

**The Manufacturers:
Collection, Display and Aboriginality at the
Queensland Museum from the Late Nineteenth
to the Early Twentieth Century**

Shawn Rowlands BA Hons. University of Queensland

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at the University of New England

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Certification

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Any assistance received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in the text.

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Shawn Rowlands

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES APPEAR IN THIS THESIS WHICH REQUIRE READER DISCRETION. TWO PHOTOS ARE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LIFE DIORAMA, PREVIOUSLY DISPLAYED AT THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM; AND TWO ARE FROM A PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION STORED AT THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM AND THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM.

THE MANNEQUINS USED IN THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LIFE DIORAMA ARE CLASSED AS SECRET SACRED MATERIAL AND, THEREFORE, ARE HIGHLY CULTURALLY SENSITIVE. THIS WARNING WILL BE REPEATED ON PAGE 149, AFTER WHICH THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO SEE THESE IMAGES WILL BE ABLE TO AVOID THEM BY TURNING ONLY THE TOP CORNERS OF THE PAGE UNTIL NUMBER 151 IS REACHED.

THE OTHER TWO PHOTOS CONTAIN IMAGES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE WHO ARE NOW DECEASED. IF THE READER ALSO WISHES TO AVOID THESE IMAGES, THEY SHOULD CONTINUE TURNING TO PAGE 152.

ALL PHOTOS HAVE BEEN USED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM.

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Abstract

This study uses two material collections of Aboriginal culture held at the Queensland Museum, in order to examine the participation of the Museum in the process of colonialism and othering. The collections examined were gathered by Dr Walter E. Roth and the pastoral manager Jeremiah Coghlan, from 1891-1903. Specifically, this thesis investigates how the collection of Aboriginal material culture perpetuated a myth of Aboriginal people as inherently conservative, incapable of adaptation to new circumstances, and poised on the brink of extinction. How these myths were perpetuated and, more importantly, how and why they ignored the contrary evidence of culture entanglement in the collections will be examined.

This thesis deals with a broad range of multi-disciplinary approaches, synthesising the study of history with the study of material culture and museum theory. The concept of frontier entanglement of cultures has been adapted and applied to a study of objects, to demonstrate the physical evidence of this entanglement in Aboriginal culture, and what an acknowledgement of this entanglement might suggest for a reinterpretation of the frontiers, both imagined and actual.

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INTRODUCTION:

THESIS BACKGROUND, AIMS AND STATEMENT

THESIS STATEMENT

During the late Victorian-era to beyond Federation, Australian museum collections and their display perpetuated a belief in the ‘other’ with regard to Aboriginal people. In particular, museums perpetuated a myth taught through educational institutions that Aboriginal people:

- belonged to a culturally fascinating, ‘traditional’, though stagnant culture;
- were incapable of adaptation to another way of life; and
- would become extinct.

The depiction of Aboriginal people was unconscious and deliberate, and is not supported by the evidence.

I will argue that my research shows that, in the Federation period of Australia, the Queensland Museum participated in the manufacturing of an Aboriginal identity through collection and display which excluded Aboriginal people from conceptions of statehood. This exclusion was made possible by the construction of Aboriginal identity through a misunderstanding that this culture was stagnant, Stone Age, and incapable of adaptation. Fundamentally, this notion was false and ignored the evidence that demonstrated clear signs of profound adaptation in the material culture collections the Museum had acquired.

My argument will demonstrate that the evidence does not support the myth perpetuated by the Museum by discussing:

- how the myth of the other was articulated, and disseminated in the community through pedagogical institutions and from frontier observers;
- the evidence of adaptation through cultural entanglement in museum collections; and
- how and why such evidence was ignored by museums.

This thesis argues that the Museum and its collectors constructed an image of the Aboriginal 'other', specifically through their interactions, observations, and material acquisitions on the Queensland colonial frontier. I discuss the ways in which the cataloguing and display of Aboriginal people's material culture in the Queensland Museum contributed to the manufacturing and imagining of Aboriginal identity. As such, this thesis deals with numerous inter-related issues: material culture and how it relates to the use of objects in historical investigation; the idea of perception in the interpretation of an object's purpose; collection, both in the context of the act of collecting itself, as well as how this relates to the historical period discussed; museum theory; and the concept of the exclusion of Aboriginal voices from the making of Australian history. More specifically, this thesis demonstrates the ways in which the Queensland Museum and the collections of Dr Walter E. Roth and Jeremiah Coghlan participated in the manufacturing of an Aboriginal identity that was based on a misunderstanding of the material evidence.

BACKGROUND

Thesis Background

This thesis was made possible by a grant from the Australian Research Council. The initial purpose of the study was to trace the objects in the collections of Roth and Coghlan to the communities from which they were collected, examining ways in which the representation of Aboriginality was carried out by the Queensland Museum. Roth was a surgeon, as well as a committed ethnographer and the Protector of Queensland Aborigines from 1897 until 1906. Coghlan was the manager of a pastoral station at Glenormiston in the first half of the 1890s and, although not a professional ethnographer, he collected a significant amount of Aboriginal material culture. Roth's collection at the Australian Museum has already been comprehensively documented by Kate Khan as a four volume catalogue of the material, and this collection was not initially intended to be a major consideration for the thesis.¹ Unfortunately, information surviving in the Queensland Museum archives is sporadic and the same kind of attention to detail found in Roth's donations to the Australian

¹ Kate Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland, Volumes 1-4* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 1993).

Museum are not apparent in his Queensland Museum collection (though the information in his government reports and bulletins is still invaluable). This may be due to the earlier date of donation and the fact that Roth could have been developing a more comprehensive method of cataloguing, though it may just as easily be because Roth considered the Queensland Museum material to be less spectacular or interesting. Coghlan's collection, on the other hand, has never been systematically researched.

The ARC grant was applied for by Professors Russell McDougall and Iain Davidson of the University of New England, as part of their broader interest in the Roth family, the intersection of ethnographic research, and the implementation of colonial policies. This interest culminated in the editing and publication of a major volume on the significance of the Roth family, which had particular focus on Walter Roth himself.² The grant was originally expected to fund a PhD dissertation on the Roth and Coghlan collections, and major literature influences had already been articulated in the application. The literature, and the intended purpose of the thesis, addressed the fields of Material Culture Studies and Museology, Aboriginal Studies, and Postcolonial Studies. Particular attention was also to be paid to positioning this work in the light of recent literature on how museum collections have formed public perceptions. Tom Griffiths and Nicholas Thomas have both published in this field, as has J. Clifford, who paid particular attention to how museums construct images of the indigenous.³ It was in the context of this recent literature that the ARC grant intended the Roth and Coghlan collections, more so than Roth and Coghlan themselves, to be considered.

Frontier Observers: Walter Edmund Roth and Jeremiah Coghlan

In his obituary for Roth in the *American Anthropologist*, Melville J. Herskovits wrote: 'With the death of Dr Walter Edmund Roth, on April 5, 1933, anthropology loses a

² Russell McDougall and Iain Davidson [eds], *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008).

³ Tom Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors: The Antiquarian Imagination in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); J. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988).

worker whose contributions to science have been of an outstanding character'.⁴ Roth was a colonial administrator, an avid collector of material culture, and a direct observer and commentator on the Aboriginal people of Queensland. Roth was born into a family which gained renown in the fields of ethnology and anthropology. He was the son of Mathias Roth—a Hungarian Jew who resettled in Britain—and the younger brother of the anthropologist Henry Ling Roth, who was most noted for his compilation, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (1890), which was a synthesis of all the sources he could find relating to the Aboriginal people of Tasmania, who were then imagined to be extinct.⁵

Roth graduated from Oxford with honours in Biology, and moved to Australia twice, punctuating these visits by completing his studies in medicine in Britain. Roth worked in Australia, as a school-master at both Sydney and Brisbane Boys Grammar school and, after he had qualified as a surgeon, as a doctor in the Boulia, Cloncurry, and Normanton hospitals. However, in the Australian context, his tenure as Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, from 1897 to 1906, and his posting as a Royal Commissioner in Western Australia, in 1904, are his most notable roles.

Roth's interest in anthropology began after he had finished his studies and, in 1897, he published a meticulous work entitled *Ethnographical Studies Among the North-West-Central-Queensland Aborigines*.⁶ This work, which soon became widely distributed to policemen and mission stations on the frontier, was partly responsible for his being offered the post of Northern Protector of Queensland Aborigines. The Southern post was filled by Archibald Meston, a journalist, politician, and amateur ethnographer who had been instrumental in the creation of the 1897 *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act*.⁷

⁴ M.J. Herskovits, 'Walter E. Roth' in *American Anthropologist*, No. 36 (1934), p. 266.

⁵ Henry Ling Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (London: Fuller's Book Shop, 1968). Hereafter, to avoid confusion with Walter Roth, Henry Ling Roth will always be referred to by his full name, whereas Walter will simply be known as Roth.

⁶ Walter Edmund Roth, *Ethnographical Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines* (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1897).

⁷ Hereafter referred to as '*The Act*'. For Meston's report which led to some of the policies of *The Act*, see: Archibald Meston, *Report on the Aboriginals of Queensland* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1896).

The Act was passed by the Queensland Government in 1897. Ostensibly, *The Act* had been intended to protect Aboriginal populations from the harm which came to them via European and Chinese exploitation of their lives and labour.⁸ *The Act* created a distinct administrative body which specifically saw to the regulation and protection of Aboriginal people. A Chief Protector was appointed to act in concert with local protectors, police, and civil servants in order to oversee the implementation of the Act in Queensland.⁹ These sinews of *The Act*, as represented by the administrative body it established, could also be used to socially control Aboriginal people through the regulation of marriage and work rights. In 1904, the notoriously difficult and reputedly brutal Meston was retrenched, and Roth was made the overall Protector of Queensland Aborigines, a post he held until his resignation in 1906.¹⁰

Controversy dogged Roth's career as Protector, and he earned the ire of businessmen and politicians who had vested interests in Aboriginal labour. Roth witnessed ample evidence of the exploitation of Aboriginal people on the frontier, from the sale of illicit substances, traffic in sexual favours, and the extortion of Aboriginal people as an under or unpaid workforce. Reactions to his enforcement of *The Act* were vigorous, and Roth's character was the subject of Parliamentary enquiry. He was accused of professional negligence, of being more interested in his ethnological studies than his medical duties, of being disruptive of police affairs, and of being anti-reformatory in regards to *The Act*. When a photo, taken by Roth, depicting two Aboriginal people in the act of copulation emerged, Roth was accused of being a pornographer.¹¹ The final test of Roth's character came when it was known that he

⁸ Regina Ganter, 'WE Roth on Asians in Australia' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, pp. 157-158.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 158.

¹⁰ Cheryl Taylor discusses some of the discomfort Meston had caused among the powerful due to his sometimes harsh treatment of Aboriginal people. According to Taylor's research, Meston was not unknown to have punished infractions by chaining Aboriginal people to trees over night or having them beaten. See: Cheryl Taylor, 'Constructing Aboriginality: Archibald Meston's Literary Journalism, 1870-1924' in *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*, Vol. 2 (2003), p. 122. See also: Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection Volume 1*, p. 10; Ganter, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 161, & 165-168; Regina Ganter and Ross Kidd, 'The power of protectors: conflicts surrounding Queensland's 1897 Aboriginal legislation' in *Australian Historical Studies*, No. 101, (October 1993), pp. 536-554.

¹¹ These controversies are all discussed in detail in by a number of articles in a recent publication on the Roth family. See: Regina Ganter, 'WE Roth on Asians in Australia'; Ann McGrath, 'Naked Shame: Nation, Science and Indigenous Knowledge in Walter Roth's Interventions into Frontier Sexualities'; and Helen Pringle, 'Walter Roth and Ethno-Pornography' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*.

had sold over 2,000 objects and prints to the Australian Museum. His detractors claimed that this collection was purchased with government funds and was not his to profit from. Roth countered, claiming that the collection made available to the Australian Museum was his own private material, and that the material gathered with government funds had been donated to the Queensland Museum. Differences in the two Roth collections, particularly regarding the materials evident in the objects, indicate that Roth valued each collection differently, and it is very possible that he had kept the best objects for his private collection.¹² This issue will be the subject of particular attention in Chapter Four of this thesis.

The purpose of this thesis is not to assess Roth's political or moral record (though it is important to state here that he was exonerated of all charges). Only his intent as an ethnographer and the degree to which he participated in the manufacturing of Queensland Aboriginal people as an imagined 'other' is evaluated. This concept of the 'other' is defined in Chapter One, in relation to historical studies. Roth was a complex individual, capable of working tirelessly to prevent European exploitation of Aboriginal people, while on the other hand willing to appropriate their remains from burial sites. Like many well-meaning agents of the British Empire, Roth's treatment of Aboriginal people proceeded from good intentions, and produced inconsistent results. My impression of Roth was that he was a man whose empathy exceeded the standards of his day; that he had a genuine interest and care for Aboriginal people, but that he could not quite remove the conception of them as scientific curiosities from his imagination.

Jeremiah Coghlan, the other major contributor of material culture to the Queensland Museum to be considered in this thesis, presents an interesting contrast to Roth. Where Roth had studied biology and medicine, and published extensively on ethnography, Coghlan had no scholarly qualifications or ambitions to professional science. Coghlan did publish one article in *Science of Man*, on the 'Foodstuff of the north-west Aborigines' (1898), but he left no other publications of his opinions or

¹² This will be discussed at length in the fourth chapter, in an analysis of the comparative differences between the Queensland and Australian Museum Roth collections.

findings in an academic or scientific context.¹³ Coghlan managed the pastoral station at Glenormiston in the first half of the 1890s, and in this role he dealt with the Aboriginal people of Glenormiston and Boulia and, according to the accounts he sent in to the Queensland Museum, did his best to foster good relations with them.

Coghlan worked under trying circumstances, enduring a regional drought in the 1890s. He made little profit from the collections he gave to the Queensland Museum, and was careful to offer items of exchange to the Aboriginal people with whom he traded. Coghlan's letters will be discussed in the third and fourth chapters (along with Roth's), in order to articulate the link between collector correspondence and the manufacturing of Aboriginal identity by the Museum. Some of these documents will show that Coghlan's writing, though informal, was full of insight into the customs of the Aboriginal people in his locality. Retiring as station manager in the mid-1890s, Coghlan ceased contact with the Museum and remained an obscure observer of Queensland's Aboriginal peoples. Very little is known about his life, and he does not hold the reputation, notoriety, or influence of his contemporaries, Roth and Meston. Coghlan spent the early part of his life working on pastoral stations in the Maranoa region. He passed away at the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum for inebriates and the poor in 1916. Owing to flood in the 1930s, all records of his stay there have been lost.¹⁴

The Roth Collection is generally considered to be the 2,000 objects of Aboriginal material culture sold to the Australian Museum by Roth in 1905.¹⁵ Of this collection, much has been written. The most comprehensive account of this material is by Khan, who published for the Australian Museum a series of four catalogues in 1993, listing every object still extant in the collection (excluding Secret Sacred material). Khan

¹³ This article was forwarded to *Man* on the behalf of Coghlan by Meston, indicating a clear link between the two. The version cited is in the Queensland Museum archives, and is in a poor state. As such, it was not examined extensively. Jeremiah Coghlan, 'Foodstuffs of the north-west Aboriginals' in *Science of Man*, 1 (2) (1898), p. 48.

¹⁴ I was informed by Department staff that floods destroyed a large part of the Queensland Department of Health archives in the 1930s.

¹⁵ It is also worth noting that Roth collected material from the indigenous people of British Guyana, after his retirement from Queensland, until his death in 1933. This material is not being discussed in this thesis, though the fact that Roth continued to collect demonstrates his passion for doing so. For more on Roth in British Guyana, see: Neil L. Whitehead, 'An Indigenous Compendium: Walter E Roth and the Ethnology of British Guyana' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, pp. 267-276.

comments, in her introduction, that the Roth collection held at the Australian Museum is 'one of the most comprehensive collections of Aboriginal artefacts ever gathered from one area'.¹⁶ Leon Satterwait has similarly stated that:

[The Roth collection is] often taken as a reference point for Australian museum collections . . . because of its size, the relatively early date at which it was collected, the extent to which it was documented, and the fact that it was compiled by a single individual and thus has a known history and a degree of coherence as a collection.¹⁷

Roth also donated to or exchanged Aboriginal material with other museums, including the Queensland Museum, the Smithsonian Institute, and the British Museum. Some of the objects he collected have been repatriated, or since exchanged between museums and collectors, as is the case between the Queensland Museum and New Zealand.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the Roth collection at the Australian Museum remains the largest collection of the Aboriginal material culture he acquired and, as such, is the single most studied of his collections.¹⁹

By comparison, Roth's donations to the Queensland Museum represent a small proportion of his Australian Museum collection. At the time of Roth's donations, between 1900 and 1903, his contemporaries were also donating material. These included Reverend Nicholas Hey, of the Mapoon Mission station, who was known to Roth through his work and correspondence; Coghlan, who received an acknowledgment from Roth in his 1897 publication; and Meston. Each of these men sent material to the Queensland Museum which was either of the same scale, or exceeded in size, the Roth donations to the Museum. As Richard Robins, a former curator at the Museum commented, 'in itself, then, there is nothing particularly

¹⁶ Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection, Volume 1*, p.11.

¹⁷ L.D. Satterwait in B. Reynolds, *Australian Material Culture: Handbook of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material Cultures, Vol I. Northeast* (Unpublished source, 1984), p. 15.

¹⁸ A single hafted stone axe in the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum is noted as exchanged to 'Mouldy, New Zealand'. Further details are not available, though it is likely that 'Mouldy' was a private collector.

¹⁹ Tellingly, when Heather McInnes wrote a thesis at the University of Queensland, on the collection bias of Walter Roth, she selected a small proportion of objects from the Australian Museum, rather than the much closer and more readily accessed Queensland Museum collection. Heather McInnes, *Through Roth-Coloured Glasses: An Analysis of Systematic Bias in Ethnological Museum Collections* (Hons diss., University of Queensland, 1995).

remarkable about the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum . . . But, of course, it cannot be separated from its collection context'.²⁰

Besides the Queensland Museum material, Robins defines Roth's other work as 'the most significant body of anthropological work on Queensland Aborigines for that period'.²¹ Robins explains the value of the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum, arguing that: 'Although Roth's collection appears to be modest in size, it was by the standards of the time a significant collection for the Queensland Museum'.²² In her work on Meston, Cheryl Taylor heaps like praise on Roth in contrast to Meston. Taylor writes:

Neither Meston's notes and reports nor his newspaper accounts bear comparison as professional writing with Roth's patient documenting and illustrating²³ of all aspects of tribal life, records which were subsequently published in scholarly volumes.

Roth's work cannot be removed from the context of the man himself, nor from his duties as Protector or his publications on the ethnology of the Queensland Aborigines. His collection also indicates how Roth and other collectors were constructing Aboriginal culture in accordance with their own notions. Further, through an examination of the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum, we can gain insight into the difference between what he saw as the collection of material culture he acquired for the State, and the one he acquired for himself, which was sold to the Australian Museum. His motivations for this sale are, at best, ambiguous, though it will be demonstrated in Chapter Four that the differences in his two collections show clear discrimination.

Alternatively, the Coghlan collection is held exclusively at the Queensland Museum, and was sent to the institution while Coghlan was the station-manager at Glenormiston in the first half of the 1890s. Unlike Roth's collection, Coghlan's material has rarely been given any consideration. Nonetheless, the collection itself is remarkable. In terms of the documentation sent by Coghlan to the Museum, this collection is not as well described as Roth's (especially considering Roth's own

²⁰ Richard Robins, 'The Legacy of a "Lazy Character": Walter Roth's Contribution to the Ethnography Collections of the Queensland Museum' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 176.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²² Robins, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 175.

²³ Taylor, *Journal of the Association of Australian Literature*, p.124.

published observations). The Coghlan collection is also larger than Roth's by around one hundred objects, and is selected from a tightly defined geographical region. Almost all of Coghlan's collection was acquired in Glenormiston and nearby Boulia. A few objects from other regions were acquired, though these are not numerous when compared to the whole. Glenormiston was considered to be one of the regions in which Aboriginal people were still conducting themselves in their traditional mode of life and, from the perspective of anthropology in the Victorian era, Coghlan's collection is close to what was thought of as a Stone Age source.²⁴

Numerous objects from the Coghlan collection have been placed on general display for the public, though this has always remained a small proportion of the whole. Coghlan lacked the political or social weight of men like Hey and Meston, and he did not have Roth's education. The Coghlan collection is indicative of a very specific region of Queensland. Contemporary to the Roth collection, a direct comparison of the two can yield insight into the biases and interpretations of colonial era anthropology.

The Museum's acquisition and use of these and other ethnographic collections between the years 1878 to 1914 is the main period of my discussion. The reason for this is because 1914 represented the culmination of the Museum's research and acquisition of Aboriginal material culture, manifested by the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama. This exhibit was opened in 1914, and it was intended to display a definitive and authentic imagination of Aboriginal people, through the use of the Museum's storehouse of objects. The Australian Aboriginal Life diorama was the idea of the Museum's then director, Dr R. Hamlyn-Harris, who was the most committed of all of the early Museum directors in acquiring and displaying Aboriginal culture. This display is crucial, not only as a demonstration of the prevailing attitudes of the time, but also because it remained in place until the Museum shifted from Wickham Terrace to its current residence at the Southbank Cultural Complex. The significance of this display receives elaboration throughout this thesis.

²⁴ The Glenormiston and Boulia region was settled by Europeans comparatively late, when compared to much of Queensland, and Aboriginal depopulation had not been as profound as other areas of Queensland by the time Coghlan was operating near there. For a detailed discussion of the region, see: Kay Cohen, *More Than Surviving: The Boulia Story* (Corinda: Pictorial Press Australia, 2001).

RESEARCH FOCUS

Upon commencing my research into the collections I began with an outsider's perspective. As someone from the discipline of history, material culture studies were less natural to me. Social histories, particularly those which dealt with expressions of conformity, rebellion, or the contestations between those who ruled and those who were ruled, had always been focus. When I first considered this thesis, the links between these interests and the themes of the thesis seemed tenuous. Yet, as I began my research I soon became aware that this was not the case. Having examined the collections the feature which seemed the most curious to me was the incidence of European material in the objects. As I continued this research, and considered the grant's aim of discussing the manufacturing of Aboriginal identity in the museum context, I wondered at the significance that the lack of display of this 'entangled material' had. Shortly after my own interest in this entanglement began, Philip Jones published his *Ochre and Rust* (2008), which dealt with similar themes.²⁵ I was frustrated that Jones did not talk as much about the objects which used European material as I hoped he would, though this was certainly not his key aim.

Initially convinced by the archival sources I was reading that collectors had either systematically ignored or not recognised the use of European material in Aboriginal objects, I decided that my main focus of discussion had to be an analysis of two issues. The first would be the incidence of entanglement in the two collections, discussing the materials used and the prevalence of objects which I first thought of as 'integrated'. My second focus would be to discuss why collectors reviled this kind of material, and why the Museum had not displayed many examples of it. This second feature is crucial to discussing ways in which knowledge of Aboriginal culture was either manufactured or misrepresented.

Of those who have studied Roth's material, none have noted in anything more than a cursory fashion that there were some objects which showed the influence of European

²⁵ Philip Jones, *Ochre and Rust: Artefacts and Encounters on Australian Frontiers* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2008).

materials. Expanding this discussion would be an important way of supplementing and recontextualising histories of the frontier which discuss accommodation, entanglement, and exchange. It is surprising that Roth has not been investigated in this way, especially considering the fact that, according to Barry Reynolds, ‘no anthropologist, archaeologist, historian or linguist concerned with Aboriginal north Queensland can afford to ignore [Roth]’.²⁶ Indeed, the lack of discussion of the Roth collection in this context is glaring.

However, this thesis is not specifically about Roth or Coghlan, but about their ethnographic and collection contexts, the ways in which this related to the Queensland Museum, other collectors, and the depiction of Aboriginal people through the display of material culture. This thesis is also not suggesting that there is a quantifiable sense of a homogenous Aboriginal identity, only that the identity created through ethnographic study and display in Queensland was false. This imagination of Aboriginal people was not entirely negative, and part of the Museum’s intention was to instruct citizens on the uniqueness of Queensland’s indigenous population. However, the Museum imagined Aboriginal people as culturally pure but stagnant and incapable of adaptation to ‘civilised’ life. Further, Aboriginal people were seen as fast vanishing from existence, mostly as a result of this perceived stagnation. This attitude was largely informed by prevailing attitudes towards ideas of ‘race’ and evolution. Crucially, this conception ignored the contradictory evidence that was present in the Roth and Coghlan collections. That the Roth and Coghlan collections display clear signs of Aboriginal material adaptation means that the conclusions reached by ethnographers and the Museum discounted or devalued the evidence gathered, in favour of the presentation through display of Aboriginal people as ‘others’.

The collections of Roth and Coghlan will be used to demonstrate the assumptions of European observers that the basic proposition of colonial anthropology in late-Victorian and early-Edwardian Australia was that Aboriginal people were stagnant, unevolving, and doomed to vanish from history. Nonetheless, it will be shown that European observers ignored or did not perceive the evidence in their own collections

²⁶ Barry Reynolds, ‘Roth, Walter Edmund’ in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://gutenberg.net.au/dictbiog/0-dict-biogR.html#roth2>, last accessed 20 May 2010.

of Aboriginal material culture, which demonstrated a keen sense of adaptation and survivalism. As opposed to conceptions of the ‘other’, this adaptation in the material culture will also be used to contribute to new ways, which are emerging in historical literature, of looking at the nature of the Australian frontier and cross-cultural contact—at issues of *entanglement*.

My research also made me aware of the fact that an historical examination of the two collections and the display practices of the Museum could not be premised on either the documentary evidence or the material culture alone. Indeed, due to their interpretation by the collectors and the Museum I realised that the material culture was now inextricably linked to the documentary evidence. Further, the Museum was positioned not only at the forefront of anthropology in the colonial period, but also as a pedagogical tool of government. As an institute of instruction, the Museum cannot be examined without reference to the other dominant pedagogical institute—the school. Both the school system and the Museum actively participated in the making of identity and, although they differed only superficially in portraying Aboriginal people, it is not possible to consider one institute without the other, since both were envisioned as educators.

Likewise, the formal and informal correspondence of those who interacted with the Museum told an important part of the narrative of historical information which has so far been overlooked by researchers. The ways in which the opinions of frontier observers informed the Museum and helped to shape the conceptions of the institution were crucial to presenting an idea of Aboriginal culture. In a sense, these letters were a kind of instruction although, unlike schools and the Museum, their audience was limited to the Museum itself. This correspondence sometimes competed with, and often complemented the mainstream ethnographic literature and, thus, receives extrapolation later in this thesis.

THESIS MAP

The relevant academic literature which helped to contextualise and inform my conclusions, as well as create the foundations for my own approach, will be discussed

in detail in Chapter One. This chapter deals exclusively with the literature review component of the thesis, laying the groundwork for a consideration of the evidence, as well as positioning my own ideas within the body of established work in the field. As this thesis crosses multi-disciplines, the topics dealt with in the literature review are varied and include notions of tradition, innovation, and imagined communities. This is positioned specifically within the context of nation-building, the making of identity, and constructions of the 'other'. Recent publications on the major theme of this thesis—which are publications on the idea of cross-cultural exchanges and entanglement, as well as other works which incorporate an analysis of European material in indigenous material culture—are discussed in detail.

Chapter One also deals with conceptualising Material Culture Studies as a key element of the evidence I present. This relates to perceptions and presentation of objects, especially in the light of museum theory. This is important because I am discussing ways in which museums operated in the time period, as well as how people—collectors and the general population of European Australia—saw museums. Finally, the notion of an Aboriginal voice in Australian history is discussed because this relates directly to processes of othering, and an acknowledgement of the ways in which Aboriginal people were silenced in the process of nation-building helps us to understand ways in which this can be changed.

Chapter Two discusses the state of knowledge on Aboriginal people among Europeans living in Australia, and more specifically in Queensland. This chapter relies on primary source material from educational text books to demonstrate that substantial information on Aboriginal people was lacking in the Queensland education system during the colonial period. Where Aboriginal people were discussed, they were consistently characterised as being people of low civilisation, unadaptable to the European way of life, both socially and technologically stagnant, and on the brink of extinction. These books imagined the 'community' of Aboriginal people as an 'other', distinct from European Australia. Chapter Two also serves to illustrate the notion that the narrative of Aboriginal history in mainstream Australia, was substantially lacking and largely negative. This chapter also serves to demonstrate that the limited exposure to Aboriginal people in the imaginations of Europeans was the inadequate tool of negotiation that Europeans could bring to contestations with the

Museum's version of Aboriginality. This idea, like the remainder of the thesis draws on a perceptual model proposed in Chapter One for demonstrating how displays are created and interpreted. It is also important to remember that both schools and the Museum were pedagogical institutions and, thus, this chapter is crucial to analysing conceptions of Aboriginality and how they relate to nation-building.

Chapter Three examines a different kind of narrative of the frontier—correspondence between collectors and the Queensland Museum. This is a source which has rarely been utilised, as the letters remain unpublished. The correspondence details the motivations of the collectors and the Museum in acquiring Aboriginal material culture, from notions of pride, contribution to science, and a sense of urgency. The common themes of this thesis—that Europeans saw Aboriginal people as Stone Age curiosities, as unevolving, and poised on the brink of ruin—are constantly evident in these sources. This chapter also discusses the correspondence of Roth and Coghlan to the Museum. The purpose here is to construct an image of how collectors saw the frontier, what their intentions were regarding appropriation of Aboriginal artefacts, and how they were involved in making the idea of the frontier by removing it from the outback and containing it within displays. These perspectives influenced the Museum's own view, and contributed to the ways in which Queensland Aboriginalism was manufactured in the Museum. Besides the ethnographic literature, this is the most important source to consider in conveying how Museum staff interpreted the objects acquired for their stores and displays. That these views are often in keeping with portrayals discussed in Chapter Two suggests the extent to which educational texts had influenced the collectors and professionals. Further, this documentary evidence forms a crucial part of the collections as it not only contextualises perspectives, but demonstrates how they were involved in the creation of identities in a less formal way than the Museum was.

Chapter Four moves from the correspondence to the collection practices of Roth and Coghlan. Beginning with a direct comparison of the collecting habits of the two men, this chapter will then deal with the actual material culture collected by Roth and Coghlan, analysing their collections within the context of cultural and material entanglement. The collections are discussed in the context of Roth's own professional writing in ethnography, so as to illustrate that the evidence for entangled

objects was not only apparent in the collections, but also in his observations. Given that Roth was aware of the incidence of European material in Aboriginal objects, his devaluation of this material is discussed. The recurring themes of Aboriginal lack of adaptation and presumed degeneration are contrasted to the actual evidence in the collections, which demonstrate the opposite to the conclusions which were drawn. A discussion of the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama is crucial to this argument, as it was the product of all the research that the Museum and its collectors had conducted on Aboriginal people. This chapter is not intended as an archaeological discussion, but a use of material culture to construct an alternate history of the frontier. Its approach is historical, and it is expected that an archaeologist or anthropologist would examine the physical evidence in a different way.

The Conclusion synthesises the data presented in the thesis for a concluding discussion on the characterisations of Aboriginal people within the context of acquisition, display, instruction, and ethnography. This discussion pays particular attention to the inter-relation of these themes, with the use of museum displays for anthropology, and colonial government. Also, the potential for future research of the same or similar collections is discussed, suggesting a wider dimension for research into entangled objects. Within the context of Australian history, this thesis demonstrates that collectors and museums engaged in Aboriginalism unconsciously *and* deliberately.

These chapters will demonstrate that the Queensland Museum was not staffed by people hostile to Aboriginal culture, nor were a great many of those who collected indigenous artefacts desirous of the destruction of the Queensland indigenous. The overwhelming desire of many collectors, and the museum, was to preserve evidence of what they considered to be traditional Aboriginal life. Collectors were curious and, often, sympathetic people, who believed that Aboriginal customs or, indeed, their entire existence was coming to an end. Yet their desire to preserve what they thought of as traditional led to much evidence of Aboriginal adaptation and survival being ignored. An innovative and enduring culture, therefore, came to be understood as static and vanishing. Portrayed as essentially immovable Stone Age curiosities, they were denied a place as active participants in the emerging identity of the Australian nation.

CHAPTER ONE:

TRADITION, ENTANGLEMENT, AND PERCEPTION

‘The thought of Tradition serves only to confirm a mystical belief that arrests any further reasoning’
- Umberto Eco, *Serendipities*.²⁷

This chapter deals with the literature review and philosophical component of the thesis. As this thesis has employed multi-disciplinary approaches, the literature review is extensive. I begin with an examination of the concept of tradition, and how this relates to notions of innovation, identity and the creation of ‘others’. From here, I proceed to the recent literature on entanglement, the incorporation of European materials into indigenous material culture, and then into a discussion of the relevance of material culture for historical enquiry. The literature discussed underpins the idea of perception, both in the discussion of the othering process, the ways in which objects are perceived, and how museums operate. As this thesis deals with museum collections, the idea of collection and museums are discussed, especially as they relate to prevailing attitudes in the Victorian-era towards ‘race’ and colonialism. After these topics are discussed, and I propose a model of museum and visitor perception (based off other literature), this chapter concludes with a discussion of the participation or exclusion of indigenous voices in nation-building, in order to introduce the idea that the evidence I present in chapters two to four show a clear exclusion of indigenous ideas, people, and narrative.

TRADITION AND IDENTITY

H.T. Wilson, a Professor of Law in Toronto, has argued that there are ‘independent facts of life’ that are central to our existence which make it possible to interpret and predict facts.²⁸ Wilson argued that these ‘facts’ are inextricably linked to rationality,

²⁷ Umberto Eco, *Serendipities: Language and Lunacy*, William Weaver [trans.] (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1998), p. 115.

²⁸ H.T. Wilson, *Tradition and Innovation: The idea of civilization as culture and its significance* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1984), p. vii.

history and progress, and that—in the Western tradition—these three themes cannot be separated from conceptions of innovation and innovativeness. On the other hand, ideas of ‘tradition’ have been more commonly considered traits of ‘primitive’ or ‘natural’ cultures.²⁹

Yet, tradition is a more universal and fluid concept than an embodiment of primitiveness. According to David Gross, tradition refers to a way of thinking or acting ‘that exists in the present, but was inherited from the past’.³⁰ Traditions, according to Gross, survive because they adapt. Though they are often eroded, traditions can ‘live on in new forms and guises’.³¹ This view is similar to the idea of tradition which the poet T.S. Eliot conceived, where tradition is better understood as being a positioning of oneself in light of everything that has come before while understanding that the past has simultaneity with the present, and that innovation is in fact integral to the survival of traditions.³² Traditions can be pivotal to identity, both in the way individuals and communities perceive themselves, and also in the way they are perceived.

In this context of imagined ‘traditions’ as perceptual filters, the concept of tradition will be examined. Specifically, it will be demonstrated that the shaping of identity through museum displays is linked to the invention of tradition, and the manufacturing of cultural identities. The phrase ‘invention of tradition’ is taken directly from Eric Hobsbawm, who used it to denote rules, regulations, and customs ‘which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past’.³³ Hobsbawm’s chief interest was with habits and customs, and he did not focus heavily upon the material aspects of culture—the physical traces and products that people create.³⁴ The idea of invented tradition is linked to the imagining of communities and the manufacturing of identity.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ David Gross, *The Past in Ruins: Tradition and the Critique of Modernity* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), p. 8.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³² T.S. Eliot, ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’ in *Selected Essays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), p. 14.

³³ Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’ in Eric Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger [eds], *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 1.

³⁴ Although it must be noted that *The Invention of Tradition* discusses certain elements of material culture as part of invented tradition – such as the volumes most famous article, by Hugh Trevor-Roper,

As Benedict Anderson has argued, 'imagined communities' rely on a sense of familiarity which members of a community feel with other members of their designated community, though they may never have met one another.³⁵ For example, individuals within a nation must imagine a comradeship with other individuals within that nation so that they can perceive what their community is. For a nation to be imagined, the limitations of the nation must also be imagined. No matter the size or population of a polity, there are finite boundaries beyond which exist other nations and people who are conceived of as the 'other'.³⁶ Through a process of othering, these people could be redefined and understood in a collective context.

