935). Today, the artefacts collected in the nineteenth century can be

²² The earliest collected Torres Strait object in an Australian collection is said to be a decorated skull from Keiriri (Hammond Island), which was acquired by the South Australian Museum in 1874 (Reynold & Stacey, 1992:12).



Fig. 2
Unfinished wooden mask collected in northern Torres Strait by Captain John Strachan in 1884. Catalogue no. 5, AM B.10097.

interpreted as a link between pre-contact and post-contact realities. However, at the time of their collection, ethnological objects were often acquired on the assumption that they represented the pure and inert state of the native culture. People who collected for profit knew that some artefacts were spectacular and highly decorative, and some were examples of unique curiosities. They fed the nineteenth century demand for evidence and decorum of recently “discovered” natives. Scholars collected with the intent of salvaging evidence of rapidly vanishing native tradition or folklore (Haddon, 1890). Hence the process through which the collections were assembled and documented cannot be fully separated from the popular and spurious beliefs or the scientific and anthropological interests and theories of that time.

Often little is known about the origin and collecting context of the artefacts acquired by or for the artefact dealers of that period. Many artefacts were acquired opportunistically by a range of people visiting the region. The adventurous travels of Captain J. Strachan to Torres Strait and New Guinea in 1884 provide an informative example. During this expedition he acquired artefacts from Islanders (Figs. 2, 3), but in his book he reveals little about his collecting activities. However, his accounts of collecting in the village of Goua, in the adjacent land of New Guinea, cast some light on the practices of that period. Strachan was eager to acquire a local “idol” called *Seegur* (Specht, 1988). This is how he proceeded to persuade the villagers unwilling to trade it away.

Having arranged the tribes in double files, I again explained that Seegur was not purchased by me for my own benefit, but that on proceeding to my home I should be able to show my people how foolish they [villagers] were in giving adoration to a piece of wood which could do no more for them than one of the branches of dead wood that were laying about their feet; that when my people saw Seegur they would be anxious to send them some one to teach them a better faith. ... On my return to Sydney, the same Seegur was sold to the trustees of the Sydney Museum, for £20²³ (Strachan, 1888:155–156).

This is like an echo of a similar, although less pontifical episode, that took place nearly half a century earlier on Erub (Darnley Island) and reported in the following manner:

Although they [Islanders] have no deity to worship, they possessed a figure, roughly carved on hard wood to represent a man, to which they attributed the power of causing as well as healing sores. Mr. Lewis endeavoured to obtain this figure from them; but they resisted his tempting offers, until the day before the [ship] *Isabella* sailed [off], when he succeeded in obtaining it (King, 1837:40–41)

The Australian Museum’s collecting expedition to the Torres Strait in 1907 documented at least one episode showing that the acquisition of artefacts was often viewed more desirable than attaining an understanding and insight into the Islanders’ culture. McCulloch (1907) reported that on Nagir (Mt Ernest Island):

²³ The sum received from the Australian Museum (Sydney Museum) was for several artefacts, including some collected in Torres Strait. Strachan claims that the “sum was handed over to the London Missionary Society” (Strachan, 1888:156).

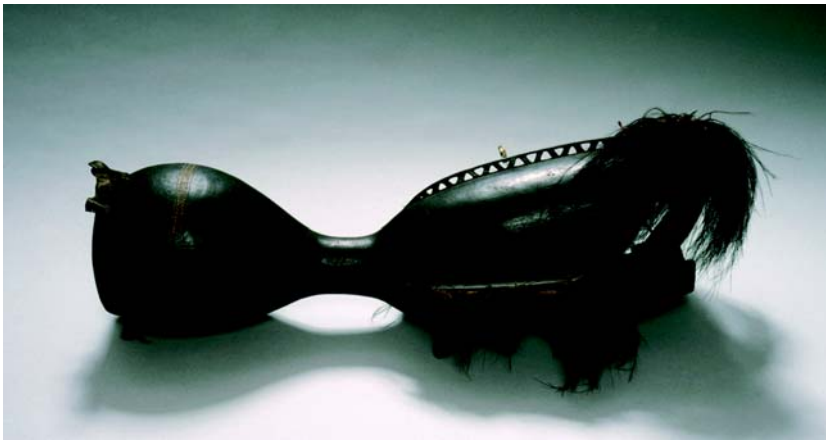


Fig. 3
Drum *warup* complete with lizard skin tympanum, feathers and goa nuts collected in the northern Torres Strait by Captain John Strachan in 1884. Catalogue no. 4, AM B.10094.

Jardine²⁴ [the local European landowner and entrepreneur] knew of a native grave containing some items of ethnological interest, so we took plenty of paper and string to wrap them in. With a little manoeuvring to avoid the native's houses we soon arrived at it and straight away commenced to investigate it.

The grave "if such it can be called" contained some animal bones, artefacts and a broken bird figure made of turtle-shell sheets sewn together with string.²⁵ The collectors took what they wanted, reported McCulloch. Then he continued, mindful about the local people:

we did not wish to raise their temper or hurt their feelings by exhibiting our plunderers, so after carefully wrapping it in brown paper and leaving nothing showing, we artfully inserted twigs of various plants in the folds, so that none should know that we had not been botanising (McCulloch, 1907).

Later, they conducted themselves much better on Mer (Murray Island).

The most comprehensively documented collection of artefacts from this early period is the one assembled by Haddon in 1888–1889 and 1898, with some artefacts collected by John Bruce around the turn of the century and some small later additions (Herle, 1998). This collection provides indispensable comparative material and references for the studies of material culture in the Straits. The Australian Museum collection cannot be fully comprehended without some knowledge of Haddon's collection and the scope of his anthropological research.

Collecting and anthropological studies: The Haddon Collection

In 1888, Alfred Court Haddon, then Professor of Zoology at the Royal College of Sciences in Dublin²⁶ went to the Torres Strait to study the marine biology of the reef system. In order to offset the cost of the expedition he intended to collect some "native" curios to sell to a museum²⁷ on return. However, soon he became concerned "that the natives of the islands had of late years been greatly reduced in number, and

²⁴ Frank Jardine was contracted as the guide/assistant for the duration of Australian Museum expedition to Torres Strait in 1907.

²⁵ From my consultations at Torres Strait I understand that the image of this figure should not be published.

²⁶ He was also Assistant Naturalist at the Science and Art Museum in Dublin.

²⁷ Presumably to the British Museum.

that, with the exception of but one or two individuals, none of the white residents knew anything about the customs of the natives, and not a single person cared about them personally” (Haddon, 1890:297). “He felt (he tells us) that it was his ‘duty’ to salvage what he could of a rapidly vanishing way of life; if he did not, the record of entire society and the way of life would be irretrievably lost. ... Haddon concluded that the coral reefs could wait, but that ‘man’s life history was changing more rapidly’ and could not” (Ackerman, 1987:121).

During the course of this 1888–1889 expedition Haddon developed a passionate interest in anthropology. He resolved to dedicate all his time that was not actually used in his zoological research to anthropological studies. Haddon argued that the “young men had a very imperfect acquaintance with the old habits and beliefs, and that only from the older men was reliable information to be obtained” (Haddon, 1890:298). He felt a sense of urgency, and began collecting the legends and myths of western Torres Strait.

Mer (Murray Island), located close to the northern end of the Great Barrier Reef and on the periphery of the Torres Strait, was one of the destinations for Haddon’s biological research. He realized that this island, in spite of a reduced population and more than a decade of missionary influence, retained a cohesive society with its cultural traditions. Even European presence manifested itself in a less destructive manner than elsewhere in the Straits (Haddon, 1935). This island promised, in Haddon’s view, superior preservation of indigenous “folklore.” Even if some customs and ceremonies were not actually practised, they were usually well remembered. For instance, the Meriam initiation ceremony was no longer performed, but “there must have been many men who were conversant with the ceremonies ... Though this particular custom may have died out many years ago, the memory of it was green” (Haddon, 1908:xix).

On Mer (Murray Island), researchers could also find some support from the presence of the London Missionary Society. These circumstances motivated Haddon to return, as anthropologist, to the island nine years later. Thus, in 1898, when Haddon led the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait he selected Mer (Murray Island) and Mabuiag (Jervis Island) for detailed study of scholarly and historical importance.²⁸

In addition to comprehensive fieldwork, involving the collaboration of various specialists, Haddon produced a prodigious, carefully edited six-volume publication entitled the *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*. This publication is not only a comprehensive study but also one of the landmarks in the development of modern anthropological research, especially in the use of genealogies. In the *Reports*, and other publications, Haddon appears to be an anthropologist with a strong humanistic bent. He strove to give voice to the indigenous people. For example, in the *Reports*, Islanders’ quotes, drawings and anecdotal material are liberally and skilfully used.

²⁸ The history and legacy of the expedition was presented to the public through a commemorative exhibition at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in 1998 (Herle & Philp, 1998).

In 1888, when Haddon was discovering his interest in anthropology, the first congress of The Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Sydney, was defining anthropology as “the critical examination of the intellectual and material progress of man from the earliest ages down to the present.” It also stressed the potential of the Australian evidence for the appreciation of “the earliest stages of the human race” (Mulvaney, 1958:297). The influential fathers of British anthropology, Sir John Lubbock and Edward Burnett Tylor, set this agenda two decades earlier. They asserted that modern “savages” were the true reflection of earliest, primitive society, and indigenous Australians, like living fossils, perfectly represented this remote, initial stage of humanity. These predominantly desktop studies made a profound impact on field anthropology in Australia, as is attested by the work of Alfred William Howitt, Lorimer Fison, Baldwin Spencer, and Francis James Gillen who attempted, through their field research, to fill in these theoretical constructs with the flesh of factual data (Mulvaney, 1958).

At the time, the different areas of anthropological research were drawing lines of comparison between Aborigines and the most primitive, crude, and primeval evidence of prehistoric humanity. Aboriginal crania were interpreted to be parallel to Neanderthal skulls, representing early pre-modern humans of prehistoric Europe and the Near East. Aboriginal language was deemed to be the most rudimentary among human speech. Their inclination for tree climbing positioned Aboriginal people close to non-human primates. This evidence, all without merit, was used to validate and reinforce preconceived theories. In addition, the lack of agriculture, social—similar to English—institutions and numerous shortcomings in the broad area of civilization was meant to provide extra weight to their argument (Mulvaney, 1958).

The form of artefacts and their manufacture played their role in this scientific scheme. Notably, General Pitt-Rivers collected representative implements of indigenous people from around the world, classifying them into primitive and more developed groups. Australian Aboriginal artefacts were crucial to this sequence, since they represented, he held, the most primitive “survivals” from primeval times (Mulvaney, 1958:297).

In short, nineteenth century anthropology primarily sought to fill in this unilinear evolutionary framework with empirical evidence; field data was to confirm the primitivism and inferiority of Aborigines. In this intellectual context, many anthropological studies and even the jargon that was used laid the ground work meant to scientifically justify the destruction and, as it was then professed, complete extinction of the Aboriginal population. The people of Torres Strait and indeed of all the Pacific islands were rated higher on the scale of primitivism. Nonetheless, they were often subject to the same contemptuous theory of racial inferiority and the same scientific attitudes.



Fig. 4
Mask carved in softwood with human hair wig, painted and decorated with cassowary feathers and beads. Collected in northern Torres Strait by Captain Huld Liljeblad in 1885. Catalogue no. 6, AM B.6185.



Fig. 5
Painted turtle-shell mask, or mask fragment, from Mer (Murray Island), acquired from Harry Stockdale in 1898. Catalogue no. 175, AM E.7888.

In contrast, it appears that genuine curiosity and a desire to document vanishing customs drove Haddon's anthropological approach. He recognized that the rich culture of the Torres Strait Islanders was rapidly changing and all aspects of this culture deserved careful recording. In addition, however, Haddon demonstrated a sympathetic and humanistic attitude to the people that he studied. For it was this curiosity and sympathy for the people that attracted him to anthropology in the first place. Unlike many anthropologists of his time, Haddon was interested in personal histories and recollections. He also used recollections and records of other credible observers to reconstruct beliefs and customs rather than to demonstrate any broad plan in human development. His study was one of the first substantial questionings of the validity of racial classification and racially-based theories.

In 1888 Haddon collected some 600 artefacts, and in 1898 an additional 1200 artefacts, a large portion from Mer (Murray Island). The sheer size of this collection is overwhelming. They are, undoubtedly, the most comprehensively documented among Torres Strait ethnographic collections of that period. Together with Haddon's Reports, and the extensively referenced Catalogue compiled by David Moore in 1984, the Haddon collections provide an excellent comparative and interpretive basis for other collections from the Straits (Haddon, 1912). In recent years this collection is being studied and re-appraised by both Torres Strait Islander and European scholars (Mosby, 1998a; McGrath, 1998; Bani, 1998; Herle, 1998; Herle & Philp, 1998; Herle & Rouse, 1998).

Australian Museum Collection

For a variety of reasons, but probably inspired by Haddon's work in the Torres Strait, the Australian Museum undertook a scientific expedition to the Strait in 1907. It was led by accomplished conchologist and collector Charles Hedley. The anthropological component of Hedley's expedition could best be described as a collecting venture. It was desirable for the Australian Museum to acquire a sample of artefacts from the islands that, through the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition, had gained particular prominence. An important marker of this collection is that many objects appear to be made for the collectors, rather than for the makers' own use and the documentation available for some artefacts supports this assertion. In addition, the rapid social and cultural changes that were taking place throughout the Torres Strait made this 1907 collection a valuable record of that time.

The core of the Australian Museum collection from Torres Strait was assembled at a time when contextual information for the collected artefacts was seldom recorded. Thus, for example, little is known about artefacts acquired from E. Palmer in 1884, Capt. Liljeblad in 1885, C. Honeman in 1888, Capt. Carpenter in 1892, H. Stockdale in 1898, the Bishop of Melanesia in 1900, or F. Snadden in 1901 (Figs. 4–7). Eighteen Torres Strait artefacts acquired by the museum from the Melbourne Ward estate in 1972 may be considerably older, but there is no information available to substantiate this assertion (Figs. 8–10). A breast ornament presented to the

AM AUR297, E.17380 (pp. 58,60)



AM E.83182 (p. 32)



AM E.68014 (p. 32)



AM E.17495 (p. 43)



AM E.3645 (p. 31)



AM Archives w2885 (p. 33)



AM Archives w2836 (p. 33)

AM E.25375 (p. 67)



AM E.17365 (pp. 58,60)





Museum in 1997 was stated to trace its origin back to 1854, but such statement cannot be verified or even supported by circumstantial evidence.

The exemplary collection by Professor Haddon remains, therefore, the basic source of reference and comparative material for the Australian Museum's collection. This is well justified since large parts of both collections are not only closely related in a geographical and historical sense, but also linked through the collectors and their associates. On this basis, David Moore cross-referenced most objects from the Australian Museum's collection to Haddon's collection. In his draft catalogue, Moore also "corrected" indigenous terms to unify them with the forms and versions from his own study and those provided by Haddon (Moore, 1979, 1984, 1993). The language component is an important part of the collection. Object terms recorded by Hedley as well as other terms transcribed in the Museum Ethnological Register may contain some valid linguistic and cultural clues. For this reason, all Islanders' terms for the objects that appeared anywhere in the Museum records are included and referenced in the catalogue.

Written documentation related to Torres Strait culture held in the Australian Museum Archives is modest, but it does compliment other sources. The list of the Museum's documentation includes:

- George Bennett's letter to the Colonial Secretary 18 November 1836, Australian Museum Archives: series 6, Outward Letter Books 1837–1923;
- Australian Museum Catalogue (1837)
- Rev. S. Ella's List (1898), Australian Museum Archives: AMS9; E.6/1898;
- J. Bruce's handwritten notes accompanying P.G. Black donation (1908); Australian Museum Archives AMS9; B.32/1908;
- C. Hedley's field journal (1907), Australian Museum Archives: AMS272: item 8 Hedley's Field Notes;
- C. Hedley's Report to the Curator (1907), Australian Museum Archives; AMS25/2; General Report no. 3, 25 October 1907;
- R.A. McCulloch's notebook (1907–?), Australian Museum Archives: AMS139, box 24, "McCullochiana"
- R.A. McCulloch's journal (1907), Australian Museum Archives: AMS129, item 1, A.R. McCulloch Diary Notes Torres Strait 1907 and;
- Individual entries and annotations in the Ethnological Register (1907, 1910).

In addition, the Australian Museum Archives has several photographs taken by McCulloch during the 1907 expedition. This expedition was probably meant to be richly documented by the camera—only a minor mistake that resulted in a crate with photographic equipment not being off-loaded from a ship on Waibene (Thursday Island), but instead taken to Manila in the Philippines, derailed this ambitious plan. However, "a couple of dozen" photographic plates that McCulloch prudently gathered during the stopover on Waibene (Thursday Island) were put to a good use. So, in the Museum Archives, there are at least 14 glass slides made from



Fig. 6 Pearl-shell breast ornament (specific provenance unknown) collected by Captain Carpenter and presented in 1892. Catalogue no. 216, AM E.3645.



Fig. 7 Ochred turtle-shell mask complete with hair wig, feather and goa nut ornamentation from eastern Torres Strait, purchased from F. Snadden in 1901. Catalogue no. 200, AM E.10403.



Fig. 8
Pearl-shell breast ornament (specific provenance unknown), presented by Melbourne Ward in 1972. Catalogue no. 218, AM E.68059.

photographs taken during the expedition; however, McCulloch's notebook contains a list of 38 photographs taken and "developed". It is possible that some of them are still in the Museum's archives. Most images show Islanders, some posing with their implements and decorations (Figs. 11–12). This small pictorial documentation is worth mentioning since it was assumed for a long time that no photographs were taken during the Australian Museum expedition of 1907. This seems to be implied by Moore (1993:3) in the typescript of his draft catalogue. In this context, nineteenth and early twentieth century artefacts accompanied by only basic information must be considered valuable. In addition these collections are important because of the overall scarcity of comparable early Torres Strait ethnological material in Australia's museums.

Four documented collections constitute the main body of the Australian Museum's artefacts from Torres Strait:



Fig. 9
Necklace with pendant made from pearl-shell (specific provenance unknown), presented by Melbourne Ward in 1972. Catalogue no. 225, AM E.83182.

The Commander Lewis Collection: 1836—nineteen artefacts assembled by Commander Charles Morgan Lewis of Government Schooner *Isabella* on its rescue mission to Torres Strait in 1836 and presented to the Museum in the same year;

The Ella Collection: 1877 (presented in 1898)—seven artefacts assembled by the Rev. Samuel Ella in about 1877 and presented to the Museum in 1898;

The Bruce-Black Collection: c. 1900 (presented in 1908)—forty-nine artefacts assembled by John Bruce on Mer (Murray Island) at the beginning of the twentieth century, and presented to the Museum by Percy George Theodore Black in 1908;

The Hedley-McCulloch Collection: 1907—167 artefacts assembled mainly on Mer (Murray Island) by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907.

Collectors and collections

Charles M. Lewis and his collection—1836

One of the earliest known collections from Torres Strait is associated with the Australian Museum. This is recognized (e.g., Australian Museum Catalogue, 1837; King, 1837), but it became almost completely forgotten, mainly due to the fact that this collection was purportedly totally destroyed in the 1882 fire of Garden Palace. My recent research of the Australian Museum collection from Torres Strait revealed that the small part of this collection escaped destruction (Florek, 2003). This collection and associated records form an important documentation of the Torres Strait Islanders' culture of pre-colonial period. The history of this collection is recounted here to provide context for this important early collection.



Fig. 10
Necklace made from small rectangles of shell strung onto a cord (specific provenance unknown). Presented by Melbourne Ward in 1972. Catalogue no. 224, AM E.68014.

In 1834, the ship *Charles Eaton*, sailing from Sydney to Europe, was wrecked on the reef in Torres Strait. From the total of 30 crew and passengers, five sailors saved themselves in a boat, eventually reaching Batavia (now Jakarta), while others in two

rafts attempted to sail to safety. Both rafts were captured by Islanders and brought probably to Pullan Island, where the Europeans were murdered with exception of a teenager John Ireland and an infant William D'Oyly. Subsequently, both survivors were “acquired” by Duppar and his wife Pamy who brought them to Mer (Murray Island), “where they remained ever since, most kindly treated” (King, 1837:15). The presence of Europeans among the Islanders, it seems, was reported by ships sailing through the Straits on several occasions, which eventually compelled authorities to act.

In 1836, the New South Wales Government mounted a rescue mission, to search for the survivors of the *Charles Eaton*. The Colonial schooner *Isabella*, under Commander Charles Morgan Lewis, sailed to Torres Strait in June 1836. One of the expedition members was Phillip Parker King, himself an accomplished navigator and at that time the member of the Committee of Superintendence of the Australian Museum and Royal Botanic Gardens. King had sailed through Torres Strait in 1819, 1820 and 1821 and his compilation of accounts from this 1836 expedition is among some of the earliest recorded English observations of the Islanders’ culture, along with samples of vocabulary from Mer (Murray Island) and Darnley (Erub Island) (King, 1837).

The tragic incident of the *Charles Eaton* attracted significant public interest in the Australian colonies and abroad. The accounts that King compiled in his book were designed to satisfy public curiosity as well as to answer some controversies surrounding previous sighting of the survivors and the ensuing rescue mission. This expedition, conceived as a rescue operation, turned into a reconnaissance which, in large part, was an encounter with little-known people and their culture. The search for survivors and information that helped to reconstruct the misadventure of the *Charles Eaton*, as well as the fate of her crew and passengers, provided context and incentive for closer engagement between the Islanders and the rescuers. This engagement became relatively close, especially with the Meriam people, because one of the survivors, John Ireland, who had lived for two years on Mer (Murray Island), became the conduit of contact and interpreter for Meriam and *Isabella* crew.

Intentionally or not, King tells a story that, although tragic, and at times macabre, has enormous appeal. There is an intense drama in shipwrecked people being saved from drowning but subsequently being murdered. John Ireland had narrowly escaped a similar fate to witness and recount the tragedy. The narrative of two years of his life with the Islanders is re-told by King (1837). At one stage, Ireland had a chance to leave Mer (Murray Island) by boarding a European ship, but his attempt was sabotaged by the unwilling captain. Finally, through some negotiations and gifts, the rescue expedition secured his release. Achieving the return of the other survivor, little William D'Oyly, proved more difficult. Unlikely to remember his natural parents, William was well cared for by the family who effectively adopted him on Mer (Murray Island). His separation from surrogate parents must have been a heart-breaking experience. After securing the release of these only two survivors in the Strait, as well as gathering enough information about the fate of other Europeans, the expedition embarked on the search for human remains, the tangible evidence, showing that other casualties of the shipwreck were indeed dead.



Fig. 11
Young women with body adornments. Photographed by Alan McCulloch on Mer (Murray Island) in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2836.



Fig. 12
Bowd decorated with yellow everlasting flowers. Photographed by Alan McCulloch on Mer (Murray Island) in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2855.

This dramatic story is inter-woven into the background of the Islanders' culture and custom which, through superficial snippets, had been accumulating in English and Australian colonial knowledge. Both King and Lewis were evidently familiar with earlier encounters between Europeans and Islanders, including Captains Cook in 1770, Bligh in 1792, Hill (who was killed) in 1793, and Flinders in 1802. In this compilation, King possibly drew on his previous observations made in Torres Strait. The rescue expedition correctly anticipated trading as the main vehicle for engagement. Soon after the *Isabella* dropped an anchor at the north side of the Mer (Murray Island) (Fig. 13²⁹), four canoes with about 60 men approached her.