The literature on othering has emerged in numerous disciplines, though here I am concerned with its use in historical and post colonial studies.³⁷ Gayatri Spivak used the concept to describe the process by which colonial authorities and discourses create the 'other'.³⁸ In the colonial context, the 'Other' is the Imperial master or ideal, the principle force which defines identity, and helps to define the 'other'. Specifically, my thesis deals with colonial Queensland, in which European Australians conceptualised the State's indigenous population as the 'other'. Through this imagining of Aboriginal Australia as 'other', European Australia was also imagining the limits of their own community. In this context, the links between Anderson's conception of nation-building, imagined communities, and the conceptualisation of Aboriginal people as 'other' are clear. Even by defining the multitudinous tribes of Aboriginal Australia as 'Australian Aborigines', Europeans were engaging in the process of 'othering'. Those who studied Aboriginal people in the colonial period did not use the term 'other', or conceive of the process in Lacanian terms. Instead, the

'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in which clan fashions are analysed at length.

³⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 6.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 7.

³⁷ For the othering in the theory of psychoanalysis, see: Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*, Anthony Wilden [trans.] (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968). For an example of conceptions of the 'other' in philosophy, see: Jean-Paul Satre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, Hazel E. Barnes [trans.] (London: Methuen, 1957).

³⁸ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 171. For Spivak's use of the term, see: Gayatri Spivak, 'The Rani of Simur' in *Europe and Its Others Vol 1, Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature*, Francis Barker [ed.] (Colchester: University of Essex, 1985).

parlance of the time referred to indigenous cultures as primitivist, exotic, and Stone Age. These were all descriptors of the othering process.

This notion of the manufacturing of identity can be well understood in the context of Edward Said's work in *Orientalism*.³⁹ Said's book deals with the ways in which an imagining of the Middle East was used as a justification for a more powerful Europe to control the 'Orient'. Orientalism, therefore, was a political ideology 'which elided the Orient's difference with its weakness' and enabled actual and philosophical control of the Middle East to merge.⁴⁰ In the Australian context, Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra have explored the idea of Aboriginalism within Australian literature.⁴¹ Directly inspired by Said, they noted that 'Orientalism' and 'Aboriginalism' denote a fascination with a foreign culture ('Oriental' for the 'Orientalists'; 'Aboriginal' for the 'Aboriginalists') simultaneously working with a repression of that culture to express its own stories.⁴² This *Aboriginalism* also took place on the frontiers of Australia, where scientists and observers catalogued Aboriginal people and sought to quantify their differences on the same scale as themselves. European observers, by virtue of their own self-perceived superiority of learning and scientific method, considered that they were better-equipped to speak for foreign cultures, to record their histories and habits. By perceiving foreign cultures, and through recording their observations, European observers who engaged in Orientalism or Aboriginalism manufactured identities of the other. In doing so, they helped to shape their own identities.

In the context of this thesis, the ideas of tradition and othering will intersect with the notion of an imagined community. These terms are multi-faceted. Tradition refers both to the conception of the authentic in Aboriginal culture by European observers, as well as Eliot's notion of it being more fluid and open to innovation. I will demonstrate that both conceptions directly relate to the documentary and material evidence regarding innovation in Aboriginal culture, during the colonial period and beyond. I will also demonstrate that ideas of tradition were used to repress Aboriginal

³⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴¹ Bob Hodge, and Vijay Mishra, *Dark Side of the Dream: Australian Literature and the Postcolonial Mind* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 27

culture and its participation in the emerging narratives of an Australian nation. This relates to Anderson's notion of imagined communities, which apply in this thesis both to the European imagination of a White Australia, as well as their own imagined community of Aboriginal society. Key to these discussions is an analysis of innovation in Aboriginal material culture, and the ways in which this was interpreted.

ENTANGLEMENT: Literature on the incorporation of European and indigenous materials in colonial-era artefacts

A key method of this thesis is to examine the evidence of entanglement in the Aboriginal material culture collected by Roth and Coghlan, and the ways in which this was either overlooked or deliberately ignored. Entanglement, in the context of this study, is a term that I have chosen to describe the use of European and other foreign material by Aboriginal people in the manufacture of their material culture, such as the use of iron as an alternative to wood, bone, or stone in a spear. The term is derived from the concept of cross-cultural contact on the frontier, used to describe the complex interactions of indigenous and European cultures. Thomas specifically used the phrase 'entangled objects' as the title of one of his books.⁴³ However, what Thomas discussed, and what I am proposing, differ in intent. Thomas deals with the synthesis of desire between European demand for Pacific Islander products, and the Pacific Islander demand for European manufacture. Concerning the latter, Thomas was mostly interested in the trade in complete European goods, such as muskets and iron hatchets. Essentially, he was concerned with the exchange of commodities. Actual exchange is of less importance to my argument, since it is the incorporation of European materials into items of traditional Aboriginal manufacture which interests me. Therefore, I use Thomas's concept of 'entangled objects' somewhat differently, and I look more specifically at ways in which this kind of entanglement was viewed or ignored by Europeans.

In the recent publication *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, two articles have approached the issue of European material in the Roth collection. The first, by Satterwait, is a study of 103 objects collected from

⁴³ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*.

Normanton by Roth, from 1895-1898.⁴⁴ Satterwait acknowledges the presence of European thread, yarn, hessian and muslin fabrics, and other non-Aboriginal materials in the objects he examined.⁴⁵ Despite this acknowledgment, Satterwait makes little comment on the presence of this material and its relevance to Aboriginal adaptation.⁴⁶

The second paper, from the same volume, by Khan, describes some of Roth's collection trends and motivations in regards to the material he donated to the Australian Museum.⁴⁷ Khan acknowledges that Roth had an interest in 'new' objects, meaning the use of European materials in Aboriginal material culture.⁴⁸ Khan concludes that the low incidence of 'new' objects in the Roth collection at the Australian Museum could be because Aboriginal people found these objects to be too useful and, consequently, did not wish to part with them.⁴⁹ Khan's purpose was not to discuss the implications of this material, so she does not expand on these points. Khan did not consider the Roth collection held at the Queensland Museum and, when the two collections are considered together, in Chapter Four, the complexity of entangled objects becomes more apparent.

Beyond considerations of the Roth and Coghlan collection, there have been a number of recent publications on the incidence of European materials in Aboriginal material culture. The most notable of these publications is Jones's *Ochre and Rust* (2008).⁵⁰ Jones's purpose is to relate the 'lives of frontier objects', and also to discuss the 'traces of encounters' as expressed through the physical forms of the objects themselves.⁵¹ Such encounters include the tale of Master Blackburn's whip; an Aboriginal club acquired by a British officer who accompanied the First Fleet and who attached knotted cords to it and made it his tool of discipline for wayward

⁴⁴ Leon Satterwait, 'Collections as Artefacts: The Making and Thinking of Anthropological Museum Collections' in *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, Nicolas Peterson, Lindy Allen and Louise Hamley [eds] (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008).

⁴⁵ This paper deals with the material held at the Australian Museum. *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁴⁶ Satterwait does devote a paragraph of his paper on the implications for adaptation, though he does not discuss what this might say about the perspectives of Europeans on the issue. *Ibid*, p. 39.

⁴⁷ Kate Khan, 'The Man Who Collected Everything' in *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 181.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 183.

⁵⁰ Jones, *Ochre and Rust*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 1.

convicts and soldiers.⁵² Jones approaches frontier history in a novel way, mostly succeeding in creating an enthralling and convincing study. Yet there are some points upon which Jones spreads the use of objects too thinly, notably in his chapter on the death of John William Ogilvie Bennett.⁵³ Here, an Aboriginal string bag is used to frame the narrative in a manner which feels superficial. Instead, a series of letters and diary entries actually form the real basis for Jones's story, with the bag being peripheral to the discussion. This is not to criticise Jones for using documents in favour of objects, but only to point out that the object seemed arbitrary, in his chapter on Bennett. However, of greatest interest to my thesis are the chapters in which Jones discusses the use of European material by Aboriginal people, specifically in their own objects. For example, Chapter Three discusses the use of metal—whether from axe heads, telegraph poles or otherwise—for cutting implements by Aboriginal people in Western Australia.⁵⁴

In discussing the incidence of metal in Aboriginal cutting implements, Jones presents a profound study of the adoption of practical materials from one culture by another. In the context of evolutionary theory in the Victorian period, Jones also demonstrates an essential contradiction in thought—that evolutionists could not rationalise how a culture they considered to be unable to adapt could possibly be adapting through this use of metal.⁵⁵ Jones also made another crucial argument that some objects of Aboriginal material culture demonstrated adaptation to demand and ideas from Europeans. In particular, Jones questions whether or not *toas*, which have been described by Johann Reuther as complex symbols used as signposts, were in fact *not* location markers at all, but instead examples of Aboriginal art.⁵⁶ Further, *toas* may have been objects which served to supply a growing demand, by European collectors, for Aboriginal objects of unique purpose and beauty. Jones argued that: 'The case of the *toas* seems to provide an example of a tendency to interpret cultural data according to prevailing assumptions about authenticity and tradition'.⁵⁷

⁵² This particular object and story are the subject of the first chapter of *Ochre and Rust*. See: *Ibid*, pp. 9-49.

⁵³ *Ibid*, pp. 130-185.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 91-129.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 129.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 225-281.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 242.

Jones's further argument, that Reuther may have been motivated purely by a demand to profit from his collection of *toas*, bears some consideration in regards to Roth. Although I believe that Roth was not initially motivated by commercial ambitions when he acquired his collection, it is possible that his sale of material to the Australian Museum was. My precise argument here will be elaborated in Chapter Four, where it is better understood with reference to the material evidence and Roth's own writing. Suffice to say here that Roth only sold his collection after he had decided to leave the country and had, by this stage, amply demonstrated the seriousness of his ethnographic research. The prejudicing of the authentic and the traditional in Roth's collection can be viewed as evidence that his Queensland Museum collection was, by comparison, devalued and less aesthetically pleasing to him. I do not believe that Jones conclusively proves that Reuther was commercially motivated, though a comparison with Roth's sale to the Australian Museum may service Jones's argument. This comparison will also be returned to in Chapter Four. Although not specifically concerned with *toas*, this thesis does intend to examine themes similar to those raised by Jones above regarding the extent of 'prevailing assumptions' and ideas of how tradition informs the interpretation of data in material culture collections, and the relation this has to the commercial dimension of museum acquisitions.

A detailed discussion of the adoption of European materials by Aboriginal people is not the main purpose of *Ochre and Rust*. Instead, Jones used objects to describe frontier contacts between Europeans and Aboriginal people in a fresh way. He demonstrated, through objects, that the frontier was a complex place, not simply characterised by exploitation, deceit and violence, but also a place in which reciprocity could sometimes exist. Henry Reynolds also discussed the adoption of European metal and manufactures by Aboriginal people in the colonial period.⁵⁸ Reynolds notes how Aboriginal people accrued European objects for curiosity's sake, their camps later being discovered to be well-stocked with these artefacts, as if on display. Nonetheless, this discussion is peripheral to Reynolds's purpose and, like many discussions of Aboriginal adoption of European materials, remains a fringe interest in the literature. One purpose of this thesis is to bring such interests to the

⁵⁸ Henry Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal resistance to the European invasion of Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006), pp. 53-56.

fore and to show how display functioned on the European side of the frontier. The evidence Reynolds cites suggests it may be the case that such Aboriginal camps had collections of European ‘curios’, after this fashion. In my view, these may be examples of frontier museums from the ‘other’ side of the frontier. But this thesis is about creations of the frontier in European minds and, as interesting as the idea of a museum-type display of European material by Aboriginal people is, a discussion of this is not my focus. However, this will form the focus of a future research paper.

Rodney Harrison’s recent study of Kimberly Points also discusses the concept of cultural bias in the act of collection.⁵⁹ Kimberly Points, which were ‘bifacially pressure-flaked [spear] points from the Kimberly region’, were most commonly made from bottle-glass.⁶⁰ Harrison makes the argument that the manufacture of Kimberley Points had ‘little or nothing to do with mainstream stone tool manufacture in Australian prehistory’, yet they were often considered by European collectors as the most visually stunning examples of a ‘Stone-Age’ people to be found.⁶¹ Kim Ackerman criticised Harrison’s findings for being unsound and unsupported by his own observations amongst men who had made and used Kimberley Points.⁶² I am not engaging in the debate over Harrison’s proposition. My interest here is in the argument that Kimberley Points were seen as objects of stone-tool manufacture, although they commonly used glass and not stone for the actual point. This is a crucial distinction, and it is one which Ackerman does not acknowledge in his reply to Harrison’s article. Whether bottle glass was scavenged or traded, it is certainly the case that the material was not ‘Stone Age’. If traditional manufacturing methods were being used, despite the new material, this is actually a classic example of an object which displays cultural entanglement. Many more of these kinds of entangled objects will be discussed in Chapter Four. The fact that collectors could see their own materials, like iron or glass, and either not recognise or completely ignore the significance of their use was a persistent phenomenon.

⁵⁹ Rodney Harrison, ‘An Artefact of Colonial Desire?: Kimberley Points and the Technologies of Enchantment’ in *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 47, No. 1, Feb. (2006), pp. 63-88.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 63.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 78.

⁶² Kim Ackerman, ‘On Kimberley Points and the Politics of Enchantment’ in *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (February 2007), p. 133.

More attention has been paid in other contexts beyond Australia to the idea of adaptive market responses in indigenous communities. Ann Carlos and Frank Lewis discussed the discrimination evidenced in ledgers of trade goods between American Indians and the Hudson Bay Company, in the eighteenth century, within the context of adaptation.⁶³ According to their conclusions, the Hudson Bay Company considered the American Indians to be ‘exacting consumers’, and shrewd and reactive to European demand.⁶⁴ Other research has demonstrated that American Indians were keen to incorporate European trade goods, such as glassware and copper alongside their own goods, and this was a process that became charged with ritual significance.⁶⁵ Cross-cultural trade on the African Gold Coast similarly displayed evidence of exaction amongst indigenous peoples.⁶⁶ Certain tribal groups acted as intermediaries between other Africans and Europeans and were able to use their position for local aggrandisement. Also, the introduction of European iron enabled Africans on the Gold Coast to expand their rubber trade through the use of new tools.⁶⁷

Indigenous adaptation to European contact and demand could have sinister dimensions, as is evidenced by Robin Law’s discussion of the Dahomey slave trade in the Bight of Benin.⁶⁸ In this case, the introduction of a specific type of European material—firearms—had the effect of enabling the kingdom of Dahomey to conquer its neighbours. Consequently, the spoils of their wars were sold to European slave traders.⁶⁹ There are numerous other examples of the negative influences of European trade with indigenous peoples but cross-cultural trade was multi-dimensional, and could sometimes have positive aspects for indigenous peoples even when the overall contact proved deleterious.

⁶³ Ann M. Carlos and Frank D. Lewis, ‘Trade, Consumption, and the Native Economy: Lessons from York Factory, Hudson Bay’ in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (Dec., 2001), pp. 1037-1064.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 1054.

⁶⁵ Christopher L. Miller and George R. Hamell, ‘A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact: Cultural Symbols and Colonial Trade’ in *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (Sep., 1986), p. 315.

⁶⁶ For an analysis of this, see: Raymond Dumett, ‘The Rubber Trade of the Gold Coast and Asante in the Nineteenth Century: African Innovation and Market Responsiveness’ in *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1971), pp. 79-101.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 86-98.

⁶⁸ Robin Law, ‘Dahomey and the Slave Trade: Reflections on the Historiography of the Rise of Dahomey’ in *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Special Issue in Honour of J.D. Fage (1986), pp. 237-267.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 247.

Robin Torrence discussed the phenomenon of trade-good manufacture by indigenous peoples specifically for European collectors in her article on obsidian-tipped artefacts in the Admiralty Islands.⁷⁰ Torrence demonstrated that the presence of European traders, collectors, missionaries, and anthropologists stimulated the production by Admiralty Islanders of artefacts for trade. Indeed, the proliferation of elaborately decorated spear heads was largely a response to European demands for more aesthetically pleasing artefacts.⁷¹ The idea that there could be some level of mutuality of exchange reintroduces the example of cross-cultural contact in colonial Australia. The possibility that exchanges fell within the definition of what Robert Reece described as the ‘major characteristic of Aboriginal-European interaction: ‘accommodation’, is worthy of further consideration.⁷²

The concept of ‘accommodation’ or ‘entanglement’ has become a persistent means of looking at the frontier in Australian histories. Mary Louise Pratt defined the frontier as ‘the contact zone’ in her book, *Imperial Eyes* (1992).⁷³ She argued that ‘the frontier is a frontier only with respect to Europe’, and that her ‘contact zone’ more adequately implies the spatial and cultural interactions within the same geographic space. David Roberts saw the frontier in colonial New South Wales as a space in which Europeans and Aboriginal people might develop a sense of Self and ‘other’ from encounters with different peoples.⁷⁴ Jones, in *Ochre and Rust*, also imagined the frontier as a place of cultural engagement, a place of sometimes reciprocal benefits and exploitation between Aboriginal people and Europeans. This was a departure from Frederick Jackson Turner’s highly influential model of the frontier in American history as ‘the outer edge of the wave—the meeting point between savagery and civilisation . . . [lying] at the hither edge of free land . . . [and] the term is an elastic one, and for our purposes does not need sharp definition’, where the frontier was

⁷⁰ Robin Torrence, ‘Ethnoarchaeology, Museum Collections and Prehistoric Exchange: Obsidian-Tipped Artefacts from the Admiralty Islands’ in *World Archaeology*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Ancient Trade: New Perspectives (Feb., 1993), pp. 467-481.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 472.

⁷² R.H.W. Reece, *Aborigines and Colonists: Aborigines and colonial society in New South Wales in the 1830s and 1840s* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1974), p. 17.

⁷³ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 6-7.

⁷⁴ David Andrew Roberts, ‘The Frontier’ in *High Lean Country: Land, people and memory in New England*, Alan Atkinson, J.S. Ryan, Iain Davidson, and Andrew Piper [eds] (Crow’s Nest, New South Wales: Allen & Unwin, 2006), p. 107.

viewed solely from the perspective of an imperial power.⁷⁵ Turner's use of 'savagery and civilisation' is a classic instance of the process of othering, by imagining himself and his readers as the civilised, and both the wilderness and the Indians as the savage. But there are other ideas of the frontier that are relevant to conceptualising my thesis. Most notably, J.J. Healy's idea that text could be a frontier is particularly relevant.⁷⁶ Healy argued that representations of the frontier through literature were themselves extensions of the frontier, as the text, in this instance, became place.⁷⁷ This view is relevant for this thesis because I deal with the imagination of the frontier through the use of objects in museum displays, and in ways the frontier was imagined in the text sources associated with collection and the people from whom collections were gathered.

Reece's notion of the frontier—as a zone of interaction and accommodation—is especially relevant to this thesis. In particular, the material record in the Roth and Coghlan collections demonstrates profound evidence of adaptation and accommodation on the part of Aboriginal people. Yet, it must be stressed that this thesis is also a history of how the frontier and, specifically, how Aboriginal people on the frontier were viewed by Europeans operating far from this 'contact zone'. This will be especially demonstrated in reference to the display of Aboriginal material culture at the Queensland Museum. In particular, the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama, which was an exhibition created by the then director of the Museum Dr Hamlyn-Harris, will be considered. This exhibition was a mainstay of the Museum, being in place from 1914 until 1985, when the Museum shifted to its current location. Though I refer to this display throughout this thesis, I pay particular attention to it in the fourth chapter.

Aboriginal adaptation to new materials and a new society was not, in the period to be discussed, believed to be a possibility. Many of those who studied Aboriginal people believed that they were incapable of adaptation and, in the few instances where

⁷⁵ Frederick Jackson Turner, *Frontier & Section: selected essays of Frederick Jackson Turner*, Ray Allen Billington[ed.] (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1961), p. 38.

⁷⁶ J.J. Healy, 'Literature, Power and the Refusals of Big Bear: Reflections on the Treatment of the Indian and the Aborigine' in *Australian/Canadian Literatures in English: Comparative Perspectives*, Russell McDougall and Gillian Whitlock [eds] (North Ryde, NSW: Methuen Australia Pty Ltd, 1987), pp. 66-93.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 66.

adaptation was admitted to have occurred, this was always demonised as the by-product of degeneration. This was seen as a departure from tradition, and an inauthentic element of Aboriginal culture. This is a constant theme in this thesis, and in a vast amount of the primary literature discussed. For example, Meston, who also collected Aboriginal material culture, wrote of Aboriginal adaptation in the April 1905 edition of *Steele Rudd's Magazine*, on the 'Evolution of the Boomerang', of which the principal point was that there had been no actual 'evolution' of the weapon for centuries.⁷⁸ Meston proposed that the boomerang was evidence of the lack of technological sophistication of the Aboriginal people, for 'painfully slow was the process of evolution, for it had to fight against a merciless hatred of innovation in what was one of the most bigotedly conservative races of mankind'.⁷⁹

It is clear from these sources that, despite the often ruinous effects of contact with Europe in the colonial period, there could be ways in which the exchange of material and ideas that indigenous peoples, if only for a brief time, could profit from the trade. This is not to suggest that the interaction was always of wondrous benefit to indigenous peoples. Nor is it making the case that indigenous people had absolute luxury of choice. There is no doubt that the colonial process was largely negative for indigenous people. Thus, these sources have also served to provide brief introductions, not only on the position of research into the incorporation of European material into indigenous material culture, but also into the influence that cross-cultural contact had upon material culture production, and upon local customs and ambitions.

The incidence of European material among the Aboriginal artefacts collected for the Queensland Museum is not adequately described by the phrases cross-cultural exchange, exchange, or hybridisation. 'Exchange' implies the abstract notion of reciprocity which misrepresents the character of the frontier, and implies that both European and Aboriginal peoples had equal gains and advantages in their interactions with one another.⁸⁰ Any sense of absolute mutuality of cross-cultural contact tends to undermine portraits of opposition in colonial histories. Over-arching theories of colonial interaction can sometimes ignore the inherent differences in localities. For

⁷⁸ A. Meston, 'The Evolution of the Boomerang Part I', in *Steele Rudd's Magazine* (April 1905), pp 365-370.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 367.

⁸⁰ Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, p. 119.

example, the Dutch Empire dealt with the indigenous people of North America and Formosa (Taiwan) but treated each differently. In North America, local circumstances meant that the Dutch army could not quell Indian resistance and, thus, they preferred trade; in the case of Formosa, the Dutch were able to use their army and navy more effectively to control local populations and, thus, their governance there was more noted for its brutality.⁸¹ Similarly, this thesis considers the Queensland frontier in the context of European imperialism and ideology, and also within the context of the Queensland colonial experience more specifically. Adaptation and innovation in the Aboriginal material culture in Queensland has been considered in isolation, though European reflections on this have not.

Hybridisation, a term popular in post-colonial studies, refers to the creation of a third hybrid 'species' or culture from the interactions of two others.⁸² Within the Roth and Coghlan collections, the incidence of objects of traditional indigenous manufacture bearing European materials could be thought of as evidence of hybridity. However, the term implies the creation of something entirely new, which no longer completely belongs to its heritage. This thesis will argue that the material culture exhibiting traits of indigenous and European manufacture does not imply a new kind of Aboriginal identity or culture being created, rather, that it is evidence of survival and adaptation—a reaction of traditional Aboriginal communities to the industrial world of the Europeans. European goods were incorporated into the traditional materials of Aboriginal people as either easier or superior items to the traditional resources, not necessarily as complete alternatives or cultural extinguishers. For this reason, the terms, 'entanglement' or 'entangled' will be used to refer to objects of traditional Aboriginal manufacture which use European materials. This relates to Eliot's concept of tradition as something innovative, rather than the notion that tradition means stagnation.

⁸¹ For a detailed comparison of Dutch policies in North America and Formosa, see: Laurence M. Hauptman and Ronald G. Knapp, 'Dutch-Aboriginal Interaction in New Netherland and Formosa: An Historical Geography of Empire' in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 121, No. 2 (1977), pp. 166-182.

⁸² The term 'hybridity', as it relates to historical and colonial studies is most often associated with the work of Homi Bhabha, who saw the relationship of the coloniser and their subjects as one of interdependence, where identities were acquired through the mutual interactions of each. See: Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man' in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

The term entanglement, as I propose to use it, will be defined in detail in the fourth chapter. My choice of this word was the subject of extensive deliberation. Hybridity was rejected for the reasons discussed above and, initially I preferred the use of the word 'integration', which had not, to the best of my knowledge, been used before. However, on reflection, it was decided that 'integration' implied something I did not intend—namely assimilation. As such, I deferred to the use of the word 'entangled', inspired by Thomas's use of the phrase in his *Entangled Objects*. As stated above, my definition of this concept will be fully expanded in Chapter Four. Briefly stated here, it means any object of Aboriginal material culture which shows the use of foreign materials (usually European) in their manufacture.

MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE STUDY OF HISTORY

This thesis deals extensively with objects and their interpretation, material culture as a key element in re-examining the record of the frontier in Queensland, and what entanglement signifies for cross-cultural studies in this context. Less than two decades ago, in a review of recent publications in the field, anthropologist Wilcomb Washburn noted that 'material culture . . . has for many years existed in a murky arena of questionable respectability'.⁸³ Before approaching the validity of this statement, it is worthwhile defining what material culture is. In the same year as Washburn's review, Clifford Clark defined material culture 'as the study of society's values, ideals, and assumptions through artifacts'.⁸⁴ Ann Martin essentially agreed with the basis of this definition when she wrote that 'the study of material culture is about the way people live their lives through . . . the material world. The venture is premised upon the proposition that artefacts are integral to cultural behaviour'.⁸⁵ Artefacts can illuminate culture, according to this literature. From this perspective, human behaviour is expressed through the material world and, therefore, artefacts produced by people indicate their behaviour.⁸⁶

⁸³ Wilcomb Washburn, 'Review: Material Culture and Public History: Maturing Together?' in *The Public Historian*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1991), p.53.

⁸⁴ Clifford Clark, 'House Furnishings as Cultural Evidences: The Promise and Peril of Material Culture Studies' in *American Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (1991), p. 73.

⁸⁵ Ann Smart Martin, 'Material Culture in Early America' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, Vol. 53, No. 1 (1996), p. 5.

⁸⁶ J. Jefferson Reid, William L. Rathje, and Michael B. Schiffer, 'Expanding Archaeology' in *American Antiquity*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Jan. 1974), p. 126.

Despite the apparent clarity of these definitions, only two years previous to Washburn's review, Polly Wiessner considered material culture studies to have drawn no universal correlations between 'human behaviour [and] material culture'.⁸⁷ Though Wiessner argued that material culture had not been proven to be capable of suggesting definitive truths about human societies, she does see that the object has an important role in defining culture. Wiessner focused upon the idea of style and posited that 'culture and symbolic structures define people', hence changes in style in an object indicates change in social expression and culture.⁸⁸ The object, therefore, has much to offer the researcher in the analysis of culture.

In his *The Social Life of Things* (1986), Arjun Appadurai argued that objects, or commodities, have social lives.⁸⁹ Specifically, Appadurai saw this social life as an element of an object's exchange value, or of its political purpose. Stated more clearly, it is the object's use and value to a society which imbues it with meaning. Objects, therefore, represent 'very complex social forms and distributions of knowledge'.⁹⁰ Culture and history determine value and what is manufactured as much as economic necessity does.⁹¹ Changes in artefacts, both stylistically and in terms of what is produced, can indicate prevailing tastes and lifestyle patterns.⁹² Material culture studies, therefore, add a further dimension to historical inquiry. This is possible when it is considered, in light of the above arguments, that an object can tell the viewer something of the social and political world in which it was conceived.

However, an object's role in cultural interpretation and record keeping is not always clear. Invisible attitudes and beliefs which informed their intended purpose and manufacture are also embodied in their forms.⁹³ Jules Prown argued that an analysis

⁸⁷ P. Wiessner, 'Style and Changing Relations Between the Individual and Society' in I. Hodder [ed.], *The Meaning of Things: Material Culture and Symbolic Expression* (London: Harper Collins, 1989), p. 56.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 58.

⁸⁹ Arjun Appadurai [ed.], 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value' in his *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 3.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 41.

⁹¹ Wiessner, *The Meaning of Things*, p. 57.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 59.

⁹³ Jules David Prown, 'In Pursuit of Culture: The Formal Language of Objects' in *American Art*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer, 1995), p.3.

of objects based on their function is far too simplistic.⁹⁴ A more profound understanding of an object can be made by considering the style of an object's presentation. Ideas and beliefs may find material expression in an object's style. Martin expanded this view in her article 'Material Culture in Early America' by explaining that objects are not simply tools, but are instead embodiments of social and cultural meanings in physical form.⁹⁵ The point is that the material culture produced by a society provides a pervasive record of those who made the objects, and those who interacted with them. Indeed, artefacts—as much as written records, oral histories, art, literature, and cultural memories—are a foundation for interpreting culture.

Despite an object's value for interpreting the past, there has been a consistent argument by some of those who study material culture that historians have an ignorance of, or distaste for, material culture studies. Thomas Schlereth argued that social historians rarely trouble themselves with studying objects, though he believed objects are inseparable from their social context.⁹⁶ Martin made a similar claim that, within the discipline of history, material culture studies are little more than an academic fringe, and are largely ignored by mainstream historiography.⁹⁷ She argued that despite the fact that 'artifacts . . . demonstrate cultural capital in the form of privileged knowledge', social history does not utilise this resource.⁹⁸ J.H. Hutton, in an article in the mid-1940s, declared that: 'I venture to suggest that we have learned more of the daily life of ancient Rome from the work of archaeologists and from excavators of Pompeii, Herculaneum and other sites than we have from Latin literature'.⁹⁹

More recently, Colleen Kriger concluded that 'historians in general seem reluctant to interrogate sources other than those of the printed word'.¹⁰⁰ According to Kriger,

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Martin, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, p. 6.

⁹⁶ Thomas Schlereth, 'Material Culture Studies and Social History Research' in *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Summer, 1983), pp. 118-20.

⁹⁷ Martin, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, p. 6.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹⁹ J.H. Hutton, 'The Place of Material Culture in the Study of Anthropology' in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (1944), p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Colleen E. Kriger, 'Museum Collections as Sources for African History' in *History in Africa*, Vol. 23 (1996), p. 129.

objects are documents from the past, useful to the scholar in interpreting that past. In her view, historians commonly treat objects in one of two ways—as representations of cultural trends begun by social elites; or, as the almost immovable cultural by-products of common people, indications of thought, yet not as dynamic as other forms of historical record.¹⁰¹ Masatoshi Konishi argued a similar view to Kriger's, stating that 'artifacts are the most direct and concrete products of particular cultural traits and therefore the best and most basic introduction to the study of ethos'.¹⁰²

Though these views have some validity, they overstate the supposed ignorance of physical evidence in historical writing. For instance, military historians can over-emphasise weaponry and technical innovation in explaining the reasons for battlefield triumphs. Further, a recent trend in the social analysis of military violence has relied heavily upon the archaeological evidence to support claims that soldiers are inherently pacifistic.¹⁰³ More importantly, historical archaeology has become a profitable and vibrant field of historical writing in recent years. This is especially the case in Australia, where numerous publications have emerged synthesising the archaeological record with document-based research.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true that conventional historical studies have traditionally placed greater value in their analysis of written records. In one of those rare works of academic philosophy which received mainstream distribution, E.H. Carr's *What is History?* (1961) stated 'the documents were the Ark of the Covenant in the temple of facts. The reverent historian approached them with head bowed and spoke of them in hushed tones'.¹⁰⁵ Much of historical theory deals with the written

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Masatoshi Konishi, 'The Museum and Japanese Studies' in *Current Anthropology*. Vol. 28, No. 4, Supplement: An Anthropological Profile of Japan (Aug-Oct. 1987), pp. 96-97.

¹⁰³ The literature on this topic has been growing rapidly, in recent years, though older publications also exist. See, for example: Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1996); Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behaviour of Men in Battle* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1970); J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (Winnipeg: Bison Books, 1998).

¹⁰⁴ A good example of this is the work of historian Grace Karskens. See: Grace Karskens, *The Rocks: Life in Early Sydney* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1997); and Grace Karskens, *Inside the Rocks: The archaeology of a neighbourhood* (Hong Kong: Colourcraft, 1999). Consider the importance of objects as narrative tools to the already discussed: Jones, *Ochre and Rust*.

¹⁰⁵ Carr's book is based on a series of academic lectures he gave, with the transcripts forming the prose. First published in 1961, this erudite volume has been reprinted four times, each time by a major publisher. That it forms part of Penguin Publishing's orange-covered Popular Penguins series says

word, in the interpretation and making of narrative, or the subjective nature of historiography. Many historical discourses focus upon what is written, although there is also a strong trend to incorporate more oral accounts into historical narratives.¹⁰⁶ Certainly, the document has continued to be the most important tool to the historian, and there is some accuracy in the allegations that historians ignore material culture in their own truth-telling endeavours.

However, considering the emergence of object-based histories, I see this thesis as an important means of supplementing frontier history and the current trend in some historical studies which incorporate archaeological evidence. Documents form a major component of my research and are integral to the interpretations of the objects. However, the material record as a tool for historical interpretation is, within the discipline of history, the more novel of my sources. Further, I do not see objects as ‘immovable cultural by-products’, but as indications of dynamic historical, social, and technological factors. In this sense, their use in this research is intended to further the existing histories of the frontier, and to reconsider the documents in light of the material evidence.

PERCEIVING THE OBJECT

It is now necessary to consider the ways in which objects are perceived, how they are seen as ‘artefacts’, ‘curios’, and as unchanging historical evidence or cultural relics. Integrating semiotic theory into a discussion of the object helps to illuminate my analysis of material culture. The point of this discussion on perception and ideas of objective truth through material culture is not to challenge the literature on the field, but to set the ground for a consideration that the objects to be discussed in this thesis were interpreted as embodiments of particular kinds of cultural truths, without any

much for its mainstream success, in the world of literature. Edition cited: E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ For example, see Alan Atkinson’s emerging three volume series on Australian history, which specifically engages with oral history as a primary tool for its analysis. Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia. A History. Vol. 1* (South Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 1997); Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia. A History. Vol. 2* (South Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2004). Henry Reynolds also relied upon oral accounts from Townsville for much of his discussion in: Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier*. A milestone of the use of oral history in the Australian context is: Deborah Bird Rose, *Hidden Histories: Black stories from Victoria River Downs, Humbert River and Wave Hill Stations* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1991).

consideration by the interpreters of their own cultural milieu, or of the adaptive behaviour of Aboriginal people on the Queensland frontier.

Semiotic theory, the study of signs and systems of signs, is a generally ahistorical theory which can be readily applied to objects in much the same way that it is more commonly applied to language, tales, myths, and so on.¹⁰⁷ As Stephen Barley wrote, 'totems [objects] are but lit candles hovering above both the icing and cake of culture'.¹⁰⁸ Robert Caserio argued that communication includes an invisible set of terms evident even when not consciously expressed.¹⁰⁹ Applying this idea to material culture studies, we see a reflection of Prown's assertion that 'objects . . . embody unconscious attitudes and values'.¹¹⁰ Ivanov Vyach, a Russian semiotic theorist, considered the value of the notion of unconscious signs when he saw them as the 'necessary link in the intellectual development of a society'.¹¹¹ Vivien Fryd, in her 'Object in the Age of Theory', asked whether objects can help the researcher to understand culture, or whether culture should help to understand the object.¹¹² This thesis will demonstrate that at the time of Australian Federation, the material culture of Aboriginal people was being used by settler society to both understand *and* to define culture.

Perception can impose an object's reality. Perception is not confined only to the viewer, but also to the function of an object, and the various roles it fulfils in social interactions.¹¹³ For example, a spear can have a value as an object of labour, taking into account the time and resources of those who make it. Once completed, a spear fulfils in theory, if not always in practice, the role of a weapon of war or of hunting. This is not only a perception on the part of the owner, but is of such universal shape and style that it can be recognised instantly by most casual observers as such. However, the spear may also become an object of diplomacy and exchange, if

¹⁰⁷ Stephen R. Barley, 'Semiotics and the Study of Occupational and Organizational Cultures' in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1983), p. 393.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 409.

¹⁰⁹ Robert L. Caserio, 'The Name of the Horse: "Hard Times", Semiotics, and the Supernatural' in *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1986), p. 13.

¹¹⁰ Prown, *American Art*, p. 3.

¹¹¹ Ivanov Vs. Vyach, 'The Science of Semiotics' in *New Literary History*, Doris Bradbury [trans.], Vol. 9, No. 2 (1978), p. 200.

¹¹² Vivien Fryd, 'The Object in the Age of Theory' in *American Art*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1994), p. 4.

¹¹³ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 4.

bartered in trade or, for instance, offered in peace between two opposing parties. If broken, the spear may lose its symbolism of war and, instead, become a reminder of defeat, tragedy, or loss. The above are only examples of some of the possible interpretations of an object.

Taking any one of the spears which Roth collected, we may easily imagine their perceived roles as an item of labour, or as a weapon—despite the fact that Roth may never have seen one of the spears he collected actually being made or thrown at a target.¹¹⁴ From Roth's perspective, the spear becomes one of two things: firstly, it fulfils a role as an object of exchange, as evidence of interaction and trade between himself and an indigenous person; secondly, the spear becomes an ethnographic curiosity, intended for Roth's own study as an example of an everyday item used by Aboriginal people. Roth's perception of the item as a valuable scientific example of a vanishing culture is reinforced when it is accepted into the collection of the Queensland Museum.

Through perception, objects both lose and acquire meaning, reflecting both the culture of the collector and the collected. As Thomas writes in *Entangled Objects*, 'objects are not what they are made to be but what they have become'.¹¹⁵ Another way of seeing this has been argued by William Noble and Iain Davidson, who wrote that the creation of 'meaning occurs via the discursive practices of human communities'.¹¹⁶ People are the ones who see, understand, and interpret, and human perception is socially constructed.¹¹⁷ The point is to be sceptical of so-called objective analyses of material culture, and to recognise that 'all of what comprises an archaeological record can be brought under the one heading, namely, *signs*'.¹¹⁸ What objects become depends on the interaction between the observer and the thing in a particular temporal and situational context. Thus, objects are not necessarily what they were or what they have become, but they are multi-faceted things which can be defined by our own perception. These perceptions are fluid and changing.

¹¹⁴ Although his observations in his bulletins demonstrate that he had seen spears being used. Whether he saw any of the spears he collected being used is unknown.

¹¹⁵ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 4.

¹¹⁶ William Noble and Iain Davidson, *Human Evolution, Language and Mind: A Psychological and Archaeological Inquiry* (Hong Kong: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 111.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 86.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 111.

COLLECTION

Flowing from the above discussion, it is necessary to consider what collecting is, what collections are conceived to be, and how the creation of collections as impositions of order relates to the ideas of perception and identity. Museum acquisitions and displays are composed of what is often broadly described as a collection. Collections themselves are often acquired independently of a museum; the majority of collections become part of private displays and hoards. According to J. Alsop, in *The Rare Art Traditions*, the act of collecting ‘is to gather objects belonging to a particular category the collector happens to fancy’.¹¹⁹ Stating the obvious, Alsop defined that a ‘collection is what has been gathered’.¹²⁰ Alsop’s description is too broad to be of particular value to this thesis, except in demonstrating a very basic definition. The common-sense nature of her definition lends itself to any kind of collection of objects, yet suggests very little for the cultural dimensions of artefact acquisition. Under this definition, one may just as easily discuss the acquisition of military hardware by the State as discuss a Rembrandt bought by an art enthusiast.

W. Muensterberger presents a more serviceable definition by stating that collecting is ‘the selecting, gathering and keeping of objects of subjective value’.¹²¹ The emphasis on *subjective value* is important, as it incorporates the concept of perspective and connotes a greater scope than Alsop’s definition. In acquiring objects, the collector deliberately or unknowingly applies his or her own evaluation of an object and catalogues them alongside the remainder of their collection. Muensterberger excludes from his definition the mere accumulation of things, and object acquisitions garnered for financial gain.¹²² Although it will be demonstrated in this thesis that artefact collections can have an intellectual *and* financial motivation, Muensterberger’s exclusion of commerce from his definition is telling. Car dealerships have particular collections of vehicles, though their purpose is not so much display as it is retail.

¹¹⁹ J. Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions: A History of Collecting and its Linked Phenomena* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 70.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ W. Muensterberger, *Collecting: An Unruly Passion, Psychological Perspectives* (New Jersey: Princetown University Press, 1994), p. 18.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Conversely, collections of ethnography and art are displayed to fascinate and to inform, and to contribute to the prestige of the owner—not primarily to sell. The act of collection, therefore, has a cultural dimension in itself, elevating the practice from the mundane or commercial to the aesthetic or academic.

In their *Collecting in a Consumer Culture* (1990), Belk, Wallendorf, Sherry and Holbrook provide a more expanded definition of collection. According to the authors:

Collecting [is] the selective, active, and longitudinal acquisition, possession and disposition of an interrelated set of differentiated object [s] (material things, ideas, beings or experiences) that contribute to and derive extraordinary meaning from the entity (the collection) that this set is perceived to constitute.¹²³

This definition raises the argument that collections are not merely confined to physical objects, but also comprise the ideological, the academic, and the metaphysical. Were the Spanish collecting souls in the New World, for instance? More importantly, however, this definition explains that collection seeks to create or derive meaning from its objects. Physical collections are as much collections of the invisible as the visible—they are a composition of what is conceived as a type, culture, or a theme. The invisible parts of a collection are composed of what semioticians would term unspoken signs which catalogue and categorise. Yet, there is another dimension to this. Intangible heritage, such as ceremony, dance, and performance cannot so easily be collected, and so does not generally form part of the material record of a culture. Technological advancements in recording sounds and images have made this kind of collection a possibility. However, there were few means of so easily doing this in the colonial period.

The notion of the creation of ideas through collecting was elaborated upon by S.M. Pearce in her ‘Collecting Reconsidered’.¹²⁴ Specifically, the author saw collection as an intent to emphasise classification by removing objects from their original context and placing them ‘into relationships . . . by seriality’.¹²⁵ Collections are formed through ‘the imposition of ideas of classification and seriality on the external

¹²³ R. Belk, M. Wallendorf, J. Sherry, and M. Holbrook, *Collecting in a Consumer Culture* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 18.

¹²⁴ S.M. Pearce, ‘Collecting Reconsidered’ in S.M. Pearce [ed.], *Interpreting Objects and Collections* (London: Routledge, 1994).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

world'.¹²⁶ Object acquisitions, therefore, constitute a deliberate attempt to both understand the world and to place some order upon it. Stamp collections, hairpins, toys, trading cards and so forth are commonly collected and represent little more than the collector's 'fancy', as Alsop explained.¹²⁷ However, Pearce's definition better suits collections acquired for ethnographic and cultural purposes, in which classification of the 'external world' is a fundamental element. Ethnographic collections acquired by museums are conscious attempts to explain and categorise cultures. Furthermore, museum acquisitions always fall into the definition of Belk *et al.*, in that they are more than mere displays of objects, and that they are collections of 'ideas, beings, or experiences'.¹²⁸ This notion is articulated in this thesis by the demonstration of the interrelation of the written records, which are themselves narratives of experiences as much as the expression of ideas. Accounts in informal letters, or as propounded in text books or ethnographic literature were one means by which to articulate collections of the ephemeral, and to explain the frontier and Aboriginal people. The collections of Roth and Coghlan themselves were the physical manifestations, as viewed by Europeans, of the ideas they were trying to express. In this sense, they are very much ideas, beings and experiences.

Ethnographic collections in the nineteenth century were made by professional scientists and amateur enthusiasts. Though this thesis discusses the collections of both amateurs and professionals, it will be demonstrated that, in the construction of indigenous knowledge and identity, it was the work of ethnographers which had the greatest influence in shaping thought. This taxonomy of the 'professional' and the 'amateur' is borrowed directly from David Kaus, who suggested that collectors fell into one or the other category.¹²⁹ As Kaus defines, professional collectors were more systematic and sought broader collections, whereas amateurs often sought a narrow range of object types.¹³⁰ However, I feel that Kaus's definition requires expansion, and I would like to suggest that professionals are also defined by how much they engage with and envision that they are contributing to the theoretical dimensions of

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹²⁷ Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions*, p. 70.

¹²⁸ Belk *et al.*, *Collecting in a Consumer Culture*, p. 18.

¹²⁹ David Kaus, 'Professionals and Amateurs: Different Histories of Collecting in the National Ethnographic Collection' *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 288.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

their collection discipline, such as ethnography, art, and so forth. In this sense, Roth is the professional, while Coghlan is the amateur. Field workers made it their aim to study so-called untouched 'native' culture, and to predict and explain patterns of behaviour amongst indigenous peoples.¹³¹ Material culture collections were one means by which it was thought that cultures could be understood. Collections represented an attempt to classify. As the anthropologist E.P. Elkin stated in his 1946 article in *Man*, Aboriginal people were seen by many scientists as 'cultural "guinea pigs"''.¹³²

In the Australian context, this 'guinea pig' element is especially relevant, as it was a commonly held belief that the Australian colonies represented a perfect testing ground for the emerging human sciences. In the nineteenth century, it was taken as axiomatic that Aboriginal people were always hovering a generation or two from extinction.¹³³ The reasons, for this imagined extinction, mirror those of Europeans looking at the 'Orient', as defined by Said. As seen by European observers, Aboriginal people were in decline, and were therefore weaker than Europeans; they were weaker because of their differences to Europeans and their differences were governed by their 'race'. Race is a contested term, and is used here only in the context of nineteenth-century understanding of the concept. From the perspective of Victorian-era race theory, Australia's Aboriginal people were imagined as being the lowest form of humanity.¹³⁴ As a people imagined to be primitive, the chief interest for the European observer was how a study of Aboriginal people could contribute to a study of the 'higher races', and what they could tell anthropology and history about the pre-history of Europe.¹³⁵ This is yet another example of the process of othering, discussed earlier.

¹³¹ A.P. Elkin, 'Conservation of Aboriginal Peoples Whose Modes of Life are of Scientific Interest' in *Man*, Vol. 46 (1946), p. 95.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹³³ There is a vast body of literature on this subject. See, for example: Russell McGregor, 'The Doomed Race: A Scientific Axiom of the Late Nineteenth Century' in *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 39 (1993), pp. 14-22; Russell McGregor, 'Degrees of Fatalism' in *Collisions of Culture and Identities: Settlers and Indigenous Peoples*, Patricia Grimshaw and Russell McGregor [eds] (Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 2006).

¹³⁴ George W. Stocking Jr., *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), p. 33.

¹³⁵ There is also a vast amount of literature on this subject, specifically relating to how Australia was a testing ground for racial and evolutionary theories. For example, see: Tom Frame, *Evolution in the Antipodes: Charles Darwin and Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2009); Barry Butcher, 'Darwinism, Social Darwinism, and the Australian Aborigines: A Re-evaluation' in *Darwin's Laboratory: Evolutionary Theory and Natural History in the Pacific*, Roy Macleod and Philip F. Rehbock [eds] (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

In Benjamin Disraeli's novel *Tancred* (1847), his character Sidonia says: 'All is race; there is no other truth'.¹³⁶ This sentiment was not simply Disraeli expressing the idle musings of a fictional character—he was himself voicing his own view on the nature of civilisation. In 1852, five years after making this observation through fiction, Disraeli repeated the idea when he wrote:

Progress and reaction are but words to justify the millions. They mean nothing, they are nothing, they are phrases and not facts. All is race. In the structure, the decay, and the development of the various families of man, the vicissitude of history will find their main solution.¹³⁷

Race theory had steadily begun to replace religious affiliation as the main justification for the exploitation of foreign peoples. For many scientists of the post-Enlightenment age, there was no question that there was a fundamental difference between the different kinds of people of the world. John Pinkerton, in his *Dissertation of the Origin of the Scythians or Goths* (1787), stated that: 'A Tartar, a Negro, an American & c. & c. differ as much from a German, as a bull-dog, or lap-dog, or shepherd's cur, from a pointer'.¹³⁸ The inevitable conclusion of those European scientists who supported the notion of racial difference was that the so-called European races were superior to those of foreigners. The Scottish phrenologist George Coombe wrote in 1832 that: 'The inhabitants of Europe, belonging to the Caucasian variety of mankind, have manifested, in all ages, a strong tendency toward moral and intellectual improvement'.¹³⁹

The idea of race, as Douglas Lorimer advises, is a problematic term as it is more of a mental construction than a biological one.¹⁴⁰ Victorian-era scientists were often frustrated by the imprecise and colloquial use of the term. But it was precisely because the term was so difficult that it became an axiomatic construct and almost impossible to discredit. My own use of the term 'race' is only to illustrate a perceptual filter through which Europeans viewed the 'other', and which helped them

¹³⁶ Disraeli was a British Prime Minister during the nineteenth century. He was fervently pro-Empire. In the novel, the character Sidonia is discussing the basis of progress and civilisation. Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred* (London: R. Brimley Johnson, 1904), p. Originally published in 1847.

¹³⁷ Cited in Reginald Horsman, 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 37, No. 3 (Jul-Sep, 1976), p. 404.

¹³⁸ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 391.

¹³⁹ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 398.

¹⁴⁰ Douglas A. Lorimer, 'Race, science and culture: historical continuities and discontinuities, 1850-1914' in *The Victorians and Race*, Shearer West [ed.] (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd), p. 14.

to construct their notions of the frontier. The most influential work on the classification of race came from the German naturalist, J.F. Blumenbach. Stephen Jay Gould concludes his *The Mismeasure of Man* (1996) with a discussion of how Blumenbach's work had been both embraced and ignored by his fellow theorists of race.¹⁴¹ Although Blumenbach had mostly followed the racial classifications of Carolus Linnaeus, he had significantly changed the former's four-race model of humanity to a five-race model. Blumenbach saw these divisions as being dictated by geography, skin colour, temperament and stance.¹⁴² Of these, geography was the most significant, as Blumenbach asserted that racial variations could be changed if members of a race were to inhabit a different environment, or be subject to a markedly different climate.¹⁴³ Unlike many of the scientists who were to accept his classificatory system, Blumenbach rejected the notion that races were inherently different to one another. He wrote that:

For although there seems to be so great a difference between widely separate nations, that you might easily take the inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope, the Greenlanders, and the Circassians for so many different species of man, yet when the matter is thoroughly considered, you see that all do so run into one another, and that one variety of mankind does so sensibly pass into the other, that you cannot mark out the limits between them.¹⁴⁴

Yet, despite these pleas for the universality of humankind, nineteenth-century race theory manifested as an ideology of dominance. Race theory for the Victorians was inherently antagonistic, and served to justify the subjugation of others. Ralph Emerson observed, in his *English Traits* (1856), that: 'It is race, is it not? that puts the hundred millions of India under the dominion of a remote island in the north of Europe'.¹⁴⁵ Even before the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species*, racial theorists stressed that the extinction of presumed lesser races was inevitable. In his *Races of Men*, the controversial Dr Robert Knox had observed that: 'Destined by the nature of their race [dark-skinned races] to run, like all other animals, a certain limited course of existence, it matters little how their extinction is brought about'.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), pp. 401-412.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, pp. 403-404.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 408.

¹⁴⁴ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 407.

¹⁴⁵ Cited in Susan Castillo, "'The Best of Nations'?" Race and Imperial Destiny in Emerson's "English Traits" in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 34, Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing, p. 108.

¹⁴⁶ Robert Knox, *The Races of Men: A Philosophical Enquiry into the Influence of Race over the Destinies of Nations* (London: Beufort Books, 1850), p. 224. Dr Robert Knox was chiefly controversial because he had been involved in the Burke and Hare scandal in Edinburgh in the 1830s. According to Knox, he had unknowingly purchased the corpses of Burke and Hare's murder

Charles Kingsley, a Victorian writer, had expressed similar racial vehemence in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. He observed that:

Because Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of peace; because the meek alone shall inherit the earth, therefore, you Malays and Dyaks of Sarawak, you are also enemies to peace . . . you are beasts, all the more dangerous because you have semi-human cunning.¹⁴⁷

Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens, expressed sentiments like these, when he wrote, in reaction to the violence of Sepoy mutineers in India, in 1857: 'I wish I were commander-in-chief in India, I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested'.¹⁴⁸

By the 1830s, the notion that poverty was dictated by moral sickness rather than circumstance had become popular in Britain.¹⁴⁹ Therefore, it was hardly surprising that Victorian moralisers would so completely embrace racial theory as a determinant of human worth and survival. Gregory Claeys observed that, in the publication of *The History of England During the Reign of Victoria* (1911), the publication of the *On the Origin of Species* (1859) was described as the most important event of Queen Victoria's reign, and of the history of the modern West.¹⁵⁰ The influence this work had on racial theory was even more pronounced when Herbert Spencer published on the theory of Social Darwinism, which applied Darwin's theories to race.¹⁵¹

Social Darwinism and its adherents conceptualised the human race as being ranked on a hierarchy, commonly referred to as the Great Chain of Being. Though this was a concept from the Renaissance, the introduction of Social Darwinism divorced the Great Chain of Being from its purely religious meaning and applied it to a hierarchy of human beings placed in relations of power to one another. Europeans, being the instigators of this theory, naturally saw themselves as being on the top link of the

victims for use in his anatomy classes. Knox had escaped prosecution, though he was no longer able to practice anatomy. There are numerous publications on this scandal. See, for example: Ruth Richardson, *Death Dissection and the Destitute* (London: Keegan Paul, 1987).

¹⁴⁷ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 410.

¹⁴⁸ Dickens was reacting primarily to press reports of massacres and rape supposedly committed by the Sepoy mutineers against Europeans in India. Although many of these reports were in fact true, it was also undoubtedly true that many were pure fiction, exaggeration, and deliberate misrepresentation. The quote is cited here because of Dickens's use of the term 'race'. Cited in Lawrence James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* (London: Clays Ltd, 1998), p. 283.

¹⁴⁹ Gregory Claeys, 'The "Survival of the Fittest" and the Origins of Social Darwinism' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 61, no. 2 (Apr., 2000), p. 231.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 223-224; Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* (London: Penguin, 1985).

¹⁵¹ Hebert Spencer coined the phrase: 'Survival of the Fittest' in his *Principles of Biology*, Vol. 1 (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002), p. 444. Originally published in 1864.

Great Chain. Race theory, combined with new scientific research, appeared to justify domination.¹⁵² By making authority and servitude appear a state of being, domination of Europeans over those they considered on a lower scale of civilisation was considered a matter dictated by nature. This was especially true in the case of Australia, where Aboriginal people were considered to be on the very bottom of the racial hierarchy. As the century progressed, innovations in publishing, particularly from 1870 onwards, meant that pamphlets and articles on the idea of 'Race' could be widely disseminated.¹⁵³

Race theory was not indigenous to Great Britain or Continental Europe. Emerson has already been quoted, and it was certainly true that the United States had also begun to pioneer in this regard. The seemingly unchallenged imperial triumph of both the United States and Britain had contributed to the study of what was perceived as a shared Anglo-Saxon racial dominance.¹⁵⁴ The United States's string of conquests over American Indian people and territory, as well as their exploitation of African lives and labour, saw the conscription of science to justify imperial excesses. It was the colonial experience which contributed to the growth of race theory through a need to justify exploitation. In the territories of the European and British empires, race theory was integral to the implementation of colonial policies, and the exploitation and displacement of indigenous peoples.

Ethnographical collections were also products of Victorian-era science and thought. In the Australian context, Griffiths discussed the process of ethnographic collection as a kind of sport, though this was a sport informed by the prevailing ideas of science and development in the Victorian period.¹⁵⁵ George Stocking Jr.'s monograph, *Victorian Anthropology* (1987), discussed the evolution of ethnological philosophy alongside the scientific and philosophic developments of European thought in the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁶ As Stocking wrote, 'the classic works of British sociocultural evolutionism were all products of the age of equipoise'.¹⁵⁷ Although it is doubtful that anyone who studied British nineteenth-century history could consider the nation

¹⁵² Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, p. 10.

¹⁵³ Lorimer, *The Victorians and Race*, p. 24.

¹⁵⁴ Horsman, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, p. 390.

¹⁵⁵ Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, pp. 10-19.

¹⁵⁶ George W. Stocking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987).

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

socially or culturally in equilibrium, it is nonetheless worth keeping in mind that Victorians rich or poor saw their age as remarkable.

This remarkability can even be seen in the squalor and misery of many of the inhabitants of the Victorian era. The harshness of life in this age barely needs elaboration, so popularised has it been by great works of literature, though there are some factors which need to be kept in mind. For all of the bluff of the *Pax Britannia*, Britain only enjoyed a single year in all of Queen Victoria's reign in which the empire was not at war with some other nation, people, or 'tribe'. Poverty was so endemic at home that one estimate put the population of prostitutes in London as high as 80,000.¹⁵⁸ Marx and Engels routinely wrote exposés on social and economic inequality in the industrial age, and it would be extreme naivety to consider that Britain truly was in 'equipoise'. Nevertheless, what Stocking intended was to explore the sense of British triumphalism which gripped the Victorian-era, and caused the members of the empire to question just how and why they had become so 'great'. Those members of the working class whom Friedrich Engels observed suffering as a result of Britain's industrial expansion may have considered the age more remarkably bleak than wonderful, yet the pace of technological innovation and imperial expansion could hardly have been thought by any as ordinary.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, it was the most economically and socially advantaged members of society who had the power to define what was and was not 'civilisation'. In an era which consistently saw evolution, not as the successive selection of variation but as a progression towards a goal, those who defined 'greatness' could easily exclude their economic and social inferiors. It was the cultural, scientific and industrial triumphs of Britain that shaped how the British saw the world. As Stocking describes, the 'contextual definition' of the great works of British cultural philosophy was 'an attempt to understand the cultural experience symbolized by the Crystal Palace'.¹⁶⁰

The majority of the modern literature on the subject of ethnographic collections and this sense of imperial triumphalism sees the link as predominantly one of conceptions

¹⁵⁸ Donald Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld* (London: John Murray, 1998), p. 92.

¹⁵⁹ Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2009). Originally published in 1844.

¹⁶⁰ Stoking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, p. 6. The Crystal Palace of 1851 was the structure in which the Great Exhibition was housed in London, showcasing the myriad cultural and industrial triumphs of the world. Over half of the floor-space was devoted to Britain, especially its industrial genius.

of 'race', rather than 'race' being a means by which Europeans endeavoured to explain their triumphs. Discussion of racial philosophy tends to pinpoint Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* as being the greatest influence on hierarchies of being. Gould's exposé of the sciences of craniometry, phrenology and other forms of intellectual measurement, for example, has its second chapter titled 'Before Darwin', as if everything that happened after this chapter is a consequence of Darwin.¹⁶¹

Of course, the fact that Social Darwinism was not Darwin conception is something that scholars are quick to point out.¹⁶² Claeys, in his article on the origins of Social Darwinism, discussed the influence of the creed upon all thought relating to hierarchies of being, not just racial ones.¹⁶³ This is an important analysis because it demonstrates that science had become a pervasive influence on social and cultural philosophy in the Victorian age. Race was not a concept invented upon the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. Reginald Horsman's article on the origins of racial theory in Britain and America pre-1950 made the important point that the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon race was taken for granted long before Darwin.¹⁶⁴ Darwin was a controversial figure in his lifetime and his philosophies were vehemently opposed, yet the idea that Anglo-Saxons were racially superior to others was not a philosophy that was seriously challenged.¹⁶⁵ The ideas of the Social Darwinists may have added credence to notions of superiority, though it is entirely probable that the human sciences would have remained racially-charged without them. Concepts of race infiltrated all of the Western human sciences in some fashion in the nineteenth century.

Racism and hierarchies of being are undeniably part of the Victorian scientific mindset. Nevertheless, the over-emphasis in the literature on racial thought has inadvertently down-played the other cultural factors which impacted upon the ethnographer. David Seed's article on nineteenth-century travel writing demonstrates

¹⁶¹ Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, see chapter contents.

¹⁶² Social Darwinism refers to the application of various Darwinian-inspired theories of evolution applied to social contest. Most commonly, Social Darwinism was applied to race theory, and the theory is credited to the philosopher and sociologist Herbert Spencer.

¹⁶³ Claeys, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, pp. 223-240.

¹⁶⁴ Horsman, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, pp. 387-410.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

the links between casual adventurism and empire.¹⁶⁶ According to Seed, travellers participated in empire-building merely by seeing because, through their interpretation of what they saw, they contributed to the 'appropriations of imperialism'.¹⁶⁷ By visually identifying what was foreign, and through commentaries constructed in their own diaries and travelogues, the traveller constructed the 'other'. Ethnographers behaved exactly as the travel-writers of their day, and this is especially true of the amateur collector of indigenous artefacts. Collection and ethnography were forms of adventurism; a kind of sport which simultaneously manufactured identity. Within the context of this adventurism and racially-charged science, the Queensland colonial experience will be discussed. The established notion that ethnographic collections helped to shape the identities of the familiar and the foreign will be applied to demonstrate that this occurred in Queensland. Primarily, this was done through the Museum.

MUSEUMS

Griffiths has observed that the word 'antiquarian' has generally become a label of contempt, as if an antiquarian can now only be conceived as 'narrow, nostalgic and eccentric, preserving the relics of the past for their own sake'.¹⁶⁸ This sense of conservatism in the museum context will serve this thesis well, in conveying attitudes prevalent in early Australian history towards tradition and ideas of authenticity. However, it will also be argued that the museum was far from a purely nostalgic institution, being instead a state apparatus which actively engaged in validating national conceptions and manufacturing identities. In the museum context, Theodore Low in 1942 satirised the relevance of museums to the public, expressing a view similar to Griffiths's notion of the antiquarian:

When a specific museum is mentioned, the scholar thinks of the magnificent collections and perhaps of his favourite objects; the man on the street thinks of a huge pseudo-something-or-other building with pigeons flying above and peanuts on the side-walk in front.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ David Seed, 'Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing: An Introduction' in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 2004. Vol. 34, Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing, pp. 1-5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁸ Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ Theodore Low, 'What is a Museum?' in *Reinventing the Museum*, Gail Anderson [ed.] (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2004), p. 31.

Low did not see this perceived remoteness to be a major short-coming of museums, arguing instead that exhibitions need not be intelligible to their entire audience if it is natural for many other fields of human endeavour to be just as rarefied in appeal and accessibility. More recently, Mark Lilla echoed this view in his 1985 article ‘The Museum in the City’, stating that the museum’s primary role and benefit is simply to exist.¹⁷⁰ According to Lilla, the public do not expect civic monuments and institutions to solicit visitors: ‘We flock to our civic places . . . we do not expect them to come to us’.¹⁷¹ Edward Barfield wrote that ‘the public interest requires that there be a courthouse . . . [but does] it also require that there be a statue in front of the courthouse?’.¹⁷² In a sense, the museum is an example of itself—an exemplar of the importance of collection to society, merely because it is a civic structure which stores collections. The monoliths and, often, stone structures which make up a museum’s architectural traits are part of this civic being.¹⁷³ Often located in or near municipal centres, museums convey both a sense of their incorporation to and distance from civic life.

Numerous scholars profess that the museum has a profound impact on public knowledge and government attitudes. Drawing upon Foucault for inspiration, Bennett’s *Birth of the Museum* (1995), critiqued the museum as providing a structured ‘performance’ of identity through display which shaped attitudes and centred the museum directly with cultural manufacture and government.¹⁷⁴ Shawn Rowe mirrored this idea by writing that education in museums is characterised by the construction of meaning.¹⁷⁵ The notion that museums arbitrate beauty and dictate cultural taste has been argued, notably by Kathleen Walsh-Piper in ‘Museums and the Aesthetic Experience’.¹⁷⁶ The construction of knowledge and the evaluation of worth, therefore, is one way in which a museum is seen to establish its authority. Anita

¹⁷⁰ Mark Lilla, ‘The Museum in the City’ in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Special Issue: Art Museums and Education (Summer, 1985), p. 89.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁷² Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁷³ Jay Cantor, ‘Temples of the Arts: Museum Architecture in Nineteenth-Century America’ in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Building*, Vol. 28, No. 8, New Series (Apr., 1970), p. 333.

¹⁷⁴ Tony Bennett, *Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁷⁵ Shawn Rowe, ‘The Role of Objects in Active, Distributed Meaning-Making’ in *Perspectives on Object-Centred Learning in Museums*, Scott G. Paris [ed.] (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2002), p. 21.

¹⁷⁶ Kathleen Walsh-Piper, ‘Museums and the Aesthetic Experience’ in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 28, No. 3, Special Issue: Aesthetics for Young People (Autumn 1994), pp. 105-115.

Herle saw the museum's act of collection, documentation, and display as the fundamental basis of their cultural power.¹⁷⁷

Twenty years ago, in the field of ethnology, Volker Harms considered that 'no comprehensive critique of the ideological foundations of museums . . . has been published to date'.¹⁷⁸ Notwithstanding what Harms may consider 'comprehensive', the position of ethnology in museum theory has been critiqued often, and from multiple perspectives, from before the publication of his article, and since. The politically-charged nature of the discussion in the post-colonial world has meant that issues relating to cultural and territorial knowledge and ownership have received much attention. Indeed, Brian Durrans declared that museum displays are 'increasingly seen as overtly or implicitly political'.¹⁷⁹ Durrans cited post-modernism as being largely responsible for what he believes to be ill-informed polemic on museums as 'hegemonic devices of cultural elites'.¹⁸⁰ The overt accusation or implication that museums represent bourgeois interests is common to many museum critiques. For example, Kavanagh, in 1989, wrote that museum collections reflect the taste and interests of the upper-class.¹⁸¹ However, Durrans's defence that museums self-censor or omit information only out of cultural sensitivity is specious.¹⁸² He asserted that museums prefer curatorial anonymity because they value team-work, and he failed to approach the notion that whatever the museum's motivations, they may inadvertently act as cultural oppressors or arbiters. Thus, Durrans defended museums from claims that they consciously misrepresent, rather than from claims that they may do so unconsciously.

Charles Garoian explored the notion of a museum as a 'performance'.¹⁸³ The museum performs culture and knowledge through the presentation of its displays.

¹⁷⁷ Anita Herle, 'Museums and Shamans: Cross-Cultural Collaboration' in *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Feb., 1994), p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ Volker Harms, 'The Aims of the Museum for Ethnology: Debate in the German-Speaking Countries' in *Current Anthropology*. Vol. 31, No. 4 (1990), p. 457.

¹⁷⁹ Brian Durrans, 'Behind the Scenes: Museums and selective criticism' in *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (August 1992), p. 11.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ G. Kavanagh, 'Objects as Evidence or Not?' in *Museum Studies in Material Culture*, S.M. Pearce [ed.] (London: Leicester University Press, 1989), p. 124.

¹⁸² Durrans, *Anthropology Today*, p. 13.

¹⁸³ Charles R. Garoian, 'Performing the Museum' in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Spring, 2001), p. 235.

However, this performance is understood through the personal identities of museum visitors and, thus, the performance is more or less mutual.¹⁸⁴ This analogy would perhaps be better expressed as a ‘dialogue’ rather than a performance, though Garoian’s view is thought-provoking.¹⁸⁵ As the education philosopher John Dewey opined in 1934: ‘Perception is an act of going-out of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy’.¹⁸⁶ Taken in Garoian’s context, the audience must engage with a display in order to perceive it; by engaging with a display, an audience passively interacts and brings their own perceptions into play.

Thus, the interaction between the collection, the museum, and the audience can be thought of as a sequence of steps. First, objects exist in the cultural milieu in which they were created and used. Second, the cultural values of society, as well as an individual’s own education, impacts upon the collector who acquires the objects. These values create an interpretation of the object, through the collector’s perception, either in the object’s own right, or as an example of the culture from which it originated. Third, the museum reacts to the collector’s interpretation, as well as the preconceived notions of its staff. As collectors often come from the same cultural background as the institution to which they donate or sell their material, there is not a fundamental disconnection in ideology here. However, the museum decides on the presentation of the object, and categorises an object, with other artefacts perceived as being alike, through the act of storage and display.

It is the museum’s interpretation which interacts with the final stage in this process, namely the reaction of the object’s audience—the museum’s visitors. Those who are the audience of the display may have their own perspectives on an object which have emerged from their own cultural learning and education, such as the perceptions they may have received of Aboriginal people in the text books they read in school. But these perceptions are not recorded and are difficult to ascertain. Whether they disagree with the presentation of an object, or whether they contest the interpretation

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ The notion of dialogue, in my view, better suits Garoian’s concept of cultural negotiation and interaction through display. Although his analysis of museum displays as performance is perfectly apt in making the point that museums and their visitors each play a role (as the informer and the informed), this concept does not adequately encompass the entirety of his argument – i.e. cultural negotiation through museum and visitor interaction.

¹⁸⁶ Cited in *Ibid.*

can be important, but the museum's conception will remain at least until the display is dismantled. It is the museum's display which remains, and which has the legitimization of research and 'knowledge' behind it. The display itself presents a superimposition of the museum's ideas, which are themselves informed by those of collectors, professional scholars, and the prevailing cultural attitudes of the time. It is the museum's presentation of these which are the most relevant, and this acts as a kind of final authoritative statement on the concepts conveyed by the display. The previous steps in this display matter only so much as they have helped to shape ideas, and the views of individual visitors generally matter only to themselves.

A counter to this model is the argument that a museum is a forum which presents its knowledge not necessarily as an absolute, but as a place of confrontation; calculated to inspire debate.¹⁸⁷ For example, in her 1999 article, 'Artifacts and Artifications', Sally Duensing considered the museum 'a wonderful and often unique intellectual bazaar that encourages the sharing of multiple perspectives'.¹⁸⁸ Duensing's use of the word 'bazaar' is an interesting example of the perceived exoticism of museum collections. Yet, within the context of the nineteenth-century museum, it will be shown that the forum model is inaccurate. Instead, this thesis will demonstrate that museums were more akin to class rooms which did not so much seek audience perceptions, as present absolutes designed to instruct and inform. The vanguard of scientific truth to the Victorian-era, the museum can be likened to a place of veneration and instruction, not a place in which culture was consciously negotiated with its visitors. The museum constructed identities of the other, and set the limits both of this other and of its own cultural heritages and imagined communities.

My thesis offers an expansion of these ideas, and the model of display and interaction presented above. The introduction chapter of this thesis has already outlined the thesis structure, though it must be reiterated here that this structure is influenced by the model discussed. Chapter Two represents the views, not only of the visitor to the Queensland Museum, but also the background to the more professional and practical experience of Museum staff and collectors. Chapter Three presents the views of

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Sally Duensing, 'Artifacts and Artifications' in *Presence of Mind: Museums and the Spirit of Learning*, Bonnie Pitman [ed.] (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1999), p. 94.

collectors, and the ways in which the Museum responded to these, in order to demonstrate attitudes and constructions of knowledge carried out before the display process. But these two chapters are not merely context. Indeed, it is impossible to separate the discussion of the material culture and display from the documentary evidence. Documents and texts formed a kind of pedagogy and theory of their own, and they were directly involved in the containment of the frontier for its articulation not only in the Museum, but in national and state narratives. Chapter Four presents the display and the material itself, and is akin to the final stages of the model discussed above, being exhibition and interpretation.

Museums are more than simple collections of artefacts, though objects are the most obvious features of their displays. The presentation of physical evidence to illustrate cultural traits is the primary method of the ethnological display. For much of European and British museum theory, until the latter half of the twentieth century, the mere collection and display of objects was considered to be an end in itself. The American anthropologist George Dorsey, after a tour of European museums in 1899, recommended that: ‘. . . it should be the object of the present generation of museum men to collect material from the different races of the earth, and to classify and exhibit it as such’.¹⁸⁹

Within Dorsey’s timeframe, and the era examined by this thesis, the museum was envisioned as the ideal school. Education philosopher John Dewey contextualised the museum as such, focussing specifically on the institution’s impact on children.¹⁹⁰ The museum, for Dewey, possessed the tools and practices which children could use to interpret information and gain knowledge. The pedagogical element of museums cannot be underplayed, especially in how foreign cultures were ‘taught’ to visitors through display. That the Queensland Museum’s conception of Aboriginal people did not differ greatly from classroom conceptions is demonstrated in Chapter Two. This is a crucial element in the linking of the use of documentary records, instruction and material culture, and will be the focus of much consideration later. However, not all early theorists limited their analysis of the museum’s educational benefits to children.