“Their object was trade, and for that purpose they had brought tortoise-shell, cocoa-nuts, and other trifles; which as they approach the ship they held up, calling out ‘tooree’ and ‘toolick’, meaning iron tools; such as knives and axes” (King, 1837:3).

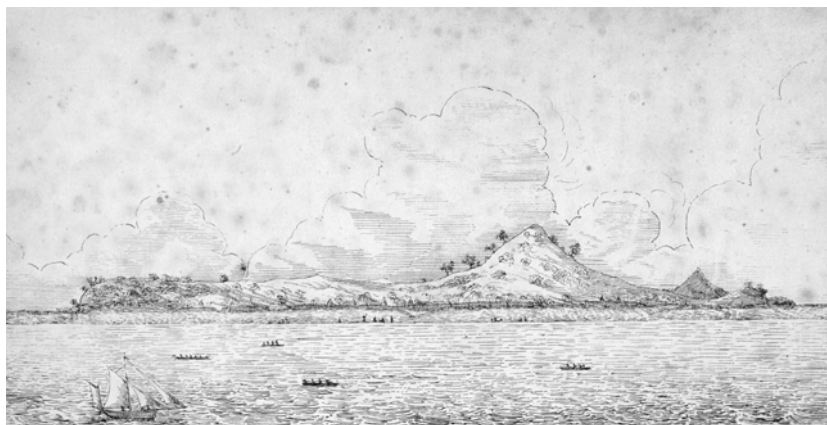


Fig. 13
View of Mer (Murray Island) with canoes and schooner *Isabella*. Lithograph produced by artist William Henry Fernyhough in 1836. (reproduced from Brockett 1836).

By that time, the Islanders fully appreciated and valued metal tools and often engaged in trading with Europeans, as they had always engaged in cultural exchanges and trade in their neighbourhood with indigenous Australia and New Guinea.

In his account of the Islanders, their culture and customs, King visibly mixes Ireland's accounts with his own current and previous observations. On occasions he validates accounts made by earlier explorers. Ireland's story provides an insight into subsistence and related travels of people in the eastern and central islands of Torres Strait. On the island, which he called Pullan:

The number of Indians³⁰ collected amounted to about sixty; they were merely residing on the island during the fishing season, for their home ... was at a considerable distance off... Their principal subsistence was turtle and small fish, which they caught with hook and line, and shell fish, which abound on the reefs. The island also produces a small fruit “like a plum with stone in it.” ... The fish is broiled over the ashes of the fire, or boiled in the basin of a large *volute*, which being rather a scarce shell is of great value to them ... Upon a voyage they carry their water in bamboo joints, and cocoa-nut shell (King, 1837: 13–14).

²⁹ This is probably one of the earliest Western images of Mer (Murray Island), by artist and lithographer William Henry Fernyhough (1809–1849) from original sketches of *Isabella*'s expedition (it is unlikely that Fernyhough travelled there personally) and published in Brockett, 1836.

³⁰ At that time Islanders were commonly referred to as Indians, meaning indigenous.

Travelling was a way of life for many Islanders, as Ireland experienced early in his stay in the Strait. From Pullan, the group of Islanders travelled northward, stopping on different islands for days or weeks, depending on the food resources available, until they arrived at Erub (Darnley Island). They stayed there for two weeks before travelling back, in a similar manner, to an island called Sir-reb, near Aurid (Aureed Island). From there, Ireland and D'Oyly were taken to Mer (Murray Island).

Ireland lived in the same hut with Duppar and his family; his employment was to cultivate a plantation of yams, and during the season to assist in taking turtle and shellfish. On one occasion he accompanied them on an excursion towards New Guinea [which he did not reach], where they went for the purpose of barter and trade, which they frequently did, to obtain bows and arrows, canoes and feathers. (King, 1837:15–16).

Ireland's knowledge and experience mostly related to Mer (Murray Island).

The natives of Murray Island [Mer] are a well formed, athletic race, perfectly distinct from the Indians of Australia, with whom there seems to be little intercourse, but evidently connected with Darnley Islanders [Erub], since they speak the same language, and keep up a constant communication with each other. They are, however very different in disposition, the former being inoffensive and friendly, whilst the latter, and those of the islands to the northward, are ferocious ... They doubtless derive their origin from New Guinea, with the natives of which they frequently communicate. ... [Islanders] subsist during winter months, on turtle and fish; and when those fail, on coca nuts, bananas, and yams, which they cultivate. ... The names of these fruits, respectively, are *koo*, *gobbow*, and *lev-var*. They also cultivate the tobacco plant, which they prepare for smoking, by drying the leaves and twisting it up into "figs" (King, 1837:25–26).

Mer (Murray Island), reported King, "is very deficient in water, and what they use is collected in the wet season in holes, and valves of *Diama gigas* under the trees. For drink they use principally the milk of the young cocoa-nut" (King, 1837:21–22).

The [northeast] extremity of the island is held sacred by them, and only visited, for the purpose of feasting, or preserving the dead, which they suspend in the sun and never bury (King, 1837:27).

King's narrative, however, centres on the resolution of the shipwreck mystery and the captain's determination to gather all possible evidence to account for the missing crew and passengers. He provides an ample body of circumstantial evidence to suggest that the sorry fate of the shipwrecked Europeans related to the Islanders' spiritual beliefs and practices and, perhaps, the coincidence of trespass without the knowledge of local cultural conduct. He does not draw such a conclusion, however, he only observes the phenomenon, but does not attempt to understand it.

The most remarkable feature in [Islanders'] character is their inexplicable fondness for the preservation of skulls, whether of their deceased friends or enemies ... and so desirous are they to possess the skull of a white man, that they travel from one end of the strait to the other in search of one (King, 1837:29)

King records numerous observations of preserved bodies and skulls as they provided clues and hope for recovering the remains of murdered Europeans. They appear like the footprints leading towards the solid evidence of a murder. Thus on Dauar:

near the huts were observed several skulls strung up among the bushes, which Ireland described to be the memorials of departed friends (King, 1837:21)

On Wyer [Waier] was observed, suspended between two bamboo-trees, but supported by a rock in an inclined position, the skeleton of a man, which had apparently been placed there some time, as all the flesh was dried up or decomposed. The figure had been painted over with a dark red ochreous pigment, with which they daub their bodies (King, 1837:23).

Captain Lewis gathered clues to the fate of the *Charles Eaton* passengers and crew. Supplied with such information and directions from residents of Mer (Murray Island), as well as the guidance of young Ireland, Lewis extended the investigation on Erub (Darnley Island). Europeans were received with some reservation but a generally friendly attitude. One evening:

They were treated with an *Aroob* dance. The Indians had dressed themselves out with leaves tastefully arranged on different parts of the body. The musicians, who were at least fifty in number, had squatted themselves at the little distance, singing and beating time by striking a piece of bamboo with a stick, and others by striking their hinder parts with their hands (King, 1837: 43).

Erub (Darnley) Islanders were not forthcoming with much information, but they confirmed what the rescuers already knew. "Mr. Lewis [was] now determined upon proceeding to Aureed [Aurid], to recover the heads of his unfortunate countrymen" (King, 1837:44). On 25 July the schooner *Isabella* arrived at Aurid where "the long-searched-for heads" were discovered in the "low thatched shed"

They were attached by a piece of European rope to a grotesque representation of a man's face [a mask], formed by turtle-shell, and ornamented with cowries and other shells. Several of the skulls had evidently belonged to Indians, but many were of European origin, and bore marks of violence; some few having their hair driven into indentations made by blows with a tomahawk (King, 1837:52)

The following passage is interesting since it reveals, as closely as possible, the spiritual and cultural reasons for murder as well as the failure to understand it as such (Haddon, 1935:350).

In order not to mutilate or destroy this figure [the mask], Mr Lewis caused the shed to be unroofed, and then carefully removed it to the boat. Whilst one party was doing this, another proceeded to make a diligent search through the island: at a short distance they came to a circular spot, planted with tobacco, which they destroyed. Several trees bore the recent marks of a tomahawk. Searching further, they discovered what under other circumstances might have been considered a very romantic spot, shaded by large trees, which the Indians probably used to celebrate their infernal orgies; for an avenue led to it from the skull-house, both sides of which were ornamented with shells stained with ochre: in the centre of this spot was a pile of drinking cups, made of the cocoa-nut shells cut in half. As there were no marks of any recent feast, it is probable that the island is only used as a depository of skulls. Mr. Lewis was now satisfied that he had found [the evidence] ... and therefore, by way of showing his anger at the horrid deed they had committed, destroyed everything that could be useful to the Indians: the skull-house was burnt down, and the fire raged over the whole island (King, 1837:52–53).

Only a few days latter (31 July) they met two other ships the *Thomas Harrison* from Sydney on its way to Java and the *Tigris* dispatched from

Bombay to search for the survivors of the *Charles Eaton* in the Torres Strait. “The surgeon of the *Tigris* visited the *Isabella* with Captain Ingglesdon; and examined the skulls; seventeen of which he was satisfied were the heads of Europeans” (King, 1837:56).

To the colonists, the mask was a gruesome trophy that was brought back to Sydney as the evidence of perished travellers. It was asserted by Ireland, Lewis and others, including King, that the skulls were, indeed, the remains of the *Charles Eaton* passengers and crew. Subsequently, the skulls were removed and buried, while the mask itself was presented to the Australian Museum with the following description in the museum’s catalogue.

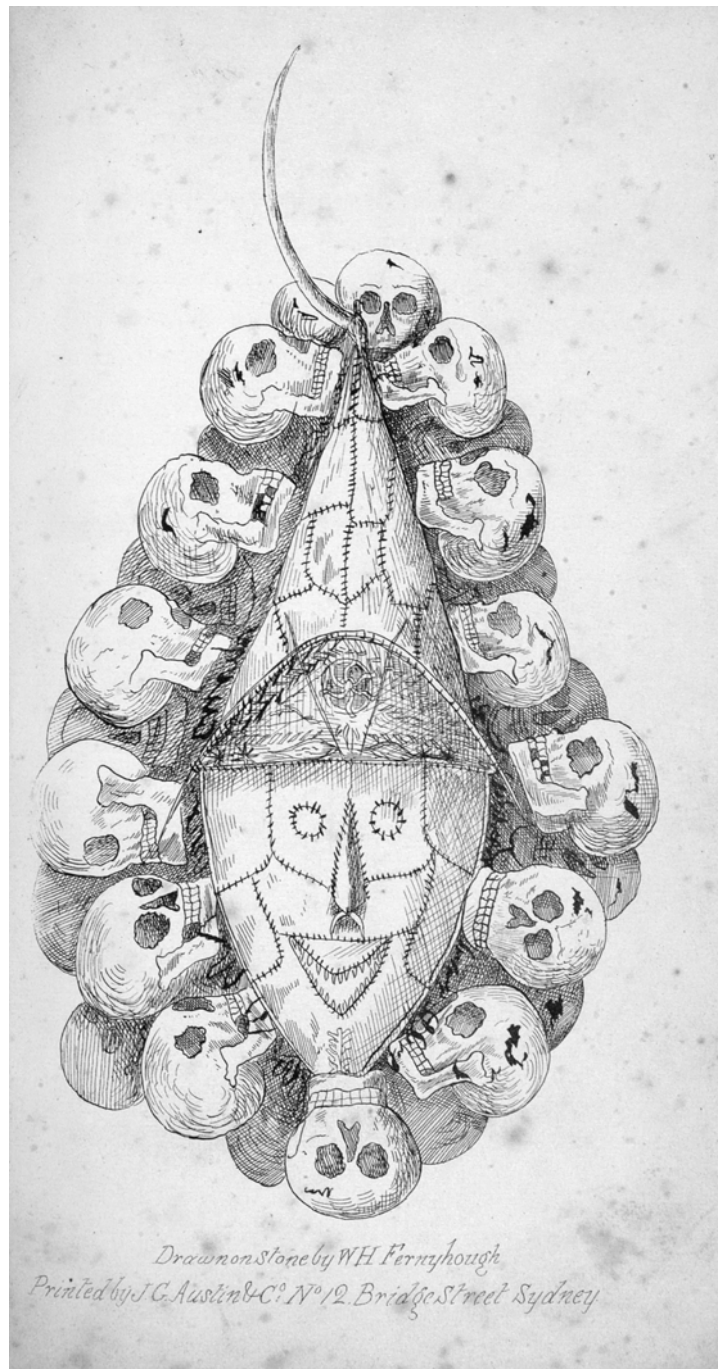


Fig. 14
Turtle-shell mask with skulls,
removed from Aurid Island.
Presented in 1836 and, presumably,
destroyed in the fire in 1882.
Lithograph produced by artist
William Henry Fernyhough in 1836.
(Reproduced from Brockett, 1836).

A large and rude imitation of the human head, ... around which several skulls of both Europeans and natives were suspended ... many of the skulls were attached to the figure by the European cordage. Several skulls bore marks of violence. This figure is formed of plates of tortoise shell, smeared over with red ochre, and measure ... between four and five feet ... A semicircular projection stands out from the forehead, also made of tortoiseshell fancifully carved, and when taken from the Island was ornamented with feathers ... The eyes are formed by pieces of the pearly iridescent interior of the *Haliotis* ... and around the figure several shells were also arranged. (Australian Museum Catalogue, 1837:69; Fig. 14).

Along with the mask, the *Isabella* expedition collected at least 45, and possibly more, artefacts from Aurid, Mer and Dauar (Aureed, Murray and Dauar) Islands. The Australian Museum's descriptive catalogue of 1837 allows for estimating a minimum number, but gives little indication of the total. It is possible that the whole collection included between 50 and 60 artefacts. The catalogue lists at least four turtle-shell masks, six figurative carvings, two or more canoe decorations, two or more head-dresses, various body ornaments and dance accessories, one pearl-shell breast plate, two or more bows and a bundle of arrows from Mer (Murray Island) (Australian Museum Catalogue, 1837:69–71). Numerous artefacts were also collected for private use or sale by the sailors and crew, which can be inferred from the various trading engagements between Islanders and rescuers. This inference is also supported by direct evidence, for example Brockett (1836:23) reports that "A sailor obtained several things from the natives for the sleeve of an old blue shirt, and I got some curiosities for an old steel pen." These objects most likely were kept by individuals or sold to private collectors.

Fate of the Lewis Collection

Sadly, a large part of the Lewis collection, which was one of the earliest cultural collections of the Australian Museum, was destroyed in 1882 in the Garden Palace fire (McKeon, 1992:15; Moore, 1993:3). What remained was not systematically catalogued and was poorly documented. When a regular documentation and registration of the cultural material in the Museum had commenced in 1877, all the earlier, poorly documented artefacts were listed under common heading Old Collection. Subsequently some parts of this Old Collection were identified as discrete individual collections and entered into the new registration system.

In 1910, a batch of 19 Torres Strait artefacts (18 arrows and a pubic cover) was entered into the Anthropology Register under the heading Old Collection (Registration Numbers: E.18260, E.18414–E.18431; Catalogue Numbers: 80, 100–107). Yet, after 1877 when the records of acquisitions by the Museum become more



AM Archives wv2841 (p. 60)



AM Archives wv2849 (p. 56)



precise, there was no recorded acquisition that would account for these artefacts. From 1882 to 1898 only small collections of individual artefacts or sets of less than five items were acquired, with the exception of 14 artefacts donated by the Rev. Samuel Ella in 1898. Afterwards, only a few individual objects were acquired before the large, well-documented collection of 167 artefacts by the Australian Museum expedition to Torres Strait in 1907. The following year, Percy Black donated 49 documented artefacts from the John Bruce collection.

It is likely therefore that the 19 artefacts registered as part of Old Collection in 1910, are some of the artefacts collected by Commander Lewis and Phillip Parker King during their expedition to Torres Strait in 1836. The Museum formally acquired this collection on 18 November 1836 and the record of acquisition (Bennett, 1836)³¹ as well as the catalogue for the following year specifies, among other items, arrows from Mer (Murray Island) (Australian Museum Catalogue, 1837:70). These objects probably did not perish in the Garden Palace fire in 1882 by being excluded from the exhibition. If this assumption is correct, then the set of arrows and the pubic cover may be the earliest known objects from Torres Strait in Australian public collections and among the earliest cultural objects acquired by the Australian Museum (Figs. 15, 16).

Rev. Samuel Ella and his collection—1877

Rev. Samuel Ella worked for many years for the London Missionary Society in Polynesia, notably in Samoa, Tokelau and other islands. In the course of his work he visited various London Missionary stations, including those in Torres Strait where he could add to his collection of “South Sea” artefacts. In 1898, Ella made a generous donation of artefacts to the Australian Museum. He provided the list of 72 objects under the heading “List of South Sea Curious.” Later that year Ella sent another two artefacts “to Mr. Hedley at the Australian Museum.” These were a shell *Melo caledonica* and a coconut leaf basket, presumably to supplement his original donation.

The Rev. Ella’s collection includes a number of artefacts traded into the Torres Strait. It proved difficult for the curatorial staff to decide whether such artefacts should be kept in the Torres Strait or Pacific collections. However, this curatorial dilemma reflects the reality in which the Torres Strait Islanders freely adopted artefacts from other cultures for their own use.

In Ella’s inventory, 14 artefacts are indicated as collected in the Torres Strait. However, six items were attributed by the curator to the Central Province of Papua New Guinea and were included in the Pacific Collection. It does not preclude the possibility that, as trade items, they may have been collected in Torres Strait, as pointed out by Ella. With one object missing (probably destroyed), there are only seven artefacts in Ella’s Torres Strait collection.

The provenance of these seven artefacts is broad, and their inclusion in the Torres



Fig. 15
Arrows from Mer (Murray Island). Some of these arrows were collected by Charles Morgan Lewis in 1836. Catalogue nos. 100–107, AM E.18418.



Fig. 16
Detail of arrows from Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Morgan Lewis in 1836. Catalogue no. 101, AM E.18418 (left) and by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 109, AM E.17248 (right).

³¹ Dr George Bennett, the distinguished naturalist, was the first secretary and curator of the Australian Museum (1835–1841).



Fig. 17
Canoe ornaments, probably original floats of a fishing net, traded from Papua New Guinea. Collected by the Reverend Samuel Ella in 1877. Catalogue no. 220, AM E.8161–E.8162.

Strait collection is based as much on Ella's indication as on the Museum curator's decision. Such a decision was based on the style and form of artefacts that are not exclusive to, or even typical of, Torres Strait. They reflect far-reaching trading networks. For instance, two fishing spears are good examples of the type of spears used in Cape York, Australia, and were probably traded from there. Another spear that was used in dances and ceremonies had been obtained from New Guinea. Similarly, two canoe decorations were probably fishing net floats traded from eastern Papua New Guinea³² (Fig. 17).

In his letter of 12 January 1899, written to the Australian Museum, the Rev. Ella says, "it is more than 22 years ago that I collected those things." On this account his collection can be dated to 1877. This was about the same time, or not long after, that the William John Macleay (Macleay-Chevert) expedition to Torres Strait and New Guinea, 1875–1876, assembled the Strait collection now held at the Macleay Museum at the University of Sydney. In this context, Ella's collection must be considered one of the earliest Torres Strait collections of artefacts in Australia.

J. Bruce and P.G.T. Black—their early twentieth century collection

Percy George Theodore Black was Chief Accountant, the Inspector of Branches, and later one of the directors of the Burns Philp Co., which at that time had trade stores in Torres Strait and New Guinea, as well as a shipping line. He travelled frequently to the Torres Strait in the course of his business. He was also a prolific collector, on occasions supplying the Australian Museum with fossils, animals, shells and, above all, artefacts (Black's letters for the years 1906–1911). He assembled a large collection of approximately 6,000 artefacts, particularly from New Guinea and the Pacific islands (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Feb. 1933; Black, 1901, 1914).

In 1908, Black donated 49 Torres Strait artefacts to the Australian Museum. Part of this collection was a complete mourning outfit (described below). Other parts included several small ancestral figures (*Ad giz*) and two sorcery figures (*esau-mani*) (also described below). While the exact date of origin of these artefacts is not known, they clearly predate the Australian Museum expedition to Torres Strait in 1907. Some were probably made in the first few years of the twentieth century and some possibly earlier.

There are numerous clues to support this assertion. Black acquired the 49 artefacts from the resident teacher, John Bruce, stationed on Mer (Murray Island). For many years Bruce had maintained contact with Haddon, providing him with additional anthropological information and artefacts (Myers & Haddon, 1908:158). In 1905, Bruce sent Haddon a set of artefacts, strikingly similar in composition and number to the set obtained by Black. Furthermore, it appears that some, if not most, artefacts in these collections were commissioned by Bruce. The Australian Museum Archives holds the documents associated with Black's donation (B.23/1908) which include

³² They may be fishing net floats from the Massim area of Papua New Guinea (Harry Baren, pers. comm. 2003).

the original labels hand-written by Bruce. Subsequent annotations in pencil indicate that these artefacts were “supposed to have been collected by J.S. Bruce for A.C. Haddon?” It is quite likely, therefore, that both sets were collected at the same time prior to 1905, and presumably the second set that was not sent to Haddon was eventually obtained by Black.

Mourning costume—Bruce-Black Collection

A Torres Strait mourning costume comprises a set of objects, worn by a widow, and some by a widower, during the mourning period. The major components of this costume include petticoat, waist belt, two shoulder belts, neck fringe and a collar.

How this costume was worn is known from both the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition research and Bruce’s notes (Myers & Haddon, 1908:157–158; Black, 1908). The nagar (petticoat E.17515, Catalogue no. 134) was tucked between the widow’s thighs from front to back and fastened to the maik lu (wak) (waist-belt E.17536, Catalogue no. 136). The two wagogob (shoulder belts E.17520-21, Catalogue no. 135) were worn across the chest, each from one shoulder across to under the opposite armpit. The bud lu (neck fringe E.17524, Catalogue no. 128) was fixed around the neck on top of the shoulder belts. The fringe, about 1 m long, hung down from the neck like a skirt, covering the front and the back of the body. The maik nagar (collar E.17519, Catalogue no. 124) went on top of the neck fringe and various mourning paraphernalia were suspended from it. The mourning paraphernalia (memento mori) suspended from the collar included one or two sticks bound with palm fibre and wooden carved replicas of a foot, hand and tongue (Fig. 18). These objects represent parts of the deceased. In the past, the actual body parts of the dead person were suspended in a similar manner³³ (Myers & Haddon, 1908:158; Moore, 1984:83).

The armlets were worn on the lower and upper arm, the anklets were worn on the wrist and ankles, and the leg bands worn under the knee completed the costume.

There is only one necklace (also called maik nagar, E.17517 Catalogue no. 127), which is clearly stated as being worn by the widower or male mourner. However, various parts of the costume seem to be used by both male and female. For example neck pendants, armlets, wristlets, leglets, and anklets in Haddon’s collection were used by widows and widowers alike (Moore, 1984).

The mourning costume was associated with a ceremony that was difficult to research due to cultural changes, including the adoption of Christianity and the missionaries forbidding continuation of such rites. In 1898 Haddon witnessed a funeral and mourning ceremony in which such “mourning dress is no longer used” (Myers & Haddon, 1908:161) and he recalls Bruce’s observations on the invention of the new forms of related ceremonies. It seems that in describing the use of the mourning costume and the associated ceremony, researchers relied on accounts provided by



Fig. 18 Accessories associated with mourning ceremony, part of the mourning costume (two feet and part of a hand), collected on Mer (Murray Island) by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue nos. 130–131, AM E.17509–E.17512.