¹⁸⁹ George A. Dorsey, ‘Notes on the Anthropological Museums of Central Europe’ in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (July, 1899), p. 465.

¹⁹⁰ J. Dewey, *School and Society* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1900), p. 85.

Elliot Huger, writing three decades after Dewey, claimed that the museum had a significant role in adult education, presenting works of art and history to large numbers of visitors.¹⁹¹ Both writers saw museums as well equipped through their expert staff, and their numerous artefacts, to educate the public. Merely by enabling public access to artefacts, and using them to present curatorial knowledge, did the museum educate.

Belle Boas, an art theorist, examined the nature of education and interaction in the museum. Although Boas declares that museum visitors are essentially anonymous and, thus, it is not possible to gauge the impact of lectures and display upon them, Boas pinpoints the exhibitions as a ‘revealing part [of education], as they visualise with colours and objects, thus repeating and presenting information in new forms’.¹⁹² Museum education, therefore, is seen as best following a passive model; by simply presenting exhibitions and displays as the educative tool themselves, instruction is performed by the museum staff essentially behind the scenes. This method of instruction is not dissimilar to the traditional presentation of ethnographic knowledge in Victorian-era museum displays, where museum displays are repositories of knowledge whose curatorial and collection influences are invisible; the objects speak for themselves. However, the material cultures are sometimes juxtaposed with other objects, manufactured by the museum, to contextualise the message or theme a museum wishes to impart. For example, the use of mannequins of Aboriginal people at the Queensland Museum will be discussed in the fourth chapter, to demonstrate how their positioning conveyed conceptions of authenticity and stagnation.

Barbara Soren presents a useful definition of education in a museum in her article ‘The Museum as Curricular Site’. She states that:

Education in a museum may be defined as the intention to enlighten the public or literally to shed light on the interpretation of the museum’s collections or creations. The intended

¹⁹¹ The concept of adult education in museums was not unique either to America or the 1930s and beyond. This thesis shall demonstrate in a historical analysis of the Queensland Museum, that one of the primary benefits of museum collections was always seen as making information readily available to the public. See Elliot Huger, ‘The Museum and Adult Education’ in *The Metropolitan Art Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 9 (Sep., 1929), pp. 240-242.

¹⁹² Belle Boas, ‘The Relation of the Museum to the Elementary and Secondary Schools’ in *College Art Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Spring, 1949), p. 182.

curriculum in a museum, then, would relate to the planning for enlightenment of individuals visiting a particular setting.¹⁹³

Education is a narrative endeavour; therefore, museum displays craft narratives in their attempts to educate.¹⁹⁴ Chris Healy has argued a similar point in the context of colonial education of history.¹⁹⁵ Taking a view of early Australian schools as places in which attempts were made to manufacture ideal citizens, Healy argued that ideas and histories were tailored to suit national narratives.¹⁹⁶ The making of meaning is the essence of education in a museum. A totality of knowledge is not possible, and the selection of material through discrimination and availability is a necessary step to presenting a museum display. A complete collection is a sterile collection, incapable of growth or exciting new interest.¹⁹⁷ Nonetheless, as Durrans pointed out, the question becomes how much selection is acceptable, and how much creates a misrepresentation.¹⁹⁸

The museum is more than an educator, or a mere store room for the rare and the quaint. Certainly the museum still has the capacity to fulfil the role of a Cabinet of Curiosity, yet museums primarily establish identities. Through the process of cataloguing the other, the museum helps to define the familiar and to limit identities. Museum collections stand as representations of what the whole is meant to be.¹⁹⁹ This is primarily achieved through the museum's educative impulse, whether this is passive or overt. Thus, museums are not forums for negotiation or contestation of knowledge and identity. Visitors certainly do contest the knowledge available in the museum, yet the display remains as an immovable force. Consider Duncan Cameron's argument that: 'Once it [the object] is in the museum, we make our judgement in the knowledge, if not awe, of the fact that the experts have already said,

¹⁹³ Barbara Soren, 'The Museum as Curricular Site' in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Autumn, 1992), p. 91.

¹⁹⁴ Lisa C. Roberts, *From Knowledge to Narrative: Educators and the Changing Museum* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), p. 152.

¹⁹⁵ Chris Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism* (Cambridge: The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1997).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 129.

¹⁹⁷ This view is given by Lilla, who does not define what a 'complete' collection could be. Lilla's point is not to suggest that completion is possible, merely that museums should always aim to expand on the objects that they have. Lilla, *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, p. 81.

¹⁹⁸ Durrans, *Anthropology Today*, p. 11.

¹⁹⁹ S.M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), p. 38.

“This is good,” or “This is important”, or “This is real”. The object has been enshrined’.²⁰⁰ Whether the viewer agrees or disagrees with the theme or truth of a display is not directly apparent to the next viewer who visits the museum. Considering this, to revisit the model of audience and museum interaction proposed earlier, the audience’s perception is relevant, although it cannot contest or negotiate with the museum’s perspective in a way that is as permanent as the display itself. What the viewer perceives is directly influenced by what the museum has placed before them on display. For those visitors who know little or nothing about the objects in a display, or what these things represent, the museum fills the gaps of their imagination. The display leads the viewer’s perception. Therefore, the museum’s display remains the dominant perspective (an unchanging argument, at least until it is dismantled).

State-sponsored museums, such as the Queensland Museum, add their influence as cultural focal points for the State. Whether they represent the State through exhibitions, or whether they display objects conceived as foreign to their region, the museum constantly fulfils its role as a cultural arbiter. Structured collections tell us how the collector perceives reality, and how we assess others also tells us how we assess ourselves.²⁰¹ Torrence has posited the notion that: ‘It might well be argued that the study of “collectors” is all that can be gained from objects which have been wrenched from their cultural context’.²⁰² What then does the study of collections in colonial Queensland within the context of their acquisition and display tell us? Before demonstrating this answer in the remaining chapters of the thesis, more must be said concerning the relationship between narrative, collection, and indigenous voices in history.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE AND THE INDIGENOUS VOICE

²⁰⁰ Duncan F. Cameron, ‘The Museum, a Temple or the Forum?’ in *Reinventing the Museum*, Gail Anderson [ed.] (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2004), p. 70.

²⁰¹ Cameron, *Reinventing the Museum*, p. 65.

²⁰² Torrence, *World Archaeology*, p. 478.

The pervasive dimension of indigenous cultural studies relates directly to the imperial impulse of the European powers in the nineteenth century. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, an indigenous Maori scholar writing in 1999, commented that ‘the term “research” is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism’.²⁰³ Smith analysed European research on indigenous peoples and recalled how her community ‘talked about [research] both in terms of its absolute worthlessness to us, the indigenous world, and its absolute usefulness to those who wielded it as an instrument’.²⁰⁴ For Smith, research was a tool employed both to indulge curiosity and to justify power. Actual improvement of indigenous life, in Smith’s view, was irrelevant.²⁰⁵ Further, those indigenous peoples who choose to research their own culture often perpetuate the same Western traditions and thought which robs and dehumanises their own people.²⁰⁶ Arguably, they are trapped into this train of thought by disciplinary preoccupations of research and culture. In Smith’s view, by employing Western schooling and methods, researchers of indigenous origins misappropriate their own culture while simultaneously legitimatising the West’s.

Arguing to the same effect, though with less polemic than Smith, Peter Pels discussed the role of anthropology in the construction of imperial rule.²⁰⁷ According to Pels, anthropological research was used to provide cheap and bloodless alternatives to colonial strategies of violence and extermination.²⁰⁸ Research was an arm of benevolent racism. The researcher could provide information by which to better control foreign peoples, and researchers could produce knowledge directly relevant to the aims of government. This idea is more famously explored in *Orientalism*, where research and government are contextualised as a link between the scholar’s intent and the corporate use of power.²⁰⁹ From this perspective, the corporate or institutional element legitimises research by employing it as an educational tool, creating knowledge of the ‘other’ in the general mind, and arbitrating this knowledge as best

²⁰³ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1999), p. 1.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

²⁰⁷ Peter Pels, ‘The Anthropology of Colonialism: Culture, History, and the Emergence of Western Governmentality’ in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 26 (1997), pp. 163-83.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

²⁰⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 2-3.

suits the realities of government.²¹⁰ Research, therefore, provides legitimacy to colonial policy.

The interrelation between research and power raises the question of whether the scholar has any right to construct knowledge of the 'other', or to produce narratives of foreign cultures. Is ethnographic research simply an exercise in cultural vandalism and imperialism? Abraham Kaplan's analysis of anthropological thought in his article 'Philosophy of Science in Anthropology' approached this problem by discussing conceptions of the other within the discipline.²¹¹ A European anthropologist may never understand what it is to be an indigenous person, but does this render all of their insights worthless? Direct experience is not essential for some knowing. As Kaplan phrased the thought, 'a male can be an expert gynaecologist, psychiatrists need not have been insane'.²¹² Empathy, therefore, is key. Insight is possible through observation, and it is the application of knowledge which imperialises. In his 'Archaeologists and Aborigines', Davidson discussed the dichotomy between how cultural stories are told by Aboriginal people, and how they are discussed by archaeologists.²¹³ Davidson argued that the conflict in the different versions lies in the fact that archaeologists see stories as being open to interpretation, or as being able to be told in various ways; the Aboriginal perspective sees traditional stories as unchanging.²¹⁴ Accepting that there is a difference in the narrative styles helps us to understand that research can inform on foreign cultures, if only in providing alternative perspectives. This last point, of course, returns to Smith's argument over the right of non-indigenous people to study indigenous cultures. The only solution is in the answer as to why the research is done in the first place, its intent, how it involves indigenous people, and how it is applied.

The notion of non-indigenous narrative is crucial to understanding European perceptions of Aboriginal people in Australia. Until the emergence of major ethnographic texts in the latter part of the Victorian era, there were no developed

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹¹ Abraham Kaplan, 'Philosophy of Science in Anthropology' in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 13 (1984), pp. 25-39.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²¹³ Iain Davidson, 'Archaeologists and Aborigines' in *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 2 (1991), pp. 247-58.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

narratives of Aboriginal people. None of the emerging narratives, it must be stated, were made with the direct engagement of Aboriginal voices. The observations found therein were those of the ethnographers—men like Roth, or William Baldwin Spencer, his contemporary and acquaintance from university. For those European Australians who had not personally encountered Aboriginal people, perspectives on who Aboriginal people were was limited by what they read in the papers, what they were taught in school, what they saw in museums, and how these were put together in the imagination. This notion of the making of a narrative in Australian history that excluded Aboriginal voices takes us to the second chapter of this thesis, and a discussion of the first stage of making Aboriginal identity—the class room.

CHAPTER TWO:

REPRESENTATIONS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN EDUCATIONAL SOURCE BOOKS

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the likely state of knowledge held by educated Queenslanders concerning Aboriginal people in Australia. This information is crucial in representing one dimension of the interaction, proposed in the previous chapter, concerning how visitors to the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama perceived the exhibition. The diorama itself is fully discussed in Chapter Four. By establishing the characterisations of Aboriginal people in educational texts, from the Victorian period to beyond the inception of the Aboriginal Life diorama, we can gain insight into the ways in which European Australians imagined Aboriginal people and their significance for national and state identity. We have seen in the previous chapter, that museums were conceived as instruments by which the State could educate its people. To contextualise this, it is necessary to consider other related means of state-sponsored education regarding depictions of Aboriginal people. But this chapter is much more than a contextual discussion. This chapter forms a crucial link in demonstrating the orthodox pedagogies of Queensland by focussing on instruction in class rooms. The class room and the Museum were partners in the process of nation-building—a process to which the notion of a vanishing ‘other’ is central.

By considering the representation of Aboriginal people in text books used in schools in the Australian colonies, we can gain important insights into the attitudes of Europeans towards the country’s original inhabitants, during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The texts cited in this chapter display a discrete analysis of attitudes towards Aboriginal people, reflecting the viewpoints of the late Victorian and early Edwardian eras, as well as state-sponsored ideologies concerning national identity. By considering these perspectives, we can then compare these depictions to the Queensland Museum’s own pedagogical functions and its portrayal and treatment of Aboriginal culture. These sources confirm an absence of substantial knowledge of Aboriginal people amongst European Australians and, in some measure, show why

people collecting, and people exhibiting Aboriginal material culture thought and behaved in the ways they did. Although Roth was schooled in Britain, he taught in Sydney and Brisbane (which used very similar schooling systems) and would have dealt with many of the texts to be discussed. Coghlan probably encountered some of the earlier texts in his schooling. Representations of Aboriginal people in the texts to be discussed are either completely or almost entirely lacking. Where representations do occur, they are often demeaning or patronising, and conform to prevailing views held by Europeans on the inferiority of Aboriginal people. These sources depict an emerging nation which did not include its indigenous inhabitants in its imagined community and did not consider the possibility of Aboriginal people either enduring or adapting to their new circumstances.

The sources referenced within this chapter are primarily from two heritage museums. The first of these is the Armidale Heritage Centre, in New South Wales, which includes a number of texts donated from the Armidale Teacher's College, and other books from private donors. The second source is the Pine Rivers Heritage Museum, in Brisbane, which has numerous texts used by Queensland school students throughout the colonial and early Federation period. As well as these, the state-sponsored and universally used texts of the *Irish National Reader*, the *Australian Reader*, and the *Royal Reader* series have been referred to.²¹⁵ These texts formed the foundation of educational material for young school children until the late-Victorian period.

Many of the books cited from the Armidale and Pine Rivers Heritage museums, include a hand-written notation on the inside page describing the source from which the book was acquired. The identity of those who made the notations is unknown though it is assumed that, by the faded nature of the writing, they were made in most cases by the original owner or, in the case of the Armidale Teacher's College, by the

²¹⁵ The three *Readers* referred to in this chapter are difficult to locate and, in my research, were not seen in complete series. Information regarding these have been gained from other sources (mentioned elsewhere), and the *Readers* themselves have only been examined in the fragmentary manner in which they were discovered. For this reason, they are not being included in the tabular data presented later. Only those sources able to be examined in their entirety will be included in that particular section. *Readers* cited: *Fourth Book of Lessons for the Use of Irish National Schools* (Dublin: Government Printer, 1835), pp. 200-218, no author given; *Royal Readers Third Book* (Melbourne: Government Printer, publication date not noted), pp. 1-12, no author given.

school. A number of the text books examined are of a standard of English intended for adult readers. These sources almost exclusively came from the Armidale Teacher's College. However, the majority of texts cited have a standard of English which befits young readers. Information in these sources, consequently, is often presented in an easy narrative style. The period these sources cover is from the late Victorian era through to the late 1930s.

Europeans living in urban centres, during the colonial and early Federation period of Australia, had little exposure to the Aboriginal inhabitants of the country. Depopulation was so rapid and profound around towns and cities that there were few or no Aboriginal people to observe. Daisy Bates, a journalist and committed observer of Aboriginal people in early twentieth-century Australia, observed of the depopulation of the original inhabitants around Perth: 'The black man survived the coming of the white man for little more than a lifetime'.²¹⁶ With no direct opportunities to observe Aboriginal people, Europeans in the urban areas of Australia had limited sources from which to gain some knowledge of them. Those on the frontier who did have more substantial contact with Aboriginal people would have had their practical observations tempered with the kinds of perspectives they gained through their own educations.

Garth Allen and Caroline Ansen have argued that museums offer for many visitors the only exposure they receive to foreign cultures.²¹⁷ In the British context, Annie Coombes agrees with this point, arguing that Museums were almost the only place where people could receive information, though dubiously interpreted, on indigenous peoples.²¹⁸ Yet, in the context of imperial education in Britain and her colonies, exposure to foreign cultures also came in a very limited fashion through school education. In colonial Australia, an alternative to education through Museum displays existed in the educative literature adopted by the State governments. However, as this

²¹⁶ Daisy Bates's long career of observing Aboriginal people began in 1899 after being posted by *The Times* to investigate allegations of cruelty to Aboriginal people in Western Australia. Daisy Bates, *The Passing of the Aborigines: A Lifetime Spent Among the Natives of Australia* (London: John Murray, 1944).

²¹⁷ Garth Allen and Caroline Ansen, *The Role of the Museum in Creating Multi-Cultural Identities* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), p. 49.

²¹⁸ Annie E. Coombes, 'Museums and the Foundation of National and Cultural Identities' in *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1988), p. 65.

chapter discusses, this literature was fundamentally flawed and lacking in detailed or accurate information and, thus, cannot be considered a substantial alternative.

There is vast literature on colonial education, both within Australia and beyond.²¹⁹ This thesis does not seek to contribute specifically to that literature. Many of the issues and arguments raised by others are only confirmed by the research presented here. Rather, the purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the state of knowledge concerning Aboriginal people that a visitor to the Queensland Museum's Aboriginal Life diorama of 1914 had gathered from their schooling. By 1885, the majority of the Australian colonies had passed laws requiring children to spend at least six years in school, and text books were crucial in preparing these youths for their lives ahead.²²⁰

Peter Taylor and Julian Thomas argue that colonial education in History may have been more about the creation of certain kinds of citizens than it was about a politicisation of knowledge.²²¹ In an expansion of this idea, Healy argues that, in the context of early Australia: 'The teaching of history in school . . . was an exercise of power that was both productive and constraining'.²²² The text books cited are full of moral examples and social advice. However, my purpose here is to discuss the position of 'silence' about Aboriginal people as presented in the majority of the sources. The use of the word silence here is a direct reference to what W.E.H. Stanner called 'The Great Australian Silence', which was the practical invisibility of Aboriginal people in social and historical accounts of Australia.²²³ Stanner was specifically referring to historical accounts written after 1939, and he acknowledged that prior works more openly discussed European and Aboriginal conflicts. Nevertheless, it is useful to consider Stanner's concept of silence even in this earlier period. For most of the sources to be discussed, this silence is active. Even where

²¹⁹ Some examples of this literature are: Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism*; Peter Taylor and Julian Thomas, *History in a Moral Regime* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1991); Austin, A.G. *Australian Education 1788-1900: Church, State and Public Education* (Melbourne: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., 1961); A.G. Austin, *Select Documents in Australian Education 1788-1900* (Melbourne: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., 1963); A.G. Austin and R.J.W. Selleck, *The Australian Government School 1830-1914* (Melbourne: Pitman Publishing House, 1975). For a source dealing with themes of education and social control in the context of the British school system: Paul Lodge and Tessa Blackstone, *Educational Policy and Educational Inequality* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1982).

²²⁰ Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism*, p. 108.

²²¹ Taylor and Thomas, *History in a Moral Regime*, p. 7.

²²² Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism*, p. 129.

²²³ W.E.H. Stanner, 'The Great Australian Silence' in *The Dreaming & Other Essays* (Melbourne: Black Inc. Agenda, 2009), pp. 182-193.

Aboriginal people are mentioned, they appear as little more than occasional obstacles to European exploration. Their portrayal is as either a sad, harmless, and insubstantial presence, receding from the frontier as it is conquered; or they are a savage, wild, dangerous and untrustworthy impediment to the spread of civilisation. The material culture of Aboriginal people is mentioned in these sources very rarely. In every case, it is used to portray either a purity of culture in Aboriginal people, or as icons of their perceived savagery, violence, and inferiority.

Colonial era school text books serve as an indication of the fundamental lack of an 'Aboriginal narrative' in the emerging nation's history. The creation of an Aboriginal narrative by Europeans only truly began with the work of ethnographers and anthropologists who recorded the customs of Australia's original inhabitants. These ethnographic records emerged in the late Victorian period, and their influence on the text books cited is minimal. Instead, most of the authors of the school text-books clearly have nothing but the most stereotypical conceptions of Aboriginal people, and they often devote little more than a sentence to sum up their entire culture and perceived character. This point is crucial for consideration of the authority of the supposedly more scientific and substantive version of Aboriginality presented by the Museum, specifically in the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to note, as Mark Harris argues, that there was no acknowledgement in these early narratives of an Aboriginal voice, or a voice informed by first hand knowledge of Aboriginal people. These text books were written by Europeans for Europeans, and the 'construction of Aboriginal people as the "other" [was] done in their absence'.²²⁴ Further, the depictions of Aboriginal people in these sources confirm the major themes of this thesis. Aboriginal people were not irrelevant to the formation of Australian nationalism, although their existence was always peripheral to the considerations of an Australia of European origin. In the minds of many Europeans, Aboriginal people remained pure when their culture seemed unadulterated—a living exhibit of the vanishing past, where adaptation to civilised life was impossible, and destructive. These ideas are clearly reflected in the text books used to educate both school children and teachers in Federation Australia.

²²⁴ Mark Harris, 'Scientific & Cultural Vandalism' in *Alternative Law Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1999), p. 29.

Through these sources, we can see the ways in which Aboriginal people were simultaneously depicted as savage and noble; as victims, and as brute creatures likely to disappear from history. This depiction, continuously demonstrated throughout every chapter of this thesis, was ever present in almost every significant discussion of Aboriginal people. Also, this depiction conforms with the Museum's own use of its research and material to portray Aboriginal culture. Although there are some important differences to be discussed, the pedagogy of the State—through the class room and the Museum—engaged in the construction of Aboriginal people as a people in the twilight of their own history, and foreign to the identity of Queenslanders.

THE READERS AND EARLY EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND

Queensland's creation as a separate state, in 1859, presented its newly formed government with the challenge of adopting a system of education for children in its schools. The lack of a developed bureaucracy in the Queensland educational system, coupled with an acute shortage of funds to develop new teaching resources, meant that the government had to draw upon external sources to provide educational materials for its youngest citizens. The *Irish National Reader* was adopted as the set text for child education in schools, and the Irish model of education was followed in Queensland and other states, such as New South Wales and Victoria.²²⁵

The *Irish National Reader* was a series of text books aimed at children. Written at a time of dearth and high mortality in Ireland, early editions of the *Irish Readers* focussed heavily upon bible stories, morbidity, and the afterlife.²²⁶ Later editions included more stories which promoted honesty and personal happiness, though bible

²²⁵ I am indebted to the curatorial staff of the Pine Rivers Heritage Museum for supplying me with information on the historical context of the various National Readers in use in early Queensland. Very little research has been conducted into Queensland's use of the readers, and what little information there is available has been summarised by the Queensland Education Department into a brief online overview. This can be found at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/library/edhistory/topics/readers/irish.html>. Peter Musgrave has written an article on the use of National Readers in Victoria, which is also useful for an overview. See: P.W. Musgrave, 'Readers in Victoria, 1895-1968, 1: The School Paper and Children's World' in *Paradigm*, (December 1994), 9-22.

²²⁶ According to Donald H. Akenson, the books were 'crammed full of moralizing and religiosity', though they were deliberately designed to be nondenominational, so as to not alienate the majority Catholic population. See: Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment: The National System of Education in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1970), p. 235.

stories always remained a strong feature. For example, the *Fourth Book of Lessons* warned:

Salvation implies deliverance from *guilt*. The law denounced a penalty against those who break it. That penalty is exclusion from heaven, and the deprivation of God's favour, and consignment to the place of misery.²²⁷

As well as religious instruction, the *Irish National Reader* included a number of stories and poems which dealt with animals, flora and fauna of the British Isles, scenes of Irish life, and tales of English kings and war. Ireland, according to education lecturer John Coolahan, was a testing ground for British social policies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²²⁸ As such, Ireland had an established state education system by 1831, which covered a primary school curriculum. Therefore, it is not entirely surprising that Irish texts were adopted in Queensland, given that they had long been in use elsewhere. Nevertheless, there was a complete lack of any information on Queensland or any substantial information on the rest of Australia. Of Aboriginal people, the *Fourth Book of Lessons* commented: 'They are among the lowest and most ignorant savages in the world'.²²⁹ In 1875 a Royal Commission on Education listened to the almost unanimous condemnation of the *Irish National Reader* series by Queensland teachers, on the grounds that they did not present material and stories relevant to local life and circumstances.²³⁰

Consequently, the *Irish National Reader* was replaced in Queensland, in 1878, by the *Australian Reader* series. The *Australian Reader* was written in Victoria by Australian educators, and published in London. A strong movement to present more secular educational texts in Victoria had seen the eventual elimination of the *Irish Reader* in that state and this, in turn, influenced Queensland's adoption of the new texts.²³¹ Although the books contained content relevant to Australia, this was not their exclusive aim, nor was there any thing Queensland-specific. Primarily, the subject matter dealt with in the series included stories involving Australian explorers, stories of Australian animals, and tales of British and world history. Despite their

²²⁷ *Fourth Book of Lessons*, p. 205.

²²⁸ John Coolahan, *Irish Education: history and structure* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981), pp. 3-4.

²²⁹ *Fourth Book of Lessons*, p. 213.

²³⁰ This information comes from the Queensland Education Department's website, though it is not inconsistent with information presented in other texts: 'Irish National Readers,' last accessed 11 March, 2010, <http://education.qld.gov.au/library/edhistory/topics/readers/irish.html>. See also: Musgrave *Paradigm*, pp. 9-11, for the reception in Victoria.

²³¹ Austin, *Australian Education 1788-1900*, pp. 239-242.

greater relevance for an Australian audience than their predecessor, the *Australian Reader* series did not remain in circulation as long as the *Irish Readers* had, as it was superseded by the *Royal Reader* in 1892.²³²

In Queensland, educational resources began to stress middle-class ideologies and champion the Protestant work ethic.²³³ The *Royal Reader* (sometimes known as the *Blue Reader*) echoed the middle-class spirit of the Empire. Written for schools in the state of Victoria, the *Royal Reader* was also adopted in Queensland. Compared to both the *Irish National Reader* and the *Australian National Reader*, the *Royal Reader* had a greater focus on content appropriate for young Australians, although this was neither exhaustive nor even very substantial.²³⁴ The primary aim of the *Royal Readers*, besides education, was to attract the attention of young eyes through the use of numerous illustrations, and to foster a love of reading. The volumes included fewer bible stories and more descriptions of animals, and of international and Australian history. In particular, there was an emphasis on stories promoting a wholesome character. Kindness, forgiveness, and honesty were encouraged; laziness and idleness were strongly discouraged.²³⁵ This is consistent with the conceptions of Healy, Taylor and Thomas of colonial education paying particular attention in the shaping of moral characters prepared for citizenship. The influence of Samuel Smiles's phenomenally successful *Self-Help* (1859) is evident.²³⁶ Smiles's work can be likened to a secular hagiography of industrial scions and self-made men of the Victorian age. Smiles saw the ultimate virtues of the successful as thriftiness, industriousness, perseverance and hard-work. The *Royal Reader* featured stories which promoted these values.

²³² The same had been the case in Victoria and New South Wales, though the abolition here had preceded Queensland. For a fuller discussion of this, see: Musgrave, *Paradigm*.

²³³ The Protestant Work Ethic, sometimes known as the Puritan Work Ethic, is a term coined by Max Weber which documents the historical and social linking of hard-work, thrift, and spirituality in Christian countries. Broadly stated, the Ethic saw people, beginning with Lutherans and Calvinists, devote themselves to hard work because it was considered to be both a sign of spirituality, and because good work was thought to benefit society. With the rise of the middle-class values of personal industry being linked to morality, the upper-class values of socially inherited privilege were supplanted. Ironically, the eventual popularity of Race theory would lead to inherited traits and values once again being considered paramount. For Weber on the Protestant Work Ethic, see: Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and 'The Spirit of Capitalism'*, Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells [trans] (London: Penguin Books, 2002).

²³⁴ For a discussion on the content of the *Royal Readers*, see: Musgrave, *Paradigm*, pp. 7-22.

²³⁵ See *ibid*.

²³⁶ Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help* (London: Walking Lion Press, 2006).

Nevertheless, the *Royal Reader's* tenure in the Queensland education syllabus did not remain unchallenged for long. The Queensland government had conceded, by 1900, that their education system needed to be reformed and revitalised.²³⁷ The new Department syllabus in 1905 emphasised that educational materials had to hold greater relevance to children's daily lives.²³⁸ The demand for more local content in educational materials indicates that the *Royal Reader* and its precursors did not have enough information considered specifically relevant to Australia.

By considering the materials included and omitted in the set texts of Queensland education from the 1860s to the early twentieth century, it is possible to gain insight into how Queenslanders viewed the world in which they lived or, at least, in how they wished their children to view it. Yet, these source books dealt with Australia only peripherally. Queensland was a province of the Empire, and European Australians identified themselves as members of the Empire. Therefore, stories about English kings or the Irish countryside would not have seemed out of place in an Australian school.

The absence of any profound discussions of Aboriginal people in these text books mirrors the position of Aboriginal people in European-Australian identity. These books were written or adopted with the education of Europeans in mind. The writers of the *Irish National Reader* could hardly be expected to include stories about Aboriginal Australia; and, to a certain extent, its adoption in Australian schools was merely a matter of economic necessity. What is to be said of the effect on a child's imagining of the nation's identity, when one school book presents stories on indigenous animals like the cockatoo, yet has nothing to say about the country's original inhabitants? In effect, *terra nullius* was being reinforced in the school room. That the volumes remained so long in use, and that their replacements did not substantially change the portrayal of Australia, indicates the profound lack of knowledge that Queensland schools (and other States) had of Aboriginal people. In part, this was because systematic accounts by ethnographers of Aboriginal culture were only just emerging in the last days of the Readers. Yet it may also indicate that

²³⁷ Austin and Selleck, *The Australian Government School*, p. 138.

²³⁸ This information comes from: 'Irish National Readers,' last accessed 11 March, 2010, <http://education.qld.gov.au/library/edhistory/topics/readers/irish.html>.

there was no way to approach the issue of cross-cultural contact without condemning the actions of Europeans on the frontier, and implicating the government in tacitly endorsing these enormities. As Eric Rolls observed: ‘So much of Australia’s history took place outside the law there was more attempt to hide it than record it’.²³⁹ Education, therefore, was as much about silencing as it was about voicing identity. The imagined community of a young Australia relied on suppressing a history of its inhumanity and this suppression also relied on a distancing of Aboriginal Australia from European Australia.

POST-READER EDUCATION

I present a table of ten sources (Table 1) which were used as educational texts from after the Reader period. The information shown here is not intended to display more than a general indication of themes discussed in this chapter. The tallies presented in tabular format show only a brief summation of whether a source mentions Aboriginal people for more than five pages (in total, rather than in sequence), and how many of the sources give more favourable impressions of other indigenous people. These sources were selected from 22 school texts, all of which showed similar patterns and discussed Aboriginal people in a similar manner. Of these sources, only ten are discussed as they more directly relate to the time period this thesis is concerned with.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ Eric Rolls, *A Million Wild Acres* (Melbourne: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 77.

²⁴⁰ There were 12 other texts studied which have been eliminated because they fall too far outside of the time period to be directly relevant. These will form the basis of a future research paper on the implications the themes of this chapter have for Australian education texts from the nineteenth through to the late twentieth centuries. These sources were: T. Herdman, *Geography for To-Day: Book V: The World*, L. Dudley Stamp and L.S. Suggate [eds] (London: Green and Co., 1955); Zoe A. Thralls, *The World: Its Land and Peoples* (Chicago: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1948); H.L. Harris, *Australia in the Making* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1940); R.H. Clayton, *From Colonies to Commonwealth* (Melbourne: Brown, Prier, Anderson Pty Ltd., 1951); J.C. Bright and P.M.J. West, *Australia – From Empire to Asia* (Sydney: Science Press, 1968); A. Grenfell Price, *Australia Comes of Age: A study of growth to nationhood and of external relation* (Melbourne: Georgian House, 1945); *English for Queensland Schools, Grade 6, Part II* (Brisbane: Queensland Government Printer, 1962), no author given; *Geography for Queensland Schools* (Brisbane: A.H. Tucker, Queensland Government Printer, 1948), no author given; F.G.N. Cawte, *Australia and Ourselves* (Adelaide: RL Publishing, 1959); *Social Studies for Queensland Schools, Grade IV* (Brisbane: S.G. Reid, Queensland Government Printer, 1963), no author given; *Social Studies for Queensland Schools Grade V* (Brisbane: S.G. Reid, Queensland Government Printer, 1963), no author given; *Social Studies for Queensland Schools, Grade VII* (Brisbane: S.G. Reid, Queensland Government Printer, 1962), no author given.

Even when some sources discuss Aboriginal people on multiple pages of text, this is most often done in a cursory fashion. Often, only a few sentences are devoted to Aboriginal people. The context in which they were mentioned is the most revealing element of European attitudes, such as where they are referred to in disparaging terms, or as a near extinct people.

Other ethnic populations tend to receive more page space than Aboriginal people. For example, S.H. Smith's *A Second Book of Geography for Young Australians*, first published in 1898, does not record one mention of Australian Aboriginal people. Conversely, Chinese banana growers in Cairns who 'jostle and jabber loudly' are mentioned, as are the Maoris of New Zealand.²⁴¹ Although the book's primary concern is physical geography, there is some focus given to various indigenous peoples. Therefore, it is telling that this text for young Australians shows photos of other indigenous peoples, and devotes pages to non-European communities living in Australia, but has no mention whatsoever of Australia's Aboriginal populations.²⁴²

²⁴¹ S.H. Smith, *A Second Book of Geography for Young Australians* (Sydney: William Brooks & Co. Ltd, 1914), p. 137 and pp. 102-103.

²⁴² *Ibid*, p. 102. The photo is of a Maori settlement of the North Island of New Zealand, described only by the subtitle 'Native Whares, North Island'.

Table 1. Textbooks

Source	Mentions Aboriginal People of Australia	Aboriginal People Mentioned on > five pages	Aboriginal People referred to in a negative manner in comparison with other indigenous people
<i>A Second Book of Geography for Young Australians</i> (1914, first edition 1898)	X		
<i>History of Australasia: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day with a Chapter on Australian Literature</i> (1914, first edition 1899)	√	√	
<i>Langman's Geographical Series, Book 3, The World</i> (1907)	√		√
<i>The Growth of the Empire: A Handbook to the History of Greater Britain</i> (1910)	√		√
<i>A Short History of Australia</i> (1929, first edition 1916)	√		√
<i>New Syllabus For Third Classes: Stories of Great Men and Women of Many Lands</i> (1926)	√	√	
<i>A Concise History of Australia</i> (1935)	√	√	
<i>Whitecombe's Human Geography</i> (1935)	√		
<i>The Story of the British Colonial Empire</i> (1939)	X		
<i>The Making of Australia</i> (No Date)	√	√	√

In terms of the page space devoted to them, the Chinese mining population consistently rate higher than Aboriginal people, whenever the two are mentioned in the same text. Although the Maoris receive some mention in text books in which the Aboriginal people do not, Aboriginal people receive more mention than Maoris overall. However, New Zealand's Maoris are more favourably portrayed than Australian Aboriginal people. In Douglas Woodruff's *The Story of the British Colonial Empire* (1939), the Maoris are compared to native peoples from around the world and assessed as:

Admittedly an exceptional race . . . an example of the way a native people can, in a generation, adapt itself and take its place in the forms and activities of the modern world. The Maoris,

maintaining their separate organisation, but entering fully into the life of New Zealand, are a model and an inspiration to the native peoples throughout the Empire.²⁴³

Woodruff's text describes the habits and character of many of the indigenous peoples of the British Empire, though nowhere does it give a single reference to the Australian Aboriginal people. Given that this is a book written and published in Britain and, therefore, most likely intended for a British audience, this is not necessarily an oversight on behalf of the author—though this is an example of how British children were taught about people foreign to them. Nonetheless, the adoption of this volume by the Presbyterian Lady's College of Goulburn for instruction is indicative of the trend in educational texts in Australia to ignore or slight its own indigenous people.²⁴⁴

Arthur W. Jose's, *The Growth of the Empire: A Handbook to the History of Greater Britain* (1910), uses more direct comparisons between Australian Aboriginal people and other indigenous peoples of the Empire. Jose declares that, regarding the Tasmanian Aborigines, 'the natives were of a fiercer and more crafty type than their cousins on the mainland'.²⁴⁵ The idea of 'craftiness' implies a kind of under-handed and roguish cunning. Of the mainland Aboriginal people, Jose even less favourably declares that 'the Australian blackfellow is little better than a Cape Bushman; the Maori is cleverer, and has been no less ferocious, than the Zulus of Tchaka'.²⁴⁶ Where indigenous peoples display characteristics that proponents of the Empire describe as ferocious or war-like, they are often accorded more flattering descriptions. The conflicts with Aboriginal people did not have the romanticisation of Pontiac's Rebellion, or of the frontier sieges of the Pa of the Maori wars. The nature of war in Australia gave no glory to the victors, so the victims were accorded none.