Fig. 19 Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Ginamai*, associated with the *Komet* district, Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 163, AM E.17495.

³³ “The skins of their hands ... on festive or funeral occasions are worn by the women” (King, 1837:28).



Fig. 20
Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Wagan*, associated with the *Zagareb* district, Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 164, AM E.17496.



Fig. 21
Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Kokuam*, associated with the *Samsep* and *Geaurem* districts, Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 165, AM E.17497.

Islanders and Bruce. Written accounts and Islanders' drawings included in Haddon's report indicate that Bruce himself obtained most information through interviews rather than direct observation. Therefore it is possible that both mourning costumes, in Haddon's collection and the Australian Museum collection, were made specifically for the collectors to assist with anthropological research.

Ad giz, ancestor figures—Bruce-Black Collection

In the late nineteenth century the Meriam people of Mer (Murray Island) were grouped into a few districts, each with its own population. People identified themselves strongly with their districts, and there were some tensions between the districts. Each district had its own ancestral figure known as *Ad giz*, a venerated mythical ancestor and protector. Representations of these figures were obtained by Bruce (Catalogue nos. 163–168).

The six human figures in the collection have bodies made of plant fibre and heads carved in pith. They represent Murray Islanders' ancestors. Their names are *Ginamai* in the Komet District; *Wagan* in the *Zagareb* District; *Kokuam* in the *Samsep* and *Geaurem* Districts; *Ganome* and *Palai* in the *Piebre* District; and *Bom* in the *Dauar* Island and *Waier* Island Districts (Figs. 19–24). These figures are stylistically consistent, as well as being similar to the set of fibre figures that were made earlier for Myers to show him the costume and dance positions of the *Alag* specific dances performed to conclude the harvest (Moore, 1984:84, plate 55).

In addition, Bruce provided Haddon with a similar set of six ancestral figures, which must have been made or collected about the same time. These are carved in pith and are roughly twice as large as those in the Bruce-Black collection (Moore, 1984:84, plate 55). It is possible that the ancestral figures in the Australian Museum collection were made for Bruce and could have been conceived as replicas or models (Figs. 19–24). It is likely that such ancestral figures were not depicted previously in such form and, since the adoption of Christianity, not made at all, at least officially.

***Waiet*: Bruce-Black Collection.** The model of *Waiet* was probably also commissioned by Bruce. It is very similar to the model in Haddon's collection (Moore, 1984, plate 63) and could be assumed to be “a model of a 1–1.2 m turtle-shell representation of *Waiet* kept in cave high up on *Waier* (Fig. 31, E.17508, Catalogue no. 171) and used in *Waiet zogo* ceremony” (Moore, 1984:85).³⁴

***Esau-mani* sorcery figures: Bruce-Black Collection.** The two *Esau-mani* figures (E.17501, E.17502, Catalogue no. 169–170), of a man and a woman, are carved in softwood and modelled with black wax. Some details, such as costume and decorations, are made from mollusc shell, palm fibre and cassowary feathers. Bruce indicates that these figures were used in *maid-lu*—sorcery magic.

³⁴ It is my understanding that Mer (Murray Island) community prefers that *Waiet*'s (Cat. 171) representation is not reproduced in publications.

Charles Hedley and Allan R. McCulloch and their collecting expedition in 1907

In 1907, the Australian Museum mounted a collecting expedition to Torres Strait, led by Charles Hedley, an accomplished researcher and collector in the Marine Biology Division of the Museum (Fig. 25). Hedley had ample experience, broad interests and abundant energies. He knew Haddon and they maintained contact by correspondence. He also knew Edmund Walter Roth, Queensland Protector of Aborigines, with whom he travelled along the coast of Queensland and it is possible that he visited, at least briefly, Torres Strait on his collecting trip to New Guinea (possibly in 1890) prior to joining the Australian Museum in 1891. Hedley's primary and passionate interest was biology of the Great Barrier Reef, and therefore Mer (Murray Island) located near the reef must have appeared attractive (Iredale, 1969).

Hedley's anthropological interest and experience dated back at least to his collecting trip to New Guinea, and his study and published anthropological material from Funafuti (Hedley, 1896). Due to his interests and following in Haddon's footsteps, Hedley selected Mer (Murray Island) as a destination for the 1907 expedition (McCulloch, 1907). Hedley was assisted by Alan R. McCulloch, a young, enthusiastic, scientific assistant with a predilection for, and a willingness to master, various technical skills, such as fishing, preparing specimens, and photography (Fig. 26). He eventually became the ichthyologist and senior zoologist of the Australian Museum (Anon., 1926:346; Strahan, 1979:51).

Hedley and McCulloch collected biological specimens and artefacts on Mer (Murray Island) for a period of five weeks, from 29 August to 4 October 1907. Hedley explains in his report to the Curator: "Murray Island was chosen as a field of operations because its far northern latitude, volcanic structure, proximity to the Barrier [Reef] and backward condition of the population promised interesting results" (Hedley & McCulloch, 1907:4). McCulloch adds in his diary that the aim of this trip was to collect materials "of which we had no representatives in the Australian Museum" (McCulloch, 1907). He also asserts that "it was general understanding that we should visit Murray Island, a locality rendered famous by Professor Haddon who had led an expedition there and collected much material for the British Museum" (McCulloch, 1907).

Hedley records, in his field journal, the local names of artefacts and sometimes gives more information concerning their usage and social context in a laconic manner. McCulloch's diary, on the other hand, contains numerous general observations and anecdotal passages that well reflect the local flavour of Torres Strait at the time of their expedition. Although it includes little anthropological detail specifically related to the collection, I quote extensively from McCulloch's journal to provide the broad cultural context viewed through this collector's eyes.

On 14 August they left Sydney by the Japanese Mail steamer and reached the Torres Strait a week later, disembarking on 22 August.



Fig. 22
Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Ganome*, associated with the *Piebre* district, Mer (Murray Island), collected by J. Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 166, AM E.17498.



Fig. 23
Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Palai*, associated with the *Piebre* district, Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 167, AM E.17499.



Fig. 24
Model of *Ad giz* ancestral figure called *Bom*, associated with the Dauar and Waier Island districts, near Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce c. 1900. Catalogue no. 168, AM E.17500.

The current being against us, the ship did not enter the harbour at Thursday Island, but lay off in a sheltered bay and unloaded onto lighters. Those in charge omitted to put off one of our most valuable boxes containing much collecting material, nearly all our trade material, tobacco, toys etc., cartridges for our guns, and worst of all—all my photographic outfit. This was not discovered until the ship had sailed on to Manila and there was of course no chance of getting it back in time to be of use. We secured it on the return journey however, and it took several months to use up the stock of plates and chemicals I had laid in (McCulloch, 1907).

McCulloch acted quickly. Among the necessary arrangements that the collectors made during their short stay on Waibene (Thursday Island), he attempted to assemble some photographic equipment.

Photographic material was practically unobtainable, though through the kindness of a few generous amateurs I racked up a couple of dozen plates, more or less fogged, some developers and dishes, while I had fortunately kept one camera with me in my cabin (McCulloch, 1907).

The island made a good impression on him:

Fig. 25
Charles Hedley. Australian Museum Archives: series 351, V10173; Portrait of Charles Hedley.



Thursday Island is a big place considering all things. It consists, of course, largely of general stores and hotels but there is a cathedral, and hospital of considerable size, and numerous larger or smaller private residences arranged along several streets. The main street running parallel with the beach can scarcely be called pretty, but the charm of coconuts planted here and there for the wind to play an everlasting tune among their leaves is one that cannot fail to appeal to me. Looking out into the bay, enclosed on every side by well wooded islands one sees pictures everywhere, and when to this is added a pearlyling *bêche-de-mer* fleet in full sail one cannot fail to enthuse over it (McCulloch, 1907).

But the prize he reserved for the one feature in particular:

Thursday Island is a wonderful place for gambling, drinking and other relaxation generally. After a long spell of hard work and utter discomfort on the fishing (*bêche-de-mer* or pearl) grounds, and with plenty of cash in ones pocket it must be the simplest thing to get carried away by any and every vice especially when they are so efficiently catered for. I saw but little of it during my very short stay, but quite enough to make me wish I owned a hotel in Thursday Island (McCulloch, 1907).



Fig. 26
Alan R. McCulloch, Central Province, Papua New Guinea 1921, photographed by Frank Hurley. Australian Museum Archives: series 320, V4892; Late A.R McCulloch with Gaura Pigeon, Frank Hurley (Photographer) c. 1922–1923.

After departing from Waibene (Thursday Island), they briefly stopped at Somerset on Cape York, where they were joined by Frank Jardine, an influential local European land-holder and entrepreneur. Then they sailed to Nagir (Mount Ernest Island).

The tide being favourable we set out in the evening for Nagir ... the home of our boat's owner and crew³⁵ ... This was my first experience with a native crew, and it was so startling that I should not forget it in a hurry. With the wind whistling through the rigging and the swish of waves, the banging and noise of sails combined with ... yells of the natives as a wave broke over them, or the boat gave an extra lurch, I feared every moment that we were on the point of smashing onto the reef (McCulloch, 1907).

To get to Murray Island [Mer] we had first to go to Darnley Island, but none of our crew were very sure of the route, and we therefore sailed on to Coconut Island to pick up a native to show us the way. ... Mr. Hedley and I went ashore after tea to see what we could. ... The native village consisted of a few miserable huts made of plaited palm leaves gathered together near the beach. We paid our respect to the old headman who was highly civilized and wore clothes of a somewhat worn and disreputable type. Soon after our arrival he proceeded to ring an old school-bell fastened to a post on the beach, to call the villagers together for evening prayer. We were provided with old cases to sit on, while the rest of the congregation sat around on plaited mats on the sand. The proceedings were dimly lighted by an old hurricane lamp, which smoked considerably and attracted numerous moths and beetles ... The old man read prayers in his native tongue while we mumbled deeply and low at irregular intervals, this being the best we could do towards joining in the service. Prayers were followed by some native hymns sung in parts. The congregation was fearfully shy in the presence of strangers at first, but some, and especially one young girl, afterwards plucked up courage and sang with vigour, even if without harmony. I afterwards heard much of this part singing, both in hymns and in original native songs, and got to like it very much (McCulloch, 1907).

Next day they sailed on, reaching Erub (Darnley Island) by the evening. It is

a high volcanic formation and supports a rich vegetation. It was also well populated some years ago, but the natives have since died off, though it still remains the head quarters of the Church of England Mission for the Straits. As soon as the anchor was dropped and the sails folded, we were rowed ashore to call on Mr. Butcher the Missionary. He was a weak weedy sort of person, very different from the pioneer missionaries ... (McCulloch, 1907).

³⁵ It would suggest that boat was leased by the Mills family, established by entrepreneur from Samoa with considerable influence in Torres Strait.

³⁶ Mei was an annual fundraising and celebration instituted by London Missionary Society (Beckett, 1987:42).

A May³⁶ [Mei] meeting was in progress at the time of our visit, which is an annual gathering of the Christianized natives for religious meetings and the program of sports. It is also a way of the church to rake in money, since every



AM B.1711-12 (pp. 59.60)



AM E.17356-58, E.54625 (pp. 60.61)



AM E.17331-32, (pp. 59,60)



AM E.17327, E.17336 (pp. 59,60)



AM E.17298 (p. 65)



AM E.17323-24 (pp. 59, 60)



AM AUR461 (p. 66)



AM E.17319 (pp. 58, 60)

native is instructed in the belief that it is his duty to subscribe as much cash as he can, to pay for his own enlightenment and incidentally his destruction. For there is no denying that missionary work invariably leaves a trail of empty houses and neglected gardens in its path. ... Depopulated Darnley [Erub Island] was a good example of missionary endeavour. (McCulloch, 1907).

Many Murray Island [Mer] natives had come over for the ... festival, crowding into their available boats in a way that would have certainly forbidden their leaving any civilized port. Their boats are old pearling luggers, often in advanced stages of decay. They are purchased by the natives ... and paid for by the sale of *bêche-de-mer*. Five boats had come over from Murray [Mer Island] and all had taken part in a race around the island, which was part of the sports program. One had run on a reef in the excitement and promptly sank, while another had given way in so many places that she needed some time for repair. (McCulloch, 1907).

The meeting over then, the problem of getting the Murray Islanders home again, presented itself. Mr. Hedley's offer to carry back about fifteen was accepted with relief ... in the end there were about thirty all told. (McCulloch, 1907).

Due to unfavourable winds they did not reach Mer (Murray Island) on the first day. Compelled to drop anchor and wait overnight, they witnessed the spontaneous performance of a string game.

Throughout the South Seas games with string, commonly known as cats-cradle with us, are very common, and the figures made are often complex in the extreme. Sitting on the deck after tea I noticed two little girls playing with a piece of string that had fallen from our parcels, and beckoned them to come over and show us what they were doing. Very shy at first they managed only simple and apparently meaningless figures, but encouraged by the old Passi³⁷ these soon become more intricate and represented definite objects. Among these I remember a very good figure of a schooner, and another of the crocodile, though many required all the imagination possessed by the native to discover what they were intended to form. Our interest in the game soon brought some of the older natives around, and when by accident one of the children let the string slip from her finger tips a yell of laughter went up from all around. Unable to control their patience several of the younger men took it up and we were cat-cradled till it was too dark to see any more. (McCulloch, 1907).

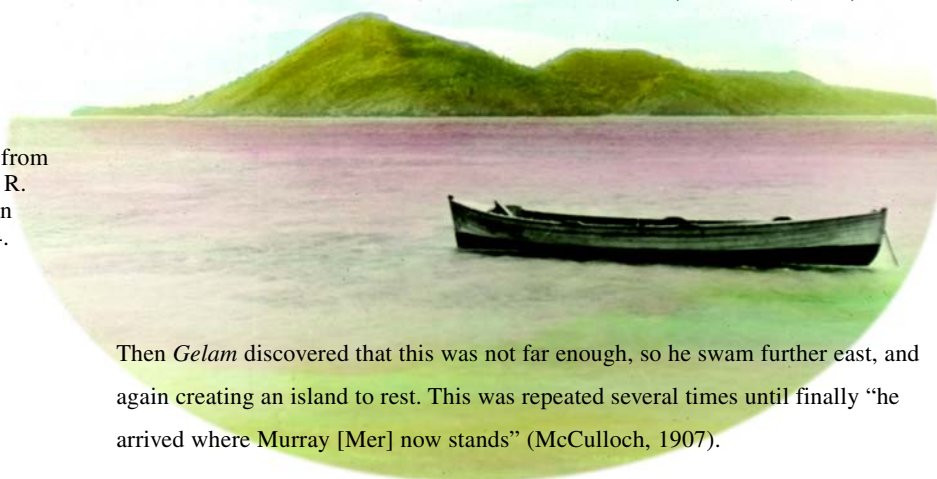
On the following morning, the island they were sailing to was clearly visible to the travellers (Fig. 27).

Murray Island [Mer] is a volcanic hill ... and viewed from our anchorage, that is from the west, appeared to be largely covered with grass. Trees seemed

³⁷ The same Passi (Pasi) was heir to a senior office in the Malu-Bomai cult, mamoose, and a church leader (Beckett, 1987:121). He was also Haddon's informant (Herle & Philp, 1998:31).

to be confined to the narrow flat land near the water's edge, and coconut palms were conspicuous along the beach. By greatly stretching ones imagination (an art highly cultivated by the natives) one can detect in the form of the hill a remote resemblance to a dugong, which fact form the basis of Murray Island legend. Old Passi explained that in the very early days when all things were more or less unsettled the dugong was a deity, *Gelam* by name, who lived somewhere over in the direction of Moa [Banks Island], near Thursday Island. He quarrelled with his mother ... and determined to leave home for good. ... He turned himself into a dugong, and swam away to the east, until thinking he had gone far enough to have left her influence behind him he formed an island and settled down to rest. (McCulloch, 1907).

Fig. 27
View of Mer (Murray Island) from
Dauar, photographed by Alan R.
McCulloch in 1907, Australian
Museum Archives no. vv2854.



Then *Gelam* discovered that this was not far enough, so he swam further east, and again creating an island to rest. This was repeated several times until finally “he arrived where Murray [Mer] now stands” (McCulloch, 1907).

Landing on the beach we were met by an excited crowd of native children headed by their teacher Mr. Bruce—a white man who has lived here for about 25 years and is now the magistrate, school-master, and general advocate for the natives. Our visit was a complete surprise to him, but his welcome was of the warmest and we owed much of the comfort of our trip to his kindly influence and help. (McCulloch, 1907; Fig. 28).

First, he helped them to find suitable accommodation.

Little more than a stones throw from Mr. Bruce's house, and right alongside a well, we found a large hut that was in every way suitable and this being the property of Ouani, the native teacher, and not in use, it was at once pressed upon us. It was grass-thatched and the walls were formed of plaited palm leaves, bound on to a framework of bamboo by thin strips of cane. There were two doors on each side and one at either end—doors by courtesy since they could not be opened or closed being merely unthatched spaces in the walls. The floor was plain sand, but we were soon provided with plaited mats to cover it. (McCulloch, 1907; Figs. 29, 30).

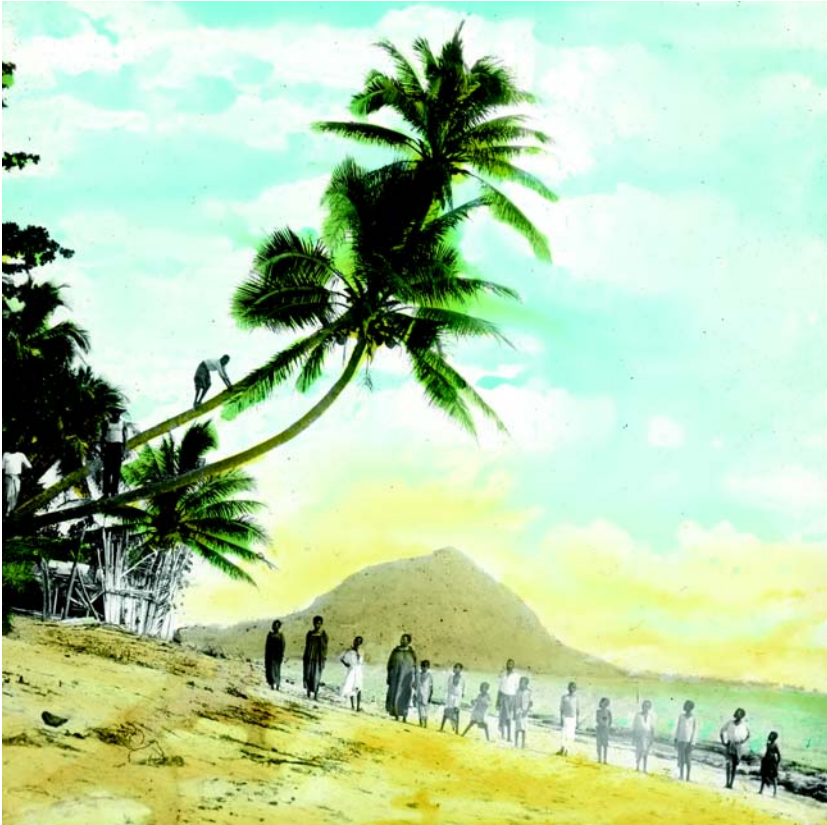


Fig. 28
A beach on Mer (Murray Island)
with Dauar in the background,
photographed by Alan R. McCulloch
in 1907, Australian Museum
Archives no. vv2848.

Sunday is an important day with semi Christianized nations and is the occasion for choir practice and church and fine clothes as well as many other things. Ouani being away when we first arrived at Murray Island, the first Sunday service was conducted by Passi, the ex-chief of Dauar. He had doubtless been as fine an old savage in his day as they are made, while in his many chats with us we soon found that his old traditions and beliefs were very far from dead. However dressed in old military costume and with a pair of spectacles placed so far down his nose that he could easily see over them, he pretended to read in a sermon, holding his book at any old angle during the proceeding. ... After the sermon we ruined hymns in both English and the native language, but the words of all were quite lost upon us, so fascinated were we by the choir (congregation generally) singing, and of one or two members in particular. One old lady of perhaps 60 years of age sang in a high falsetto at least an octave above all the others. Still others, not wishing to be outdone shouted louder than all the rest though as this meant considerable exertion their efforts were more or less short-lived. However while some took a spell the others shouted and by taking it in turns as it were, the general volume was sustained. (McCulloch, 1907).

The desire for distinction was not confined to the singing however, but was as well maintained in the dresses of the ladies ... Most of the clothing is purchased from the missionaries who receive it from the sewing clubs in London. Variety of colours rather than fit is the feature arrived at, so that impression in my mind of the dresses in church on that first Sunday morning at Murray Island is one that will outlive almost any others. Canary yellow with black spots or stripes was very popular or salmon pink with purple lace.

Fig. 29

The Bowd's house, an example of an early twentieth century house on Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2846.



Fig. 30

Group of Islanders in front of the Pasi's house, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2849.



Fig. 31

View of Waier Island showing the location of *Waier's* shrine, taken from a stone fish trap on Mer (Murray Island) by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2853.

One or two ladies sported hats of a more or less striking order, and we noticed the teacher's wife with a brand new one on to which the price ticket was as securely sewn as when it left the shop. The men mostly wore pink or white lava lavas with perhaps a singlet and even an occasional coat, while officials, policemen, chiefs etc. donned some remnant of the uniform provided by a munificent government. (McCulloch, 1907).

On Sunday afternoon we would stroll up to the rim of the old crater of Gelam overlooking the central valley of the island in which were most of the native gardens with paths winding here and there between them. To seaward were the fantastic shaped islands of Dauar and Waier [Fig. 31] while Darnley Island [Erub] stood up on the horizon. Looking down one saw the native's houses sheltered in under the thick belt of coconut palms fringing the shore. In the shallow waters of the lagoon one saw dense black shoals of herrings swimming leisurely around or sometimes wildly scattering as a shark dashed into their midst, their every movement easily watched in the clear water. (McCulloch, 1907).

At Murray Island [Mer], as at Darnley [Erub], the space between the encircling reefs and the shore is marked out with long rows of piled up stones enclosing larger or smaller quadrangular spaces. These are commonly spoken of as fish traps and are supposed to have been constructed by the earlier inhabitants of the islands with a view to entrapping the fish that entered them at high tide and did not escape before the water fell and left them dry. (McCulloch, 1907; Fig. 31).

To the eastward we could see the almost unbroken line of white foam where the great swell of the Pacific surged on to the outer barrier five miles away, and could hear this distant roar, an everlasting threat against the living wall that barred their progress. This is a sound that never fails to impress its hearer, no matter how used one may be to it, and it thus gives rise to some superstitious beliefs [among] the natives. They imagined the outer reef to be the abode of departed spirits who were forever striving to come back to their home on the land, and failing, were ever ready to drag others to share their doom. We could not induce our friends to take us round to that side of the island in their boat. They feared that it would be drawn away from the island by the ghosts and told us of the case of a girl who was fishing in a canoe off the eastern side. When she found herself beginning to drift seawards she paddled with all her might and called to her friends on the shore but in vain. Slowly she drifted further and further till she seemed to be a mere speck against the white wall of foam behind her, and then those who watched knew that she had gone to join her voice with the other ghosts who were always calling. (McCulloch, 1907).



Fig. 32
Model of a nineteenth century house on Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 189, AM E.17361.

Hedley and McCulloch purchased artefacts on various occasions, but ethnographic collecting was only part of their job. Hedley's notes for the 4th September well illustrate the nature of their activities:

Bought more ethnological gear & instructed native through Mr. Bruce to make model of hut [Fig. 32]. Walked to east side and collected beetles & spiders under leaves & sticks. When the tide fell collected molluscs. Found some new shells. McCulloch & Jardine made large collection of crabs & fish at low water on the seaside. They enlisted several children who helped them very much (Hedley, 1907; Fig. 33).