As has been stated, the manufacturing of an Australian narrative designed for white school children necessitated the obfuscation of an Aboriginal presence in the story. Where Aboriginal people are mentioned, they are rarely talked about for longer than a few sentences per page. Even single events can gain more exposure and elevation in

²⁴³ Douglas Woodruff, *The Story of the British Colonial Empire* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1939), p. 137.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* A sheet is glued to the second page of the book, declaring that this was once the property of the Presbyterian Lady's College of Goulburn, New South Wales.

²⁴⁵ Arthur W. Jose, *The Growth of the Empire: A Handbook to the History of Greater Britain* (London: John Murray, 1910), p. 254.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

the national story than Aboriginal people. For instance, in one text by a Professor of History, Walter Murdoch, there are six pages where Aboriginal people are briefly mentioned in isolated contexts, whereas the Eureka Stockade is discussed in detail on ten.²⁴⁷ This is another clear demonstration on the use of certain people and/or events, as well as the deliberate ignorance of others for the process of nation-building—events or people which suited national narratives were preferred, whereas people who were not considered to be part of Australia's citizenry were maligned through a lack of engagement in this narrative.

A LITERARY TERRA NULLIUS: The absence of Aboriginal people in the written Australian continent and nation

Education, according to Lisa Roberts, is the act of crafting a story.²⁴⁸ Knowledge is not transmitted, but produced, which is to say that the process of selecting ideas and themes for a curriculum is a process of discrimination.²⁴⁹ Narratives are created by the limitation and ordering of facts and information. Fundamentally, education is a narrative endeavour. Considered in this light, it is hardly surprising that texts written for a white audience would discuss settler history in greater detail than they would Aboriginal history. Despite the fact that settler history in Australia is inextricably linked with cross-cultural contact with Aboriginal people, these documents retain their focus on the supposed triumphs of the Europeans. These triumphs are more often over the environment, which is portrayed as vast and empty, and every bit in keeping with the idea of *Terra Nullius*. Nonetheless, the complete avoidance in many of these texts, and the relatively miniscule mention in others of Aboriginal people, reduces the story of Australia's settlement to one of fantasy. References to Aboriginal people rarely occur unless they are describing specific encounters with explorers and settlers, of which some examples will be discussed shortly. Aboriginal people, therefore, appear as extras in tales of European heroism. Comments on Aboriginal communities, contemporary to the publication of the text, almost always discuss why Aboriginal people are on the verge of extinction. The unwritten message of these

²⁴⁷ Walter Murdoch, *The Making of Australia* (Melbourne: Whitecombe and Tombs Ltd). This source has no publication date in the publisher details, however, it was kept by the Armidale Heritage Museum with books whose publication dates ranged from 1890 – 1940.

²⁴⁸ Roberts, *From Knowledge to Narrative*, p. 152.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 3.

texts is clear—Australian history and culture is *white* history and culture. Aboriginal people are discussed as something from the past, or as something which will soon permanently join the past. This represents a convenient white-washing of frontier history and expansion, and diminishes, through sheer ignorance, any trace of moral guilt over the destruction of Aboriginal communities.

By excluding or diminishing indigenous Australians from the narratives constructed in these educational texts, the writers were instructing children in an imagined Australia. Nationalists, as Hobsbawm proposed, need a belief in something ‘that is patently not so’.²⁵⁰ It is not surprising that an Australian nationalism crafted by settler society prejudices White in favour of Black Australia. What is worth considering is that many of the educational books cited in this chapter present their historical stories as akin to fairytales of the frontier. The tale of Bass and Flinders recurs in a number of these texts, specifically the encounter where the explorers have to amuse ‘the natives’ by giving them haircuts.²⁵¹ The risk is high for the intrepid explorers who may lose their lives on the spears of the fickle indigenous, yet the wily Europeans are able to entertain the savages by trimming their hair and beards. Aboriginal people, in this tale, can be likened to fearsome beasts or monsters from other folk or fairytales, who must be tricked and outwitted in order for the heroes to survive. The cutting of hair is also a common theme in myths and folklore, and it is often linked to the loss of strength.²⁵² This kind of Aboriginalism, therefore, has a pernicious morality because it reduces real life encounters to the form of a puerile adventure story. So, not only are Aboriginal people largely ignored and, thus, not included in the Australian imagined community—they are otherwise reduced to bit players who are a mix of the pathetic, the monstrous, and the comic.

Another encounter frequently depicted in these books is the tale of Charles Sturt and his party being surrounded by hostile war bands on the banks of the Murray River.

²⁵⁰ E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1870: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 12; Hobsbawm refers to the French philosopher, Ernest Renan, who declared: ‘Getting its own history wrong is part of being a nation’. Whether this is a conscious process or not is open to conjecture. Ultimately, it may not matter—falsehood does not become truth simply through belief, even though faith can operate as strongly when based upon lies as upon truths.

²⁵¹ For example: *Whitecombe’s Human Geography, Third Class* (Sydney: Whitecombe & Tombs Ltd; 1935), pp. 13-14; G.T. Spaul, *New Syllabus English History For Third Classes: Stories of Great Men and Women of Many Lands* (Sydney: William Brooks & Co. Ltd; 1926), pp. 109-110.

²⁵² The most famous example of this is the Bible story of Samson and Delilah.

Sturt's story is discussed in Spaul's history book for third graders, along with similar encounters met with by Eyre and Kennedy's parties.²⁵³ In each of these tales, the parties are saved from murder at the hands of savages at the last minute by a single good native, or a small group of them. The subtext is clear—'good' Aborigines are the very few who help Europeans, while the 'bad' are all of the rest. Despite these encounters, Aboriginal people fade into the background of these narratives, existing only when met by white explorers. Spaul ties the stories mentioned in his text to a larger perspective on Australian nationalism. The nation is foremost in the minds of the good citizen and 'the man who refuses to salute the flag of his country is an enemy to the people, and is never likely to do anything that will add to the glory of his nation'.²⁵⁴ As in the case of *Whitecombe's Human Geography*, Spaul was also presenting his imagined community of Australia as a place of heroic white men, with Aboriginal people largely demonised and contrasted to the idea of the nation by their perceived lack of civilisation.

Jose made the irrelevance of Aboriginal people to early national history even clearer in his text, *The Growth of the Empire*. According to Jose:

It was at this time [just before 1840] that the Black War took place. The aborigines of Australia have not hitherto been mentioned, because, although the settlers had been in contact with them from the moment of Phillip's landing, yet their presence had practically no effect on the colonisation of the country.²⁵⁵

Other texts compile the epic story of the formation of Australia with Aboriginal people taking the role of minor obstacle or backdrop to the spread of civilisation. For instance, *Whitecombe's Human Geography* related the wider scope of settler expansion as sacrifice and daring against a dark interior:

For a long time nobody knew what the middle of this big land was like, and as it was not so easy to travel about in those days as it is now, few people wished to go very far away from Sydney. But some men, braver than the rest, went on long trips into the country and around the coast so that they slowly came to know more and more about it. We owe a great deal to these daring men who made these dangerous and exciting journeys into a land that was known only to the savage blacks who lived in it.²⁵⁶

Nothing is said in this source of how the knowledge of these 'savage blacks' was used to make penetration into the interior possible. The sacrifice and ingenuity of the European explorers are lauded to the exclusion of all other factors. 'These were only

²⁵³ Spaul. *New Syllabus English History For Third Classes*, pp. 150-160.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 162-163.

²⁵⁵ Jose, *The Growth of the Empire*, p. 254.

²⁵⁶ *Whitecombe's Human Geography*, p. 9.

two of the brave men of those early days,' *Whitecombe's Human Geography* declared of Bass and Flinders, 'and when we think of the tiny ships they had in those days we must be proud of all they did for us'.²⁵⁷ The use of 'us' in this case illustrates an example of othering. The author was conceiving of themselves and their audience in a tight social circle—that of White Australia.

Whitecombe's Human Geography made it clear to its young readers that Australia was a nation exclusive to people of European descent. This is evident in the casual references to Aboriginal people throughout the source, such as: 'We all know something of the native blacks who are to be found scattered all over *our* [my emphasis] country'.²⁵⁸ The use of the word 'scattered' is also pivotal as it seems to imply the image of Aboriginal communities simply occurring at random or placed haphazardly, in an uncoordinated way, around the countryside. Likewise, the use of the word 'our' is analogous to the use of the word 'us' in the same text, cited above. The author is conceiving of themselves and their audience in exclusive terms. In the age of the White Australia Policy, it is not surprising that the indigenous population of the country would not be included in the conception of nationhood, and it is indicative of the broader social attitude towards Aboriginal people by White Australia that school text books also propounded these views.

Yet, the nationalism espoused within these text books went further than merely excluding Aboriginal people from their conceptions of Australia; Australian nationalism also utilised the position of Aboriginal people to justify the moral superiority of the Dominion. The narratives used within these texts supported the view that Australia's benevolent paternalism, like Britain's, was crucial to its character. Woodruff wrote that 'the nineteenth century was, on the whole, a hundred years of peace, because the nations of Europe were discovering the other continents and taking possession of them'.²⁵⁹ This source defended the right of empires to rule

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.14.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 32.

²⁵⁹ Ignoring that the continents had already been discovered, the statement rings logically false. Woodruff was most likely not misinformed about the fact that 'taking possession' of the other continents meant doing so by force, so the statement is an excellent indication of how those in favour of nineteenth-century imperialism accorded no significant legal or social rights to indigenous peoples. Indeed, for Woodruff's statement that the possession was peaceable to be true, we would have to consider *terra nullius* to be in operation in almost every quarter of Empire. Beyond the clear contradiction in Woodruff's statement, the statement holds no truth whatsoever. Woodruff probably

lesser peoples, using the example of the Sudan: ‘The purpose of British rule is two-fold; it is to bring the peoples of the Sudan to a higher level of civilisation for their own sakes and for the sake of all their neighbours’.²⁶⁰ This is an example of Orientalism in action, with the colonised peoples of the Empire defined by a sense of weakness when compared to the British. This justifies domination, ostensibly for the purpose of ‘civilising’. Woodruff’s book does not deal with Australian Aboriginal people, though it offered the above justification for the whole of the Empire. The comparative implications are clear—the process of appropriating Aboriginal resources and land is seen as justified as long as the general condition of the indigenous people is improved.

‘A PEOPLE OF LOW CIVILISATION’: Aboriginal people and adaptation in the educational literature

Despite praise for the British Empire’s perceived paternalism, these books have an overly pessimistic assessment of Aboriginal people and their ability to improve. Consider *Langman’s Geographical Series, Book 3, The World* (1907).²⁶¹ The text was intended to give school children an education in the geographical features of the world. The subject matter also included some discussion of the people who inhabited the world. The book declared:

The **aborigines** of Australia are called **Australian Negroes**, and are a people of low civilisation. . . . Their dwellings are most primitive and temporary in character, their dress scanty, and their food often of a nature disgusting to Europeans . . . Unlike the Maoris, they attempt no competition with Europeans in civilised pursuits.²⁶²

What is important to consider with this source is that it represents how Aboriginal people were being portrayed in mainstream education literature, in contrast to other indigenous peoples of the British Empire. There are two themes in the above quote which recur in most of the sources for Australian schools cited; these are encapsulated in the declaration that Aboriginal people are of ‘low civilisation’, and that they

did not forget that the Napoleonic Wars, the Crimean War, the Franco Prussian War, and the American Civil War all occurred in the nineteenth century, though his statement would only function if they had not. Quote from Woodruff, *The Story of the British Colonial Empire*, p. 135.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 105.

²⁶¹ *Langman’s Geographical Series, Book 3, The World* (London: Langman’s Green And Co, 1907). Author and editor details are not credited in the text. The inside cover has a note dated to 14 of April, 1912 indicating that it was the property of Emily Lenox of Mount St. Mary’s school, Woolwich.

²⁶² *Ibid*, p. 476.

attempted ‘no competition with Europeans in civilised pursuits’. Although it may be thought that the first statement argues the second, the distinction is important. In these sources, Aboriginal people are portrayed as savage and incapable of adapting to civilised life. The declaration that they are uncivilised is not surprising in the age of Social Darwinism. However, for an Empire that used the argument that they were uplifting the standard of living and education of the native peoples it ruled, the assertion that Aboriginal people could not adapt is particularly damning. From a government perspective, this idea also had the fortunate implication of justifying the failure of benevolent paternalism to ‘improve’ Aboriginal people—if government policies failed, the evolutionary position of indigenous people was to blame, not the ineffectiveness or ill-consideration of the policy-makers.

Condemnations of the Australian indigenous people within these school texts are not entirely vituperative. Although Aboriginal people are consistently portrayed as simple, savage, or uncivilised, this is often explained as a characteristic of their social (not moral) condition and, in some cases, is romanticised. Jose’s *History of Australasia*, first written in 1899, characterised the Australian indigenous as ‘hostile’.²⁶³ School children who used this text read that ‘it used to be said that the Australian blackfellow was the lowest form of humanity’.²⁶⁴ Despite Jose’s argument that ‘the more carefully his [Aboriginal people’s] conditions of life are studied, the more evident it becomes that his habits have been clearly adapted to them’, Aboriginal people are still firmly considered in the sense of being different by mode of life and temperament to White Australia.²⁶⁵ The European imagination of the Aboriginal people as ‘hostile’ could also be expressed in the collection of weapons, which form a significant part of the Roth and Coghlan collection. Unlike the textbooks, which relied on simple descriptions of Aboriginal people as hostile, the Museum could convey this hostility by the display of numerous spears and other weaponry. Images of these will be seen in Chapter Four.

Professor of History Ernest Scott’s, *A Short History of Australia* (1916), was used as an instructive text at the Armidale Teacher’s College. Scott declared that the

²⁶³ Arthur W. Jose, *History of Australasia: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day with a Chapter on Australian Literature* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson Ltd, 1914), p. 23.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Australian indigenes 'were a people so low in the scale of human development that they had no domestic arts or animals. They were in the Stone-Age stage of human evolution'.²⁶⁶ Their chief benefit would be in what their current mode of life could suggest about prehistoric Europe. According to Scott, the work of ethnographers such as:

Howitt, Fison, Roth . . . has revolutionised our human knowledge of primitive human relationships; so that an ancient authority on classical studies writes the apparent paradox – which, however, is the simple truth – that the modern student who would understand prehistoric conditions in Greece has to go to Australia.²⁶⁷

This view was common to anthropologists who had expressed interest in the Aboriginal people in the early twentieth century. Roth's older brother, Henry Ling Roth, had expressed almost the same notion as Scott when he wrote:

It is safe to say the ancient Greeks and the Australian Aborigines never met, yet the study of the religion and government of the latter has helped students very considerably in understanding the culture of the former.²⁶⁸

Henry Ling Roth was only expressing an orthodox view in anthropology, which had been expounded even earlier by E.B.Tylor, who Henry Ling Roth had cited as one of the founding fathers of the discipline. In 1871, Tylor had written:

By comparing the various stages of civilisation among races known to history, with the aid of archaeological inference from the remains of the pre-historic tribes, it seems possible to judge in a rough way of an early general condition of man, which from our point of view is to be regarded as a primitive condition, whatever yet earlier state may in reality have lain behind it. This hypothetical primitive condition corresponds in a considerable degree to that of the modern savage tribes, who in spite of their difference and distance, have in common certain elements of civilisation, which seem remains of an early state of the human race at large.²⁶⁹

The popularity of the idea of Aboriginal people as tools for interpreting prehistory is evident by the fact that these differing kinds of texts support the notion. Scott wrote for education, while Henry Ling Roth and Tylor were giving their opinions to professional academics. Clearly, the ideas and attitudes of the professional academic world were penetrating the education curriculum of the young. Views such as Henry Ling Roth's regarding the usefulness of Aboriginal people to understanding the pre-history of Europe were prevalent. By this stage, the concept of pre-historical classification of people into three ages—stone, bronze, and iron—had already become

²⁶⁶ Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 185. Originally published in 1916.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 185-186.

²⁶⁸ Henry Ling Roth, 'On the Use and Display of Anthropological Collections in Museums' in *The Museums Journal*, Vol 10, 1911, p. 288.

²⁶⁹ E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, language, art and custom* (London: Murray, 1891), p. 21. This is a reprint of the 1871 edition.

ensconced. The notion was first envisioned by the curator of the National Danish Museum, Christian Jurgensen Thomsen, which he used to reorder his museum's classificatory systems. Despite some opposition, the idea that there had been a Stone Age was taken for granted by the end of the 1860s.²⁷⁰ Aboriginal people were classed as Stone Age because they were considered by European observers to not have advanced beyond the use of stone tools.

The image of the indigenous person as Stone Age is not only described in detail throughout these early school text books, it is also visually portrayed. *The Story of the British Empire* goes into considerable detail about the indigenous inhabitants of the Empire and, although the Aboriginal people do not receive a single mention throughout, the text includes some comic depictions of native peoples.²⁷¹ For example, where the book declared that 'the general course of history has been for the private trader to be the first to establish contact with an uncivilised people', a sketch follows of the classic situation of encounter.²⁷² In the sketch, a white trader stands on a shore surrounded by barrels of goods and muskets. Three archetypal naked tribesmen with spears and absurdly over-sized earrings stand and gape in wonder at the strange goods of the white man. This is an example of the use of objects (albeit only depictions) for the juxtaposition of Europe and the 'other'. The white traders appear with their objects, which are the trappings of civilisation and trade, while illustrations of spears and adornments serve to make the tribesmen seem both dangerous and laughable. This use of objects to make indigenous people seem both comic and threatening also reinforces the point that, though they appear to be superficially dangerous, they are easily awed and therefore considered weaker than Europeans.

Whitecombe's Human Geography, for third grade Australian school students, is a good example of the simultaneous praise and condemnation of Aboriginal Australia commonly found within these texts. On the one hand, indigenous people are

²⁷⁰ Glyn Daniel and Colin Renfrew, *The Idea of Prehistory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), pp. 38-39.

²⁷¹ Woodruff, *The Story of the British Colonial Empire*.

²⁷² *Ibid*, p. 19.

described in encounters with European explorers as ‘savage blacks’; conversely, their mode of life is romanticised.²⁷³ The text book declared:

Though the ways of the blacks are very different from ours, we must remember that they are a very remarkable people. They led a simple life, wandering about hunting for their food.²⁷⁴

The same book praises the endeavours of the European explorers who opened up the interior of Australia for settlement. The efforts of the Europeans are characterised as invaluable and heroic, whereas Aboriginal people who hindered these expeditions were cast in the mould of ‘savage blacks’.²⁷⁵ Thus, while there may have been some regard for the success with which Aboriginal people existed in the supposedly harsh environs of Australia, ultimately, they had no real place in the emerging Australian nation. The use of the word ‘wandering’ is similar to the use of ‘scattered’, previously discussed. ‘Wandering’ subtly reinforces the notion that Aboriginal people were without settled sophistication, as if they merely responded to their environment with purposelessness. The text’s image of a nomadic and transient people found reinforcement in the Museum’s display of a typical scene of Aboriginal life, of which more will be said in the fourth chapter.

The perceived savagery of Aboriginal people is not the most telling condemnation they receive in these texts. Their ‘low civilisation’ was sometimes at least portrayed in a similar vein to the cliché of the Noble Savage—an endearing throwback to a less complicated existence.²⁷⁶ Further, as some books explained, Aboriginal people could be useful to the student simply because they were so backward—their way of life could help to illuminate the distant past of Europe, as discussed above.²⁷⁷ It is not only the fact that Aboriginal people were seen as backward that condemned them.

²⁷³ *Whitecombe’s Human Geography*, p. 9.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁷⁵ For instance, see the story of Bass and Flinders in *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

²⁷⁶ The phrase ‘the Noble Savage’ had been in use before Jean Jacques Rousseau. Indeed, Rousseau himself never used the phrase at all in his text *Discourse on Inequality* (London: Penguin Classics, 1985), first published in 1754. Voltaire accused Rousseau of supporting primitivism, despite the fact that Rousseau clearly did not. Rousseau’s writing actually argues men can only be elevated to a state of ‘goodness’ by civilisation. Nature is doomed to keep a man in servitude and barbarism. The idea of the Noble Savage had fallen from favour in the nineteenth century, by the time Charles Dickens wrote his satirical essay *The Noble Savage* which accused the American Indians of wicked savageness, and declared their defenders to be fools. Nonetheless, the emergence of the romanticisation of nature and the past in the latter part of the Victorian era, through such trends as the Pre-Raphaelite art movements; as well as distaste for the excesses of industrialisation in cities like London and Manchester, caused an interest in the idea of the Noble Savage to once more come into vogue. For more on this subject, see: Ter Ellinson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).

²⁷⁷ For example: Scott, *A Short History of Australia*, p. 186.

Rather, their perceived inability to adapt was a more serious indictment for the authors of these texts.

In contrast to many of the sources referenced in this chapter, the *New Syllabus History for Third Classes* devotes seven of its 40 chapters to Aboriginal people or encounters with them. The rest of the book deals with historical figures as large as Pizarro and George Washington, lending a focus to Aboriginal people that is far more generous in comparison with any other text book examined.²⁷⁸ The first page of this publication notes that the work is to 'meet the requirements of the education department of New South Wales'.²⁷⁹ While Spaul's book included disparaging references to 'murderous natives' and characterised the indigenous way of life as 'strange, simple', they are often portrayed as the wise saviours of explorers like Sturt and Eyre.²⁸⁰ The 'murderous natives' are the men who tried to stop Kennedy's expedition, while those who aided Europeans are seen as good and decent. While this may indicate the author's view that good Aborigines assisted Europeans and bad ones resisted white encroachment, Spaul was clearly pessimistic of any real chance of assimilation or indigenous adaptation.

Spaul details the story of Bennelong (Spaul spells this *Bennilong*), the Aboriginal man who came to serve Governor Phillip for a short time.²⁸¹ Bennelong is portrayed as an intelligent member of his people, who develops a relationship of mutual respect between himself and the Governor. Nonetheless, when Phillip takes Bennelong to England, Bennelong is spoiled and ruined by the world he encounters there. Bennelong comes to learn 'bad habits which afterwards did him a lot of harm'.²⁸² There is neither mention of the damage to Bennelong's health the long sea voyage took, nor his consequent lack of acceptance in his own or adopted cultures after the journey. Instead, Bennelong is portrayed as someone unable to resist European vices and, as a result, the attempt to adapt him to white society failed.

²⁷⁸ Spaul, *New Syllabus English History For Third Classes*, see chapter contents.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid*, publication page.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 160.

²⁸¹ *Ibid*, 150.

²⁸² *Ibid*.

Scott's previously discussed *Short History of Australia*, first published in 1916, states the case of Aboriginal inability to adapt more explicitly than Spaul. According to Scott:

It was perhaps inevitable that the native race should fade away in the parts of the country where the white population became thick. They were not a people who could be absorbed or adapted to civilised life.²⁸³

Scott was frank about the violence perpetrated by European settlers against Aboriginal people. He cited incidences of poisoning and settler rapacity against Aborigines. One story he recounts is particularly damning:

A French man of science who visited Sydney on the staff of the ship *Uranie* in 1818 related in a book which he published about the voyage, that wealthy inhabitants of the city who entertained the officers gathered together a company of aboriginals armed with clubs, and set them fighting, giving liquor to incite the observer, "their corpses were carried out amidst the laughter of the assembly".²⁸⁴

As damning as this account is, Scott's final assessment of the 'black population . . . fading out of existence' was considered as a result of their own inability to advance beyond their way of life, not the violence inflicted upon them. This is Social Darwinism in action; the race which does not adapt must perish. This lack of adaptation also relates to issues of nation-building. The lack of adaptability in Aboriginal people was seen as a lack of any sense of historical agency, and this justified exclusion in the Australian narrative. This exclusion has already been discussed in Chapter One, but is worthwhile considering in the above context because it shows how European conceptions of race related to the limitation of national identities.

F.L. Wood's *A Concise History of Australia* (1935), used by Queensland schools in the 1930s, echoed the sentiments in Scott's text regarding the reasons for indigenous decline in Australia.²⁸⁵ Aboriginal people receive scant attention in Wood's 'concise' history of the nation, with only one reference to them carrying for more than one page.²⁸⁶ Where Aboriginal people are discussed in some detail, the reasons for their near extinction are explained. Wood stated that: 'Again, the natives refused to settle down and become the white man's workmen. Accordingly, the colonists often

²⁸³ Scott, *A Short History of Australia*, p. 187.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 186.

²⁸⁵ F.L.W. Wood, *A Concise History of Australasia* (Sydney: Bridge Printing Pty. Ltd.; 1935).

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 102-103.

thought of them simply as a nuisance, and tried to exterminate them'.²⁸⁷ Therefore, blame is not placed solely upon the rapacity of European settlers. Instead, Wood suggests that it is the refusal of Aboriginal people to settle down and be of use to white men that necessitated their destruction. The use of the words 'settle down' are related to the use of 'wandering' and 'scattered' in *Whitecombe's Human Geography* in portraying a restlessness and uncivilised state of Aboriginal existence. Wood includes no discussion of whether or not traditional Aboriginal lifestyles could be considered settled. The important factor for Wood is that they 'refused to settle' and, thus, could not adapt to the European way of life. This is an important point to consider in the museum context, where display could immobilise indigenous cultures as a set-piece exhibit. If Aboriginal people would not settle down, they could at least be frozen in the imagination through the act of collection and display. Wood's views can also be considered in the context of forced labour in Australia. Roth had encountered numerous instances of exploitation of Aboriginal labour and, when he had attempted to put an end to this exploitation, he had received determined resistance from some Europeans. Roth himself had commented on this that:

I am well aware that the general opposition to my administration, and to myself personally, is mainly due to my interference with what has for many years past become considered a vested interest in the flesh and blood of the native.²⁸⁸

Whitecombe's Human Geography reaches the same conclusion as Scott, without the cold functional assessment of Wood. The inability of Aboriginal people to adapt to life on the frontier is once again cited as the prime reason for the loss of their land and lives. The students of the Armidale Teacher's College would have read in *Whitecombe's Human Geography* that:

They [Aboriginal people] could not change easily from their way of life to ours, so they have gradually disappeared from some parts of the country. There are none now in Tasmania, and very few in New South Wales and Victoria. In the far north, however, where there are few

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 263.

²⁸⁸ Roth in Reports by the Under Secretary for Public Lands, cited in: Kate Khan, 'The Life and Times of Walter Edmund Roth in North Queensland' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 190. Regarding slavery or forced labour in Queensland, consider the abduction of Aboriginal children by European settlers. Shirleene Robinson has written on the widespread abduction of Aboriginal children by Queensland settlers. Robinson argues the practice of abduction was common knowledge, and often defended on the basis that placing an Aboriginal child in forced servitude would also afford the opportunity of 'civilising' them. Despite the obvious destruction and demoralisation of Aboriginal families, some settlers who stole these children coldly observed that it was not possible for an Aboriginal woman to feel the same bond for her child that a European mother would. Shirleene Robinson, 'Queensland settlers and the creation of first "stolen generations": the unofficial removal of Aboriginal children in Queensland, 1842-1897' in *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (April 2002), pp. 1-16.

white men, there are still many tribes living in the same simple way as they did before our people came to their land.²⁸⁹

This quote makes the author's view clear that Aboriginal people could still survive where they carried on living in their traditional fashion, yet they could not exist where European civilisation had become ensconced. However, in this view rests the fundamental contradiction of European ideas on the perceived failure of Aboriginal people to adapt. Where Aboriginal people clung tenaciously to their old traditions (even when this is praised as one of their virtues), they were deemed failures. In the mindset of European observers, tradition kept Aboriginal people free from pernicious influences, yet it also damned them to certain extinction.

CONCLUSION

An examination of the source books used in the Australian education system is an effective method of gaining insight into prevailing attitudes towards Aboriginal people during the Federation period and beyond. Although precise attitudes may have varied from condemnation to romanticisation, all sources agree that the indigenous population of Australia were hopelessly primitive and fast disappearing. Many sources paid scant attention to Aboriginal people, and some completely ignored them. Not only did generations of Australian school-children grow up with these perceptions explained to them in written form, but also their teachers received instruction from these sources in their own colleges. The absence of indigenous peoples from these sources, or their inclusion in disparaging terms, created the impression that they did not belong in the collective imagination of what the Australian nation comprised, and that they had nothing valuable to contribute even if they had been included in Australia's imagined community. This meant that Aboriginal people could be consigned to the past, partly through their general exclusion from these texts, and partly through the act of ethnographic collection and display, which will be discussed over the next two chapters.

For urban Australians, and other Europeans in Queensland who had little or no personal encounters with Aboriginal people, education was one of the only means by

²⁸⁹ *Whitecombe's Human Geography*, p. 33.

which they were exposed to knowledge about the original inhabitants of the state. Besides what may be read in the press, there were very few other sources of 'knowledge' on Aboriginal people. The characterisation of Aboriginal people in these texts helped to form, in young minds, the overall state of knowledge that Europeans had regarding Aboriginal Australia. The profoundly one-sided, ill-informed, and substantial lack of information in the discussed sources is one of the few alternatives to the depiction of Aboriginal people in Australia. Other alternatives which drew from a more substantial and practical awareness of Aboriginal people emerged in the ethnographic literature, the writings of collectors on the frontier, and in museum displays. The links in these texts to the other sources cannot be overlooked, as many of the collectors would have received their basic educations from the *Readers* and their successors. Roth, too, would have taught through them.

Further, these depictions, and the documentary sources which encompass them cannot be separated from the collections themselves, and the following two chapters will demonstrate this. These chapters will show that the Museum's own conceptualisation of Aboriginal people did not differ greatly from the characterisations of the texts discussed in this chapter. Visitors to the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama may have found their education on Aboriginal Australia to have been enhanced, but not challenged.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE WRITTEN WORLD OF THE FRONTIER, AS SEEN THROUGH THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

We have seen in the previous chapter how Aboriginal people were characterised in the educational literature of colonial Australia. Depictions of Aboriginal people were largely negative, either disparaging them as savage, uncivilised, or simple. Even where they were portrayed in a more sympathetic light, Aboriginal people were still viewed as incapable of adaptation and incompatible with the modern world. More importantly, the previous chapter demonstrated that European Australians had no substantial or accurate depictions of Aboriginal people in their school text books. The sources to be discussed in this chapter are not formal text books, but the frank and sometimes very private correspondence of men and women who wrote to the Queensland Museum from 1878-1914. These letters demonstrate that, like the sources discussed in Chapter Two, Aboriginal people were often sympathetically portrayed when they exhibited characteristics which conformed to a view of their culture as authentic or traditional. Where they frustrated the aims of Europeans, they were derided. As the correspondence to be discussed will show, the ideas collectors held of Aboriginal people were based on a higher degree of practical experience and exposure than is evident in the education text books. Attitudes were complex, and not always consistent, though universal themes of Aboriginal people as Stone Age curiosities, as a dying people, and as incapable of adaptation to European life are common.

In the nineteenth century, the Queensland Museum operated upon the frontier, both through agents and through its interpretation and enshrinement of the 'other'. Collectors, scientists, institutions, and others corresponded with the Museum in order to exchange artefacts and information. Their reasons for doing so varied from monetary gain, contribution to science, to the pursuit of intellectual immortality. The relationship between the Museum and its collectors was one of reciprocity. The

written world of the collector, expressed through the correspondence discussed in this chapter, entered into the narrative of Empire and science; the collector's frontier of violence and adversity was also an imagined realm of savagery and adventure.

Before the correspondence can be discussed, the notion of violence on the frontier needs to be briefly summarised. The purpose of this information is to contextualise collection in a region which had already witnessed profound depopulation and dispersal of Aboriginal communities. In a sense, then, collectors could be seen as akin to scavengers, sifting through the detritus of one people to satisfy the curiosity of their own.

'LINE OF BLOOD': Aboriginal depopulation on the frontier

By the time Roth and Coghlan were collecting, the Queensland Aboriginal population had been severely depleted from contact with European settlers and the Native Police. The discovery of gold in northern Queensland meant that tens of thousands of Europeans and Chinese migrated to the region, eager to exploit the new found wealth.²⁹⁰ Competition with Aboriginal people for land and resources were the immediate products of this settlement, and the depopulation of the Aboriginal community was the ultimate consequence. Where Europeans settled, the native fauna were depleted, and the wilderness cleared to make way for farmlands and communities.²⁹¹ Consequently, Aboriginal people lost access to their game and resources. When Aboriginal people hunted European livestock to compensate, settler retaliation was swift and merciless. Roth's old university acquaintance and fellow ethnographer, Professor Baldwin Spencer, observed this kind of pattern in the regions he and F.J. Gillen studied, and decried how grossly unequal white and black relations had become.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection Volume 1*, p. 13.

²⁹¹ Although, the 'wilderness' is very much a European concept, and is mentioned here to evoke their conceptualisation of the frontier. A wilderness, by definition, is an unsettled and uncultivated region. The presence of Aboriginal people on the frontier meant that there actually was no such thing as an Australian 'wilderness' in this sense.

²⁹² Tim Rowse, *White Flour, White Power: From Relations to Citizenship in Central Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 14

Ethnographers and anthropologists, scientists and collectors often observed the barbarities that European civilisation had to offer Aboriginal people on the Australian frontier. The rapid depopulation of Aboriginal people was certainly not limited to Queensland. When Dr Lorimer Fison and A.W. Howitt published their study of the Kamilaroi of northern New South Wales and Kurnai people in the Gippsland, it was clear that Aboriginal populations had been profoundly depleted.²⁹³ Howitt discussed frontier mortality in his introduction to the section on the Kurnai. According to Howitt's figures, Gippsland had an Aboriginal population of 1,000-1,500 in 1839. By 1877, a Royal Commission had established that the population had shrunk to 52 men, 41 women, and 66 children.²⁹⁴ Howitt was clear that this decline was a universal result of the contest of races on the frontier:

It is only in accordance with previous experience as to the fate of this aboriginal race when brought into contact with the white men throughout Australia, and it is only a further instance of a general experience of that which is going on all over the world, with greater or less rapidity, under similar contact of savage coloured races with the civilized white race.²⁹⁵

Howitt made this view clearer still when he wrote:

It may be stated broadly that the advance of settlement has, upon the frontier at least, been marked by a line of blood . . . But the tide of settlement has advanced along an ever-widening line, breaking the native tribes with its first waves and overwhelming their wrecks with its flood.²⁹⁶

The apparent process of indigenous extinction when confronted with European civilisation seemed inevitable to many Victorian observers.²⁹⁷ As a German ethnographer wrote in 1881: 'for us [Europeans] . . . primitive societies are ephemeral . . . inasmuch as they exist for us all. At the very instant they become known to us they are doomed'.²⁹⁸ According to numerous observers, violence towards, and exploitation of Aboriginal people, was considered to be disturbingly prevalent on the Australian frontier. For example, when Roth took up the position of Northern

²⁹³ Lorimer Fison and A.W. Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai: Group Marriage and Relationship, and Marriage by Elopement* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1991), originally published 1879.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 181.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 181-182.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 182.

²⁹⁷ Although it must be stated that the concept of indigenous extinction in the face of European contact was not new to the Victorian age. Indeed, European encounters had already brought about the extinction of indigenous cultures centuries before, as had been the case in Conquistador contacts with the Aztecs and Incans, for example.

²⁹⁸ Cited in Jones, *Boomerang*, p. 126.