Fig. 33
Leo and George, two children who assisted Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in collecting wildlife specimens on Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2837.

Hedley's preoccupation with biology and awareness of anthropology is well captured in the episode he recalled in his report:

A large turtle, the Loggerhead, is missing in the Museum series. ... Once a fine individual was seen asleep on the surface. We steered for it, a sailor caught up a knife in his teeth, rushed to the bows and was in the act of leaping on it, when he recoiled. It appeared that a cuttlefish was clinging to the turtle, that the sailor belonged to the cuttlefish totem, and dared not injure the Loggerhead while his totem protected it. (Hedley & McCulloch, 1907:4-5).

Another day Hedley reported: "Bought a stone top from native (Fig. 34). Mr. Bruce gave me a cone with top cut off." (Hedley, 1907) A few days later he was searching for a basket to carry a stone spinning top and he soon acquired two such baskets (Fig. 35). From his journal it is not clear what Hedley's directions were in collecting artefacts. However it appears that, like many other collectors of that time, he concentrated on what was visually attractive and conforming to a general view of Mriam (Murray Islanders') folklore.



Fig. 34
Spinning top *kolap*, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 159, AM E.17269.



Fig. 35
Basket *kolap epoi* for holding and carrying a spinning top, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 157, AM E.17272.



Fig. 36
Head dress *sam*, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 69, AM E.17316.



Fig. 37
Neck ornament *tabo kaub-kaub* made from olive shells, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 74, AM E.17366.



Fig. 38
Breast ornament *mai* made from pearl shell, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 42, AM E.17360.



Fig. 39
Armlet *nasir* made from trochus shell, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 26, AM E.17326.



Fig. 40
Belt (waistband) *pet wak* made from woven palm fibre and land-snail shells, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 29, AM E.17319.



Fig. 41
Belt *seserig* made from dogs' teeth, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 31, AM E.17365.



Fig. 42
Dance wand carved from softwood, Nagir (Mount Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 21, AM AUR297, E.17380.



Fig. 43
Dance wands carved from softwood, Nagir (Mount Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 21, AM E.17379, E.17382.



Fig. 44
Meriam men wearing *Dari* head-dresses, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2843.



Fig. 45
Gadodo wearing an armguard *kadig* with bowstring ornament *tage lu* and chest ornament *dibi dibi*, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2838.



Fig. 46
Breast ornament *dibi-dibi* made from shell, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 39, AM E.17346.



Fig. 47
A pair of arm guards *borz* that provide protection from the bow string, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 98, AM E.17327, E.17329.



Fig. 48
Bowstring ornaments *tage lu* made from bamboo and coloured wool, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 34, AM E.17331, E.17332.



Fig. 49
A pair of armlets *put* made from pandanus and cotton cloth, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 25, AM E.17323, E.17324.



Fig. 50
A pair of arm ornaments *zogo kadig* made from bamboo and palm leaves, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 33, AM E.17334, E.17336.



Fig. 51
Two chest ornaments *sabagorar*, fish hook style, made from turtle-shell, eastern Torres Strait, acquired from Edward G.W. Palmer in 1884. Catalogue no. 199, AM B.1711, B.1712.



Fig. 52
Two men wearing dance costumes. One holds a traditional drum *warup* with feather decoration, the other wears the “crocodile—kingfisher” mask of the western Torres Strait tradition, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (Mask: Catalogue no. 176, AM E.17339), Australian Museum Archives no. vv2841.

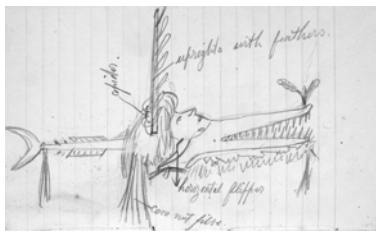


Fig. 53
Sketch of the “crocodile—kingfisher” mask made by Alan R. McCulloch probably on Mer (Murray Island) in 1907. Catalogue no. 176, AM E.17339. Australian Museum Archives: AMS139, box 24, “McCullochiana”.



Fig. 54
The “crocodile—kingfisher” mask of the western Torres Strait tradition, collected on Mer (Murray Island) by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 176, AM E.17339.

³⁸ It appears that Hedley had confused arm guard *borz* (then used only as ceremonial and dance ornament) with *zogo kadig*, a different ornament also associated with arm guard. The latter was highly regarded and rare (Catalogue no. 33 and 98).

³⁹ Alternative spelling: *wangai* (e.g., Harris, 1977)

⁴⁰ See footnote, page 62.

Torres Strait culture was known for its rich spiritual and ceremonial life. Various rituals and ceremonies required special accessories. Artefact collectors often favoured decorations and ceremonial accessories as they expressed cultural flavour in a more colourful manner than tools or ordinary domestic implements (Figs. 36–43). Thus such artefacts justified special treatment. “Native put on dance dress to be photographed [Figs. 44 and 45]. Bought various dance ornaments” reports Hedley (1907; Figs. 46–49). Later he elaborates that the *borz* (arm guard) was “used only by men of position; a low class man was punished for wearing it. Now [such ornaments are] extremely rare”³⁸ (Figs. 47 and 50). Similarly “frontlet of cassowary feathers [was used] by chiefs only,” while the turtle-shell fish-hook ornament was worn “on breast of married woman” (Hedley, 1907; Fig. 51).

The collectors discovered some of the meanings behind the decorations. For instance, for *iwa sab* (breast ornament: Catalogue no. 36; E.17274–E.17275) it was recorded that the “man who wore this taboo sign had vowed to abstain for six months from yam, banana, [the] coconut, but may eat taro, fish and sweet potato” (Hedley, 1907—26 September).

Equally the domain of spirits and magic incited the collectors’ interest as seen in the following notes by Hedley. The *gor* (rattle) “is rattled at night in village by sorcery man ... considered as a spirit moving about.” For rain making, a “rain stone [is] put in banana leaf and pray over it.” Similarly, erotic and love charms merited note. According to Hedley’s informant “when girl desires man she wraps [a love charm] in her petticoat; concealed it has power to infatuate the especial man.” (Hedley, 1907). “A locust called *kitoto* was used by sorcerer to detect theft. The insect when released was conjured by the hair of a dead man and flew to the thief” (Hedley, 1907). “Dance mask of the leader [was used] in the dance of the *wangi*³⁹ ceremony. The dance induced the *wangi* palm tree to bear largely. Neither women nor men were allowed to witness this dance” (Hedley, 1907). Although the “big crocodile mask of Murray⁴⁰” was worn for a photograph (Hedley, 1907; Figs. 52–54).

With such focus on ceremonial artefacts little attention was given to daily aspects of life. However, unlike some casual collectors, Hedley recorded a few observations. Thus he writes in his laconic manner that the boar tusk is an “old knife.” Another tool called a *panigob* (E.17281–E.17283, Catalogue no. 188) was a hoe or a “shell spade ... used ... to dig gardens and cut out canoes.” The Melo shell *ezer* (E.17378, Catalogue no. 185) was used as an “old saucepan,” while the *ni sor* was a water container made of two coconut shells strapped together with the plaited cord (E.17258–E.17259, Catalogue no. 184, Fig. 55). A small single coconut shell “with plaited loop, [was a bottle] for giving children drink” (Hedley, 1907; E.17257, Catalogue no. 183).

They also collected several items of fishing equipment, such as fishing scoops (baskets), fish beaters, fish hooks, fishing line and fishing spears (Figs. 56–59). Some of these are models (fish beater) and some intended or adopted for dancing (fishing scoop) (Figs. 59–60). Nonetheless, they reflect a range of fishing equipment that typify traditional

Fig. 55. Coconut water containers, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (Catalogue no. 184, AM E.17259).

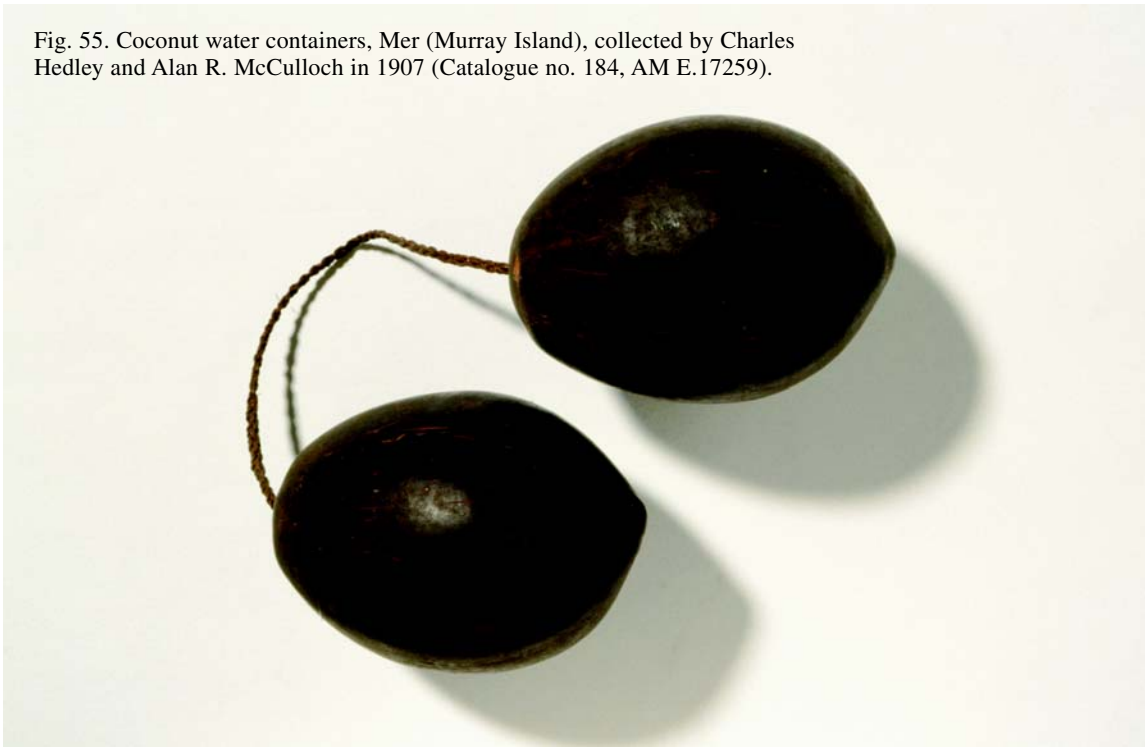


Fig. 57. Fishing line made from palm fibre, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (Catalogue no. 90, AM E.17373).

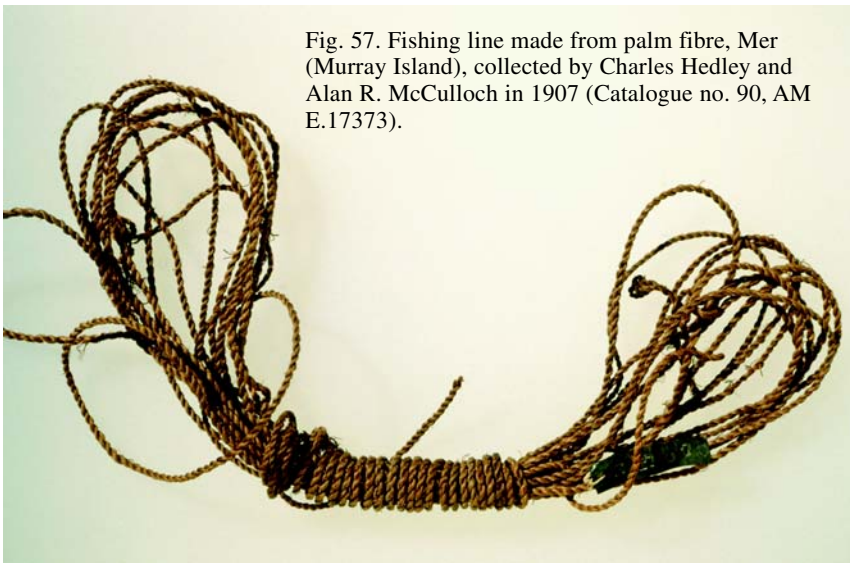
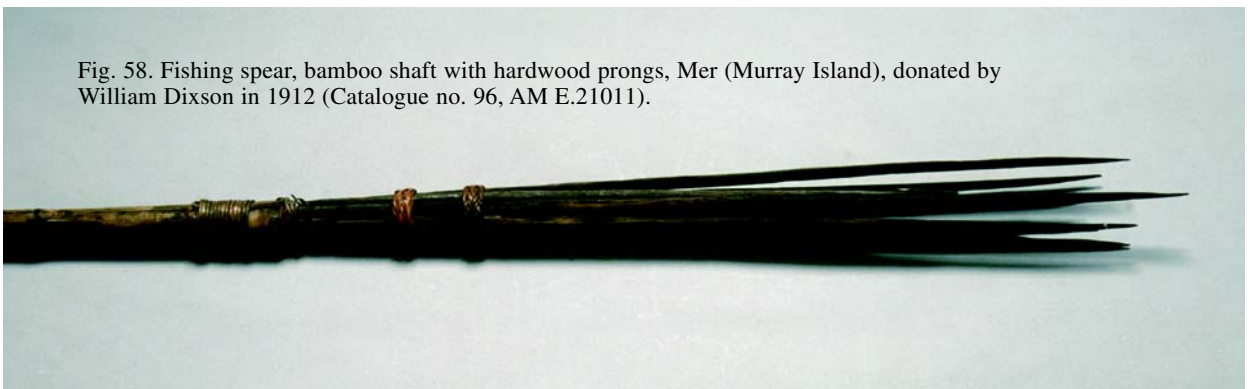


Fig. 56
Fish hooks made from turtle-shell, three pin type hooks are from Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, the thick one of unknown provenance (bottom left) was donated by William Dixson in 1951. (Catalogue no. 87, AM E.17356, E.17357, E.17358 & Catalogue no. 201, AM E.54625).

Fig. 58. Fishing spear, bamboo shaft with hardwood prongs, Mer (Murray Island), donated by William Dixson in 1912 (Catalogue no. 96, AM E.21011).



forms, whose use extended into post-contact and colonial times. Consistently, they did not collect any contemporary fishing gear that undoubtedly was in individual use, as well as in commercial fishing and pearling operations.

On return from the Strait, Hedley & McCulloch reported (1907:4) that their expectations “were fulfilled. A large number of old curios are still in existence, almost every day we purchased some object of interest and where originals were no longer obtainable, models were made for us.” It appears that numerous objects in this collection are contemporary replicas of old, pre-contact forms. Years earlier, Haddon also acquired many artefacts made especially for him (Herle, 1998:117). Obviously, by the time of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition in 1898 and, even more so, by 1907 many traditional artefacts were still remembered but not customarily made and used. The overall impression is that a large part of the Hedley-McCulloch collection consists of artefacts made, not for use by Meriam (Murray Island’s) people, but specifically for artefact collectors. However, Hedley and McCulloch only slightly overstated the case by proclaiming that they enlarged “the Museum collection by a fairly complete ethnological series, illustrating an Australian people not before represented in the Museum.” (Hedley & McCulloch, 1907:6)

Tradition and transition

Material culture does not convey historical narratives, but artefacts do reflect historical process. Artefacts not only represent the society from which they come but also cast light on the collectors. The way in which artefacts are selected reveals some aspects of the collectors’ beliefs and expectations. This is worth exploring, since the origin of artefacts and the mode of collecting strongly influence indigenous, historical and scientific values embedded in these collections.

Through the late eighteenth century and the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, encounters between Torres Strait Islanders and Europeans became more frequent, initiating a cultural change and adaptation process (Mosby, 1998c:31–33). We can glimpse this process in some aspects of material culture and trade. For example, in the early nineteenth century, and possibly earlier, the Torres Strait Islanders produced replicas of swords, “evidently formed from European models; which opinion is confirmed by the native appellation being *Tabu oush tulek*, or belly-iron” (Australian Museum Catalogue, 1837:70). Similarly, trading as experienced by Flinders on 30 October 1802 (Mosby, 1998b:34) became the norm for many friendly encounters (King, 1837:3). In this period Islanders predominantly sought to obtain metal axes and knives, but numerous other items were exchanged as well, augmenting their material culture.

In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, with the onset of colonialism, this cultural change rapidly accelerated in such a way that the Islanders virtually reinvented their culture, adapting it to new realities. This change included an adoption of Christianity, western education, development of creole language and (in many cases) acquisition of English language, European clothing and various

⁴⁰ The origin of this mask is not known. It is possible that it was made on Mer (Murray Island) for the collectors, even though it represents a tradition of Western Torres Strait (J. Philp, pers. comm.). McCulloch made a sketch of the mask probably on Mer (Murray Island) in 1907, Fig. 53, (McCulloch, 1907b).

Fig. 59

Model of a fish beater made from bamboo and banana fibre, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (Catalogue no. 86, AM E.17290).

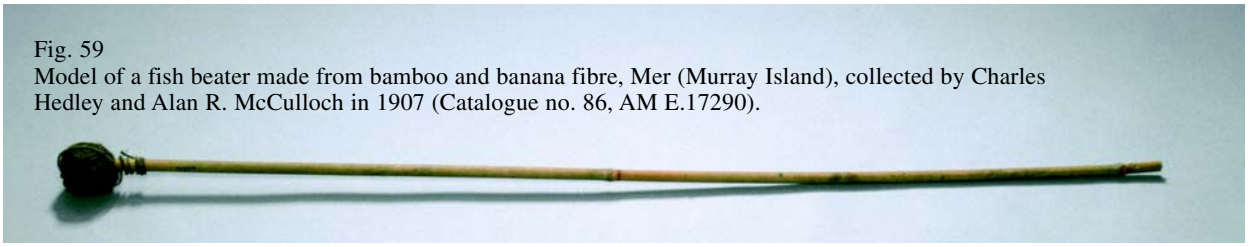


Fig. 60

Fishing scoop made from bamboo and palm strips, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (Catalogue no. 89, AM E.17293).

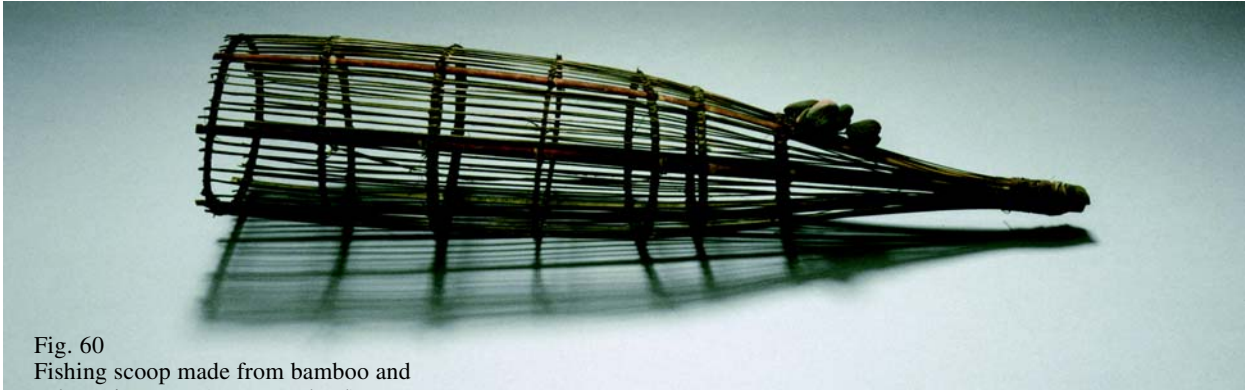


Fig. 61

Bowd and Lyabel fishing with the cast-net, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2844.

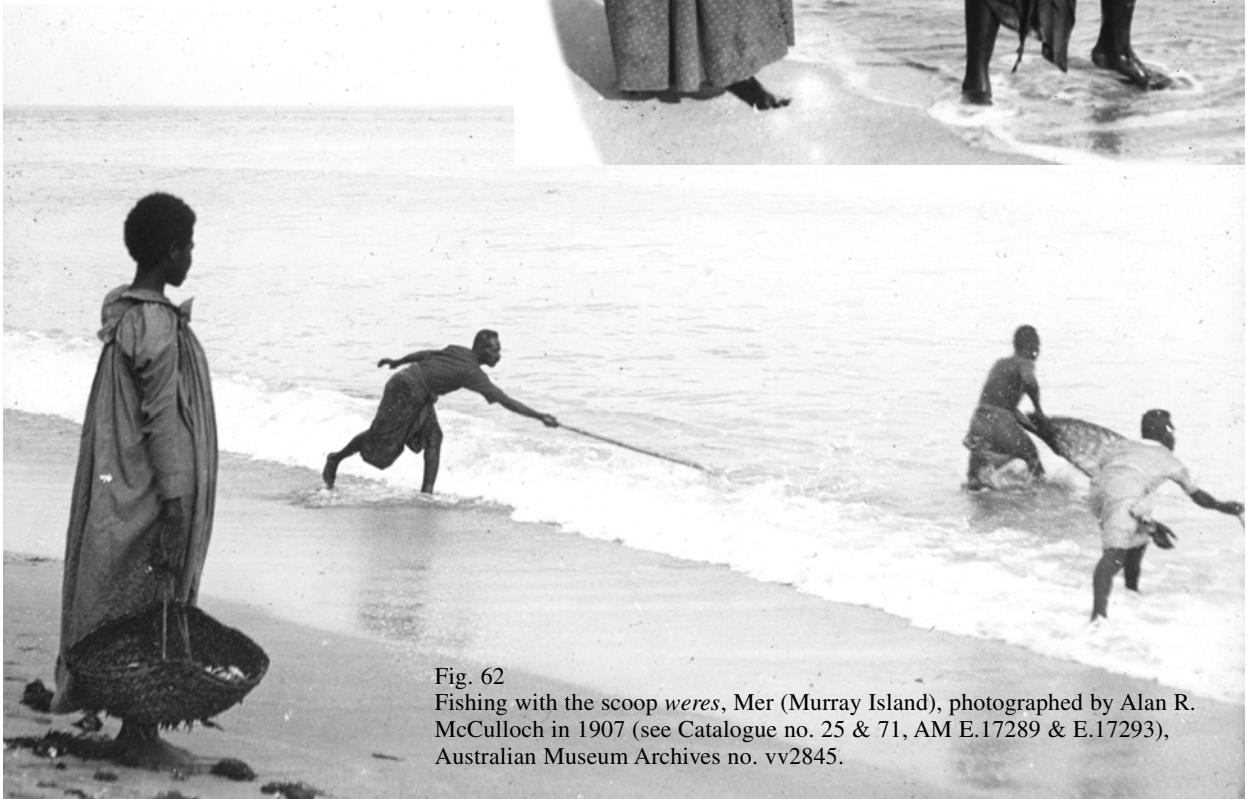


Fig. 62

Fishing with the scoop *weres*, Mer (Murray Island), photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907 (see Catalogue no. 25 & 71, AM E.17289 & E.17293), Australian Museum Archives no. vv2845.



Fig. 63
Rattle *lolo* made from bamboo, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 148, AM E.17297.



Fig. 64
Rattle *lolo* made from bamboo and decorated with incisions and feathers, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 147, AM E.17296.



Fig. 65
Pan-pipes *karob* made from bamboo, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 144, AM E.17302.

domestic utensils. These changes affected every sphere of life. By the late nineteenth century Islanders had remodeled their culture in a very profound way. The old was not forgotten while at the same time the new had already developed and was functional. Willingly, or not, the Islanders were forging their new, post-contact identity.

Yet the artefacts included in most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century collections from the Torres Strait appear to be carefully selected to reflect a perceived pre-colonial culture of its people. Collectors from this period tended to focus on indigenous traditional (pre-colonial) material and deliberate exclusion what was developed afterwards.

Collectors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were conscious of the old, traditional elements of culture as well as its then current, contemporary manifestations. The first was often regarded as more valuable or “genuine;” the second, if not taken as a good approximation of the first, was frequently ignored. Contemporary and current were regarded mostly as a useful insight into past tradition. For example, Haddon’s collections (1888–1889, 1898), Bruce-Black’s collection (c. 1900) and Hedley-McCulloch’s collection (1907) carefully omitted artefacts used at the time in commercial fishing, plant cultivation, food preparation, daily domestic work, Christian ceremonies, education and clothing. In all these areas Islanders were developing their new tradition and identity that did not warrant, then, much anthropological interest, let alone collection of artefact.

By the beginning of the twentieth century a fishing lugger, modified in unique Torres Strait manner, was as much the attribute of the Torres Strait culture as a dug-out canoe was in the eighteenth and in the large part of the nineteenth centuries. Anthropologists and collectors, however, had their eyes fixed on what they perceived as traditional and genuine “native” artefacts. So the objects collected mirror this bias, rooted in European perceptions and expectations. This may explain why domestic and gardening implements, such as metal hoes, knives, machetes and cooking pots were excluded from Hedley-McCulloch collection.

Haddon intended to salvage or reconstruct the Torres Strait culture of the pre-colonial period. Yet he encountered and studied contemporary culture of the late nineteenth century. While he was able to collate historical material that cast light on the pre-colonial culture, his collection of artefacts was almost entirely contemporary. The same applies to the large part of the Australian Museum collection.

While the various layers of culture are embedded in the artefacts, interpretation tends to focus on their pre-colonial function (e.g., Moore, 1984, 1993).

On one superficial level artefacts reflect the mode of life. For example, cultivation of crops on some islands is reflected by tools, or models of tools for tending the soil and zogo figures used to protect the gardens. Fishing gear is another example, much closer to the interest of the Australian Museum expedition. Hedley knew about

fishing and he dedicated a large part of his time on Mer (Murray Island) to obtaining marine specimens. He observed how the Islanders cast their net and how “men catch fish in a conical basket scoop” (Hedley, 1907; 30 August) (Figs. 60, 62). Then he promptly included such scoops in his collection (E.17289, E.17293, Catalogue no. 89). He described a harpoon for hunting dugong and turtles, which was fitted onto a spear, and fishing with a net (Fig. 61).

The nature of local resources is also reflected in artefacts. Timber is generally scarce on the islands of Torres Strait. Bamboo was commonly used for building materials, including upper canoe structures, and a variety of small implements and weapons. Water containers, knives, scrapers, combs, pipes, sound instruments, and bows were made of bamboo. Some bamboo objects were decorated with fine incisions. Partial removal of the surface veneer was frequently used for decorative effect (Figs. 63–66). When treated in salty water, bamboo became resistant to borers, hard and durable, making a good alternative for hardwoods.

However, some wooden products could not be easily substituted with bamboo. The prominent example is the hull of a dugout canoe. The canoe was a vital piece of equipment, indispensable to the Islanders’ marine-oriented economy and equally important in maintaining trading networks (Fig. 67). So, the canoes’ hulls, especially the large ones, needed to be procured from the Fly River estuary, Western Province of Papua New Guinea, via complex arrangements and negotiations (Moore,



Fig. 66
Clapper *kerker keber* made from bamboo, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 137, AM E.17298.

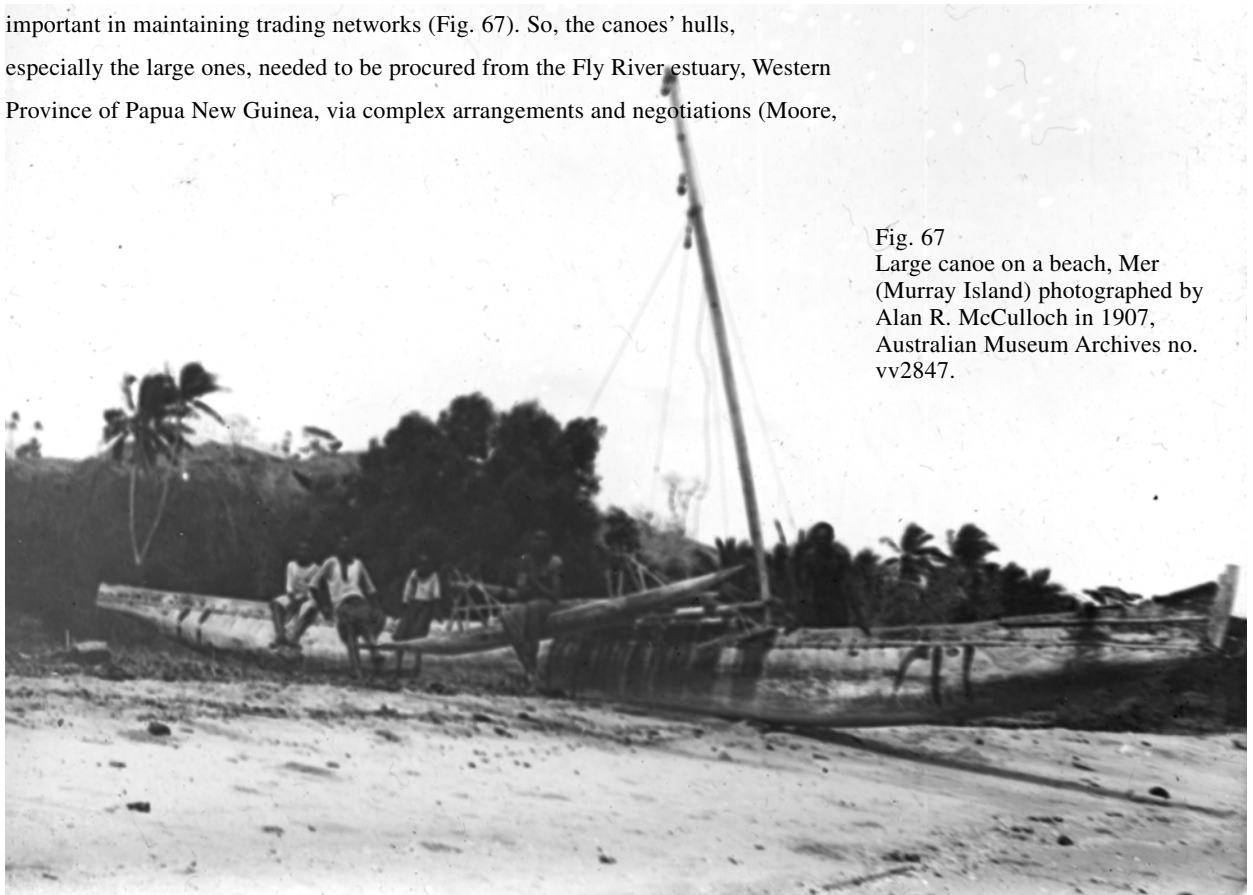


Fig. 67
Large canoe on a beach, Mer (Murray Island) photographed by Alan R. McCulloch in 1907, Australian Museum Archives no. vv2847.

1979:303; Wilson, 1993:9). Many other wooden objects such as arrows, spears, drums, masks, and carvings were also acquired by exchange from New Guinea or other regions. These objects were frequently modified to meet local taste and requirements, but they bear obvious traits of their neighbouring cultures such as New Guinea, other Pacific Islands, and Australia.



Fig. 68
Stone moulding tool *omaber* used while hot to bend turtle-shell, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 193, AM E.17376.



Fig. 69
Fragment of turtle-shell mask with remnants of red and blue pigment, Torres Strait, collector unknown. Catalogue no. 231, AM AUR461.



Fig. 70
Model of turtle-shell mask *dogaira wetpur krar* used in harvest ceremonies, Mer (Murray Island), collected by John Bruce, donated by Percy G. Black in 1908. Catalogue no. 177, AM E.17514.

The fibre from local coconut palm husks was extensively used for the manufacture of string, fishing lines, canoe rigging, rope for fences, and various domestic needs (Fig. 57). The leaves of the same palm were used for many woven objects such as baskets, mats and canoe sails, as well as building material, such as wall and roof thatching. On the Muralag (Prince of Wales) group of islands, where coconut palm is rare, pandanus was commonly used for the production of woven artefacts and cordage. String was a universal binding device with a wide range of applications. McCulloch stressed this fact in his description of furnishings for the house which was his and Hedley's accommodation on Mer (Murray Island).

In less than no time bamboos were brought in and hacked into lengths with fearful-looking cane knives. Strong cording, of which we had a plentiful supply, served to lash them into place and our hammocks were hung almost as fast as we could unpack them. In the matter of lashing and tying of knots there are very few things unknown to a native. The lack of nails has taught him to tie almost anything in position whether it be with strips of split cane or string made from coconut fiber. (McCulloch, 1907)

Turtle-shell is another example of a local resource. The hawks-bill turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricata*, was not hunted for food because of its poisonous glands,⁴¹ but specifically for its shell, although the shell of other turtles was also used to make a variety of objects. These included body ornaments, combs, spoons, awls and fishhooks. Other objects, such as sculptured figures, were constructed elaborately from several shell pieces sewn together. However, the turtle-shell masks were of special importance in the rituals of the eastern, central, and western islands in pre-colonial part of the nineteenth century (Fig. 69). The art of mask making and associated Malo ceremonies that were at their summit in the nineteenth century, declined rapidly with the conversion to Christianity (Mosby, 1998c:40). The strong interest in this tradition on the part of Islanders themselves and foreigners persisted to the present. The art of mask making had change style but most importantly its original purpose and spiritual context (McGrath, 1998:104). Hedley and McCulloch showed some interest in the process of production. For example, they collected a stone supposedly used as a moulding tool with the following explanation: "In moulding masks from the hawks-bill turtle-shell this stone was heated and pressed on the ... shell like the flat iron of a laundress." (Hedley, 1907; Fig. 68) Individual pieces of shell were then sewn together. Complete masks were often decorated with fretwork, incisions, pigments, marine shells and feathers (Figs. 5, 7, 14, 70).

On another level, the adoption of non-indigenous materials and tools throughout the Torres Strait reflected the process of change (McGrath, 1998:104–107). Since the early contact with European sailors, Islanders eagerly sought to obtain iron knives and axes through trade (King, 1837:3). In 1907, metal axes were still highly valued. For instance, to obtain a specimen of a Loggerhead turtle Hedley felt it appropriate to offer "a prize of tomahawk" (Hedley & McCulloch, 1907:4). European string, fabric, cotton, wool and buttons were freely incorporated in traditional designs of

⁴¹ It appears that this turtle could be consumed after some elaborate preparation, the secret of which was known and closely guarded by few people (explanatory panel at the Museum of Gateway Torres Strait Motel, Horn Island, 16 August 2003).



Fig. 71
Pubic cover *alida* made from shell *Melo amphora*, decorated with buttons and coloured wool, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 78, AM E.17285.

body accessories and decorations (Figs. 48, 49, 71, 72). This process accelerated in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Subsequently, many new materials such as aluminium and plastic were adopted in conventional and in more contemporary artefacts (Wilson, 1993). Although Haddon seemingly avoided collecting such artefacts, he commissioned several mask models made of cardboard and many artefacts with contemporary, non-indigenous materials are in his collection (Herle, 1998:117; Moore, 1984:75, 102).

Anthropological collections of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries intended to reflect pre-colonial cultural tradition, yet the artefacts illustrating this reality were mainly produced in colonial and post-colonial periods for a variety of reasons, often different to those for which they were made in pre-colonial times. One such reason was that the Islanders' were interpreting their own culture (old and new) for the anthropologists and the collectors. Islander informants were usually sought, and even Hedley, in his rather cursory study, conducted interviews, although he does not provide the names of informants or validate the acquired information.

It is interesting to see how he dutifully recorded, in his laconic journal, in copper-plate lettering, the local names of collected artefacts, information about their use, and when they were obtained. Hedley's intention to reflect pre-colonial culture in his collection can be seen in such expressions as "old knife" and "old saucepan" in describing the function of a boar tusk and a shell container. It was, of course, a vital part of a rational collecting process, but there is ambiguity embedded in his records. Many artefacts were made for a different purpose to that described by Hedley and presumably stated by his informants. For example a panigob (Catalogue no. 188) described as a hoe or a "shell spade" appears to be made as a small decorated replica or a dance accessory, not actually a gardening tool.

Not only were the artefacts interpreted as if they still had the same function as in the pre-colonial time, but the contemporary cultural reality of the Meriam (Murray Islanders), with whom he worked, is virtually absent from Hedley's records (Fig. 30). While McCulloch described in his journal (1907) various aspects of the



Fig. 72
Belt *pet wak* made from two types of marine shells and coloured cloth, Mer (Murray Island), donated by E.M. Grosse in 1918. Catalogue no. 32, AM E.25375.

Fig. 73
Head-dress *Dari* made from bamboo frame and feathers, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 63, AM E.17264.



Fig. 74
Head-dress *Dari* made from bamboo frame and feathers, Mer (Murray Island), collected by Charles Hedley and Alan R. McCulloch in 1907. Catalogue no. 62, AM E.17263.

contemporary material culture, including fishing boats, can knives, clothing, houses, and string figures none of this become a subject of scholarly attention.

Contemporary realities made their marks not only in McCulloch's journal; cultural changes and adapting process are visible, in various ways, in the artefacts produced and collected at that time. Importantly, nearly all objects in the 1907 collection can be dated, by circumstantial evidence or direct records, to the first decade of the twentieth century. The Bruce-Black collection may be a little older and can probably be dated to the turn of the century.

Some artefacts in these collections were made for the Islanders' own use. Many of them such as fishing scoops and nets, musical instruments, spinning tops and some body accessories were presumably used in the same way as in pre-colonial period. For example the dari (headdress), with the white feathers of the Torres Strait pigeon provides an instructive example of change and resilience of tradition (Figs. 73, 74). This type of headdress became strongly associated with the popular image of the Islanders. Its simplified outline was eventually adopted as the emblem of Torres Strait in 1992⁴². Dari headdresses are present in various public collections and some, at least from the beginning of the twentieth century, incorporate European fabric, cotton and other materials. Dari with all its symbolic connotations, epitomises the persistence of a tradition and the magnitude of change that occurred in the Torres Strait.

⁴² The Torres Strait Islander flag with dari head-dress in the centre was designed by Islander Bernard Namok and officially adopted in 1992.







AM E.17297 (p. 64)



AM E.17296 (p. 64)



AM E. 18418 (p. 41)



AM E. 18418 (p. 41)

Other objects such as pre-colonial type of clothing and possibly some tools (or their replicas) changed, by the late nineteenth century, into body ornaments and dance accessories (e.g., pubic cover, arm guard and hoe). Bows and arrows probably changed their function in a subtle way and became bird hunting tools rather than weapons⁴³, yet they were eagerly collected as, in popular imagination they were associated with the pre-colonial image of Islander warrior.

It is important to realize that Islanders themselves entered into the artefact trade and, significantly, into anthropological studies. Some objects were made specifically for the collectors as replicas (e.g., models of beehive house, fish beater, thatching needle). Because of this, it is difficult to indicate the function of individual objects without conducting detail historical research.⁴⁴

More significantly, in many instances Islanders acted as interpreters of their own culture. It is possible to detect from the history of collecting and research that, in this vital period of rapid transition from pre-colonial to colonial reality, the Islanders not only reshaped and reinvented their culture but also, to a great extent, presented the past tradition to the outsiders through their own prism. It must be appreciated that the rapid transformation to Christianity resulted in the radical repositioning of previous belief systems. Parts were filtered into a new faith when the connections could be made, and parts were kept secret and remained hidden, absent from official practices (Sharp, 1993:44–45). Thus, some knowledge associated with masks, mourning costumes, ancestral figures and other symbolic objects that was disclosed is only fragmentary and abridged for the outsiders. It is ironic, however, that Christianity, the faith that Islanders so keenly adopted and adapted in this early colonial period, and which became such a central part of the new tradition, was virtually ignored by the collectors.

By the early twentieth century, Torres Strait Islanders had developed new cultural traditions, firmly rooted in Christianity and current economic circumstances. In his field journal, Alan McCulloch provides glimpses of such contemporary culture through boat races, making string figures, or Sunday church services. Artefacts associated with these activities, however, had not appeared worthy of collecting. It is only since the 1960s that a few contemporary Torres Strait artefacts have been acquired by the Australian Museum. They include baskets, fans, napkin rings, place mats, quilts and contemporary artwork (Catalogue no. 233) (Figs. 75, 76).



Fig. 75
Two South Sea style fans made from pandanus, Mer (Murray Island), donated by K. Green in 1962. Catalogue no. 187, AM E.60392.



Fig. 76
Two baskets made from pandanus, Nagir (Mount Ernest Island), donated by K. Green in 1962. Catalogue no. 19, AM E.66186, E.66187.

⁴³ At the beginning of twentieth century arrows were still made for dancing, trade, and bird hunting (J. Philp, pers. comm. 2003).

⁴⁴ See comments in Catalogue Organization pp. 75–76.

Catalogue

Catalogue organization

The realization of cultural complexities, the dynamic of rapid change, and the reinterpretation of Islanders' culture for outsiders make the organization of objects presented in this catalogue difficult. Should the objects be organized as they were perceived by the early twentieth century collectors, or should they be rearranged according to our understanding of more complex and tentative meanings and purposes? Probably neither manner of arrangement will be satisfactory to the Islanders themselves or to other potential users of the catalogue. So it is important to emphasize that the present arrangement does not intend to impose any interpretation of the objects, but only to provide an order to assist the user.

The artefacts in the catalogue are grouped in several ways. Firstly, they are grouped according to their broad provenance from Top Western Islands, Western Islands, Lower Western Islands, Eastern Islands and Torres Strait General. Within these groups objects are listed under specific islands when such specific provenance is known. The provenance for most objects is specific to a particular island or group of islands: Boigu, Dauan, Mabuiag (Jervis Island), Moa (Banks Island), Nagir (Mount Ernest Island), Waibene (Thursday Island) and Mer (Murray Island).

Secondly, in two sections with large number of artefacts (Mer and Torres Strait General), the artefacts are grouped into a few broad functional categories. Dividing artefacts into functional groups is problematic since many categories overlap with one another; some are hard to identify and some categories are represented by very few objects (e.g., one paddle). These functional groups are devised only to organize material in the catalogue, and not to imply or enforce any definite functional interpretation of the objects. Within these groups, all artefacts are listed alphabetically.

The eight functional groups for Mer are:

- ceremonial, dance and body accessories
- fishing and hunting implements and materials
- weapons and accessories
- mourning costume
- sound and music instruments
- game accessories
- magic and sacred objects
- household utensils and raw material

The four functional groups for Torres Strait General are:

- fishing and hunting implements
- weapons
- dance, body accessories and ornaments
- other artefacts

Entries

The entries are designed to provide simplified but easy-to-read information about the artefacts. When possible, similar artefacts are put together into a single entry. However, when artefacts of a similar type differ significantly in design and style or are fairly individual, they are listed and described separately. In addition, similar artefacts acquired from different sources are listed separately. Entries are numbered in a single sequence from 1 to 235 for internal referencing and indexing. Each entry consists of three parts: heading, description and history. Headings contain the following information:

Artefact name

All items are listed under their common English terms such as arrow, figure and tool.

Material

Only the principal material is listed. For example, masks may be constructed of a variety of materials but only the most distinctive material is specified, such as wood for some masks and turtle-shell for others.

Indigenous terms (with reference)

Indigenous terms, if known, are always given, followed by the reference source, such as JSB (for John S. Bruce, 1908), CH (for Charles Hedley, 1907), SE (for Samuel Ella, 1898), DRM (for David R. Moore, 1993), and REG (for the Australian Museum Ethnological Register). I attempted, above all, to provide indigenous words that were recorded closest to the time and place of the collecting process. Thus, nearly all possible terms extracted from Bruce's and Hedley's notes are included in the first instance. It appears that the indigenous terms written in the Register were directly transcribed from Bruce's and Hedley's notes. On a few occasions, they are supplemented by some words derived from unknown sources, possibly additional Hedley notes that were not deposited in the Museum Archives. Also, some terms in the Register may have been transcribed from Haddon. Since Moore's terms are often identical to those from the other sources, his version is given and referenced to him only when neither Bruce, Hedley nor the register provides indigenous terms, or when there is a discrepancy between the other sources and Moore. In the introductory essay, however, I consistently use Moore's indigenous terms as a convention.

Registration number

All numbers prefixed with E, B, and AUR refer to the Australian Museum registration system. In the museum's data arrangement this number alone is sufficient to access the artefact and information related to it.

Description includes

Details

A brief description is given to provide basic information concerning the shape, technology, and function of the artefact. As far as practicable, all descriptions tend to follow the same format, indicating how the artefact looks, how and of what material it is made, and its function. Since many artefacts were not actually used, but made for trade or at the collector's request and some were replicas, the

indication of use must be qualified. Thus, in many instances, function indicates what the category of artefact was used for, rather than specifying the function of the particular item in the collection.

Moore (1984, 1993) who conducted detail study tends to attribute, across the collection, function that would be relevant to pre-colonial situation. For artefacts collected, and presumably made, since approximately 1800 such attribution is distorted. For example the function of arrows collected in 1907 Moore interprets as warfare (Moore, 1993:28). It is more likely, however, that the arrows from this period were made for different reasons. In his catalogue for Haddon collection, supported by more comprehensive field data, Moore applies finer distinctions. He attributes use of “man arrow” to warfare and “plain” arrows to “shooting birds and small animals” (Moore, 1984:103–104). Because of such ambiguity, the function of artefacts is referenced where possible or not stated where function attributed by Moore (1993) or recorded in other sources appear in conflict with historical context. Also function is not given when specific information was not recorded in existing documents.

The number of the figure illustrating the item is also given here.

Dimensions

All artefacts have basic dimensions, length (L), width (W), height (H) and diameter (D) whichever are appropriate, and all are given in centimetres. Some measurements are difficult to make and special instances are noted when relevant. For example, if a necklace is opened its length is measured in total from one end to the other. If its ends are tied together it is stretched straight and measured folded. For many artefacts with feathers and tassels only approximate dimensions can be given, *circa* measures are marked *c*. For long and thin artefacts, such as arrows and spears, only length is given. Similarly, only the diameter is measured for thin rings, such as armlets.

History

This section provides the collector’s name and the year of collection. Since many artefacts passed hands on many occasions I attempted to find the original collector or the earliest known person that was associated with the artefact. While such information is available for a large part of the collection, the history of some artefacts is unknown beyond the date of acquisition by the Museum. For a few artefacts the date of entry into the Ethnological Register remains the entire historical reference available.

The names of some collectors may, in the future, provide leads to important information. While I was unable to follow all possible clues that are in the Museum archives, the history of some artefacts could still be refined through further search of archival material. For example, researching personal histories and activities of early missionaries and ships captains may reveal some valuable information.

Top Western Islands

Boigu

001

ARROW, reed
kep (DRM)
E.54644-(1–19)

Nineteen reed arrows with dark palm wood points attached to the shaft with plant fibre and resin. Some points plain, some carved with ridges. Traded from Mai Kussa River region of New Guinea (DRM). L: 142–165 cm. History: presented by J.W. Morris in 1952.