Protector of Aborigines, in 1898, he became appalled at the exploitation of the indigenous people he saw.²⁹⁹

THE CORRESPONDENCE

METHODOLOGY

The correspondence of the Queensland Museum is an unpublished source that has much unused potential to supplement frontier studies. The documents from this correspondence come from various people and institutions who wrote to the Museum from the year 1878. Although archival documents outside of this period have been read, only those documents from 1878, when the correspondence began, to 1914 will be discussed here. Both Roth and Coghlan wrote to and donated their material to the Museum within this time frame. Nineteen-fourteen has been selected as the archival limit because this was the year in which the Queensland Museum unveiled its Australian Aboriginal Life diorama. This exhibition was the culmination of the Museum's research, acquisitions and study conducted on its behalf by numerous collectors. The letters and artefacts sent to the Museum form the intellectual and material basis of the Aboriginal Life diorama, which formed the primary basis of the Queensland Museum's depiction of Aboriginal people for over seven decades. This is crucial for a proper consideration of the model of exhibit perception proposed in Chapter One. Just as the educational texts in Chapter Two demonstrate the ideas of visitors to the Museum had regarding Aboriginal people, the letters discussed in this chapter give insight into the collector's and the Museum's own perspectives. These letters formed the foundation of practical information that the Museum used in gathering and presenting its version of Aboriginal Australia.

Kathryn Frankland transcribed a large proportion of the correspondence in the 1980s.³⁰⁰ Her transcriptions are at times imperfect, though these have since been largely corrected by Museum staff with simple pen notations. The original documents are attached to the back of the typed transcriptions so that it is possible to refer to

²⁹⁹ Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection Volume 1*, p. 11.

³⁰⁰ Kathryn Frankland was employed specifically to do this task. Her report was published internally. Kathryn Frankland, *Interim Report on the Processing of the Anthropology Correspondence Series (1878-1921)*, *From the Queensland Museum* (Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1989).

these in the case of confusion. For the purposes of my research, all document originals were read before consulting the transcriptions. Frankland's work is of invaluable benefit to this study, and could be capitalised on by other researchers. As she states in her report: 'The potential of museum archives as a source of information has been largely overlooked by researchers'.³⁰¹ Her transcriptions cover the period 1878-1921, of which this chapter utilises all but the last seven years of material.

The documents are rich in detail, and there still remain hundreds of letters in this archive which could be used by other researchers with interests distinct from my own. The Museum had numerous interests beyond the fields of anthropology and ethnology and, even within these disciplines, the institution was also concerned with the study of people and issues omitted in the following discussion. Nevertheless, the sources have been examined on the basis of relevance to the thesis, and as a general representation of Museum and collector interests in the period. Categories chosen for examination included any letter which mentioned:

- Aboriginal people in any context;
- human remains, indigenous or non-indigenous;
- correspondence which discussed the character of frontier life;
- correspondence which discussed the specific motivations of collectors, and the aims and intent of the Museum;
- letters concerning international exchanges of material and ideas;
- letters from Coghlan;
- letters from or concerning Roth.

The frontier was not only a place of trade, inter-cultural exchange, conflict, depredation and hardship; it could also be a place of exceptionally poor grammar and spelling. Many of the letters exhibit a standard of English that is wanting. Some letters were written on small scraps of paper, while the author was in a physically taxing and hostile environment. Some letters are barely legible, and others have been eliminated from this study on the grounds that they are entirely indecipherable, the hand-writing having faded irretrievably. Any original errors in the documents have not been pointed out where they have been quoted. To do so would be so frequent as

³⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 1.

to be distracting. Therefore, the conventional method of acknowledging a quotation's error ([sic.]) has not been used.

There is a great deal of information in the letters which would be considered by today's standards criminal, insensitive, or even morally reprehensible. In some cases, the writers of these documents were themselves aware that what they were proposing to do, or had done, would be considered unethical by their own societies. Likewise, some of the vocabulary used in the nineteenth century would not be acceptable today. But that is also the point—inappropriate language about indigenous people was probably not acceptable then, or may have been contextually charged. None of these letters have been censored, in order to avoid misrepresenting the tone or intent of the documents.

Regarding the individual correspondents and people mentioned in the letters, wherever possible, the identities have received some description. Not all of these people are known or traceable, while others retain a fragmentary historical presence. Many of the correspondents—such as Roth, Coghlan, Meston, Hey, and Spencer—have already been introduced. The unknowable identities of the greater part of the correspondents is not a detriment to this discussion. By giving the unknown some voice in the context of these interactions, their writing helps to construct history from the everyday, as promoted by Hobsbawm and others. Where correspondents are knowable, and are being introduced here for the first time, their biography will often be expanded upon in the footnote, at their first mention.

SUMMARY OF DATA

For the period 1878-1914, there are a total of 891 pieces of correspondence surviving in the Museum archives. Most of these take the form of letters, though there are a few telegraphs and receipts amongst the correspondence. My categorisation of correspondence was based upon the amount of space each document devoted to one subject. Excluding the category of 'other', which simply included any document not concerned with issues in the other categories, the remaining correspondence was itemised on the basis of the dominant purpose and subject matter of the letter.

‘Aboriginal exchanges’ specifically refers to commercial or material exchanges between the author of the letter and Aboriginal people. For example, the use of trade goods to acquire Aboriginal material culture, or the use of money to purchase their services as guides are both covered by ‘Aboriginal exchanges’. Some letters include numerous categories—for example, a letter might detail the donation of Aboriginal skeletal material, as well as material culture and, thus, it was included under the categories of ‘Aboriginal Artefacts’ and ‘Human Remains’.

All matters relating to Aboriginal people were categorised under three broad types—Aboriginal Artefacts, Aboriginal Exchanges, and Aboriginal Other. This last category was distinct from the broader category of ‘Other’, and is always presented as ‘Aboriginal Other’. If a letter only dealt with a topic in a sentence or less, that mention was not considered substantial enough to warrant dual classification. Wherever there was a stronger theme in a document, this formed its basic classification, and other categories could only be counted if their mention exceeded the sentence limitation.

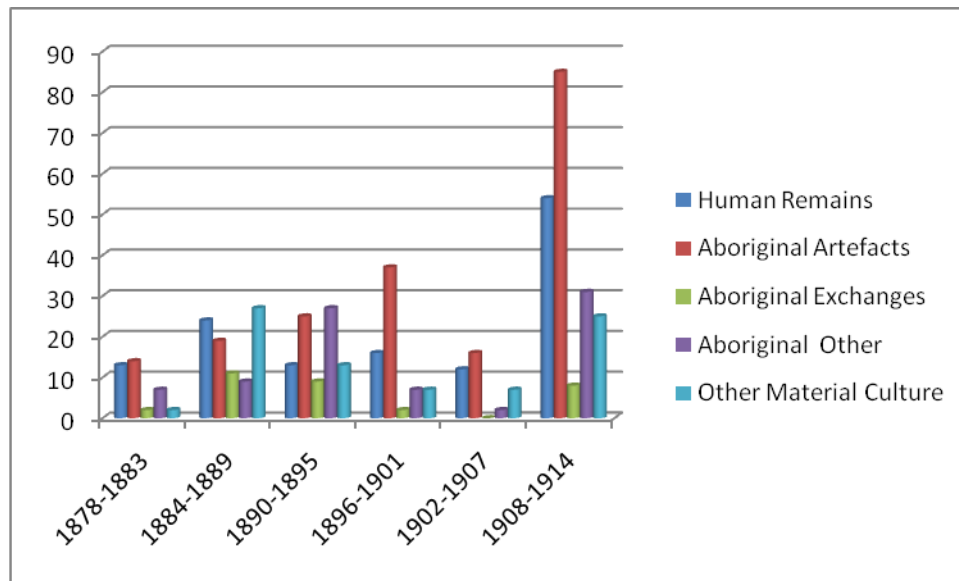
This information clearly demonstrates the trends in the correspondence and, thus, in the interests of the Museum and its collectors. A presentation of this information in tabular and graph format is overleaf:

Table 2. Museum correspondence, 1878-1914

Year	Human Remains	Aboriginal			Other Material Culture	Other	Total Letters
		Artefacts	Exchanges	Other			
1878	1	1	0	0	0	3	4
1879	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
1880	3	1	0	1	0	3	8
1881	0	2	1	0	0	1	2
1882	2	5	1	1	0	3	8
1883	7	5	0	5	1	7	20
1884	3	3	1	4	2	18	28
1885	8	3	1	1	2	11	20
1886	3	4	3	1	4	15	28
1887	2	2	1	2	9	20	27
1888	2	3	3	0	3	19	28
1889	6	4	2	1	7	22	34
1890	2	3	0	4	3	12	19
1891	1	6	2	3	4	4	14
1892	3	6	5	5	3	29	39
1893	3	1	1	1	1	14	19
1894	4	2	0	6	0	19	27
1895	0	7	1	8	2	17	25
1896	1	10	1	0	1	25	31
1897	4	4	0	1	1	12	22
1898	2	1	0	1	4	34	43
1899	2	5	0	0	1	11	19
1900	3	9	1	3	0	21	30
1901	4	8	0	2	0	10	23
1902	1	4	0	0	2	3	9
1903	9	3	0	0	2	7	17
1904	1	3	0	1	1	12	14
1905	0	1	0	1	1	5	6
1906	0	4	0	0	1	12	16
1907	1	1	0	0	0	14	16
1908	5	1	0	1	4	10	19
1909	1	11	0	1	6	15	33
1910	1	1	0	0	0	6	8
1911	19	33	3	8	0	45	101
1912	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1913	9	1	0	2	5	11	27
1914	19	38	5	19	10	22	106
TOTAL	132	196	32	83	81	493	891

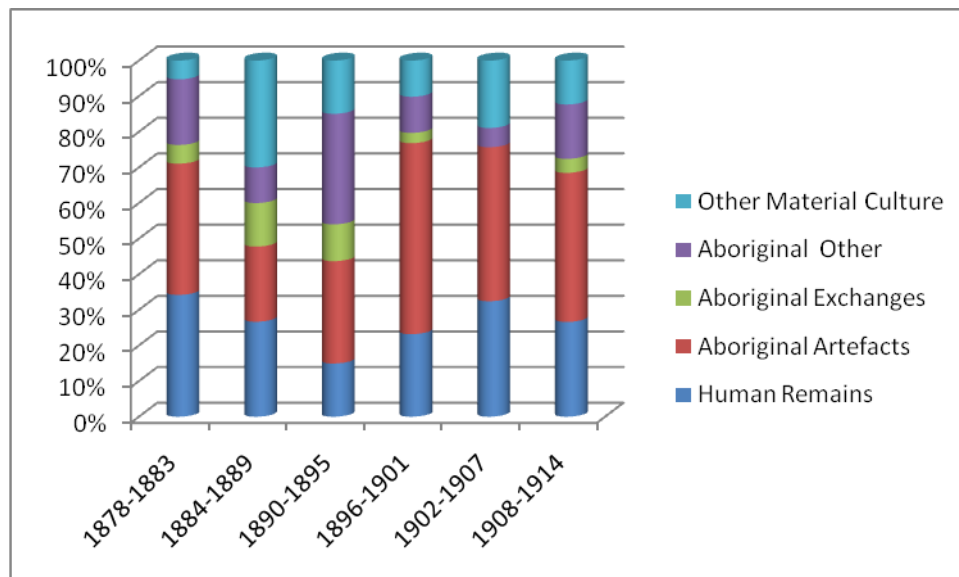
Presented as a graph spread, divided into categories and years, the data is:

Graph 1. Museum correspondence, 1878-1914.



Displayed with categories in proportion to the amount of correspondence received, the information is as follows:

Graph 2. Museum correspondence by proportion, 1878-1914.



Excluding the years 1878-1883 and 1908-1914, the volume of correspondence on Aboriginal material culture is always exceeded by letters concerning other matters unrelated to material culture. Most of the letters in the 'other' category relate to zoological and geographical collecting. None of the letters in this category relate to Queensland Aboriginal people in any context.

Even from a cursory examination of the information in the table and graphs above, it is clear to see that Aboriginal issues were not a major priority for the Museum compared to its other considerations. The weight of correspondence indicates that less than half of the letters dealt with matters concerning Aboriginal people. Considering that many of the letters which did deal with Aboriginal people in some way often did so in less detail than another issue addressed in the same correspondence, we can see trends which were reflected in the previous chapter. Specifically, the lack of substantial attention to Aboriginal people in the school text books is echoed even in these letters of those in the field who dealt with them every day. Although the information on Aboriginal people is much more detailed in these documents, it is far less so in comparison to other themes which correspondents wrote about. In concert with the discussion in the previous chapter, this information demonstrates that Aboriginal people were of lesser importance to many Europeans in their conception of what issues were relevant to the Museum, and what was important on the Queensland frontier.

These categories are interrelated. As such, the following discussion is not presented under headings which relate to the classifications in the above data. The discussion instead follows the consistent and discrete themes which link the correspondence together, and which relate to this thesis. A discussion of Roth's and Coghlan's correspondence follows a discussion of the rest of the letters I have chosen to highlight. This structure is a result of the two collector's importance to the thesis and, also, the approach serves to contextualise Roth and Coghlan with the other collectors and themes discussed.

Before proceeding to the discussion, a brief summation of the Museum's history in this period must now be outlined. This will enable the reader to more easily grasp the chronology of directors while reading letters which refer to them. Twenty years after its foundation, the Museum moved into a new address in William Street, Brisbane in 1878. Two years later, W.A. Haswell was appointed director, though his tenure lasted only until 1882, when Charles De Vis took the position. Charles De Vis remained the director of the Museum for 23 years before retiring, after which C.J. Wild was appointed as an acting director in 1905. In 1911, R. Hamlyn-Harris, who had been an

assistant to Wild, became the director. He retained this position for the remainder of the period discussed in this chapter, until he resigned in 1917.³⁰² The Museum has no record of a mission statement in this period. Essentially, the Museum existed as a brains trust for the State. Prior to the foundation of the University of Queensland in 1910, all government-employed academics worked for the Museum.

MOTIVATIONS FOR COLLECTION

Collectors contributed artefacts to the Museum ostensibly for the benefit of science, and it was not uncommon for these donations to be made without monetary compensation. Donating to the Queensland Museum could provide a kind of intellectual immortality for the donors; preserving their names with the collections they imparted. R.H. Smith wrote to the Museum in 1902, generously offering the institution a small collection of weapons free of charge, ‘on the condition that my name appears with them as I see other names are attached under similar conditions’.³⁰³

The issue of crediting collections sometimes caused antagonism between the institution and the collector. The correspondence shows evidence of a number of disputes concerning the use of a collection donated to the Museum. Such disputes most commonly arose from collections not being displayed prominently enough, or where slights against objects were perceived by the collector. Pride, therefore, could be integral to the nature of collection and display. Consider two letters of complaint sent to the Museum from different collectors. The first letter demonstrates the desire by a collector to see their collection in the public eye, thus, to have its contribution to science more directly comprehended, or credited. The collector, R.C. Beck, wrote in 1881:

About twelve months ago (I think) I presented to the Museum a bundle of carved boomerangs & a coolamon which I collected . . . Having visited the Museum & seeing a very poor collection of those weapons there, I thought my collection would be acceptable . . . I have twice since then

³⁰² This chronological information comes from: Richard Robins and Neville Agnew, *A Guide to the Anthropology and Archaeology collections of the Queensland Museum* (Brisbane: Queensland Museum internal publication, 1990), p. 3.

³⁰³ Letter from R.H. Smith, 16 July 1902, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 6706/1902.

been at the Museum but have not seen my donation placed on view! Will you be good enough to let me know the reason they have not been exhibited.³⁰⁴

The Queensland Museum could display only a small proportion of its stock, so the lack of display is hardly surprising. Nonetheless, the expectation that a collector's donation should be exhibited indicates what some may have felt to be the purpose of their collections. This lends itself to the idea that collections were in part trophies of frontier encounters, and that donation might bring an appreciation of this in the public eye. The way in which the Museum chose to display objects could even be considered a personal insult to the collector, as demonstrated in a complaint by H. Purcell in 1895:

When in Brisbane recently I chanced to go through the Museum with a friend, and in one case I saw "Blackfellows letter or message stick" "Meaningless" written underneath on the cards. These are two that I gave you a year or two ago, and I would like to point out that if they are message sticks how can they be meaningless – the remark looks rather pointed to myself – I went to great trouble to get these two for you and I think it hardly fair, that "Meaningless" should be attached to only mine in the whole collection.³⁰⁵

The issue of accreditation raises an interesting question about the relationship between narrative and the object. If objects were sometimes seen by the collector as a projection of themselves, the objects might hold autobiographic weight for the collector. This returns us to the issue Torrence has raised—that objects may tell us more about their collectors than about their manufacturers.³⁰⁶ Purcell's outrage over the depiction of an object is because of a perceived insult to himself, rather than the simplistic categorisation of a cultural artefact as meaningless. If, as Martin argues, objects are embodiments of social and cultural meanings in physical form, these embodiments could become less important for the collector than the object's role as a trophy of their own interactions with another culture.³⁰⁷ This relates to the issue of perceiving an object. In these examples, an object has been perceived by collectors, not as an embodiment of its parent culture, but as a kind of trophy of the collector's hard-work, or as a record of their contribution to science.

³⁰⁴ Letter from R.C. Beck, 4 October 1881, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 57/1881.

³⁰⁵ Letter from H. Purcell, 8 May 1895, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4700/1895. Part of the writing before the 'H' is illegible, and it may be that H was not Purcell's first initial, or that he was using a title. No more is known of this author.

³⁰⁶ Torrence, *World Archaeology*, p. 478.

³⁰⁷ Martin, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, p. 6.

‘RATHER MUCH LIKE DESECRATING’: Science, profit, and entertainment as motivations for the collection of human remains

In order to record the differences between races, the physical characteristics of a person were paramount to the Victorian scientist. The science of phrenology, the study of human propensities and defects by the measurement of the skull, created an enormous and long-lasting trade in the skeletal remains of indigenous peoples. The skull became a key method of establishing perceived racial differences. Museums acquired collections of human remains alongside the material culture they gathered. In the Australian context, phrenology had instigated a vigorous trade in Aboriginal skulls from as early as the 1820s.³⁰⁸ Furthermore, private collectors both satisfied their own curiosity and supplied the museum’s demand for human remains. The letters between the Queensland Museum and various correspondents demonstrate that skeletal and other materials from the human body were a fundamental component of the ethnographic collection of the institution.

Between 1878 and 1914, there was a mutual curiosity and demand for human remains by the Museum and collectors. The first record of an exchange in the letters occurs in 1880, where three documents sent by W.T. Birkbeck of Collopy, Noosa River, discuss the potential donation of skeletal material. These letters serve as an excellent example of the clash between science and popular morality at the time, and highlight the fundamental attitude of many collectors—that scientific research justified insensitivity and theft. In these letters, Birkbeck related how his neighbour, Mrs. Attwood, discovered some bones while collecting firewood, only a hundred yards from her home. Consequently, Birkbeck’s own examination uncovered the remainder of the skeleton and an ivory-handled knife. The knife troubled Birkbeck, who could foresee no reason why an Aboriginal may own such an expensive piece. Nevertheless the incident inspired him to write that:

I could obtain a perfect skeleton of a blackfellow by digging him up, but I think it would be rather much like desecrating unless it were in the interests of science. Should like your opinion on such matters. Could also obtain a gin.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ Jan Kociumbas, *The Oxford History of Australia: Possessions 1770-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 276.

³⁰⁹ Letter from W.T. Birkbeck, 28 June 1880, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1880.

His second letter dismissed any scruples over the idea of desecration, and stated:

I will willingly obtain you a specimen of a black fellow, aged (I should think) about 40 years and as far as I know complete, if you will let me know how long it would take for a body to decompose in the ground, of course minus Coffin . . . I am very glad if I have been the means of assisting you, or any other person in the pursuit of knowledge relating to the science of anatomy and nothing would give me greater pleasure to afford you the means of obtaining what you require.³¹⁰

The last record in the letters of this proposed exchange occurs in late October 1880, where Birkbeck once more considered the gravity of his proposal:

Re the skeletons, I have done nothing as yet. Firstly, I must watch the opportunity & do the digging up at night . . . Kindly let me know by return what you think of it as you must admit it is not a very nice thing to go digging up dead bodies (in fact body snatching) and I shall have to see there are no darkies about when it is done else, I shall incur their enmity. As I have lived here 7 years in perfect amity with them and they have treated me very well during our intercourse, I feel a repugnance to hurt their feelings willingly. Tho' at the same time I am aware it is to further the interests of science.³¹¹

No correspondence exists to document what the director of the Museum may have thought. However, the intimation in the letter is that Birkbeck was only reluctant to exhume a recently deceased Aboriginal man because he felt the action would be disrespectful to the indigenous people with whom he had fostered good relations. His query concerning the rate of decomposition demonstrates that some of his discomfort may also have been a physical revulsion for the act, as much as a moral one. Birkbeck deemed the action as 'body snatching', an obvious allusion to the body snatching craze in Edinburgh and London in the early part of the nineteenth century.³¹² Birkbeck stressed the idea of secrecy in his letters, noting that he would

³¹⁰ Letter from Birkbeck, 7 July 1880, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1880.

³¹¹ Letter from Birkbeck, 18 October 1880, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1880.

³¹² In order to supply the anatomists of Edinburgh (also other British cities, though most prolifically and famously Edinburgh) with fresh corpses for their lectures, men were employed to rob cemeteries of the recently deceased. Law precluded the use of any remains for the purposes of dissection, unless they had been hanged for murder (the dissection was considered a part of the punishment). Those who robbed the graves were colloquially known as the Ressurrectionists. Most famously, the Ressurrectionists Burke and Hare found that even grave-robbery could not supply the talented and popular Dr Robert Knox with the corpses he required; accordingly, they began to murder vagrants and prostitutes, and supply these to the doctor. After seventeen murders, Burke and Hare were finally discovered when a student recognised the young woman whom Knox was having them dissect. Dr Knox pleaded ignorance and escaped prosecution, later going on to a career lecturing about the racial superiority of Anglo-Saxons. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote a short story called 'The Bodysnatchers', which firmly fits into the horror genre. The story stands as an excellent example of how the public viewed the act of grave-robbery as repellant, horrific, and immoral. Of course, the popularity of stories like these also indicates just how much the phenomenon of grave-robbery appealed as macabre and salacious entertainment. See: Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Bodysnatchers' in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Stories* (London: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2004).

have to perform the digging under the cover of darkness. Clearly the deed itself was considered to be dubious enough so as to want to hide it. Nevertheless, the idea that the theft, or seizure, of skeletal remains was excusable when done to further the interests of science is also expressed in Birkbeck's letters. This theme recurs in many of the letters concerning human remains. It reflected a general attitude of many of the correspondents that the pursuit of science stood as adequate justification for insensitivity to indigenous beliefs, and the acquisition of Aboriginal remains.

Judging the actions of grave robbers is not the prime concern of this chapter, though it is essential that this be positioned within the context of cultural misappropriation and colonialism. Nicole Watson has argued that phrenology, and the consequent collection of skeletal 'data' to support the science, was just as pervasive a tool of colonialism as the musket.³¹³ Collection of indigenous dead reinforced the sense of defeat in the colonised, and proved the triumph of settler societies. Watson stated: 'In Australia as in the US, science facilitated colonisation through its dehumanisation of Aboriginal people. By reducing Aboriginal people to wretched and doomed creatures, science wiped the European slate clean of culpability for genocide, and justified invasion'.³¹⁴

Phrenology and the collection of human remains was just one of the features of science which achieved this end. Nonetheless, it must be stated that most collectors of skeletal material were genuine in their belief that the collection of indigenous remains was of benefit to science. And science, in the Victorian period, was chiefly considered to be of benefit to humanity because it was an instrument of progress. These views might appear naïve or tasteless to modern readers, though they are supported by the primary documents cited here.

Collectors of human remains were aware that their actions could be perceived as immoral by mainstream society. This is evident in their correspondence. C.H. Clarkson, a doctor who worked at the Polynesian Hospital in Mackay, sent numerous letters to the Museum regarding his donation of indigenous remains. That he

³¹³ Nicole Watson, 'The Repatriation of Indigenous Remains in the United States of America and Australia: A Comparative Analysis' in *Australian Indigenous Law Reporter*, Vol. 33 (2003), <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AILR/2003/2.html>, p. 1.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

perceived his actions to be unpopular or, even, illegal is clear in what he wrote. On 15 August 1885, he wrote to the then director of the Queensland Museum, Charles De Vis, offering the skeleton of an islander boy, found dead in the bush:

The skull and its history should be of interest either to the Royal or the Museum – (without name or donor as it might harm one's position here and preclude further obtainings).³¹⁵

Clarkson wrote to the Museum again in September, though this time he offered two skulls:

Both about 18 to 20 years of age. You will perceive they are fresh from the P. Mortem room so kindly make them look a little ancient or some inquisitive friend may want to know too much.³¹⁶

Clarkson did not express the moral reluctance that Birkbeck had in exhuming the recently dead. Although he expressed some concern, this was only for his reputation. His reference to an 'inquisitive friend . . . [wanting] to know too much' is a clear indication that Clarkson was aware his use of the skulls of the recently deceased would be questioned. The fact that Clarkson expressed reluctance at receiving a donor's credit for the first skull indicates that he did not send the material in for his own professional vanity. His motivation appeared to be the advancement of science. Clarkson's admission that he feared professional, social, or legal backlash to his actions is clear evidence of how the public viewed the appropriation of human remains.

The curators of the Queensland Museum did not simply wait for collectors to send in skeletal remains to them of their own volition. Indeed, the Museum sent direct requests to collectors to supply them with the human remains they required for the state's collection. On 14 August 1882, C. Twisden Bedford wrote that:

I notice by your circular to the B. M. that the museum wants aboriginal skulls had I known this I could have brought you in several from my last trip out as I came across several Native Police grave yards (or rather I took them to be such) with splendid specimens of skulls lying about.³¹⁷

Hanley Sneyd of the Barcoo Barracks, wrote in response to another request by the Museum for skulls. On 22 January 1883, he addressed his letter to the director, Charles De Vis:

³¹⁵ Letter from C.H. Clarkson, 15 August 1885, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 635/1885.

³¹⁶ Letter from Clarkson, 14 September 1885, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 664/1885.

³¹⁷ Letter from C. Twisden Bedford, 14 August 1882, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 195/1882.

In receipt of your letter to day and will attend to it regarding the skulls . . . I was living in Gladstone Port Curtis eighteen months ago and saw any amount of skulls knocking about a few miles from there. If you wrote to Mr. Mellifont proprietor of the Gladstone Observer he would call attention to your request and I am sure the district inhabitants would respond.³¹⁸

Any sense of reluctance, or comparisons with grave robbery, ceases to occur to these collectors when the skeletal material is being taken from Aboriginal burial sites of the long-deceased. The prospect of contributing to the Museum's storehouse of knowledge proved to be adequate justification for many collectors to supply skeletal material.

Nonetheless, it is clear that many collectors did not offer human remains to the Museum merely to expand science. Monetary gain is a motivation in many of the letters, with skulls and complete skeletons being offered to the Museum simultaneously with other institutions, for a cash fee far above the costs incurred in obtaining the remains. In a letter addressed 'to the secretary', D. McGregor of Cairns wrote in 1883 that he had uncovered the remains of a great Aboriginal warrior.³¹⁹ 'I have never seen one larger or more complete than this one or better preserved,' McGregor declared.³²⁰ Consequently, the skeleton was offered for sale to the Museum, however:

Wishing to dispose of it to the best advantage would you please put the matter before the committee of your Museum and let me know what they would be willing to give for it & let me know at your earliest convenience as if I do not dispose of it here I intend to send it to England.³²¹

More indicative of the commercial nature of the collection of human remains for the Museum are a series of letters concerning an Aboriginal 'mummy' offered for sale through the Office of the Australasian Medical Gazette. Three letters recorded part of an exchange between the unnamed owner, their agent L. Bruck, and the Queensland Museum. The first two letters were written in December 1884, and are authored by Bruck who confessed that 'I have no idea of the value of the Queensland Mummy referred to in my last, I only know that its owner is expecting to get about £60 for

³¹⁸ Letter from Hanley Sneyd, 22 January 1883, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 323/1883.

³¹⁹ Letter from D. McGregor, 14 July 1883, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 493/1883.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ *Ibid.*

it'.³²² The Museum's interest in the exchange is demonstrated by the fact that Charles De Vis sent his son to examine the item and make an offer for its purchase. De Vis's son wrote back that:

Bruck has written to several European Museums with the object of getting the highest figure he can for it . . . Under the circumstances Bruck will not let it go for the sum you mention until he hears from those to whom he has written.³²³

Similarly, in 1914, W.C. Ritchie offered the Museum the opportunity to purchase a single Tasmanian Aboriginal skull, for the sum of fifty pounds.³²⁴ That the figure was relatively higher than Bruck's, who offered an entire skeleton, is perhaps only explained by the novelty of the skull being Tasmanian.³²⁵ The outbound correspondence of the Museum does not record whether or not a purchase was made. Nevertheless, the trade in indigenous remains by the Museum could generate business opportunities elsewhere, as is demonstrated by a letter from 'Watson Brothers, Plumbers & Metal Merchants', in 1898. Recognising the particular needs of a museum to display human remains, Watson Brothers wrote:

We hereby offer to make a case for a Human Skeleton, dimensions as marked . . . the corners to be of Iron Tube connected through top & bottom, with black nuts so that it can be taken to pieces . . . The price to make two complete, with plate glass, will cost Eight pounds five schillings each.³²⁶

The traffic in human remains was not only limited to bleached skeletal matter. Indeed, the entire body of an indigenous person was considered worthy of preservation and study. A letter from 'The Old Curiosity Shop, Brunswick St.' informed the director of the Museum that:

I have a few anatomical specimens which I hope may find a resting place in the Queensland Museum, they are in spirits and consist of, the brain of an Aboriginal, the privates of an adult

³²² Quote from: Letter from L. Bruck, 18 December 1884, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 564/1884. The other letter is: Letter from Bruck, 9 December 1884, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 553/1884.

³²³ Letter from Charles J. De Vis Jr., 2 February 1885, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 421/1885.

³²⁴ Letter from W.C. Ritchie, 5 May 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 14431/1914.

³²⁵ Aboriginal people from Tasmania were, by this stage, imagined to be consigned to history. The last of the Tasmanian Aborigines was assumed to have died in 1876, at Oyster Cove, South of Hobart. Though Aborigines of Tasmanian descent survive today, from a phrenological point of view, the acquisition of a skull of a people assumed to be extinct was unique and, furthermore, could be used to discuss perceived differences between Tasmanian and mainland Australian Aboriginal people.

³²⁶ Letter from Watson Bros., 22 February 1898, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5437/1898.

showing the rite of incision as performed by the natives, and the female perineum similarly treated.³²⁷

A note written on the letter by C.J. Wild, the Acting Director of the Museum, reads ‘I have the honour to advise, that the offer be accepted, the opportunity may never recur’.³²⁸ The specimens may have functioned as macabre scintillation in the Old Curiosity Shop, and it is to be wondered whether or not their acquisition was considered even in part because of their mere curiosity and salacious appeal. Museum displays typically have a bias towards the exotic and the aesthetically unique, so it is little wonder that the preserved organs of an Aboriginal person could be considered worthy acquisitions, even beyond their own appeal to researchers.³²⁹

The Museum’s store of skulls and skeletons were used not only for their own research purposes, but also for other community groups and researchers. In this sense, the Museum fulfilled its role as a repository of knowledge, holding its artefacts in safety for the curious. Consequently, human remains could even be loaned to others for educational purposes. Professor Sydney B.J. Skertchly wrote to the Museum in 1908 for just such a purpose, requesting the use of two Aboriginal skulls for a short course of lectures on Anthropology.³³⁰ Evidence shows that the Museum did acquiesce to these requests, as they did for St. Kilda’s Girl’s School, Southport, 1913:

Dear Dr Hamlyn-Harris,
Thank you for your letter and for being so kind as to place the skeleton at the disposal of the girls. The dismembered skeleton will afford them an excellent opportunity for making drawings of the bones.³³¹

³²⁷ There was a world-wide interest in the genitals of indigenous people, which had begun with the parading of Sarah Baartman, the ‘Hottentot Venus’, who was a Khoikhoi woman from Southern Africa. She had been exhibited as a freak show which drew special attention to the size of her buttocks. Although her exhibition was considered scandalous in London society, her exploitation as a hyper-sexualised freak show serves as an example of the links between science, indigenous people, objectification and entertainment, in the nineteenth century. For further information see: Stephen Jay Gould, ‘The Hottentot Venus’ in *The Flamingo’s Smile* (New York, W.W. Norton and Company, 1985), pp. 291-305. Letter from H. Phillips (Old Curiosity Shop Proprietor), 20 April 1910, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 7995/1910.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*

³²⁹ As all of the human remains acquired by the Museum would now be classed as Secret Sacred, it is not known if any of this material is still extant.

³³⁰ Skertchly was a geologist who had fostered a friendship via correspondence with Charles Darwin. Letter from Sydney B.J. Skertchly, 1 September 1908, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1908.

³³¹ Letter from C.E. Bourne, 30 October 1913, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 13/82/7/1913.

Not all requests for the use of human remains were so scientifically motivated, however. The Museum also received numerous letters asking for skulls for use in theatre. A production of *Faust* in 1886, at Brisbane's Theatre Royal, required the use of 'a skull and bones for our production'.³³² A decade later, another production at the Theatre Royal wrote to the Queensland Museum, asking: 'I will feel very much obliged if you will allow me to use two skulls and some bones in Hamlet at the Theatre Royal'.³³³ The exchange in human remains, therefore, was not simply a matter of scientific zeal and inquiry; skeletal material could become the props of popular entertainment. That the curators of the Museum quickly saw the inappropriateness of lending skulls to theatre groups is clear in their own letters. On 28 June 1911, Hamlyn-Harris wrote a terse letter to the principal of Nudgee College, stating: 'These skulls would not have been lent had I understood the purposes for which they were required'.³³⁴ A day later, the principal replied:

I am returning with all due care the two skulls you so kindly lent us. We used them in a private presentation of the gravediggers scene from Hamlet. I regret that our request should have put such a tax on the liberality of the museum. I beg to thank you very sincerely for your great kindness under the circumstances.³³⁵

The use of skeletal material for the arts is a subject worthy of expansion beyond this thesis. It is a clear demonstration of the strong relationship between the arts and sciences in the late Victorian period, as manifested here in the museum context. Unfortunately, little more is known about the particular productions which used Museum material for props. Without this information, it is only possible to hypothesise on whether or not an Aboriginal skull was considered more appropriate than a European one for use in *Faust* because it might be considered inherently more monstrous or less human. However, this correspondence does demonstrate that, if the acquisition of skeletal material from burial sites was to retain moral authority for the Museum, skulls and bones could hardly be lent to amateur productions of Shakespeare. This is an indication of Hamlyn-Harris's stronger interest in Aboriginal people, and the discipline of anthropology, than other directors. The change in policy

³³² Letter from L. John, 17 November 1886, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 1038/1886.

³³³ Letter from Walter Bentley, 12 October 1896, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5667/1896.

³³⁴ Letter from R. Hamlyn-Harris, 28 June 1911, Queensland Museum Outwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1911.

³³⁵ The signature of the principal is illegible. Letter from Principal of Nudgee College, 29 June 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 11/382/1911.

also indicates the growing professionalisation of anthropology, and the Museum as the main centre of the discipline. Indeed, the collection of skeletal material had not abated, despite the Museum's new policy. Just one day following the letter from Nudgee College, the Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals wrote in to the Museum to inform them that their request to collect remains found in Aboriginal graves in the police paddock at Woodford had been met with approval from the Home Secretary.³³⁶

FRONTIER VIOLENCE

The collection of human remains could sometimes be linked to another persistent theme in the correspondence—that the Australian frontier was a violent domain. Both settlers and Aboriginal people living on the frontier were at risk of violence, from amongst themselves, each other, and the environment. Many collectors worked in this environment to acquire specimens of interest to the Queensland Museum. Occasionally, these objects were directly tied to an incident of violence, and sometimes the acquisition itself was violent; accordingly, many of the letters written to the Museum attest to the dangers of the frontier, to acts of Aboriginal resistance, and to accounts of European rapacity.