002

BOW, bamboo
sarik (DRM)
E.54644-(20)

Bow made from split bamboo. Bowstring of bamboo strip attached with twisted plant fibre. Bands of thin chevron incised on inner surface. L: 186 cm, W: 4.5 cm. History: presented by J.W. Morris in 1952.

Dauan

003

BASKET, palm leaf
balboi (DRM)
E.66188

Small bowl-shaped basket made from palm-leaf strips knotted to a coil of cane or reed. Plaited handle made from the same material. D: c. 20 cm, H: c. 16 cm. History: collected probably in 1962 and presented by E. and W. Campbell in 1974.

Top Western Islands specific location unknown

004

DRUM, wood
warup
B.10094

“Hourglass” drum made from hard wood, complete with lizard skin tympanum, decorated with cassowary feathers and goa nuts (Fig. 3). L: 95 cm, W: 30 cm. History: collected by Capt. Strachan in 1884, purchased by the Museum in 1886.

005

MASK, wood
buk (DRM)
B.10097

Mask of human face carved in softwood with eyes made of shell (Fig. 2). L: 66 cm, W: 26 cm. History: collected by Capt. John Strachan in 1884; purchased by the Museum 1886.

006

MASK, wood
buk (DRM)
B.6185

Mask of human face carved in softwood complete with human hair wig. Painted red, white and blue with linear decoration of white dots. Eyes made of pearl-shell. Cassowary feathers used to make chin and other decorations together with beads and cotton (Fig. 4). L: 68 cm, W: 25 cm. History: collected by Capt. Liljeblad; purchased by the Museum in 1885.

Western Islands

Mabuiag [Jervis Island]

007

FISH POISON, plant
etu-maru (REG)
E.23553

Leaves and twigs, sample of plant *Tephrosia purpurea*. Soaked in water to produce purple dye and to poison fish (DRM). History: exchanged with Queensland Museum in 1916.

008

MAGIC OBJECT, eagle
E.54617

Two claws of the White-breasted Sea Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, with palm-leaf ties. Used in canoes on fishing and fighting expeditions—held in the middle of the canoe in both hands in order to draw near, by magic, the enemy’s canoe (REG). L: c. 18 cm. History: collected by W. Macfarlane in 1933; presented W. Dixson in 1951.

Moa [Banks Island]

009

CHARM, stone
E.31344

Charm in a form of a fish hook made of gray volcanic stone (REG). L: 8.2 cm, W: 2 cm. History: presented by Rev. J.W. Schomberg in 1927.

Lower Western Islands

Waibene [Thursday Island]

010

ARMLET, pandanus
musur (DRM)
E.66365

Plain narrow armllet woven from pandanus strip. Worn by men and women as personal decoration (DRM). D: 8.5 cm, W: 1.7 cm. History: collected for the Museum by D.R. Moore, 1973.

011

BAG, pandanus
lie (DRM)
E.66363

Small bag woven from pandanus strip with diamond pattern in brown. L: 49 cm, W: 32 cm. History: collected for the Museum by D.R. Moore, 1973.

012

BLANKET, linen
E.67059, E.67060

Two linen blankets with machine sewn patchwork of triangles, commonly used in the area. One blanket combining red, green, yellow, white and blue, another combining red, green, yellow and white. Patchwork craft learnt from the missionaries. L: 166–202 cm, W: 137–169 cm. History: purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1975.

013

FAN, pandanus
E.66191, E.66192

Two small fans made from twilled pandanus strips. Central stem extended to form a handle, edges serrated. One is plain, another with brown twine forming flower-like pattern. L: 26–32 cm, W: 14–19 cm. History: purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

014

MAT, pandanus
minalai (DRM)
E.66364

Small mat made from twilled pandanus strips, decorated with mauve dyed strips in check-like pattern. The same technique was used to make large mats and sails (DRM). L: 52 cm, W: 21 cm. History: collected for the Museum by D.R. Moore in 1973.

015

NECKLACE, shell
uraz (DRM)
E.66195-(1–4)

Four necklaces made from one or two different types of small marine shells, including *Pyrene ocellata*, strung on cotton line. Worn by women (DRM). L: c. 35–41 cm, W: c. 2 cm. History: purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

016

NECKLACE, shell and seed
E.66196

Necklace made from small marine shells *Nerita reticulata* and small red seeds strung on nylon line. L: 27 cm, W: 0.8 cm. History: purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

017

SEEDS, wild plum
wongai or ubar (DRM)
E.5298

Handful of dark brown seeds in bean-like casings, obtained from wild plum tree *Sersalicia serica* which fruits were eaten in season. The same seeds were also used by Gundang tribe of Cape York in making necklaces (REG). L: c. 2 cm, W: c. 1.3 cm (each). History: presented by J.A. Thorpe in 1895.

018

TUSK, dugong
dangal danga (DRM)
E.66194-(1–3)

Three dugong tusks, cleaned and dry. One tusk with a point ground into flat sharp edge, other two unmodified. L: 14–15 cm, W: 2.3–2.6 cm. History: purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

Nagir [Mount Ernest Island]

019

BASKET, pandanus
balboi (DRM)
E.66186, E.66187

Two flat-base, oval-shaped baskets made of pandanus strips in twill weave. Decorated with brown flower-like and zigzag patterns. Plaited pandanus handle (Fig. 76). H: 43 cm, L: 33–35 cm, W: 16–21 cm. History: Purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

020

BIRD FIGURE, turtle-shell
E.17383-(9)

Three-dimensional figure of a bird made from thirteen pieces of turtle-shell sewn together with string. Remnants of cement suggest that the figure might have been originally completed with bird feathers. Both legs have been broken. Several additional pieces of turtle shell indicate that whole sculpture was more complex. L: 38.2 cm, W: 12.8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch, 1907.

021

DANCE WAND, wood
E.17379, E.17380, E.17382, AUR297

Four club-like wands carved in softwood with pineapple-shaped head and a nob at the handle. Painted red and blue. One with pandanus strip tied around the head. Held in hand during dancing (DRM) (Figs. 42, 43). L: 68.5–79.5 cm, W: 6.5–8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

022

DANCE WAND, wood
E.17381

Club-like wand carved in softwood with human and animal figures, painted pink, red, blue and black. Held in the hand during dancing (DRM). L: 59 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

023

SERVIETTE RING, pandanus
E.66189-(1–6)

Six serviette rings made from woven pandanus strips with brown diamond pattern. Pointed projections at the edges described as “ornate diagonal pattern” (REG). Traditional technique used in making armllets (DRM). D: c. 5 cm, W: c. 4 cm. History: Purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

024

SERVIETTE RING, pandanus
E.66190-(1–6)

Six serviette rings made from woven pandanus strips with plain and brown check pattern. Traditional technique used in making various woven objects (DRM). D: c. 4.8 cm, W: c. 3.5 cm. History: Purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1974.

Eastern Islands

Mer [Murray Islands]

Ceremonial, dance and body accessories

025

ARMLET, pandanus
put (DRM)
E.17323, E.17324

Two armllets made from pandanus strips plaited with cotton, with a piece of red cotton fabric sewn on the outside. Pendants of red and blue cotton and red beads are attached to one point. Worn for dancing (REG) (Figs. 45, 49). L: 13.5–14.5 cm, W: 11–12 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

026

ARMLET, shell
nasir (DRM)
E.17326

Lower whorl of *Trochus niloticus* shell is cut to form a ring in imitation of a boar tusk armllet. Worn by men on the upper arm for dances and ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 39). D: 10.5 cm, W: 2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

027

ARMLET, shell
waiwi (DRM)
E.17350, E.17351

Two *Conus litteratus* shells with a section cut off and some initial grinding, the early stage of producing dibi-dibi (arm ornament). Such ornaments were worn by men for ceremonies referencing warfare. Ornaments of this kind were highly valued in trading (DRM). L: 12–13 cm, W: 7–8.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

028

BELT, shell
pet wak (DRM)
E.17317, E.17318

Two belts made from plaited palm fibre, with red and brown cotton floweret bands attached. *Mammilla* shells are tied on with a thin string. Worn by men in dances and ceremonies (DRM). L: 33–41 cm, W: 2.5–4.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

029

BELT, shell
pet wak (DRM)
E.17319

Woven palm fibre belt with string ends for tying. Blue paint has been used to accentuate a chevron-like pattern. Land-snail *Hadra bartschi* shells, which have traces of blue paint, are tied on with string. The belt is broken and most shells detached. Worn by men in dances and ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 40). L: 34 cm, W: 2.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

030

BELT, palm
wak (DRM)
E.17325

Narrow belt made of twilled strips of palm leaf, decorated with red and blue wool applique, zigzag and chevron design. Worn by men in dances and ceremonies (DRM). L: 99 cm, W: 3 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

031

BELT, dog's teeth
seserig (DRM)
E.17365

Dogs' canine teeth affixed to a strap of plaited coconut root. Worn by women and girls for ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 41). L: 162 cm, W: 4.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

032

BELT, shell
pet wak (DRM)
E.25375

Plaited plant fibre and fabric-strip with red, white, and black cotton knotted on. Two types of marine shells, *Mammilla* and *Haliotis asiniana*, are suspended on thin cotton threads. Worn by men in dances and ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 72). L: c. 38 cm. History: presented by E.M. Grosse in 1918.

033

BODY ORNAMENT, bamboo
kadigk (CH, REG) zogo kadig (DRM)
E.17334–E.17337

Four decorative replicas of bow armguards made of bamboo strips woven together with palm-leaf strips. A long extension, protruding from one end, represents a bow. Painted red with blue, yellow and white stripes. Worn by senior men in dances⁴⁵ (DRM) (Fig. 50). L: 83–96 cm, W: 11 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

034

BOWSTRING ORNAMENT, bamboo
ool (CH) tage lu (DRM)
E.17331–E.17333

Three ornaments in the form of loops made from bamboo strips held together with red cotton or string binding. Coloured and plain wool wrapped around the strips. Tufts of coloured wool attached. The ornament is an imitation of a spare bowstring carried in the armguard. Used in dance and ceremonies, attached to an armguard (REG) (Figs. 45, 48). L: 64–66 cm, W: 11–13 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

035

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
dibi-dibi (DRM)
E.5563

Pendant made from the ground point of *Conus leopardus* shell with plaited coconut-fibre cord. Used by men and women as a personal ornament (DRM). D: 6 cm. History: presented by J. Jennings in 1896.

⁴⁵ In pre-colonial times associated with Malu–Bomai initiation ceremonies (Moore, 1993:20).

036

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
iwa sab (REG)
E.17274, E.17275

Two breast ornaments made from a short piece of red, ochred wood. Decorated with white feathers, a bunch of coconut fibre, and four *Anadara* shells suspended on plant fibre string. Worn on the chest to indicate the wearer was abstaining from certain foods (DRM). L: 17 cm, W: 10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch, 1907.

037

BREAST ORNAMENT, palm-wood
medu sab (CH)
E.17276

Four red-ochred pieces of palm-wood threaded on fine string. Worn on the chest to indicate wearer was abstaining from certain foods (DRM). L: c. 14 cm, W: c. 10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

038

BREAST ORNAMENT, plant fibre
gurrsaab (CH) gura sab (DRM)
E.17277

Plaited reed circle and plaited rattan strap, decorated with white feathers, palm fibre, and fourteen small red seeds. Worn on the chest to indicate wearer was abstaining from certain foods (DRM). L: c. 12 cm, W: c. 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

039

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
dibi-dibi (REG)
E.17346–E.17349

Four breast ornaments made from the ground, circular tip of the *Conus leopardus* shell with an extension at the top and a hole for hanging. The complete ornaments have a cord and pearl-shell button at the junction. Worn on the breast by men and women as personal ornament (DRM) (Fig. 46). D: 6.5–9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

040

BREAST ORNAMENT, turtle
sabakura (CH) sabagorar (DRM)
E.17352

Large turtle-shell fish hook with two points projecting from the bottom. Decorated with incised design of lines and chevron. Hole drilled at the top end for cord. Worn as a pendant by married women (DRM). L: 11 cm, W: 7 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

041

BREAST ORNAMENT, turtle
sabakura (CH) sabagorar (DRM)
E.17353

Thick turtle-shell fish hook with two points projecting from the bottom. Decorated with plant fibre tassel and with a palm fibre cord attached. Worn as pendants by married women (REG). L: 7.3 cm, W: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

042

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
mai (REG)
E.17360

Plain pearl-shell *Pinctada* sp. cut and ground into a crescent with two holes, in the upper margin, for suspension. Short piece of three-ply coconut cord attached. Worn by men in dances and ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 38). L: 12.2 cm, W: 11 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

043

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
nagarr (CH) o or wauri o (DRM)
E.17364

Trapezoid plate made of ground shell *Conus leopardus* with a hole drilled for suspension. Coloured with red ochre. Worn by women as a sign of engagement or marriage (REG). L: 8.5 cm, W: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

044

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
sowad (REG) sauad (DRM)
E.17370

Half ring made from ground *Trochus niloticus* shell with one end truncated and the other tapering. A short string attached with *Coix lachrymae jobi* seeds suspended. Probably a local imitation of traded boar tusk pendants sawad, used for personal adornment (J. Philp, pers. comm. 2003). L: 9 cm, W: 5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

045

COMB, wood
kerem seker (DRM)
E.17287

Large comb carved from hard brown wood with fourteen teeth. Decorated with incised and carved geometric motifs, such as diamond, zigzag and chevron, grouped in bands. Small hole drilled through at the upper margin. Used for personal grooming (DRM). L: 21.5 cm, W: 15 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

046

COMB, wood
kerem seker (DRM)
E.17288

Double-ended comb, carved from hard brown wood. Fifteen teeth one side and sixteen the other. Handle decorated with incised geometric motifs including circle, crescent and trapezoid. One tooth broken. An unusual type for the Torres Strait, used for personal grooming (DRM). L: 23.5 cm, W: 8.4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

047

DANCE HARPOON, wood
wap (REG) kap wap (DRM)
E.17236

Wooden spear with bulbous, pointed head. Butt decorated with cassowary and other small white feathers attached with string. Feathers imported from New Guinea. Used in dances (DRM). L: c. 160 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

048

DANCE HARPOON, wood
wap (REG) kap wap (DRM)
E.17237

Miniature head of dugong spear made from hardwood, decorated with incised design depicting fish head and rings of chevron bands. Traces of white pigment infill. Used in dances (DRM). L: 29 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

049

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17221

Softwood wand decorated with diamond design, painted purple with traces of blue. Both ends pointed. It may be part of a larger object. Used in dances (DRM). L: 58 cm, W: 3.2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

050

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17222

Shaft carved into a pattern resembling a stack of cones, with plain grip and spatula-shape top. Painted orange and blue. Small holes around top cone and a handle probably for insertion of feathers. Used in dances (DRM). L: 61 cm, W: 4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

051

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17223

Two human faces projecting from decorated surface, carved in softwood. Some painting in blue, black and red. Used in dances (DRM). L: 107 cm, W: 7.8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

052

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17224

Wand with the head of an eagle carved in softwood. Chevron and band design painted blue, black, and red. Two rows of holes made below the head and in the middle section. Broken into two pieces. Used in dances (DRM). L: c. 98 cm, W: 8.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

053

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17225

Wand with the head of an eagle carved in softwood. Decorated with chevron design. Holes in the shaft are probably for inserting cassowary feathers. Used in dances (DRM). L: 92 cm, W: 9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

054

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17226

Wand with the head of an eagle carved in softwood. Decorated with inverted cone and a slot pattern. Painted blue and red. Holes around the edge are probably for inserting cassowary feathers. Used in dances (DRM). L: 74 cm, W: 5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

055

DANCE WAND, wood
noo (REG) gub (DRM)
E.17227

Wand with the head of an animal carved in softwood. Ochred red and decorated with painted yellow and black stripes and dots. Used in dances (DRM). L: 62 cm, W: 2.8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

056

DANCE WAND, wood
lougorp (CH) gub or lougort (DRM)
E.17228

Short post carved in softwood. Cylindrical head with small projection at the top. Decorated with carved bands and diamonds and painted blue, red and black. Palm fibre fringe tied in the middle. Probably used in dances (DRM). L: 56 cm, W: 7 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

057

DANCE WAND (HUMAN FIGURE), wood
lougorp? (REG), madub? (DRM)
E.17229

Elongated human figure carved in softwood. Painted black and red. Probably imported from New Guinea for hostile magic and/or dances (DRM). L: 90 cm, W: 11 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

058

DANCE WAND, wood
gub (DRM)
E.17507

Thin sculpture with head of bird and body of crocodile or lizard. Some notches cut underside. Used in dances and ceremonies, carried in the hand (DRM). L: 38.8 cm, W: 1.6 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

059

EAR DISTENDER, wood
peltut (CH) or laip tut (DRM)
E.17371, E.17372

Two ear distenders carved from dark brown wood. Each consists of two lobes connected by a narrow ridge, decorated with carved chevrons, in-filled with blue and red pigment. Used for distending ear-lobes after piercing (DRM). L: 5.8–6 cm, W: 2.3–2.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

060

EAR DISTENDER, wood
ubar or laip tut⁴⁶ (DRM)
E.39723

Ear distender carved from dark brown wongai wood with two elongated lobes, connected by a narrow ridge. Used for distending ear-lobes after piercing (DRM). L: 10.5 cm, W: 2 cm. History: presented by Mrs Howell in 1935.

061

EAR PIERCING NEEDLE, turtle-shell
tel (CH) or tol (DRM)
E.17367

Turtle-shell needle with a sharp end. A triangular section protrudes from the head and is decorated with fine incised cross-hatching. Strung on plaited palm-leaf cord. Used for piercing and for making the incision in a child's ear-lobe for the eventual fitting of decorations (DRM). L: 6.2 cm, W: 1.3 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

062

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (CH)
E.17263

Arched cane frame wrapped in string and painted blue and red. White Torres Strait Pigeon feathers with their ends cut into a diamond-shape pattern are attached to the frame, with one long black feather projecting from the top. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare (Fig. 74). L: 60 cm, W: 36 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

063

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (CH)
E.17264

Arched bamboo frame wrapped in string painted red, purple, orange and yellow. White Torres Strait Pigeon feathers with their ends cut into a diamond-shape pattern are attached to the frame. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare (Fig. 73). L: 51 cm, W: 34.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

064

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (CH)
E.17265

Arched bamboo frame wrapped in string and painted blue, orange, white and yellow. A red and green wool tuft is attached at the centre and a goa nut tied at the top. White Torres Strait Pigeon feathers with their ends cut into a diamond-shape pattern are attached to the frame. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare. L: 47 cm, W: 35 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

065

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (CH)
E.17266

Arched bamboo frame wrapped in string and painted blue and red. White Torres Strait Pigeon feathers with their ends cut into a diamond-shape pattern are attached to the frame with a long black feather at the top. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare. L: 60 cm, W: 35 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

066

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (CH)
E.17267

Arched bamboo frame wrapped in string and painted blue, orange and red. A strip of green European cloth is tied with red cotton around the frame. Torres Strait Pigeon feathers, probably dyed brown, with their ends cut into a diamond-shape pattern are attached to the frame. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare. L: 60 cm, W: 35 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

067

HEAD-DRESS, bamboo
dari (CH)
E.17268

Arched bamboo frame wrapped in string and painted blue, orange and white with a bamboo point at the top. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare. L: 28 cm, W: 21 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

068

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
esam (CH) samera (DRM)
E.17315

Cassowary plumes attached to a band made of four rows of string. Head-dresses of this type were worn by men in dances referencing warfare. L: 24 cm, W: 15 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

069

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
esam (CH) samera (DRM)
E.17316

Cassowary plumes attached to a plaited and woven band, decorated with strips of white and red ochre. Worn by men in dances referencing warfare (Fig. 36). L: 69 cm, W: 30 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

070

LEGLET, coconut
maka maka (CH) or makamak (DRM)
E.17320

Two sets of leglets made of plaited coconut roots. These sets comprise seven and six separate undecorated circles. Worn by men and women below the knee for dances and ceremonies. D: c. 11 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

071

LEGLET, coconut
maka maka (CH) or makamak (DRM)
E.17321

Two sets of leglets made of plaited coconut roots. Each set comprises fifteen separate undecorated circles and two circles with tags of coloured wool attached. Worn by men and women below the knee for dances and ceremonies. D: c. 12 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

⁴⁶ Ubar is name in western Torres Strait, laip tut is name in eastern Torres Strait (Moore, 1993:35).

072

LEGLET, coconut
maka maka (CH) or makamak (DRM)
E.17322

Two sets of leglets made of plaited coconut roots, comprising forty-two separate undecorated circles and fifteen circles with tags of coloured wool attached. Worn by both men and women below the knee for dances and ceremonies. D: c. 12 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

073

LEGLET, pandanus
muka muka (JSB) put (DRM)
E.17534, E.17535

Two leglets made of pandanus strips wrapped around a plant fibre frame. D: 9 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

074

NECK ORNAMENT, shell
serere (REG) or tabo kaub-kaub (DRM)
E.17366

Olive shells *Oliva caldania* suspended from a band of plaited European string. Highly valued in trade. Worn by women as a personal adornment (DRM) (Fig. 37). L: c. 44 cm, W: c. 1.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

075

NECK ORNAMENT, shell
tabo kaub-kaub (DRM)
E.17713

Gastropod and variety of other small shells strung on black European thread. Worn by women as a personal adornment (DRM). L: c. 19 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

076

NOSE ORNAMENT, shell
kilboub (CH) or kirkup (DRM)
E.17340–E.17342

Three nose ornaments made from a long, curved piece of *Trochus niloticus* shell. The ends are pointed or rounded. Worn by men through a hole in the nasal septum for ceremonies referencing warfare. L: 13.3–24 cm, W: 0.7–1.2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

077

PUBIC COVER, shell
hizzeri (REG) or alida (DRM)
E.17284

Large triangular segment of *Melo amphora* shell with incised line, chevron, and dot decoration at the top. The waist-strap is made of plaited coconut-fibre, attached through two holes by European buttons and orange-coloured wool. A bunch of goa nuts is attached to the strap. Worn for ceremonies referencing warfare. L: 29 cm, W: 15.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

078

PUBIC COVER, shell
hizzeri (REG) or alida (DRM)
E.17285

Large triangular segment of *Melo amphora* shell with incised chevron and dot decoration at the top. The waist-strap is made of rope and attached through two holes by pearl shell buttons and tufts of red and green wool. Worn for ceremonies referencing warfare (Fig. 71). L: 25 cm, W: 15.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

079

PUBIC COVER, shell
hizzeri (REG) or alida (DRM)
E.17286

Triangular segment of *Tridacna* shell with incised line and dot decoration at the top. A hole is drilled at the upper part for suspension. Worn for ceremonies referencing warfare. L: 15.5 cm, W: 7.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

080

PUBIC COVER, bark
E.18260

Elongated plate made of Mameluca tree bark, double-folded and held with two stitches at the upper side margins. Waist-strap made of plant fibre, inserted between two layers of bark. L: 21 cm, W: 11.5 cm. History: Collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836; Old Collection, 1910.

081

SKIRT, palm fibre
nesool (CH) nesur (DRM)
E.17254

Palm fibre tufts knotted onto a belt of coarse palm fibre cord, decorated at the top with a fringe of red European cloth. Worn by young women for dances (DRM). L: c. 80 cm, W: c. 30 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

082

SKIRT, sago fibre
nesool (CH) nesur (DRM)
E.17255

Sago leaflets knotted onto a belt of fine plaited coconut-root cord, traded from new Guinea. Worn by women (DRM). L: c. 85 cm, W: c. 38 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

083

SKIRT, palm fibre
nesool (REG) nesur (DRM)
E.17256

Plant fibre tufts knotted onto fibre strings and suspended from a knotted belt. Worn by women and girls (DRM) or possibly by men (REG). L: c. 80 cm, W: c. 30 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

084

TUFT, feather
degem (CH)
E.17310, E.17312

Two tufts made from Bird of Paradise plumes attached to a piece of light wood with plaited palm fibre. Worn by men in dances (DRM). L: 36–40 cm, W: c. 7.5–9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

085

TUFT, feather
degem (CH) kolber-kolber (DRM)
E.17313, E.17314

Two tufts made from cassowary feathers held together with a strip of palm fibre. Worn by men in the back of a belt and used in dances and ceremonies (DRM). L: 54–62 cm, W: c. 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Fishing and hunting implements and materials

086

FISH BEATER, bamboo
werir (CH)
E.17290–E.17292

Three small models of fish beaters. Long bamboo shaft with spherical ball of banana stem or other plant fibre attached with plaited or plain fibre strip. A real beater is up to 3 m long, with a cabbage-size head (Fig. 59). Used in pairs to drive fish into a conical fish scoops. L: 66–134.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

087

FISH HOOK, turtle-shell
kesorr-kek (CH) or mekek (DRM)
E.17354–E.17359

Six bent-pin type fish hooks made from turtle-shell, four of these with short coconut cord attached. The shell was heated and bent then sharpened by grinding. Used for fishing (Fig. 56). L: 5–7.3 cm, W: 3–3.8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

088

FISH POISON, plant
sud (DRM)
E.23216

Several short stems of *Derris uliginosa*. Used as fish poison. History: exchanged with Queensland Museum in 1915.

089

FISH SCOOP, bamboo
weresz (CH) or weres (DRM)
E.17289, E.17293

Two conical baskets made from split bamboo twigs tied with palm leaf-strips onto cane rings. One (E.17293) decorated with three goa nuts and one large snail shell attached near the top probably used in dancing. Usually used to catch shoals of sardine (Figs. 60, 62). L: 86 cm, W: 40 cm; L: 86 cm, W: 20 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

090

FISHING LINE, palm
gaim (CH) or mekek kek (DRM)
E.17373

Two-ply line made from palm fibre, tied up in a hank. Used for fishing (Fig. 57). L: c. 31 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

091

HARPOON, wood
wap (REG)
E.17234

Hardwood shaft decorated with carved squatting human figure, reptilian head and incised chevron design. L: 325 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

092

HARPOON, wood
wap (DRM)
E.59607

Wooden shaft with bulbous head. Decorated with a carved crocodile and a swimming man, and filled in with red ochre. Used for harpooning dugong and turtle. L: 299 cm. History: presented by A. Kellner in 1959.

093

PADDLE, wood
uzer (DRM)
E.17233

Pointed leaf-shaped wooden blade affixed to a plain bamboo shaft with plant fibre cord. Blade decorated with double curved lines painted in faint blue, with carved notches, and criss-cross pattern incised at the base. L: 130 cm, W: 15 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

094

SLING, coconut fibre
muntan (CH)
E.17238, E.17239

Two slings made of strips of plaited coconut leaf-fibre with a loop at one end, and a knot at the other end. Pouch made of loosely woven fibre. Probably learnt from mission teachers. Used in hunting (DRM). L: c. 38–65 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

095

SPEAR, bamboo
walek (CH) or dagulal (DRM)
E.17253

Fishing spear with four prongs affixed to shaft with coconut-fibre cord. Prongs held together by narrow string binding, painted blue. Blue paint residue visible on tips. Used for fishing. L: 172.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

096

SPEAR, bamboo
dagulal (DRM)
E.21006–E.21011

Six spears with four, five, or seven hardwood prongs, with plain or small carved barbs. Prongs held together with woven bamboo fibre and attached to a shaft with a bamboo strip. Used for fishing (DRM) (Fig. 58). L: 270–325 cm. History: presented by W. Dixson in 1912.

097

SPEAR THROWER, wood
kobai (DRM)
E.17241

Spearthrower made of dark hardwood with a peg affixed with plant fibre and resin. Remnants of resin visible on handle (Melo shell missing). This spear thrower, the Cape York Peninsula type, was not used on Mer (Murray) or other islands of the eastern Torres Strait, but was probably obtained by exchange (DRM). L: 79 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Weapons and accessories

098

ARM GUARD, bamboo
borz (CH) kadig (DRM)
E.17327, E.17329

Two tubes of woven bamboo strips. Worn on the lower arm to protect arm from the bowstring (DRM) and/or a part of ceremonial costume (Figs. 45, 47). L: 22–24.5 cm, W: 7.5–9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

099

ARM GUARD, bamboo
borz (CH) kadig (DRM)
E.17328, E.17330

Two tubes of woven bamboo strips and coconut fibre, wider at one end, with two European buttons attached, one at each end. One arm guard has a short string of red beads attached at one end. Worn on the lower arm to protect arm from the bowstring (DRM) and/or a part of ceremonial costume (Fig. 45). L: 21.5 cm, W: 9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

100

ARROW, reed
opop or le op⁴⁷ (DRM)
E.18414

Reed arrow. Wooden point attached with string, resin, and leather band. Point carved with small human head, two sets of four barbs and pineapple-type design, filled in with white ochre. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 144 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

101

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18415–E.18420

Six reed arrows. Wooden points attached with string, resin and leather band. Points carved with small human head and geometric design, filled in with white ochre. Bone tip-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Used in warfare (DRM) (Fig. 16). L: 144.5–158 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

102

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18421–E.18425

Five reed arrows. Wooden points attached with string and lizard skin band. Points carved with snake-design and filled in with white ochre. Bone tip-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 151–161 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

103

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18426

Reed arrow, wooden point attached with cotton band. Oval cross-section point carved with geometric design, remnants of white ochre. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 139 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

104

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18427

Reed arrow, wooden point attached with string, palm fibre strips, resin and leather band. Point carved with two sets of four barbs, and pineapple-type design filled in with white ochre. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 154.5 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

105

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18428

Reed arrow, wooden point attached with string, palm fibre strips, resin and leather band. Point carved with two sets of four barbs, and pineapple-type design filled in with white ochre. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Strip of red cotton tied to lower set of barbs for decoration. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 149.5 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

106

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18429

Reed arrow with geometric incisions. Wooden point attached with string, resin, and leather band. Oval cross-section point with diamond incision and notches. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 144.5 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

107

ARROW, reed
opop or le op (DRM)
E.18430, E.18431

Two reed arrows. Plain wooden point attached with string, twine, resin, and leather band. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. Used in warfare (DRM). L: 143–150 cm. History: Old Collection 1910, collected by C.M. Lewis in 1836.

108

ARROW, bamboo
opop or le op (DRM)
E.17246, E.17247, E.17251

Three bamboo arrows. Undecorated wooden point, with some notches, attached to the shaft with twine and resin. L: 118.4–125 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

109

ARROW, bamboo
opop or le op (DRM)
E.17248

Bamboo arrow. Hardwood barbed point attached to shaft with string and leather band. Point decorated with carved human face and geometric designs, and painted black, white and red. Broken bone tip attached with twine and resin. L: 112 cm, W: 1.8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

110

ARROW, bamboo
opop or le op (DRM)
E.17249, E.17250

Two bamboo arrows. Hardwood points with four to six carved barbs attached with twine and resin. L: 159.3–174 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

111

ARROW, wood
opop or le op (DRM)
E.17252

Hardwood arrowhead with barbs on four sides. Incised decoration of concentric squares, rows of diamonds and chevrons. Base and tip broken off. L: 48 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

⁴⁷ Kep or paruag are names in western Torres Strait. I use opop or le op—names in eastern Torres Strait (Moore, 1993), as these arrows are from Mer (Murray Island).

112

BOW, bamboo
sarik (DRM)
E.17243

Bow made from split bamboo with a bowstring of bamboo fibre. Band of small shells tied on with coconut fibre string. L: 163 cm, W: 4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

113

BOW, bamboo
sarik (DRM)
E.17244

Bow made from split bamboo with a bowstring of bamboo strip, attached with twisted plant fibre. Band of red and blue cloth strips tied on. L: 178 cm, W: 4.3 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

114

CLUB, wood
tut (DRM)
E.17278, E.17279

Two mushroom-headed clubs each carved from one piece of wood with cylindrical grip and plain shaft which has some notches or scars. This type of club introduced by Melanesian missionaries (DRM). L: 55–55.5, W: 7–7.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley & A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

115

CLUB, bamboo, shark teeth
E.17232

Bamboo shaft with both ends truncated. Two rows of shark teeth attached to one end with plant fibre cord. L: 96 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Mourning costume

116

ANKLET, sago
teter put (JSB) or tag mus (DRM)
E.17527

A pair of ankle ornaments made from sago fibre fringe knotted into plaited cord. Worn by widows on ankles and wrists (DRM). L: c. 35 cm, W: c. 10 cm; L: c. 35 cm, W: c. 12 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

117

ANKLET, hibiscus
teter put (JSB) or teter mus (DRM)
E.17528

A pair of ankle ornaments made from hibiscus fibre fringe plaited into a cord. Worn by widows on ankles and wrists (DRM). L: c. 61 cm, W: c. 11 cm; L: c. 62 cm, W: c. 12 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

118

ARMLET, palm
put (JSB) tag put (DRM)
E.17522, E.17523

Two circle-shaped armlets made from woven palm strips. One plain, another with brown colour added. Worn by widows on upper arm (DRM). D: 10 cm, W: 2.5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

119

ARMLET, coconut
tag put (JSB)
E.17531

Coconut leaf fibre fringe tied to plant fibre string. Worn by widows on upper arm (DRM). L: 15 cm, W: 10 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

120

ARMLET, sago
tag put (JSB)
E.17532

Sago leaf fringe tied to plaited palm leaf string. Worn by widows on upper arm (DRM). L: 48 cm, W: 22 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

121

ARMLET, coconut
tag put (JSB)
E.17533

Fringe of shredded coconut leaf tied to plaited palm leaf string. Worn by widows on upper arm (DRM). L: 36 cm, W: 26 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

122

BREAST ORNAMENT, shell
mai (REG) or kemer-kemer-ma (DRM)
E.17504

Thin pearl-shell (Black lip *Pinctada margaritifera* or Golden pearl-shell *Pinctada maxima*) suspended from palm leaf cord with fringe of coconut fibre. Worn by widower (REG) or widows in mourning (DRM). L: 12 cm, W: 11 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented P.G. Black in 1908.

123

COLLAR, palm
ked (JSB) or put (DRM)
E.17516

Band of woven palm-leaf strip with tufts of coconut fibre attached at both ends. Selectively painted blue and red to accentuate chevron pattern. Other mourning accessories were suspended from this collar. Worn by widows around neck (REG). L: 96 cm, W: 3 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

124

COLLAR, palm
kebe nagar (JSB) or maik nagar (DRM)
E.17519

Band of woven palm-leaf strip with tufts of coconut fibre attached at both ends. Selectively painted blue and red to accentuate chevron pattern. From this collar other mourning accessories were suspended. Worn by widows around neck (DRM). L: 68 cm, W: c3 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

125

HEADBAND, palm
mat lager (JSB)
E.17529

Four strips of plaited palm-leaf, knotted to each end. Worn by widows around forehead (DRM). L: 60 cm, W: 1.5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

126

LEGBAND, palm leaf
teter put (JSB) or tag put (DRM)
E.17525, E.17526

Two legbands made from palm-leaf strips knotted into plaited plant fibre string. Worn by widows below knee and sometimes on the upper arm (REG). L: 40–48 cm, W: c. 25 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

127

NECK FRINGE, palm
kimiar ra nagar (JSB) or maik nagar (DRM)
E.17517

Fringe of palm fibre knotted into a woven necklace made from the same material. Three small black seeds attached for decoration. Worn by widower or male mourner around neck (REG). L: 44 cm, W: c. 30 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

128

NECK FRINGE, palm, coconut
nagar (JSB) bud lu (DRM)
E.17524

String necklace made from long, two-ply palm fibre strings and short fringe knotted into coconut cord. Worn by widows of higher social status (REG). L: 103 cm, W: 15 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

129

NECKLACE, palm
wak (DRM)
E.17518

Plaited palm leaf with three small tufts of palm fibre attached. Worn by widows as mourning pendant (REG). L: 35 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

130

PENDANT, wood
teter-paur (JSB)
E.17509, E.17510

Two feet, probably a set, made from softwood. Simplified form of a foot with five pointed protrusions representing toes. Painted with red ochre. One foot with plant fibre cord attached through a hole drilled at upper margin. *Memento mori* worn by widows suspended from their neck, back and front, during bud—mourning (REG) (Fig. 18). L: 19.5–20 cm, W: 7.5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

131

PENDANT, wood
tag-paur (JSB)
E.17511, E.17512

Two hands, probably a set, made from softwood. Simplified form of a hand with fingers. Painted with red ochre. One hand with plant fibre cord attached through a hole drilled at upper margin. *Memento mori* worn by widows suspended from their neck, back and front, during bud—mourning (REG) (Fig. 18). L: 17.5 cm, W: 7.2 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

132

PENDANT, wood
werut (JSB)
E.17513

Tongue (end broken off) made in simplified form from softwood painted with red ochre. Plant fibre cord attached through a hole drilled at upper margin. *Memento mori* worn by widows suspended from their neck, back or front, during bud—mourning (REG). L: 9 cm, W: 3.5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

133

PENDANT, wood, palm
teter lid? (JSB) or bud lu (DRM)
E.17537–E.17540

Four bundles of sticks, one or two in each, wrapped around with palm fibre. Sticks represent remains of deceased. *Memento mori* worn by widows suspended from their neck (REG). L: 8–34 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

134

PETTICOAT, sago
mesur, ropa-ropa mesur? (JSB) or nagar (DRM)
E.17515

Skirt, probably made from shredded sago leaves, tied into belt of plaited pandanus strips. Worn by widows, the skirt was tucked between woman's thighs from front to back where it was fastened to a waistband (REG). L: c. 65 cm, W: c. 60 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

135

SHOULDER BELT, palm
wagogob (JSB)
E.17520, E.17521

Two belts, each made from a band of woven palm leaf. Some parts coloured red and blue to show chevron-like pattern; ends tied together with tassel. Worn by widows, crossed over shoulders (REG). L: c. 40 cm, W: 1 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

136

WAIST BELT, palm
wak (JSB) bud lu or maik lu (DRM)
E.17536

Narrow band of twilled palm leaf with chevron design accentuated by selected black and red painting. Worn by widow around the waist, possibly a belt of the deceased husband (DRM). L: 96 cm, W: 1.7 cm.

History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

Sound and music instruments

137

CLAPPER, bamboo
kiri-kiri-kiebel (CH) or kerker keber (DRM)
E.17298

Bamboo clapper, handle with two longitudinal slots, upper part longitudinally split. Decorated with diamond and triangular forms of partially stripped outer layer, and black painted outline. Some forms filled in with incised cross-hatching or dots drilled into a surface. Used in rain-making ceremony; moved sharply up and down to produce clapping sound (DRM) (Fig. 66). L: 55.5 cm, D: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

138

CLAPPER, bamboo
kiri-kiri-kiebel (CH) or kerker keber (DRM)
E.17299

Bamboo clapper, handle with two longitudinal slots, upper part longitudinally split. Decorated with diamonds, and a row of X-like motifs of partially stripped outer layer, and black painted outline. Incision showing letters: DMO; with notched edges. Used in rain-making ceremony, moved sharply up and down to produce clapping sound (DRM). L: 64 cm, D: 4.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

139

DRUM, wood
warup (REG)
E.17242

Hour-glass shaped drum made from hardwood, open end carved as fish mouth. Decorated with incisions of geometric pattern. Remnants of white and orange pigment. Probably imported from New Guinea. Used in dances and ceremonies (DRM). L: 82.6 cm, W: 13.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

140

FLUTE, bamboo
burall (CH) burar (DRM)
E.17304

Plain flute made of bamboo, with one small oval slot cut near each end. Played for enjoyment (DRM). L: 92.5 cm, D: 2.4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

141

FLUTE, bamboo
burall (CH) burar (DRM)
E.17305, E.17307

Two plain flutes made of bamboo, with two small holes drilled close to mouth end, and V-shaped notch cut out at other end. Played for enjoyment (DRM). L: 44.5–75.5 cm, D: 2.1–2.4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

142

FLUTE, bamboo
burall (CH) burar (DRM)
E.17308

Small plain flute made of bamboo, with three evenly spaced holes cut along the shaft, two round notches cut into mouth end, and movable tongue cut near other blocked end. Played for enjoyment (DRM). L: 19 cm, D: 1.2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

143

JEWS HARP, bamboo
darubi (REG) daroberi (DRM)
E.17303

Instrument made from half bamboo segment. One end rounded, tapering gently to a point at the other end. Long slot open but tied with string at the sharp end, with a thin strip of bamboo left in the middle. The incised cross-hatching lines and short strokes decorate one half of the outer surface. Design probably derived from New Guinea. Played for enjoyment by blowing on thin strip and pulling string to modulate the tone (DRM). L: 37 cm, W: 6.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

144

MUSICAL PIPES, bamboo
karof (REG), piago or karob (DRM)
E.17302

Pan-pipes made from four bamboo pipes of different lengths tied together with palm leaf strips. Instrument probably introduced by missionaries. Played for enjoyment (DRM) (Fig. 65). L: 14.5 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

145

RASP, bamboo
lolo (REG)
E.17300-(2)

Section of bamboo, cut into a knife-like shape with 15 teeth carved along the edge. Each side painted with V-shaped pattern in black and faded black. Teeth painted white on one side. A separate stick produces sound when rubbed along the teeth. Used to keep rhythm in dances (DRM). L: 30 cm, W: 3 cm (stick L: 26.8 cm). History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

146

RATTLE, shell
serpa sirip (DRM)
E.17295

Five *Halotis* shells tied to thin cord with knotted grip. Used in dancing; shaken to rattle (DRM). L: c. 17 cm, W: c. 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

147

RATTLE, bamboo
lolo (REG)
E.17296

Bamboo holder and a bundle of sticks. Holder with a tail-like extension is partially stripped of the outer layer and smeared with red ochre. Two areas of the holder are decorated with fine triangular incisions, and a similar pattern is repeated on the tail's end. Cassowary feathers inserted in several points. Bundle of eight sticks attached with a cord through the hole in centre. Used to make sound for enjoyment only; a string is wound around the sticks and suddenly drawn out against the bamboo holder (DRM) (Fig. 64). L: 83 cm, W: 7.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

148

RATTLE, bamboo
lolo (REG)
E.17297

Bamboo holder and a bundle of sticks. Holder with rounded ends has half its outer layer stripped off, and the other half incised with zigzag decorations. Bundle of six sticks attached with a plaited cord through the hole in the centre. Used to make sound for enjoyment only; a string is wound around the sticks and suddenly drawn out against the bamboo holder (DRM) (Fig. 63). L: 31.5 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

149

RATTLE, shell
lolo (REG)
E.17300-(1)

Ten shells suspended on thin cotton cord from strip of fabric with strands of brown grass attached. L: c. 12 cm, W: c. 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

150

RATTLE, goa nut
goa sirip (DRM)
E.17301

Goa nuts suspended on the palm fibre cord from the ring of plaited cane. The ring is reinforced by cross-braces made from two sticks wrapped around with palm fibre and European cords. Instrument shaken in hand in dances to produce rattling sound during dances⁴⁸ (DRM). L: 21 cm, W: 20 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

⁴⁸ In pre-colonial times associated with Malu-Bomai ceremonies (Moore, 1993:21).

151

RATTLE, matchbox pod
kolapi sirip (DRM)
E.17343

Matchbox beans *Entada phaseoloides* cut open and strung suspended from plaited palm fibre strap. The strap is broken and some beans detached. European cord used to tie broken parts together. Used as rattle in dancing (DRM). L: c. 16 cm, W: c. 13 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

152

RATTLE, goa nut, matchbox pod
goa sirip (DRM)
E.17344

Goa nuts *Pagium edele* and Matchbox beans *Entada phaseoloides* cut open and strung on plaited palm fibre strap. Tufts of red, pink, purple and black wool attached. Used as rattle in dancing, usually attached to arm guard. L: c. 16 cm, W: c. 14 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

153

RATTLE, matchbox pod
goa sirip (DRM)
E.17345

Matchbox beans *Entada phaseoloides* cut open and strung on plaited palm fibre strap. The strap is broken and many beans detached. Tufts of red, green and plain cloth attached. Used as rattle in dancing, usually attached to dance gauntlet (DRM). L: c. 16 cm, W: c. 10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

154

WHISTLE, palm leaf
burall (REG)
E.17309

Small coiled strip of palm leaf, tied with string. Blown to make sound for enjoyment (DRM). L: 2 cm, D: c. 2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Game accessories

155

BALL, pandanus
kai (DRM)
E.17294-(1–16)

Sixteen small cube-shaped play-balls made from plaited pandanus strips. Used in team throwing game in which balls must not touch the ground (DRM). L: 3.5–4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

156

BALL, pandanus
kai (DRM)
E.25376

Cube-shaped play-ball made from plaited pandanus strips. Used in team throwing game in which balls must not touch the ground (DRM). L: 4 cm. History: presented by E.M. Grosse in 1918.

157

BASKET, pandanus
kolap epei (DRM)
E.17272

Small basket with two handles made from twilled and plaited pandanus strips. Decoration painted in blue and orange. Used for holding and carrying a stone spinning top (DRM) (Fig. 35). L: 29 cm, W: 15.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

158

BASKET, pandanus
kolap epei (DRM)
E.17273

Basket made of twilled pandanus strips. Elliptical rim made with cane stiffening. Two handles of plaited palm leaf. Fringe ends at base. Used for holding and carrying a stone spinning top (DRM). L: 41 cm, W: 19 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

159

SPINNING TOP, stone
kulaap (CH) or kolap (DRM)
E.17269–E.17271

Three stone spinning tops in the form of a disk with flat top and spherical bottom. Wooden spindle inserted through the hole drilled in the centre. One top decorated with a painting of a red turtle with blue and white spots; the second decorated with orange painting around the hole and along the edge; the third (without spindle) painted with an orange crescent filled in with a white and orange pigment and white line along the edge. Used in men's competitive game (DRM) (Fig. 34). D: 18–21 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Magic and sacred objects

160

BULLROARER, wood
biga (DRM)
E.17230

Mounted model of small bullroarer carved from softwood, with black band across one surface. One end has a projection with a braided palm fibre cord; the other end is attached to a bamboo stick with small cuts around its diameter. It was swung in rain-making rituals (DRM). L: 25 cm, W: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

161

BULLROARER, wood
biga (DRM)
E.17231

Mounted model of small oval bullroarer carved from wood. One end has a knob with plant fibre cord, the other end is attached to a bamboo stick. It was swung in rain-making rituals (DRM). L: 22.5 cm, W: 5.7 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

162

CHARM, coconut
kog lu (JSB)
E.17505

Love charm. A root kuze-bager, in small bundle, was masticated in the mouth and plastered over another root called arzer. Together they were wrapped in bisi-uam, coconut fibre, representing a woman's petticoat (JSB). Such charms with scenting property were carried in dance or used with incantation to obtain the love of a chosen woman (DRM). L: 10 cm, W: 5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce, presented by P.G. Black in 1908.