The first inclination of violence in these documents comes from Francis Lyons, in 1882, who describes the acquisition of a unique artefact. Lyons's object, and his acquisition of it, demonstrate the violent potential of Aboriginal and settler relations on the frontier:

I take the liberty of addressing you trusting I have in my possession a curiosity which may be a great addition to your valuable list. It is that of a Queensland "Aboriginal Mummy". I procured it a short time since when in the pursuit of the Niggers who are very mischievous killing Cattle in the neighbourhood of the Herberton Tin-Fields. When their camp was stormed they abandoned everything except the Mummy in question, a skull, & the dilly bag which contained them. And it was not until after a long and desperate chase. And when their lives were in Imminent danger that they gave it up or rather dropped it that they might save their own lives.³³⁷

Lyons went on to describe the remains which, according to information he received from an Aboriginal boy, was that of a king's daughter, shot through the head with a

³³⁶ Letter from Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals, 30 June 1911. Queensland Museum Outwards Correspondence Archive 11/384/1911.

³³⁷ Letter from Francis Lyons, 12 January 1882, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 78/1882.

European rifle. His examination of the remains bears this evidence out. The letter demonstrates some of the violent character of frontier life. Not only are the remains acquired through violence (and consequently offered for sale to whichever museum bids the highest), the skull of the dead woman bears a bullet hole in her forehead. According to Lyons, the remains were only chanced upon because he was a member of a party hunting Aboriginal people attacking cattle stocks near Herberton. This letter captures the nature of resistance and reprisal on the frontier, as well as the commercial nature of conflict—both in the protection of settler herds, and in the potential profit from the spoils of war. Not only this, but the letter demonstrates a clear devaluation of Aboriginal people compared to the physical evidence they left behind. For example, where Lyons discussed the object—an ‘Aboriginal Mummy’—his language is more socially acceptable, polite, and technical. Where he mentioned the Aboriginal people he is chasing and who had caused ‘mischief’, they are described as ‘Niggers’. It is possible to see from this that the static and dead elements of Aboriginal culture were not objects to insult, but the living who made life troublesome for settler expansion were. This seemingly small issue of nomenclature aptly demonstrates a major point in this thesis—that Aboriginal culture was of interest to collectors when it was unchanging or lifeless, but that Aboriginal people themselves were not accorded the same dignity. Specifically, the dead had more value than the living.

In another letter from Clarkson, he discussed an unintended benefit for science of a massacre of Aboriginal people near Emerald. His letter concerns a partially collapsed Aboriginal grave site, the skeleton he uncovered there, and numerous fossils he hoped to send into the Museum. As a side note to his purpose, Clarkson wrote that ‘Dr Symes of Springsure could I am told procure you any amount of skulls & bones from a place where a massacre took place in retribution for the Murders of the Wills family’.³³⁸ The massacre mentioned here refers to retribution taken for the Cullin-La-Ringo massacre, the largest massacre of European settlers by Aboriginal people in

³³⁸ Letter from Clarkson, 18 July 1883, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 485/1883. Ten days later, Clarkson sent another letter advising that he had packed a case for the Museum containing ‘male and female skeletons of aboriginals’. See: Letter from Clarkson, 28 July 1883, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 488/1883.

Australian history.³³⁹ Despite these remains, which were of scientific curiosity in their own right, the records of violence could be of interest to collectors merely for the parts they played in local history. For example, two donors in 1883 offer the relics of confrontation from the frontier. The first, in August, is the helmet of a government agent, displaying a bullet hole from the gun of an Aboriginal assassin.³⁴⁰ The second letter, in October, offers the remains of a gun ‘used by the natives of Api in the massacre of poor Steadman, Govt. Agent of the Brigantine “Lavina”’.³⁴¹ In both cases, the targets of violence were officers on board a brigantine, which may have been a matter of pure opportunity, though just as likely suggests discrimination on behalf of the attackers to select symbols of power; further, the Aborigines who attacked these men used European firearms in their assaults. Certainly, the fact that the attacks were not carried out with spears, woomeras, or boomerangs does bring into question the validity of claims that Aboriginal people could not adapt to their new circumstances.³⁴²

Kendall Broadbent’s letters to the Museum are rich with details on the harsh nature of the frontier, and the dangers implicit in the collection of artefacts. His first to the Museum, on 22 August 1888, details a proposed expedition by himself to the head of Elphinstone Creek. He appeared very willing to cooperate with the local indigenes,

³³⁹ Nineteen of 22 settlers were killed by around 50 Aboriginal people while they made camp. One European witness survived by hiding in the bush, and two others were elsewhere. The reprisal massacre claimed the lives of more than three times as many Aboriginal people. See: Raymond Evans, “‘Plenty Shoot ‘Em’: The Destruction of Aboriginal Societies along the Queensland Frontier” in *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History*, A. Dirk Moses [ed.] (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), p. 155.

³⁴⁰ This letter was sent by the police at Mackay. The first three letters of the sender’s surname are unclear and read either Lor or Sol. The reading I think most likely is ‘Lormeider’. See: Letter from F.O. Lormeider, 25 August, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 523/1883.

³⁴¹ This letter was written by the second officer of the S.S. Yaralla. Letter from 2nd officer Venney, 20 October 1883, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 574/1883.

³⁴² A reader of these letters may wonder at whether or not the shootings were actually carried out by Europeans who later passed the attacks off as being from Aboriginal people. In the absence of any evidence to support this view, the opinions of the letter writers are being considered at face value. There is no reason to suppose it difficult for an Aboriginal person in the colonial period to use a European firearm. After all, the adoption of muskets and rifles as the universal weapon of European warfare was primarily the result of their ease of use over all other alternatives. Other indigenous peoples had proven their ability to adapt to the use of firearms in warfare, and to exceed the marksmanship of professional soldiers. There is no reason to suspect that Aboriginal people could not adapt to using firearms for guerrilla warfare against settler populations; European weapons were issued to the Native Police, including rifles, bayonets, and swords, and they received military style drills. For example, see: Kocimbus, *The Oxford History of Australia*, pp. 279-280.

having taken ‘4 months supplies for self and natives’.³⁴³ Unfortunately, Broadbent laments the fact that he had to change his desired camp of the previous year because ‘Mr Craig has hunted them off his place’.³⁴⁴ In October, Broadbent wrote to the Museum requesting: ‘1 Snider rifle and 200 rounds of ball cartrage. Blacks are bad here. Require rifle for Alligator shooting’.³⁴⁵ The difficulty of killing alligators is enough to warrant Broadbent sending a second request that: ‘I wish you would please send me a repeating rifle and cartrages, for Alligator shooting’.³⁴⁶ Although it seems unlikely that Broadbent felt genuinely threatened by the wild life (and perhaps he only intended to hunt crocodiles)—his requests for the rifle and ammunition were probably made to ease his task of specimen collection—there is much to read into the fact that he follows the first request for a gun with the sentence ‘*Blacks are bad here*’. Broadbent clearly had a desire to use Aboriginal people for his expeditions, as will be reinforced in other letters of his to be cited, though it is conceivable that he was sufficiently worried about conflict that a Snyder rifle may have been of use, at least for the purposes of negotiation.

Violent confrontation was not the only threat faced by Aboriginal people on the frontier when dealing with European society. Specimen and artefact collection could create social and health problems as a result of the nature of exchanges between collectors and indigenous people.³⁴⁷ One letter written to the Museum in 1914 is prefaced with the statement that the author wishes it known that they have a high regard for ‘the services of science in the cause of humanity’, yet that they have begun a campaign against the predations of collectors in their region.³⁴⁸ The reasons for

³⁴³ Kendall Broadbent was a zoologist who worked in every state of Australia. He worked for the Queensland Museum from 1880-1900 collecting various specimens, from wildlife, plants, and Aboriginal material culture. For quote, see: Letter from Kendall Broadbent, 22 August 1888, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2481/1888.

³⁴⁴ This is one of many casual references to violence and intimidation perpetrated by Europeans on the frontier against Aboriginal people. The weight of this kind of anecdotal evidence paints an often-times grim picture of the frontier. See: *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ Letter from Broadbent, 12 October 1888, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2547/1888.

³⁴⁶ Letter from Broadbent, October 1888 (no date), Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2560/1888.

³⁴⁷ This point will be returned to the fourth chapter, particularly in regards to the observations, in the ethnographic literature, of Spencer and Gillen.

³⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the signature is completely illegible, and there is no other indication on the letter of exactly who sent the document. The letter was sent from Brammo Bay, Dunk Island. Letter from unknown, 22 December 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1914.

their objections are two-fold—firstly, the collection of animal skins and eggs are depopulating the local wildlife, and threatening extinction; secondly, the collectors are using unscrupulous methods to recruit the services of local Aboriginal people. The author cautioned:

Do you know that I have evidence that eggs and skins are being secured in this district by blacks who receive in payment, if not opium then rum. I have every reason to believe that the “material” thus obtained is used for alleged scientific purposes. I do wish that I had the opportunity of whispering a few details into your private ear.³⁴⁹

This letter was written almost ten years after Roth had left Queensland, though the author notes an exploitation of Aboriginal people which was in keeping with Roth’s own observations. The above description, therefore, supplements a consideration of Roth’s allegations that Europeans were underpaying Aboriginal people, or using narcotics to procure their services.

Letters such as this one raise the important question of the extent to which the Museum was culpable in violent or exploitative exchanges with Aboriginal people on the frontier. Had the Museum considered the costs to indigenous people that the acquisition of some of the collection had created, and was the mere preservation of material culture in a museum justification enough for any unfortunate exchanges? Unfortunately, the correspondence in this period does not record the thoughts of Museum staff on such issues.³⁵⁰

THE NATURE OF THE FRONTIER: Environment and collection in Queensland

The prospect of violence was not the only challenge to the collection of materials for the Queensland Museum. The physical and environmental nature of the frontier could also pose unique dangers and impediments. Collectors faced weather and geography which not only frustrated access to materials, but also threatened their livelihood. The Australian environment presented a unique challenge to collector interests. If the letters represent embellishments or exaggerations of the frontier environment, they also serve as examples of imperial adventure writing, simultaneously serving to relate

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ The Museum minutes do not cover this period of its history, so it cannot be known whether ethics were a subject of debate for their board meetings.

the dangers and exoticism of the frontier, its opposition to traditional European life, and its ‘otherness’. This idea ties into the literature on adventurism in colonial travel writing. David Seed has conceptualised the colonial traveller as having been engaged in the ‘appropriations of imperialism’.³⁵¹ Through ‘seeing’ new people and lands and, crucially, in recording their observations, they helped to create the ‘other’ in the colonies. The gaze of the traveller was the gaze of the Empire. The ‘other’ could be anything foreign to the traveller though, in the context of these letters, the ‘other’ is the Australian landscape and its original inhabitants. Griffiths has also written on this issue, likening the collector to a hunter—a masculine hero of the scientific world conquering the harsh environs and peoples of the frontier through the cataloguing and collection of foreign cultures.³⁵² The letters, therefore, conform to these depictions, especially when the adversities of the Queensland frontier are discussed, exaggerated, or romanticised.

N. Samwell’s efforts to send to the Museum the skeleton of a kangaroo were stymied by the environment around him. In February 1887, he wrote from Georgetown to advise the Museum of the lack of certainty in completing his task. Not only had the recent swelling of the river ‘swept everything before it’, including skeletons, local Aboriginal people had transformed the environment for the worse.³⁵³ ‘The blacks have burnt the grass for the past 4 seasons, since they have been allowed to come in,’ he wrote, ‘& consequently hunted all the game back’.³⁵⁴ Samwell did not comment on whether he thought this transformation of the environment by Aboriginal people could be a purposeful action tied to their own use of the local flora and fauna.³⁵⁵

Almost a decade later, floods were an impediment to collection for Aylmer Haly in Moreton, 1895. Extensive floods had meant that Haly had been unable to send mail away for the Museum, or respond to their specific requests. Regarding the collection of weapons for the Museum, Haly saw that the local circumstances presented a unique

³⁵¹ Seed, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, pp. 1-2.

³⁵² Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, pp. 19-20.

³⁵³ Letter from N. Samwell, 23 February 1887, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2049/1887.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ For more information on Aboriginal ‘transformation’ of the environment, and how humans see the adapted use of land and agriculture as innate, see: Lesley Head, *Second Nature* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

challenge: ‘As for spears do not think I can manage it, no method of carrying without great trouble, everything on pack horses up here’.³⁵⁶ Drought could just as easily frustrate artefact collection as flood, as Chas Morton reported to the Museum in 1914, complaining that, although he had sent ‘one pack of Black’s material as you advised me. I could not get a good collection together for you as the country has been too dry’.³⁵⁷

Broadbent’s letters read with profuse frustrations at not being able to more easily acquire objects for the Queensland Museum. Indeed, Broadbent reported that he had risked his health, in January 1886, while collecting material for the Museum:

I have the honour to report. Ten days almost incessant rain since my last report. In consequence the country around flooded in places . . . This is a bad time of the year to come here too whet, and the scrubs dreadfully whet, and sickly. I am at present rather sickly myself.³⁵⁸

His health somewhat repaired, in June of the same year, Broadbent once more complained that collection was frustrated by the hazardous regional weather:

The weather is very bad here 2 or 3 days rain every week, the natives won’t work in the rain. I shall stay here until the middle of July, then I shall have to come into Cardwell for more foods and trade.³⁵⁹

These letters serve to show how some collectors conceived adversity on the frontier, and how this could sometimes dictate the nature of collection. More importantly, it was conceptions such as these which informed the Museum of the nature of the frontier as a place rich in cultural and scientific detail but, nonetheless, one which was also threatening and wild. Yet, not all exchanges on the Australian frontier were governed by violence and environmental difficulty. Sometimes the exchange itself was the prime consideration.

³⁵⁶ Letter from Aylmer Haly, 22 March 1895, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4674/1895.

³⁵⁷ A list of donated material is attached to the original letter, though there is no extra information to tell us much more about Morton. Letter from Chas H. Morton, 9 June 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 00546/1914.

³⁵⁸ Letter from Broadbent, 16 January 1886, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 796/1886.

³⁵⁹ Letter from Broadbent, 15 June 1886, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 934/1886.

TRADE

The trade in indigenous material culture was not simply an exchange between collectors and the Museum. Exchange between collectors and an Aboriginal person on the frontier was also a prevalent feature of artefact collection. Aboriginal people did not always wish to part with their goods, doing so only in return for objects of some practical or luxury value. Accordingly, the letters from collectors to the Museum attest to the numerous exchanges carried out between collectors and Aboriginal people.

Items traded to Aboriginal people were most commonly perishable in nature. Flour was a necessity for Europeans, though probably not for Aboriginal survival, although it was accepted. The letters indicate that luxury goods like tobacco were most commonly given in exchange for artefacts. Tools of European manufacture were the most common non-perishable item, although the precise length of time these industrially manufactured tools might be good for use is unknown. Certainly, material traded for artefacts was often of an inferior type to better versions in European markets. Iron tomahawks were the most common tool offered to indigenous people, their use being so much easier than traditional tools that they very quickly displaced stone axes on the frontier. The reasons for the popularity of iron axes amongst Aboriginal people was principally because of the benefit of an iron axe to the user, especially the lack of labour necessary to manufacture one.³⁶⁰ Stone axes took greater effort to construct from their source material, and would never reach the sharpness of iron. Though stone axes were more durable than a cheaply traded iron axe, cast off pieces of iron could be more easily fashioned for the same purpose and, thus, became more commonplace.³⁶¹

The communications of Broadbent to the Museum illustrate the necessity of trade goods for the acquisition of indigenous artefacts, as well as the difficulties of establishing trust. A brief telegram from Broadbent outlined the kinds of materials collectors typically traded for artefacts. In this case, Broadbent informed the Museum in 1884 of the exchanges he was about to make on their behalf: ‘Can buy native

³⁶⁰ Jones, *Ochre and Rust*, p. 115.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

weapons have six (6) Tommyhawks three 3 pounds tobacco please send order to Burns Philip Normanton advise them send to Kimberley'.³⁶² Broadbent was an especially detailed correspondent when it came to discussing the trade of goods with Aboriginal people, which was probably a necessity of his employment by the Museum. In January 1886 he once more wrote to the Museum to advise them of his intentions regarding artefact and specimen collection: 'I shall take out with me a bag of flour and tobacco for any black visitors I might get in the gap'.³⁶³

Services were also purchased from local Aboriginal people when collectors sought particular specimens of Australian flora and fauna. The same materials were often used to purchase services as were used to purchase artefacts, although money was quite often employed in this regard also. Despite these payments, Aboriginal people would not accept anything from an unfamiliar collector, without an element of trust. Indeed, given the reports from the frontier of squatters poisoning biscuits and blankets, it is little wonder trade necessitated caution.³⁶⁴ Considering the reluctance some expressed in the earlier letters on human remains collection, the desire to maintain good relations with Aboriginal people could have been motivated more by gain than by humanity. Trust between the collector and Aboriginal communities became an important component of the exchange. Broadbent discovered this in 1886, much to his frustration:

I am afraid Sir I shall not be able to get the new mammals until the weather takes up. The blacks here are not to be depended on. I have offered them flour, tobacco and money to go with me all I can get is by and by. It takes time to know them. Mr. Lambolt was 6 months before he could get them if possible.³⁶⁵

By June, Broadbent's reputation with the Aboriginal people may have improved, as he wrote that he could buy for the Museum any kind of weapon they required for their collection.³⁶⁶

³⁶² Letter from Broadbent, 9 July 1884, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 207/1884.

³⁶³ Letter from Broadbent, 796/1886.

³⁶⁴ Scott, *A Short History of Australia*, p. 187. This source contains direct references to the poisoning of foodstuff traded to Aboriginal people. The purpose of this poisoning, according to Scott, was an attempt by settlers to exterminate local Aboriginal populations.

³⁶⁵ Letter from Broadbent, 8 May 1886, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 901/1886.

³⁶⁶ Letter from Broadbent, 934/1886.

Three years later, Broadbent had become adept at the use of trade goods for penetrating the interior, and was now writing notes of credit to settlers for the supply of the materials he needed for his exchanges, though the cost for the Museum—who were presumably making the payments—was quite small. Broadbent wrote in 1889 that he had:

Signed a voucher in favour of Mrs Thorn, I got flour, tomahawks, tobacco, pipes. etc. on the 29th of August from Mr J. Thorn. Mr. Thorn died about the middle of September. I have used about half of the trade out where I have been, and have plenty left, to try into the Mountains from the Cardwell side.³⁶⁷

The cost credited to the voucher was just over £8; a small sum to have paid for Broadbent's optimism and the potential acquisitions for the Queensland Museum.

Detailed records of trade materials intended for exchanges with Aboriginal people were sometimes submitted to the Queensland Museum. This provides insight into the nature of expeditions whose purpose was specifically artefact and specimen collection. For example, G.C. Gore wrote from Port Darwin to the Museum in 1911, proposing to launch an excursion in the Northern Territory to secure 'tortoiseshell, pearls, weapons etc' from the local tribes.³⁶⁸ The expedition was considered to be a risky one as Gore reckoned the 'blacks are very bad down the coast', necessitating that white men who joined the expedition 'must be able to use fire arms if necessary'.³⁶⁹ However, trade, not violence, was to be the preferred medium of exchange, with £30 of the proposed £146 expenses set aside for trade goods. Of those goods, everything was to be 'of the commonest and cheapest class'.³⁷⁰ Gore's proposal included a list of the specific trade items, indicating what was considered acceptable to trade for the goods required. The list was:

16 lbs Beads
2 doz cheap tomahawks
12 doz wooden pipes
50 lbs tobacco twist stick 26 to the lb
200 yards gordy common print
100 yards turkey red

³⁶⁷ This letter lacks a specific date, besides the year. Broadbent mentioned a number of other dates in the letter as indications of what actions he had been taking. The last date mentioned is 7 November, so we can safely assume that the letter was written towards the end of the year. Letter from Broadbent, of 1889 (no date), Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive un-numbered/1889.

³⁶⁸ No specific details of Gore are known, though the letter tells the reader enough to know that he was a boat master operating out of Port Darwin. Gore claims, in his letter, that he has been travelling the coast for 30 years, suggesting that his observations have the weight of experience. Letter from G.C. Gore, 12 May 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 288/1911.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

2 gross matches
 1 gross clay pipes
 10 lbs coloured wool skeins
 4 doz elastic coloured belts³⁷¹

Although the outbound correspondence of the Museum does not indicate whether or not Gore's proposed expedition was met with approval, other letters from the Museum indicate that they were supportive of the use of trade goods to acquire indigenous artefacts. This philosophy evidently tied the Museum to the office of the Protector of Aborigines, which had used government funds in the past to acquire artefacts of Aboriginal manufacture. At times, the government funds for the Protector came directly from the Queensland Museum, as evidenced by a letter written from the Under Secretary to the Director of the Museum, in 1911:

I have the honour to inform you that your suggestion that tobacco be given to the Protector of Aborigines at the Native Police Camp at Coen in exchange for implements and the like has been approved, and you are authorised to take the necessary action in the matter.

Later in this chapter, where Roth's correspondence is discussed, the issue of government funds being used for object acquisition will resurface.

'WHILST THE OPPORTUNITY REMAINS': Fears of racial and cultural extinction as a motivation for collection

The acquisition of indigenous material for the Queensland Museum was charged with a sense of urgency. Everywhere collectors looked, they saw the presumed evidence of a vanishing culture. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Aboriginal people were considered by European observers to be a direct reference point to pre-historic cultures. Aboriginal people represented a way of life that civilisation had long since discarded and, consequently, Europeans hoped to gain insight into their own past by reference to the living Stone Age—the Australian indigenous. Unfortunately for the fields of ethnography, anthropology, history, and archaeology, it seemed evident that Australia's indigenous population would soon be extinct. Consequently, the collection and preservation of Aboriginal materials, considered relics of a unique Stone Age culture, was of paramount concern to those who gathered artefacts, and to the Queensland Museum.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Within the correspondence of the Queensland Museum, the evidence that collectors were cognisant of the collapse of Aboriginal culture appears early. In 1900, Meston first alluded to his concern that Aboriginal people were vanishing from history, in a letter he wrote to the Museum. Meston had sent in parcels from the Maranoa, containing bones and the ‘perfect specimen of a child in bark coffin’.³⁷² He drew the attention of the director, Charles De Vis to a plaited band tied around the coffin, mentioning casually that ‘it is an ancient piece of work, not woven now by the blacks of the district’.³⁷³ The implication here is that Meston considered such ‘ancient’ work as a rarer production, owing to Aboriginal depopulation. In 1907, Meston again wrote of the decline in traditional skills and artefact manufacture amongst Aboriginal people:

Such choice specimens of weapons are very difficult to obtain now anywhere in North Queensland as the blacks are rapidly abandoning their old habits and it seemed to me a mistake to let this go out of the country, as the time is rapidly approaching when such specimens will not be obtainable.³⁷⁴

A year later, Meston stated his concerns more explicitly: ‘In a period not far distant, all that will be left from the Aboriginals will be their weapons and skulls and skeletons in our Museum’.³⁷⁵

Meston was not the only Museum observer to speak of Aboriginal people as a vanishing race. Brief comments in the letters are commonplace, regarding various tribes approaching annihilation. For instance, A.L. Gillespie, in a letter in 1900 about a ‘native dog’ wrote that ‘I can also show [a Museum agent] a few types of a fast dying race of Moonie Blacks’.³⁷⁶ Other allusions to the death of the Aboriginal people and culture took the form of a sales pitch from the collector to the Museum. Stephen W. Buhot wrote to the Museum in 1909:

Offering to the Museum for the sum of £12.10 a collection of North West Queensland Ethnological Specimens as per attached list. They have all been obtained direct from the wild

³⁷² Letter from A. Meston, 24 October 1900, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 6207/1900.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ Letter from Meston, 26 July 1907, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 7372/1907.

³⁷⁵ Letter from Meston, 18 June 1908, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 7590/1908.

³⁷⁶ Curiously, this letter also contains a hand-written note by the Museum, on 24 December, 1900 that the ‘reply to this letter not copied by orders from Curator’. Letter from A.L. Gillespie, 13 November 1900, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 6227B/1900.

tribes and contain many specimens now very difficult to obtain, and annually becoming scarcer.³⁷⁷

The number of letters concerning the scarcity of Aboriginal material to be sent into the Museum drastically increased in 1911. In part, this may be explained by Hamlyn-Harris taking a keener interest in the expansion of Queensland's ethnographic collection for the 1914 display; it may also be the case that collectors were reacting to what they read in the press regarding the certainty that Aboriginal people would die out within a few generations. Indeed, Gore's letter in May of 1911 begins with: 'I see by the papers some person writing about the scarcity of native weapons and curios in Australia'.³⁷⁸ Gore did not entirely agree that this was the case, proposing that the Museum secure funding for his expedition to collect material along the 'McArthur' where the 'blacks [are] very numerous'.³⁷⁹

For the colonial ethnographer, 'civilisation' was destabilising and eradicating Aboriginal culture. Earlier in 1911, Police District Inspector Malone wrote to the Museum from Townsville advising that 'civilisation has reduced the blacks in this district to a very few, who now retain no weapons etc of historic value'.³⁸⁰ The Inspector forwarded the Museum's request to an Inspector Quilter in Coen where there were still to be found Aboriginal people 'almost [in] their original native state'.³⁸¹ The idea that Aboriginal people were of scientific value when in their 'original native state' recurs throughout the correspondence of the collectors, just as it did in the literature intended for schools.

Where Aboriginal people were no longer perceived to live in their traditional fashion, they ceased to be curious to the collectors; they had lost the veneer of the Noble Savage or the Stone Age informant. The vanishing of their material culture, therefore, is seen as substantial proof that they failed to adapt and, thus, were doomed to extinction. Ironically, the vanishing of their traditional material culture is proof that

³⁷⁷ Letter from Stephen W. Buhot, 30 October 1909, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1909.

³⁷⁸ Letter from Gore, 288/1911.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁰ This observation is also interesting in the light of European materials in Aboriginal artefacts. Although it is not known if Malone had observed any such objects, if he had, his remark that the objects of no 'historic value' indicates how devalued such artefacts were. Letter from H. Malone, 17 February 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 11/84/1911.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

they had adapted to the extreme circumstances with which they were confronted and were surviving in extreme difficulty. The specific dimensions of this adaptation, as it relates to materially traceable forms, will be the focus of discussion in Chapter Four. Here we are concerned with discussing the perspectives of the correspondents so as to establish: first, the notion of Aboriginal survival was almost universally unrecognised; second, Aboriginal material culture was considered by Europeans to encompass objects which were 'authentic' and showed no adulteration of culture; and, third, that Aboriginal people were considered to have rapidly abandoned their own way of life.

The Office of the Protector of Aborigines, Longreach, wrote to the Queensland Museum in 1911 to explain that:

Referring to your letter and printed circular of 14 inst. asking me to obtain aboriginal implements, appliances and ceremonial tokens, I am afraid that so far as this District is concerned that I will be unable to accede to your request as the aboriginals have been for a number of years civilised that they have abandoned using their native implements.³⁸²

On the same day, the Inspector's Office at Rockhampton wrote to the Museum, replying to the circular that:

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 14th instant and in reply to inform you that there are very few Aborigines in this District, the majority of whom are employed, consequently the native weapons have fallen into disuse, but should I drop across any of the material mentioned I shall be pleased to forward same to the Director.³⁸³

Reverend Nicholas Hey, as head missionary of the Aboriginal Mission at Mapoon, was a man directly engaged in the destruction of traditional Aboriginal culture and in promoting civilisation in the European mold. Yet even Hey bemoaned the harm that civilisation had done to Aboriginal material culture. He wrote, on 17 March, 1911:

In order to get an original and representative collection I must ask you for a few months time. Since the advent of civilisation it is getting more & more difficult to procure "the real thing". The native spears are now usually tipped with iron & not with bone as formerly and much of the material used for other implements is to a great extent of European origin or make. Such implements which have been made for sale may be permitted to pass on to the dealer in curios or the traveler but they would hardly be fitting for a Museum. You are quite correct in saying "the time is not so far distant when the voice of the (full blooded) Aboriginal will be heard no more".³⁸⁴

The separation of the words 'full blooded' by brackets before the word 'Aboriginal' is revealing. In the ethnographer's imagination, half castes were not worth ethnographic

³⁸² Letter from G. McGrath, 21 February 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence 93/1911.

³⁸³ Unfortunately, the signature is illegible, and the name of the Inspector is unknown. Letter from Inspector, 21 February 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 95/1911.

³⁸⁴ Letter from N. Hey, 17 March 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 156/1911.

consideration, and the continued existence of Aboriginal people who are not ‘full blooded’ does not suppose that the race is capable of surviving. Further, the association of the decline of ‘the real thing’, that is Aboriginal material culture showing no European influences or materials, with a discussion on the decline of Aboriginal racial purity demonstrates the ideological link in the collection of ‘traditional’ material culture and what was narrowly defined as Aboriginal culture.

Letters continued to arrive over the course of the year informing the Museum that the institution’s requests for authentic relics of Stone Age Australia were impossible to fulfill. Where European civilisation had penetrated into indigenous territory, Aboriginal culture had seemingly vanished. Some Aboriginal people were admitted to have remained, though they were deemed to be of little use for the Museum’s purpose, as they had abandoned their traditional customs and way of life for the ease of European life and materials. For example, A. Williams, of the Torres Straits, wrote in April, replying to the Museum’s demand for artefacts:

Although I have been here two years I have seen nothing of interest. The natives tell me their old time weapons and skulls are gone long ago. I beg to state the natives are in a high state of civilisation. The men hunt and shoot ducks with shot guns. The ladies make their dresses with sewing machines!³⁸⁵

Ray Loughnan wrote from Mitchell with similar sentiments, advising that ‘the blacks here seem to have discarded their native weapons and utensils for firearms and other implements of the white man’.³⁸⁶ J. S. Bruce wrote to advise the Museum that the opportunity of preserving the indigenous artefacts of the Murray Islands had passed:

In answer to yours re obtaining for the Queensland Museum specimens of native implements etc. I am sorry to say that they have already been all collected and taken away from here . . . The Craft of fashioning their old time necessities has died out with the old craftsmen, the younger men don’t seem to be able, or try to replace those that have been removed now that their old ceremonies and dances have given place to other amusements. It is a great pity that a collection of island specimens were not secured when they were plentiful, but they were considered then as useless and of no value whatever.³⁸⁷

The collectors, nevertheless, were ignoring much of the evidence before them which showed substantial signs of Aboriginal adaptation and survival. This evidence lay in the collections which they acquired, and will be considered in detail in the next

³⁸⁵ Letter from A. Williams, 17 April 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 11/238/1911.

³⁸⁶ Letter from Ray Loughnan, 22 April 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 238/1911.

³⁸⁷ Letter from J.S. Bruce, 25 April 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 243/1911.

chapter on the Roth and Coghlan collections. But some collectors were astute enough to know that the so-called abandonment of Aboriginal customs for European comforts was not as straightforward as others observed. Aboriginal identity could persevere even when European goods and habits had been ostensibly adopted. According to Ethel Hewitt, who wrote to the Museum in August of 1913, despite the local indigenous adoption of European habits, ‘the blacks are as they used to be . . . they wear their skirts till out of sight and then hang them on the wire fence and become Diana and the Amazons till the chase is over’.³⁸⁸

Nonetheless, the Queensland Museum continuously sought the relics of authentic Aboriginal Australia, in preparation for its Aboriginal Life exhibit. To supply this display, the Museum required artefacts of Stone Age Australia, preserving a dying race in time, beneath glass cabinets and visitor eyes. The Director of the Queensland Museum, therefore, continued to write to collectors in rural areas to request more Aboriginal material culture. On 18 June 1914, Hamlyn-Harris wrote: ‘Please do all you can to help us. We are terribly in need of assistance in the matter of obtaining all specimens and records of the Queensland Aboriginals whilst the opportunity remains’.³⁸⁹ In September, Hamlyn-Harris was more urgent: ‘As the native is dying out so rapidly and all chances of obtaining material vanishing. I should be extremely glad if you would do all you can to have specimens obtained and forwarded to this institution for permanency’.³⁹⁰

The urgency of Hamlyn-Harris’s request for material was also influenced by the need for the Museum to impress international visitors. In 1914, the British Association for the Advancement of Science was due to visit Queensland for the deliberations of their society. Specifically, the Anthropological Section of the Association planned to meet in Brisbane. Hamlyn-Harris responded to this opportunity by sending requests to collectors in the field. As a result of the Association’s intentions, he explained:

I am therefore making a very special effort to get together as good a display as possible of Queensland Aboriginal material for exhibition in our galleries. The effort is worth making because in addition to the fact that the Queensland Aboriginals are a doomed race, we should at

³⁸⁸ Letter from Ethel Hewitt, 11 August 1913, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1913.

³⁸⁹ Letter from Hamlyn-Harris, 18 June 1914, Queensland Museum Outwards Correspondence Archive 548/1914.

³⁹⁰ Letter from Hamlyn-Harris, 5 September 1914, Queensland Museum Outwards Correspondence Archive 986/1914.

the same time realize that the honour and reputation of Queensland is at stake. The Queensland Museum therefore appeals to those who can help to send to the Director as soon as possible all kinds of

- (1). Native string. Basketry, Woven bag and net work.
- (2). All native articles used as food such as seeds, roots, insects etc.
- (3). Native games, toys etc.
- (4). All articles of superstition, magic and medicine.
- (5). Domestic implements of arts and manufacture, including wood-work, Gums, resins and cements, shell and bone work./ Pigments, stone work of all kinds. Coolants, letter sticks etc.
- (6). Weapons of defence and offence.
- (7). Ceremonial tokens including those used at Corroborrees, etc such as plumes, bullroarers
- (8). Skeletons and skulls.
- (9). Mummies and all material appertaining to burial.
- (10). Samples of native hair:-
with following particulars. (1). Sex.
(2). Age.
(3). Tribe.
(4). Locality.

Kindly be good enough to see that all specimens are properly labeled with name (native if possible) and locality.³⁹¹

The Museum had been building for the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama of 1914 long before this circular was sent. In order to arrange the display, the Museum required scenes of Aboriginal camp life, complete with mannequins. Accordingly, sculptors had been contacted as early as 1911 to begin work on the dummies needed. The figures were to come from Melbourne and, according to the sculptor's letters, were to be inspected before packing by no less an anthropological authority as Baldwin Spencer.³⁹² Mannequins were expensive, and the prices offered by the sculptor rivalled the cost of some of the collections the Museum held. A new sculpt would cost £60, while mannequins the sculptor had in stock would be charged at £15. Beards and hair, the sculptor wrote, were 'not to be got' in Victoria, and would be better secured for less cost in Brisbane.³⁹³

Regarding hair, Hamlyn-Harris did not take long to send requests to collectors in the field for samples of Aboriginal hair and beards. A police constable wrote into the Museum on 9 July 1913, informing the director that: 'In reply to your Correspondence . . . (re the collection of specimens of Aboriginal hair) I have the honour to advise you

³⁹¹ Letter from Hamlyn-Harris, 4 March 1914, Queensland Museum Outwards Correspondence Archive 211/1914.

³⁹² The sculpting work was to be undertaken by a German sculptor named August Saupe. Letter from August Saupe, 3 October 1911, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 598/1911.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

that I forwarded you by secure mail, a collection of hair as requested'.³⁹⁴ Once again the Museum was expanding its collection of the indigenous body, this time through hair, in order to reconstruct a scene of Stone Age life and preserve Queensland's 'doomed race'.

Nineteen-fourteen is a year which resonates through history and the collective imagination. The commencement of the Great War also bolstered Australia's international self-confidence. Indeed, Australia's war time involvement, especially the Gallipoli campaign, has become one of the most important events in the construction of Australian identity. For the Museum, 1914 coincides with both Australia's support of the Empire in the Great War, as well as the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the consequent Australian Aboriginal Life diorama. Letters to the Museum in late 1914 cannot help but draw attention to the greater calamity of the War. Two letters in October serve as examples of this fact. The first, by E. Banfield concerns objects which had been used in Aboriginal ceremonies, and a book the author planned to write:

Of course I am not vain enough to think that such works as mine will be accepted by my publisher while the excitement of the war conducts the thoughts of men away from quiet and peaceful scenes.³⁹⁵

In late October, Gregory Matthews commented simply, accompanying a letter about birds that: 'we are all hoping for better war news'.³⁹⁶

Although these men expressed doubt that their research was of any interest in comparison to the larger drama of the War, it is important to consider how seemingly unrelated events like the War and the Australian Aboriginal Life exhibit can intersect in the creation of identity. Nineteen-fourteen was the beginning of a truly formative time for national conceptions of Australia. While Australia acted on the global scene, what was and was not 'Australian' was being partially defined by science, through the collection and categorisation of the 'other'. Crucially, it is possible to see that European Australia had essentially concluded one war—that which was waged in

³⁹⁴ The author's signature is illegible, though the rest of his writing is readable. Letter from Police Constable, 9 July 1913, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 211/1913.