163

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17495

Ochred human figure with a spear of palm stick. Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head and turtle-shell ears. It is a miniature representation of a *Komet* district ancestor called Ginamai. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 19). L: 23 cm, W: c. 20 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

164

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17496

Ochred human figure with spear of palm stick (detached). Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head, and has one turtle-shell ear. It is a miniature representation of a *Zagareb* district ancestor called Wagan. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 20). L: 22.8 cm, W: c. 10 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

165

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17497

Ochred human figure with spear of palm stick. Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head and two shell ears. It is a miniature representation of *Samsep* and *Geaurem* districts ancestor called Kokuam. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 21). L: 21.5 cm, W: c. 24 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

166

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17498

Ochred human figure—spear of palm stick (missing). Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head and one turtle-shell ear. It is a miniature representation of *Piebre* district ancestor called Ganome. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 22). L: 25 cm, W: c. 13 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

167

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17499

Ochred human figure holding a club and spear (detached) of palm stick. Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head and one turtle-shell ear. It is a miniature representation of a *Piebre* district ancestor called Palai. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 23). L: 21.7 cm, W: c. 23 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

168

FIGURE, plant fibre
Ad giz (JSB)
E.17500

Ochred human figure holding a spear of palm stick. Figure is made of plant fibre with pith head and has one turtle-shell ear. It is a miniature representation of a Dauar Island district ancestor called Bom. Associated with ancestral rituals (DRM) (Fig. 24). L: 28 cm, W: 25 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

169

FIGURE, wood, wax
esau-mani (JSB)
E.17501

Male sorcery figure esau-mani carved in softwood and modelled with black wax. Cassowary feathers tied around waist and neck. Eyes and ears made of mollusc shell and turtle-shell respectively. Hands, mouth, forehead and nostrils painted red. Used in maid-lu (JSB) sorcery magic. L: 27.5 cm, W: 7 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

170

FIGURE, wood, wax
esau-mani (JSB)
E.17502

Female sorcery figure esau-mani carved in softwood and modelled with black wax. Palm fibre skirt tied around waist. Eyes and ears made of mollusc shell and turtle-shell, respectively. Left arm and leg missing. Used in maid-lu (JSB) sorcery magic. L: 26.5 cm, W: 9 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

171

FIGURE, wood, bamboo
Waiet's shrine (JSB) or waiet (DRM)
E.17508

Wooden human figure with head-dress and accessories in front of bamboo-frame structure. Figure carved in softwood and painted black, red and white. Drum, pubic cover and breast ornament made from wood. Head-dress and other decorations made from feathers. Ear pieces made from turtle-shell. The figure represents Waiet at the sacred shrine (JSB). L: 39 cm, W: 9.5 cm (figure only). History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

172

FIGURE, wood
pagi (DRM)
E.63419

Animal figure with the body of sea snake and the head of a bird. Carved out of natural crimped branch, blackened except for the tail. Chevron pattern scratched through black surface. Probably used as a taboo sign gelar (DRM). L: 152 cm, W: 5 cm. History: registered 1968.

173

MAGIC OBJECT, shell
ass (CH) or as (REG)
E.17409

Unmodified shell *Chicoreus ramosus* used in arrangement with other shells around carved figure in magic ceremonies (DRM) or to decorate sacred enclosures (REG). L: 15 cm, W: 10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

174

MAGIC OBJECT, wood
kadal or siebre lu (JSB)
E.17503

Partially hollow cone of softwood smeared with red ochre, representing a crocodile's (kadal) tooth (tereg). Used in hostile magic (DRM). L: 10 cm, W: 2.5 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black in 1908.

175

MASK, turtle-shell
krar (DRM)
E.7888

Mask of human face made from turtle-shell. Carved fringe projecting from front of the face attached with string and resin. Remnant of red, yellow and blue painting (Fig. 5). L: 18 cm, W: 19 cm. History: collected and presented by H. Stockdale, 1898.

176

MASK, turtle-shell
tete (CH) or kar (DRM)
E.17339

Large mask with main body made from turtle-shell, representing a crocodile's head, painted red and blue. Projections supported on bamboo frame with white feathers. Long snout (representing a kingfisher daborr) with cassowary feathers, cloth strips and shells hung underneath, with a bunch of sago fibre hung from the back. Teeth, ears and an attachment with two slotted stripes made from wood. The mask was worn on the head by men in kap (dance) ceremonies (DRM) (Figs. 52, 53, 54). L: 80 cm, W: 27 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

177

MASK, turtle-shell
dogaira wetpur krar (DRM)
E.17514

Mask of a human face made from turtle-shell. Wooden nose, hair and beard made from pandanus strips. Tufts of cassowary feathers on head, cowrie shells and goa nuts tied around fringes. Mask painted with red, white and black pigments. This is a small version of a much larger mask that was worn in dances celebrating a good harvest (DRM) (Fig. 70). L: 50 cm, W: 32 cm. History: collected by J. Bruce; presented P.G. Black, 1908.

178

SACRED BEANS, seed
wada (CH) or kolap? (DRM)
E.17368

Five Matchbox beans *Entada phaseoloides* in brown and reddish colours.⁴⁹ D: 2.5–3 cm each. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

179

SECRET OBJECT, stone
omabel (CH) or omabar? (DRM)
E.17260

Erotic charm made from stone, partially ochred. It may be a phallus or representation of a woman with a missing or broken head (REG). Possibly used in love magic by women (DRM) ("a woman may, by wrapping this charm in her petticoat obtain the love of the man she may desire" REG) or by men ("Erotic charm to entice woman's love" (Hedley, 1907). L: 14 cm, W: 10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

180

SECRET OBJECT, beeswax
isau mani or mani lu (DRM)
E.17262

Female figure modelled in black beeswax and skirt made from fine reed. Used in hostile magic to bring pain or death to an adversary (DRM). L: 23 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

181

ZOGO STONE, pumice
wiwar? (DRM)
E.36262–E.36265

Four globular pebbles of brown or black pumice with human face, turtle-like head, or other zoomorphic heads carved into one section. Probably placed in gardens to protect crops (DRM). L: 11.5 cm, W: 7.5 cm; L: 12 cm, W: 6.5 cm; L: 9.5 cm, W: 8 cm; L: 20 cm, W: 15 cm. History: presented by C. Simpson in 1933.

Household utensils and raw material

182

BROOM, coconut tree
pesurr (CH) wesker or bei lid (DRM)
E.17280

Coconut florescence, cut at the end to form a handle. Used for sweeping out houses. L: 58 cm, W: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

183

CONTAINER, coconut
nisor (CH) ni sor (DRM)
E.17257

Small spherical container made from coconut shell with a hole and a plaited pandanus strap. Used as a child's feeding bottle (CH). L: 10 cm, W: 6.9 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

184

CONTAINER, coconut
ni sor (DRM)
E.17258, E.17259

Two water containers made from two coconut shells strung on a plaited coconut root strap and knotted through the eyes of the strap. Used for carrying water; strung on the shoulder (Fig. 55). L: 11–15 cm, W: 8–10 cm (each shell). History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

185

CONTAINER, shell
ezer (DRM)
E.17378

Large water container made from *Melo amphora* shell with enclosed part removed and edges trimmed. Used for storing water and cooking. L: 30.5 cm, W: 21 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

186

CORD, coconut
em? (CH) ked (DRM)
E.17374

Several metres of plaited coconut fibre cord, tied in a coil. D: c. (coil) 20 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

187

FAN, pandanus
E.60392-(1–2)

Two heart-shape South Sea style fans made from woven pandanus leaf strips with purple pattern. Handle woven from ends of strips. Used in church (Fig. 75). L: 31.5 cm, W: 24 cm. History: presented by K. Green in 1962.

⁴⁹ In pre-colonial times "probably used as ornament in Malu-Bomai ceremonies" (Moore, 1993:21).

188

HOE, wood
ponigob (CH)
E.17281, E.17282, E.17283

Three models of a hoe made of softwood. Handles with round knob, ends carved into a crocodile head. Carving accentuated with sparse painting in red and black. Shell inserted into a hole and cemented with resin. Shell missing in two of the hoes, leaving an empty hole with resin on its rim. Such tools were used for hoeing gardens and hollowing out canoes. These models may have been conceived as dance accessories. L: 35–47.5 cm, W: 8.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

189

HOUSE MODEL, palmwood, reed
E.17361

Model of nineteenth century Mer (Murray Island) beehive house. Bamboo framework covered with fine reed, tied at the top with coconut fibre string. Base made from light palm wood (Fig. 32). “Their dwellings are of circular form built of bamboo, with a thatched roof” (King, 1837:28). L: 48 cm, D: 35 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

190

HOUSE MODEL, palmwood, bamboo
E.17362

Model framework of nineteenth century Mer (Murray Island) beehive house. Bamboo strips tied with plant fibre. Base made from light palm wood. L: 29 cm, W: 27.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch, 1907.

191

KNIFE, shell
kaip (DRM)
E.17377-(1–6)

Six knives of unmodified bivalve shell *Polymesoda arosa* with blunt, slightly polished edges, some showing small scars, possibly resulting from use. Organic residue is visible on some knives. Imported from New Guinea. Used for peeling vegetables and various cutting tasks. L: 8–12 cm, W: 7–10 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

192

KNIFE, shell
kaip (DRM)
E.17410-(1–3)

Three knives of unmodified shell *Asaphis violuscens* and *Polymesoda arosa*. Imported from New Guinea. Used for various cutting tasks. L: 6–7 cm, W: 4.5–5.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

193

MOULDING TOOL, stone
omaber (CH)
E.17376

Faceted pebble with smooth surface, coated with greasy film in orange colour. Used, while hot, to press against turtle-shell to bend it for producing fishhooks, masks and other objects (Fig. 68). L: 7.5 cm, W: 5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

194

PIGMENT, stone
gobigod (CH) kobegud (DRM)
E.17375

Piece of soft volcanic ash. Ground to make blue pigment. L: 9 cm, W: 6.5 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

195

PIGMENT, stone
ledamirr (REG) or siu (DRM)
E.17718

Red pebble of hard water-worn rock. Ground to make red pigment. L: 4.5 cm, W: 4 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

196

SCRAPER, boar tusk
gir (DRM)
E.17369

Boar tusk ground at the narrow end to make a sharp edge. Tusk imported from New Guinea. Used for scraping spear shafts and other woodwork (DRM). L: 10.5 cm, W: 2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch, 1907.

197

SMOKING PIPE, bamboo
sukub marap (DRM)
E.17240-(1–2)

Large bamboo pipe with one node partially opened. A hole located closer to the other end is to fit a 22 cm long reed cigar or tobacco holder. Fine incised decoration in geometric patterns at both ends of a pipe while the animal and human figures are in the middle. “The pipe is made of the stems of the young bamboo, six or eight inches long, inserted in a bowl made also of bamboo” (King, 1837:26). Used for smoking tobacco as a recreation (DRM). L: 50 cm, D: 6 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

198

THATCHING TOOL, bamboo
atualu (CH) or erem lu (DRM)
E.17363

Model of a house thatching needle, mita-atualu (REG) (literally: house needle), made of a flat bamboo stick. Sharp pointed end with a hole cut near it. A real thatching needle is about 1 m long (DRM). L: 48 cm, W: 2 cm. History: collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

Eastern Islands—specific location unknown

199

PENDANT, turtle-shell
sabagorar (DRM)
B.1711, B.1712, B.1716

Three pendants, fish hook style, decorated with geometric design and white ochre infill. Worn as neck ornaments by women as a part of their marriage costume (REG) (Fig. 51). L: 7.5–14.7 cm, W: 6.5–8 cm. History: collected E.G.W. Palmer; purchased in 1884.

200

MASK, turtle-shell
krar (DRM)
E.10403

Human-face mask made of turtle-shell, nose attached with resin and plaited fibre. Rib-like structure on the lower half. Human hair wig, cassowary feathers and goa nuts attached. Decorated with incisions, as well as red and white paint. Probably used in funeral ceremonies (DRM) (Fig. 7). L: 47 cm, W: 24 cm. History: purchased from F. Snadden in 1901.

Torres Strait general

Specific location unknown Fishing and hunting implements

201

FISH HOOK, turtle-shell
mekek (DRM)
E.54625

Turtle-shell fish hook. Circular upper part with spiky protrusion at the bottom. Unusual shape, probably made for craft market (DRM) (Fig. 56). L: 5.5 cm, W: 2.5 cm. History: presented by W. Dixson in 1951.

202

HARPOON, wood
wap (DRM)
E.25451

Shaft of dugong harpoon made of heavy dark wood. Bulbous head carved with geometric design, serrated rings carved at neck and butt. Used for harpooning dugong and turtle (DRM). L: 318 cm, W: 6.2 cm. History: exchanged with Technological Museum in 1918.

203

SPEAR, wood
takul (DRM)
E.8193, E.8194

Two spears with four-pronged heads and plant fibre and resin binding. Bone tips attached to the prongs with twine and resin. Used for spearing fish. Probably obtained from Cape York Peninsula (DRM). L: 164–222.5 cm. History: collected by Rev. S. Ella in about 1877 and presented in 1898.

Weapons

204

ARROW⁵⁰, reed
E.9496

Plain reed arrow. Two-part wooden point with fibre binding in the middle. L: 88.6 cm. History: purchased from Bishop of Melanesia in 1900.

205

ARROW, reed
kep (DRM)
E.24840, E.24841

Two reed arrows. Wooden points carved with human head and geometric design filled in with white ochre, attached to the shafts with string and leather band. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. L: 120.5–138.5 cm. History: purchased from J. Stacey in 1917.

206

ARROW, reed
kep (DRM)
E.24842, E.24843

Two reed arrows. Wooden points carved with geometric design (snake?) and filled in with white ochre, attached to the shaft with string and leather band. L: 142 cm. History: purchased from J. Stacey in 1917.

207

ARROW, wood
kep (DRM)
E.28175

Arrow point carved into a stylized man with geometric design, remnants of white ochre and binding for a barb (tip broken). Possibly made in New Guinea. L: 51.5 cm. History: purchased from Tost and Rohu, 1923.

208

ARROW, reed
kep (DRM)
E.28827

Reed arrow, wooden point carved with crocodile design filled in with ochre, attached with string, resin, and leather band. Bone point-and-barb affixed with plant fibre and resin. L: 153 cm. History: purchased from A. Stockdale, 1924.

209

ARROW, wood
kep (DRM)
E.64191

Arrow point carved into a stylized man with geometric design, remnants of white ochre. Barb affixed with string and leather band (tip and barb both broken). String binding for attaching point to the shaft. L: 54 cm. History: no information available.

210

ARROW, reed
kep or le op (DRM)
E.71124

Reed arrow (butt broken off). Wooden point with carved man figure and four rows of small barbs (tip broken). Plaited string band at the lower section to bind a longitudinal split. Point attached to the shaft with leather band. L: 91 cm. History: presented by M. Ward in 1972.

211

ARROW, reed
kep (DRM)
E.71413–E.71421

Nine reed arrows. Wooden points attached with plain or plaited fibre, resin and bands. L: 90.2–141 cm. History: collected Dr F. Watson; presented by M. Ward in 1972.

212

BOW, wood
gagai or sarik⁵¹ (DRM)
E.9498

Wooden bow, both ends pointed. One end with incisions, possibly a tally. L: 148.4 cm, W: 3 cm. History: purchased from Bishop of Melanesia in 1900.

213

CLUB, stone
gaba gaba (DRM)
E.10808

Club with disk-shaped stone head and handle made of cane. Possibly collected on Iama (Yam Island) (REG). L: 81 cm, D: 11 cm. History: exchanged with Dr J.C. Cox in 1902.

214

CLUB, wood
E.54619

Stylized stingray made of heavy dark wood. Flat disk-like head and long thin handle with pointed end. Surface finished with metal rasp and varnished. Possibly from Mabuiag (Jervis Island) (DMR). L: 47 cm, W: 9 cm. History: presented by W. Dixson in 1951.

⁵⁰ Kep or paruaq are names in western Torres Strait, while opop or le op are names in eastern Torres Strait. Moore's Catalogue (Moore, 1993) refers to most of the arrows in this section as kep and I retained his attribution.

⁵¹ Gagai is name in west Torres Strait; sarik is name in east Torres Strait (Moore, 1993)

Dance, body accessories and ornaments

215

ARMLET, coconut
E.80047

Circular section of polished coconut shell with incised herringbone design. D: 8.8 cm. History: purchased from Harry's Museum in 1978; presented J. Magers in 1985.

216

BREAST ORNAMENT, pearl-shell
danga mai, kmer kmer mai⁵² (DRM)
E.3645

Pearl-shell *Pinctada* sp. crescent with rectangular projection at the top, and four small holes. Little rod with plaited coconut fibre attached through the holes. Worn by men on chest in dances referencing warfare (DRM) (Fig. 6). L: 12.5 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected by Capt. Carpenter and presented in 1892.

217

BREAST ORNAMENT, pearl-shell
danga mai, kmer kmer mai⁵³ (DRM)
E.8151

Narrow crescent of Golden pearl-shell *Pinctada maxima* with dot and line design incised along edges. Plaited band of brown and yellow hibiscus fibre attached through two holes. Decorated with red wool tassels and coix seeds. Worn by men on chest in dances referencing warfare (DRM). L: 16 cm, W: 2.2 cm. History: collected by Rev. S. Ella in about 1877 and presented in 1898.

218

BREAST ORNAMENT, pearl-shell
mai (DRM)
E.68059

A wide crescent of pearl-shell (Black lip *Pinctada margaritifera* or Golden pearl-shell *Pinctada maxima*) with incised decoration along upper edge and two holes for suspension. Worn by men on chest in dances referencing warfare (DRM) (Fig. 8). L: 15.6 cm, W: 10 cm. History: presented by M. Ward in 1972.

219

BREAST ORNAMENT, pearl-shell
E.88355

A wide crescent of Golden pearl-shell *Pinctada maxima* with incised decoration of three rows of dots between the lines along the upper edge. Two holes made for suspension. Worn by men on chest in dances and warfare. L: 21.5 cm, W: 16 cm. History: according to Miss Briscoe, it was traded from Torres Strait to Cape York in c. 1854, then acquired by her family and purchased by E. Mair, who presented it to the Australian Museum in 1997.

220

CANOE ORNAMENT, wood
E.8161, E.8162

Two small ovate shape wooden plaques with the pattern of two symmetrical concentric curves carved on both sides. Remnants of red, white and black paint. Tied to prow of canoe for magical purposes (DRM). Probably traded from Trobriand Islands, Papua New Guinea (Harry Baren, pers. comm. 2003) (Fig. 17). L: 11 cm, W: 8 cm. History: collected about 1877 and presented by Rev. S. Ella 1898.

221

CARVING, wood
gub (DRM)
E.68008

Human face with handle carved of heavy dark wood. Incised decoration of wavy lines and chevrons with remnants of white infill. Held in hand during ceremonial dances (DRM). L: 42.5 cm, W: 8.5 cm. History: presented by M. Ward, 1972.

222

DANCE WAND, bamboo
gub (DRM)
E.21047

Thin bamboo stick with "crocodile mouth" cut at one end. Short strings of *Coix lachrymae* and shells attached in through holes in a shaft. Sago palm fronds attached near base. Held in hand during ceremonial dances (DRM). L: 88 cm, W: 3.3 cm. History: presented by W. Dixson in 1912.

223

HEAD-DRESS, feathers
dari (DRM)
E.86870

Miniature version of head-dress. Arched cane frame wrapped in red dyed fibre and string painted green, yellow, white, red and pink. Two buttons, painted red and white, attached. White feathers of Torres Strait Pigeon with ends cut into a diamond shape pattern, and one long black feather projecting from top. This could be a replica or a child's head-dress (DRM). L: 58 cm, W: 23 cm. History: presented by J.M. Moriarty in 1989.

224

NECKLACE, shell
kaura dan, piau mat lager⁵⁴ (DRM)
E.68012–E.68016

Five necklaces made of small rectangles of *Nautilus* shell strung tight on a cord made of fabric and string or a plant fibre cord. Worn in dancing (Fig. 10). L: 25–55 cm, W: 1–2 cm. History: collected Mrs Muller; presented by M. Ward in 1972.

225

NECKLACE, shell
piau mat lager (DRM)
E.83182

Small rectangles of *Nautilus* shell strung tight on plant fibre cord, with an elongated 16 cm long pendant (broken) made from Golden pearl-shell *Pinctada maxima* (Fig. 9). L: 50 cm, W: 16 cm. History: collected J. Tyrrell; presented by M. Ward in 1972.

226

NECKLACE, shell
AUR.384

Shells *Melampus luteus* suspended on several short strings from thick cord wrapped around with string. L: c. 57 cm, W: c. 20 cm. History: unknown

227

ORNAMENT, turtle-shell
AUR. 455

Star-like ornament made of two pieces of turtle-shell joined together with reed and resin. Wooden peg added at the back. L: 17 cm, W: 18 cm. History: probably collected for the Museum by C. Hedley and A.R. McCulloch in 1907.

⁵² Danga mai is name in west Torres Strait, while kmer kmer mai is name in east Torres Strait (Moore, 1993).

⁵³ Danga mai is name in west Torres Strait, while kmer kmer mai is name in east Torres Strait (Moore, 1993).

⁵⁴ Kaura dan is name used in west Torres Strait, piau mat lager is name used in east Torres Strait (Moore, 1993:35)

228

SPEAR, wood
gub (DRM)
E.8195

One piece hardwood spear with human face carved below the point. Brown bands on both sides of the face. Probably imported from New Guinea. Used as dance accessory (DRM). L: 260 cm. History: collected by Rev. S. Ella about 1877 and presented in 1898.

Other artefacts

229

CARVING, wood
E.66686

Fish carved from one piece of wongi wood and mounted on a stand. Made by Eliotha Bowie from Poruma (Coconut Island) in 1960 (REG). L: 20 cm, W: 7.5 cm. History: Purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1975.

230

CONTAINER, shell
alup or ezer⁵⁵ (DRM)
E.11416

Large shell *Melo amphora*, partially modified. Used as water vessel and cooking pot (DRM). L: 32 cm, W: 24 cm. History: presented by P.G. Black in 1903.

231

MASK FRAGMENT, turtle-shell
AUR461

Central section of turtle-shell mask with mouth and eyes. Remnants of red and blue pigment (Fig. 69). L: 23, cm, W: 16 cm. History: no information available

232

LIME, stone
chunam (SE)
E.8147

Small amount of powdered lime. Used for decoration of various objects and in preparation of stimulants, usually mixed with betel nut to release alkaloids when chewed (DRM). History: collected by Rev. S. Ella in about 1877 and presented 1898.

233

PRINT, paper
E.86298

Print entitled Song of Diving (No. 6/93) red ink on paper, made by artist P.K. Gela of Thursday Island. L: 77 cm, W: 58 cm. History: Purchased from Iina Torres Strait Islander Corporation in 1994.

234

QUILT, fabric
E.67059, E.67060

Two patchwork quilts of green, yellow, blue and white triangles of fabric sewn onto linen backing. L: 166–202 cm, W: 134–169 cm. History: Purchased by E. and W. Campbell in 1960 and presented in 1975.

235

SMOKING PIPE, reed
sukub marapi (DRM)
E.74577

Replica of bamboo pipe (DRM). One end opened, small hole drilled near other, closed end. Surface decorated with pokerwork design. Tobacco bowl missing. L: 60 cm, D: 4.5 cm. History: collected before 1927, part of R. Kirkwood collection; presented by B.G. Amey in 1977.

⁵⁵ Alup is name in west Torres Strait, while ezar is name in east Torres Strait (Moore, 1993).

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