³⁹⁵ E. Banfield was 'Edmund James Banfield', naturalist and author. His most famous work is *The Confessions of a Beachcomber*. Letter from E. Banfield, 5 October 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1914.

³⁹⁶ Letter from Gregory M. Mathews, 20 October 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 990/1914.

unconventional terms against the Aboriginal population—while shortly afterwards taking part in another, the Great War of 1914-1918. So, while the trappings of victory over a conquered people were being placed on display in the Queensland Museum, the young nation was entering another equally imperially-charged conflict.

ROTH AND COGHLAN

The Roth and Coghlan collections are of key importance to the Museum and this thesis. The letters of these two men to the Queensland Museum stand both as representational of and apart from the other collector correspondence already discussed. Both men write letters which approach the same themes and content of the other collectors, as well as letters which show insights which the majority of the other correspondence does not. This is particularly obvious when the letters discuss insight into Aboriginal life, as well as respect for the judgement of the local populations. The attention to detail when it comes to the cataloguing of objects donated, especially in the case of Roth, is superior to many other collectors in the period.

Like the other correspondence discussed in this chapter, the letters of Roth and Coghlan are a rich source of material for gaining insight into frontier life in colonial Australia. The particular benefit of analysing Coghlan's letters is that he was much more interested in commenting on tribal and inter-tribal relations than other correspondents so, within these sources, his are the best examples of seeing how Aboriginal people lived and interacted with one another in a relatively undeveloped region of the frontier.

As was stated in the Introduction to this thesis, the Coghlan collection has never been seriously scrutinised by the Museum or independent researchers. Coghlan was a comparative unknown in the field of collection and ethnography. His reputation never rivalled any other collector, nor is it likely he ever intended it to. As has been noted, Coghlan published one article in *Man* on the foodstuff of the Australian Aborigine, and this was made possible by Meston. Both Meston and Roth had dealings with Coghlan, though there are no records in the correspondence examined of other scholars or collectors being aware of the station manager or his significant

collection. This is not the case with Roth, who ranks as the most referred to individual in the period of correspondence studied.

In contrast to one another, Roth and Coghlan work as two distinct types within the taxonomy of collectors, as outlined in Chapter One. Although Roth began his career in ethnography as an enthusiast, he very quickly developed a professionalism which exceeded many of his peers. Although Roth was a government agent, he was something of a political outsider ideologically, as evidenced by the vociferous complaints he received from elected representatives.³⁹⁷ Coghlan, on the other hand, always maintained his position as an amateur enthusiast, and courted no political controversy. Both men saw themselves as observers of Aboriginal culture, and their letters and publications reflect this. Nonetheless, Roth's observations were given in an authoritative light, and were weighted with his own talents as a doctor, who had a scientific background through his medical education. Coghlan was content to relate his observations in an informal fashion, and allow the Museum to make of them what they would.

Roth's correspondence retained a much greater focus on the intellectual significance of his work, while Coghlan merely acknowledged that others may find his efforts useful. Roth's letters display awareness, not only of the ethnographic tradition, but also of the significance of his research to museums. This is especially apparent in his writing on the perceived decline of Aboriginal people in Queensland. Like many other collectors, and the Museum itself, Roth positioned his work as being vital to the observation of a people who were seen as fast vanishing from sight, both physically and culturally. Nonetheless, it must be observed that Roth did not discuss these issues in his correspondence with the Museum, although it appears in his other literature. The reason he did not do so can only be speculated upon and, although it may be because he felt his publications addressed these matters in greater detail, it may also be because of practical and time constraints imposed by his duties.

³⁹⁷ For a full discussion of the opposition to Roth, see: McGrath, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, pp. 193-208.

Coghlan's first letter to the Museum was written on 11 October 1891.³⁹⁸ This letter was sent from Glenormiston, where he was station manager, and primarily concerns a specimen of a lizard, dispatched in a box to the Museum. The letter ends with a brief notation that he intends to send in 'native weapons' for the collection. On the 24th, Coghlan forwarded this bundle of weapons, preceded by a letter describing the donation.³⁹⁹ Unfortunately, only the cover letter survives, and the precise list is no longer extant.

Even in these brief letters, it is apparent that Coghlan had frequent dealings with local Aboriginal people. His first letter is full of constant references to the local names for things that he had heard Aboriginal people use, and their own observations on the behaviour of local animals. For example, Coghlan writes of the lizard that: 'It may appear cruel sending this one so far without food, but the blacks tell me that they can go several days without food, so I am chancing this chap'.⁴⁰⁰ Nonetheless, these are relatively superficial examples of Coghlan's relations with local Aboriginal people when compared to some of his later letters. Indeed, one of Coghlan's letters stands out in the period examined as being by far the longest piece of conventional letter writing submitted to the Museum.⁴⁰¹

Coghlan's writing is, in fact, far more concerned with the local customs of Aboriginal people, their language, and local folk tales than in detailing the particulars of his donations. An unrestrained enthusiasm for the observation of indigenous people and their customs is easy to read in Coghlan's writing. Although Coghlan has an evident appreciation of local stories—he writes in one letter of 'a legend current here that a very old white man was amongst the blacks and that they carried him about till he died'—he tempers his curiosity with the results of his own investigations.⁴⁰² Regarding the legend mentioned, Coghlan comments that:

³⁹⁸ Letter from Jeremiah Coghlan, 11 October 1891, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 3489/1891.

³⁹⁹ Letter from Coghlan, 24 October 1891, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 3506/1891.

⁴⁰⁰ Letter from Coghlan, 3489/1891 .

⁴⁰¹ Certain other correspondence runs for a longer actual page count, though this is largely a result of these letters being lists of names and objects. The letter is: Letter from Coghlan, 24 March 1893, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4099/1893.

⁴⁰² Letter from Coghlan, 15 December 1891, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 3577/1891.

I have tried to follow up this “yarn” up and through I have camped about the place, and had white stockmen with black wives, I have never succeeded in getting anything reliable – and I fancy the yarn has somehow originated with the whites.⁴⁰³

Nevertheless, Coghlan does not suppose that all disinformation on the frontier came from white settlers. He is also critical of what he sees as a habit of the local Aboriginal people to deceive, especially when it comes to their own beliefs. Coghlan cited an example of how many of the Aboriginal people are:

Awful frauds seeming to even deceive themselves . . . A boy here was very bad and showed me some kangaroo bones which he said he pulled out of his head that had also been there by a enemy belonging to another tribe. Also a gin had a swelled leg, an old “fraud” showed me a lot of Kangaroo bones he had pulled out, that he averred had been put there by some enemy.⁴⁰⁴

Tempting as it may be to write this account off as the incredulity of an insensitive European to indigenous belief systems, Coghlan’s correspondence consistently shows that he has much respect for the opinions of the Aboriginal people who lived near him, though they are sometimes in opposition to his own ideas of health and medicine.⁴⁰⁵

In contrast to the fewer letters from Coghlan (8), between 1878 and 1914, there are 24 pieces of correspondence which either come from a member of the Roth family, or refer to them or to their work. Of these, 23 refer to or come from Roth, while the remaining letter is written by his brother, Henry Ling Roth. Henry Ling Roth’s letter was written in August of 1880 while Walter Roth, then in England, was only 19. The letter concerns the recommendation to the Museum of an officer of the Queensland Native Police, on the chance that he might prove useful for acquiring artefacts and specimens on the Museum’s behalf. Of most interest, in terms of this chapter, is the fact that the letter displays clear evidence that Henry Ling Roth had used Aboriginal people to aid him in acquiring either artefacts or specimens. Henry Ling Roth had moved to North Queensland in 1878, as he had been employed by English investors to investigate the sugar cane trade. He wrote from Mackay in response to the Museum’s request for material that:

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁴ Letter from Coghlan, 4099/1893.

⁴⁰⁵ In his 15 December letter, 1891, Coghlan gives a less damning account of Aboriginal mysticism when he describes a local Aboriginal healer taking blood from a patient by means of supernatural agency. Coghlan does not make mention of whether he believes that what he saw was a fraud or not. See: Letter from Coghlan, 3577/1891.

We are not suffering from a drought here as you seem to be in the south (although a little rain would come in handy) & the creeks are anything but dry yet; but I have some niggers out.⁴⁰⁶

This letter, therefore, gives early evidence of a member of the Roth family having an association with the Queensland Museum, as well as relations (if only of servitude) with Aboriginal people.

Walter Roth's first letters to the Museum come from the period before he returned to England to complete his studies in medicine, and were written while he was a teacher at Brisbane Boys Grammar School (as discussed in Chapter One in light of the kinds of ideas he may have formed from using the text books). On 'Monday Morning' of an unspecified month in 1889, Roth wrote to the Museum to request a loan of three skulls for a lecture he was to give.⁴⁰⁷ The second letter merely introduces his wife, who was collecting the material on Roth's behalf, as well as requesting skeletal material of half a dozen different kinds of small native animals from the Museum's collection.⁴⁰⁸ This is an early example of the interests of Roth in skeletal material. More examples of this will be discussed shortly, as they inform on some of Roth's attitudes and motivations. This also demonstrates the point made earlier in the chapter about the Museum loaning human remains for the purposes of education.

Six years passed before Roth again wrote to the Museum, though the cordiality of his letter indicates that he was either professionally or personally familiar with the Museum's director, Charles De Vis, and thus indicates interaction more substantial than the previous correspondence. The letter, which will be discussed at length in the next chapter, detailed the work that Roth had been conducting in researching the indigenous people of Queensland. Roth wrote of his confidence in his research, which had been gathered from a wide area of the State. He commented:

When I now show you the nature of the information which I have gathered, I think, without conceit, you won't give me a character for being lazy! However I will leave you to judge.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ Letter from Henry Ling Roth, 28 August 1880, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive Un-numbered/1880.

⁴⁰⁷ Letter from Walter Roth, 'Monday Morning' 1889, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2716/1889.

⁴⁰⁸ Letter from Roth, 'Wednesday Morning' 1889, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 2700/1889. Note the archival error evident in this and the above letter. There is no doubt that 2700/1889 was sent after 2716/1889 (it refers to the other), yet this has been numbered out of sequence in the archive. This error in numbering occasionally recurs in other correspondence in the archives.

⁴⁰⁹ Letter from Roth, 11 February 1895, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4635/1895.

Laziness was indeed one of the accusations which were to be leveled at Roth in his role as Chief Protector of Aborigines, although this accusation asserted that he was less interested in his duties as a surgeon than in his interests as an ethnographer. Roth's correspondence, when compared to almost every other collector who communicated with the Museum in this period show a much greater attention to detail—with objects being catalogued in his letters, rather than obliquely referred to; and details of the place of acquisition and year also submitted. Whereas an amateur enthusiast like Coghlan simply wrote: 'I am sending you a few extra Aboriginal Curios', Roth would submit pages of documents following his letters which listed the artefacts he had donated.⁴¹⁰ Furthermore, Roth obviously kept a meticulous record of the materials he collected (something he would later come to deny when questioned over his sale of artefacts to Sydney), as his last major donation to the Museum attests (the substance of which is detailed in the next chapter). There were limitations to Roth's documentation as, like many collectors, he very rarely recorded the precise circumstances of the exchange of individual objects. For example, there are no records in the Queensland Museum material which indicate what he may have traded for an object. This is an unfortunate omission, as such information would shed a great deal of light on cross-cultural commercial exchanges on the frontier.

Both Roth and Coghlan showed the same interest in the collection of human remains that many other correspondents with the Museum had. Roth's interest far exceeded Coghlan's, and Roth also showed more awareness that the collection of skeletal material had an unpleasant or inconvenient stigma in the eyes of mainstream society. Whether Coghlan felt the same is uncertain, as he never chose to justify his donation of 'two skulls of female natives' in moral or scientific terms.⁴¹¹ Coghlan's letters read as clear responses to Museum requests, and as such there are frequent statements of the fact that he is sending in material in response to Museum demand. Therefore, it is likely that Coghlan merely sent in objects which fulfilled Museum requests, and his donation of skeletal material was probably done with complete detachment, without any particular repugnance or righteousness concerning potential grave robbery.

⁴¹⁰ Coghlan cited in: Letter from Coghlan, 11 January 1897, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5106/1897.

⁴¹¹ Letter from Coghlan, 1 November 1893, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4283/1893.

Roth, on the other hand, was clearly cognisant of the worth of skeletal material to a Museum's collection. In September of 1897, Roth even offered skeletal matter to trade with the Museum for objects which he desired himself:

A complete aboriginal male skeleton has come into my possession: I shall be glad to offer it in exchange for some aboriginal things of which I am in want to complete my own collection.⁴¹²

Roth had requested skulls from the Museum previously, and his other writing indicates that he had a deep interest in human remains and funerary customs. This is another example of phrenology and anthropometry being considered a crucial element of nineteenth-century science, though the general population still found grave robbery to be morally questionable. Consider a paragraph in a letter written to the Museum in 1900 by Roth, while he was the Northern Protector of Aborigines. He expressed frustration at conventional morality and sensitivity interfering with his research:

With regard to skeletons, I will do my best, but I can assure you that I have now to pass by many opportunities which, before I was appointed a Civil Servant, I would have seized. I had to forego a lovely series last year in the Peninsula, because of some Europeans in the vicinity who might have made mischief over the practical expression of my scientific zeal!⁴¹³

Science was once more used as the justification for the unrestrained pursuit of material. Scientific enquiry had been Roth's defense for his infamous photo of an Aboriginal couple copulating, and the advancement of knowledge served as the explanation for many of Roth's endeavours on the frontier. In 1900, Roth wrote to the Museum that:

Yes, I am trying to do good scientific work, and forward various reports regularly to my Department . . . My collected M.S.S. since I was appointed Protector already amounts to about 3 times that contained in my book: my chief aim is to deal with the Northern Ethnology from a comparative point of view, dealing with each branch of the subject by itself – by far the most interesting method – and so in about 8 or 10 years time I shall have something worthy of permanent record.⁴¹⁴

Trade was also an important element of the acquisition of Aboriginal artefacts for Roth and Coghlan. The individual exchanges of goods for artefacts are not known,

⁴¹² This letter is interesting also because Roth expresses the idea that a collection could be 'complete'. The expression may have not been intended as written, though it bears consideration that Roth may have thought his own collection to have been representative of Aboriginal material culture. Even had he thought so at the time of this letter, it is most likely that his subsequent research would have changed his mind. In any case, he continued to collect for years after this point. Letter from Roth, 30 September 1897, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5371/1897.

⁴¹³ Letter from Roth, 15 April 1900, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 6074/1900.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

although it is easily discernible from the letters that most, if not all, objects sent to the Museum from these two collectors had been acquired through barter. Remuneration for the collector was not always the most appealing element of collecting for the Museum. Indeed, profits gained could often be quite slight. In the case of Coghlan, he wrote that:

I only regret that I cannot afford to present them to the institution, as it is I make a mere trifle, if anything, on them, as I am always careful not to take any from the natives without giving something in return.⁴¹⁵

For Roth, the acquisitions he made for the Queensland Museum while he was collector, were possible as a result of his official position as Protector of Aborigines. Yet, official duties sometimes interfered with Roth's research ambitions:

To give you some idea of how busy I am kept, I may mention that during last month, I had some 130 communications of purely departmental and official business to attend to: that does not leave much time to spare for scientific work.⁴¹⁶

Roth would later claim that the objects he sold to the Australian Museum were acquired at his own expense, and on his own time. Whether this claim holds any truth is questionable, though it was unambiguously backed by the Queensland Museum. Regarding the objects which Roth did donate to the Museum, he informed them that:

Indeed I may tell you that I applied for, and was granted, a small amount of tobacco annually in order to purchase curios from the blacks for your museum: so that you will recognise that you are not forgotten.⁴¹⁷

Regarding Roth's sale of material to the Australian Museum, the Queensland Museum played a key role in investigations into improper conduct on the part of Roth. In 1906, a number of letters went to and from the Museum requesting accounts of objects donated to Queensland by Roth. A note from Richard Gailey of the Queensland Museum written on the front of one such request directed that: 'I desire that you . . . submit it to the Chairman and act on his advice in relation to this matter'.⁴¹⁸ A reply from the Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Stock indicated that the Museum had not supported any impropriety on the part of the former Protector of Aborigines. The letter stipulates quite carefully that Roth's donations to the Museum were 'not as a donor but in accordance with his official

⁴¹⁵ Letter from Coghlan, 23 December, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5089/1896.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁷ Letter from Roth, 6074/1900.

⁴¹⁸ R. Gailey, cited in: Letter from John Leahy, The Australian Estates & Mortgage Company Limited, 12 January 1906, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 7046/1906.

duties as defined by himself'.⁴¹⁹ A small but crucial point—if the material sent to the Queensland Museum was donated from objects collected in relation to Roth's 'official duties', then the objects sold to Sydney could very well be accepted (at least officially) as the product of his interests and efforts as a private collector. No prosecution of Roth would be necessary, and both his reputation, and that of the State as his employer could be preserved.

Although Roth wrote in his publications at length on the inter-tribal trade amongst Aboriginal people, his correspondence to the Museum does not mention this phenomenon in any context. Perhaps Roth considered he had answered any questions the Museum may have had on indigenous customs in his public writing, or perhaps he thought the Museum was not specifically interested. On the other hand, Coghlan discusses inter-tribal trade in a number of his letters. In particular, Coghlan was interested in the diplomatic nature of trade, and how tribes sought advantage over one another politically through monopolies on resources. For example, Coghlan wrote of the local pituri trade in 1891:

The blacks here are great traders, doing trade for a long distance, exchanging pitcheri, for coolimons and other things – and not long ago they boycotted the Boulia blacks for some bad conduct and refused to let them have pitcheri, and as the blacks here have all the pitcheri the Boulia'ns had to give in and be good.⁴²⁰

In 1893, Coghlan again wrote to the Museum about the diplomatic and political nature of inter-tribal trade in the local Aboriginal communities:

A good deal of barter, the Blacks of Boulia & Toko have good spears & Boomerangs etc. which they barter for Pitcheri with the Mulligan blacks – the Smoky Creek blacks have a monopoly in Hulimans as that is the only place the Coral tree grows. At present there is a boycott on the Mulligan blacks, refusing to sell Pitcheri through some [indecipherable] with the Smoky Creek blacks.⁴²¹

The difficulties presented by frontier life frustrated the collection of material by Roth and Coghlan, just as it had frustrated other collectors. Roth complained in his February 1895 letter that his research for his upcoming publication on Queensland indigenous people had been stymied in certain regions.⁴²² His intended journey to Aboriginal communities in the Toko Ranges and the Mulligan had been canceled as a

⁴¹⁹ Letter from The Undersecretary, 4 September 1906, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 7172/1906.

⁴²⁰ Letter from Coghlan, 3577/1891.

⁴²¹ Letter from Coghlan, 1893 (no specific date noted), Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4120/1893.

⁴²² Letter from Roth, 4635/1895.

result of flooding. Expeditions he planned in later years were often contingent on good weather and topographic conditions. For example, Roth wrote in 1900 that:

I am off on Friday for the Andromanche River, between Bowen and Mackay, and then to Cloncurry, Camooweal and Northern Territory border provided the drought breaks . . . You will thus understand how it is that at present I can send you nothing, but will certainly do so next wet season.⁴²³

Coghlan faced similar difficulties to Roth in his efforts to collect material for the Queensland Museum. In 1891, Coghlan wrote that he was unable to fulfill a Museum request for a live lizard because ‘owing to drought I have not been able to replace it however we are nearing the rainy season after which I hope to be able to fulfill my promise’.⁴²⁴ Two years later, Coghlan wrote again that:

I must apologise for not replying to you Jan 8th of last year, but the fact is the wretched drought then and now raging has put all correspondence in the shade. I have been in monthly expectation of the teams arriving and being able to send you a few native weapons by them on their return, but they are stuck 300 miles away.⁴²⁵

The tyranny of distance and the harsh effects of weather could frustrate collection on the Queensland frontier, and retard the growth of the Museum’s collections.

Of the correspondence, ten letters from the period of 1878 to 1914 refer to Roth directly, though they were not written by him. Roth became a figure of importance, influence, and controversy in Queensland, and it is hardly surprising that others wrote of him. Further, Roth’s reputation as an ethnographer had become one of international standing, and this is demonstrated in the correspondence. Roth was also engaged in a network of correspondence with other enthusiasts in his field, especially with Spencer. In October of 1899, Spencer wrote to the Queensland Museum from his new Directorship of the National Museum in Melbourne. Spencer was in need of artefacts of Queensland Aboriginal material culture, to supplement Victoria’s dearth of artefacts indigenous to the State. He wrote:

I am afraid that there is little in this line which we can offer you in exchange but we are most desirous of securing many more specimens of Queensland objects and as you are probably the recipient of all Dr. Roth’s collection you must be very well off in this respect.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ Letter from Roth, 6074/1900.

⁴²⁴ Letter from Coghlan, 3577/1891.

⁴²⁵ Letter from Coghlan, 4099/1893.

⁴²⁶ Letter from W. Baldwin Spencer, 26 October 1899, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5953/1899.

Roth generated interest internationally, as evidenced in 1905. Dr Finsch, the curator of the Braunschweig City Museum's Ethnological Department, wrote to the Queensland Museum to request material:

In order to complete our stock, which is very poor just in specimens from Australia I wrote to Mr. Walter E. Roth, expressing the wish, that I would be very happy, if he could enrich our Museum with some specimens from Australia or perhaps New Guinea. A few days he was kind enough to answer, that he had held no duplicates more, but had all handed over to the Brisbane Museum [the Queensland Museum] and recommended to address me to you.⁴²⁷

Roth continued corresponding with the Museum in the period following his exodus from Australia, particularly with Hamlyn-Harris. These letters indicate that there was no bad blood between Roth and the Museum following the sale of the majority of Roth's collection to Sydney. Further, Hamlyn-Harris and Roth endeavoured to revise Roth's previous writing on the Aboriginal people of Queensland, to be published through the Queensland Museum.⁴²⁸ The task was never completed by the Museum, though Hamlyn-Harris presented the revisions to the University of Queensland in the late 1950s, from where they were finally published in the 1980s.⁴²⁹

CONCLUSION

Roth and Coghlan were only two of the many collectors who acquired material and donated or sold it to the Queensland Museum. A large body of professional scientists, adventurers, and amateur anthropologists exchanged material and information with the Museum, contributing to the Museum's storehouse of knowledge and culture. These correspondents each had their own beliefs and experiences, setting them apart from their peers as unique. Nevertheless, they worked within the same frontier—physically and intellectually—and contributed to the same repository of material. The Museum's ideas often intersected with those of its collectors, and the tastes of the institution's own staff largely dictated collection priorities and Museum purchases.

⁴²⁷ Letter from Dr. O. Finsch, 1904 (no date specified), Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 6958/1904.

⁴²⁸ Roth's last of these letters, in the period studied, was: Letter from Roth, 7 March 1914, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 44/1914.

⁴²⁹ Though it must be said that the revisions were published not as integrations with the main text, but only as facsimiles of Roth's revisions themselves. See: Lindy Allen and Bernice Borey [eds], *Cultural and Historical Records of Queensland: Number 3, Annotations to Publications by W.E. Roth* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Printery, 1984).

The perspectives of the Museum's collectors and frontier agents helped to inform and create the views expressed by the Museum staff. Observations about Aboriginal life on Queensland's peripheries were sometimes the only information that the Museum had about local circumstances and habits. Museum directors, like Hamlyn-Harris, believed in the urgency of collection partly because the correspondence he read informed him that there was an imminent decline in the Aboriginal population and material culture.

From an examination of the correspondence between the Museum and the various people who wrote to the institution, the predilections of the Museum in relation to the collection of Australian Aboriginal material culture have been demonstrated. Aboriginal people were considered as if they were an endangered species (but without the protection that status might have afforded them), and the preservation of their authentic culture was the prime motivation for the Museum's acquisition of their artefacts. Although the letters to the Museum indicate that Aboriginal people were not about to vanish within a generation, for the most part, collectors failed to recognise the signs of Aboriginal adaptation, survival, and cultural resistance. The preservation of Aboriginal material culture and remains was the product of a faith in scientific method and thought which justified any and all appropriations of material, and cultural insensitivity. Exchanges in artefacts on the frontier were sometimes violent, criminal, and unorthodox, although there is also clear evidence in the correspondence that the frontier was a space in which Aboriginal people still had the capacity to negotiate exchanges on their own terms, and to both resist and co-operate with settler society. Returning to the idea of the Museum's acquisition of information for their own perspective, these letters formed an important foundation of this knowledge. By considering the themes of these letters in the next chapter, it will become evident that the Museum's depiction of Aboriginal culture as stagnant and inadaptable was partly informed by their correspondents. These issues will now be considered through an analysis of the Roth and Coghlan collections at the Queensland Museum, beginning with a direct comparison of the collection styles of the two men.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE ROTH AND COGHLAN COLLECTIONS AT THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM; ENTANGLEMENT AND DISPLAY

The previous chapter has demonstrated that the Roth and Coghlan collections at the Queensland Museum were the products of the enthusiasm of these two collectors, as well as the particular interests of the Queensland Museum staff. Roth and Coghlan reflected many of the dominant motivations of other correspondents to the Museum, such as inquisitiveness about Aboriginal people, a desire to seek authentic relics of 'Stone Age Australia', and an urge to do so before it was too late. It has been shown that the Museum responded to the letters of its agents and made deliberate requests for Aboriginal material culture which were charged with this sense of urgency and a thirst for what was seen as the authentic and traditional record of the Stone Age in Australia. This chapter will now position this information within the context of the Roth and Coghlan collections themselves. The Australian Aboriginal Life diorama will be shown to be the culmination of the Museum's acquisitions, and the first and longest-lasting exhibit of Aboriginal material culture in its history. Roth's own writings regarding Aboriginal culture provide evidence of his observations, as well as his collection bias. This will also be contrasted with the material he gathered. It will be demonstrated that the Museum's display of Aboriginal material culture conformed to a view of Aboriginal people as static and unchanging. Contrary to the interests and expectations of the Museum and its collectors the actual material evidence in the Roth and Coghlan collection, as well as Roth's observations, clearly show that Aboriginal people were adapting to new materials and difficult circumstances. The collections, rather than being evidence of orthodox traditions in Aboriginal culture, were the product of entanglement on the frontier.

The Aboriginal material culture sold or donated to the Museum by Roth and Coghlan represents a significant ethnographic collection. The objects acquired by the Museum from these two collectors arrived over the course of more than a decade, and included objects of Aboriginal material culture, skeletal material, and preserved animal

specimens. For reasons of cultural sensitivity, the skeletal material will not be directly considered, except in acknowledging that it was collected. Before considering the material itself, we will proceed from a comparison of Roth's and Coghlan's collection practices, and a discussion of the Aboriginal Life diorama.

COLLECTION LETTERS

Roth's first donation to the Queensland Museum arrived in the latter part of 1897, and this package included an entire Aboriginal male skeleton.⁴³⁰ Roth had already been in contact with the Museum, two years previously, in a letter in which he outlined his methodology:

For the last six months I have been continuously and assiduously collecting notes on the ethnology of the blacks in these districts, and in the course of my investigations (which have taken me as far up the Georgina as Roxburgh – my trip to the Toko Ranges and Mulligan having been hitherto prevented by floods) have acquired numerous references etc to the fauna of this locality. Such a list I have compiled on the following page, for which I would be extremely grateful for your forwarding the official scientific names: books of reference out in these wilds are out of the question. To lessen the trouble I am putting you to, and for which I am thanking you in anticipation, I have numbered the list of which I have kept a copy: all therefore for you to do, when you can conveniently find time, is to forward just the number and the name required. Where you are at a loss for identification, I would be very grateful for your suggestion as to what animal in [it] might be.

When I now show you the nature of the information which I have gathered, I think, without conceit, you won't give me a character for being lazy! However I will leave you to judge.

I have collected, (and corroborated with every precision possible out here)

- (1). six vocabularies of dialects.
- (2). A sign-language understood among the different tribes who otherwise would be rendered unintelligible the one to the other. I have about 120 of such signs – all illustrated.
- (3). Several corroborees, with full details, such as the particular ornamentations, all painted in the proper colours, the translations (where Known) and "stage-directions" etc.
- (4). The search for food – methods of entrapping the different animals birds & fish, preparation of vegetable foods – cooking utensils etc.
- (5). Domestic (Camp) life: The various games and amusements, sickness and methods of Healing, Medicine, & treatment. Burial rites etc. Rain-making etc.
- (6). Fighting implements – the meaning of the ornamentations on their boomerangs etc. (which I think is recorded for the first time). The various trade routes along which they barter these weapons, and what they get in exchange etc. Methods of Fighting. Their ideas of punishment in the camp.
- (7). Sexual Relations – and sexual mutilations.
- (8). Personal ornaments and ornamental mutilations.

I believe that the most interesting are the sign-language, and the interpretation of the ornamentations – or perhaps you could inform me whether any one has been before me in this

⁴³⁰ Re: offer of sale of skeleton: Letter from Roth, 5371/1897; Re: delivery of skeleton: Letter from Roth, 4 October 1897, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 5395/1897.

field. You can, I well believe, understand my not having written to Messrs Meston et id genus omne, on these matters!

Believe me
Always very sincerely yours,

W.E. Roth.⁴³¹

Robins describes this as the only letter of substance sent by Roth to the Museum, although I believe that the letters I have discussed in the previous chapter can be considered substantial.⁴³² Roth's other letters, though usually short and to the point, provide considerable insight into his character and method. The culmination of the research Roth mentioned in the above letter led to the publication of *Ethnological Studies*.⁴³³ According to Roth, part of the purpose of this book was so that he could:

. . . look forward to the day when Mr. Parry Okeden [Commissioner of Police] will have the satisfaction of seeing his words verified, that "Queensland will be proud of her aboriginals" - a consummation in which he has made up his mind to take an active part.⁴³⁴

One year before the publication of Roth's *Ethnological Studies*, Coghlan had sent a major acquisition to the Museum. Uncharacteristically for Coghlan, the letter which preceded his donation came with a detailed list of the objects for dispatch. But in contrast to Roth's above letter, Coghlan's correspondence lacks any statement of intent or method. The letter is quoted at length so as to provide a better comparison of style to Roth's:

Herewith I enclose a list of the things sold to your Muesum, I have packed them as carefully as I could and trust they will reach you speedily and in good order.

I only regret that I cannot afford to present them to the institution, as it is I make a mere trifle, if any thing, on them, as I am always careful not to take any thing from the natives without giving something in return.

Should teams be going direct to Longreach I might send them that way, as it is the shortest.

There will be two boxes, or cases, one bundle, two-handed-swords and clubs.

Yours faithfully,

J. Coghlan

[second page]
List of aboriginal curios to Queensland Museum

18 spears yatchenas
6 shields gnowras

⁴³¹ Letter from Roth, 11 February 1895, Queensland Museum Inwards Correspondence Archive 4635/1895.

⁴³² Robins, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 173.

⁴³³ Roth, *Ethnological Studies of the North-West-Central-Queensland*.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid*, Preface, second page.

6 knives
 4 coolimans
 1 emu plume
 2 possum fur ornaments, whaangaas
 5 cerraiberrie sticks
 2 play boomerangs
 1 cunty (tool maker)
 1 old bird net
 1 kangaroo skin water bag
 8, or more, stone tomahawks
 6 goose necked boomerangs ILILA
 1 " " " " in rough
 22 ordinary " "
 1 yam stick Wingura
 6, or more, Bull roarers Indakah
 3 gnomeras spear projectors,
 3 pitchery bags
 1 specimen of fibre plant
 3 Drawings by "Dick", his own ideas
 1 packet containing 1 stone knife small flint used in scarifying etc., splinter of wood bound in red taken from a native after a fight
 1 nardoo pounding stone
 6 corraiberrie ornaments, etc.

Memos These are the things here now ready to go in addition there is a box, en route, containing shields. Stone Tomahawks etc. etc. of which I have no list. Some of the shields are shattered by boomerangs in fights I witnessed. other's show a burnt mark across them this is caused by the natives raising fire by friction. Spears ticketed 1 are Kalkadoons 2 round points, Boulia and East of here 3 are north west spears, (Waggia tribe) and are thrown by the Womera. (Gnomera) the Lance bladed spear is local and West for more than 150 miles, they are sometimes used lance fashion. A white man, named Nathan, was killed on an adjoining station, a short time back, by one of these spears being thrust lance fashion into his body and twisted when the blade broke and remained in his body.

J. Coghlan⁴³⁵

These two letters bring the two collectors into contrast. On the one hand, Roth's letter clearly indicates a keen interest in, and determination to contribute to, the study of Aboriginal people. His letter referred to the detailed research he was conducting on various facets of Aboriginal society, language, and customs. Further, Roth's hope to not be considered a lazy character is also evidence that he not only wanted to contribute to ethnography but, also, to be taken seriously as a researcher in the field. Coghlan's letter, on the other hand, is more direct and to the point. Besides his list of material sent to the Museum, there is little of ethnographic substance in his correspondence. Where Coghlan simply lists a long series of object names and material, Roth articulates a systematic approach to the ethnography of North-West-Central-Queensland. In contrast with Roth, Coghlan's writing has the character of

⁴³⁵ Letter from Coghlan, 5089/1896.

someone who merely contributes to the material store of the Museum, but does not wish to directly engage with the ethnographic research or theory.

This fundamental difference between the two collectors must be kept in mind when reflecting on the objects discussed in this chapter. Both collections show no significant difference in the incidence of entanglement. Although this point is expanded in this chapter after the objects are discussed, it is worth stating here that the similarity in the overall number of entangled objects, collected from different regions, indicates the prevalence of entanglement on the frontier. It is crucial to note that if Coghlan, as a less systematic collector than Roth, acquired material which conforms to trends in a more selective collection, these trends can be seen to be universal.

As has been observed, Roth and Coghlan were known to each other and, at least as far as it is possible to ascertain, had a good working relationship. The acknowledgements in *Ethnological Studies* include Roth's appreciation of 'Mr. J. Coghlan, late of Glenormiston', for assistance rendered.⁴³⁶ Coghlan is mentioned a further three times in Roth's book, always in a favourable light. Roth wrote that:

I have no personal knowledge of Fungi, mushrooms, &c., as articles of diet in these districts. However, Mr. Coghlan, of Glenormiston, a careful observer, says that just on the western side of the Mulligan a sort of truffle, with a yellowish flesh after roasting, appears to be a delicacy. This, he tells me, is very difficult to find even with a practised eye, a small undulation on the surface of the ground being its only indication.⁴³⁷

The second mention is another credit to Coghlan for his assistance in providing information regarding Aboriginal hunting patterns in the Glenormiston region.⁴³⁸ Finally, Roth referred to Coghlan as having discovered a cave with an image carved into the rock by Aboriginal people unknown.⁴³⁹ Coghlan's opinion of Roth is not documented. Whether they were friends or good working partners is incidental to this thesis, though the fact that they interacted and that Roth gained some of his knowledge of Aboriginal customs from Coghlan demonstrates an interrelation between their collections and the knowledge they acquired.

⁴³⁶ Roth, *Ethnological Studies of the North-West-Central-Queensland Aborigines*, Preface, second page.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 93.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 97.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 116.

The majority of Coghlan's collection had been acquired before Roth released his 1897 publication, and none of Roth's major donations to the Queensland Museum were made in the period when Coghlan was working in the Glenormiston and Boulia districts, although Roth also collected from these regions at a later date. Roth's last donation to the Museum was in late 1903. Coghlan's first acquisition for the Museum occurred more than ten years previously, in 1891. Coghlan sent numerous other packages of specimens, artefacts, and bones. Coghlan also donated objects in 1892 and 1894, while the Museum purchased others from him in 1897, 1898, and 1901. The majority of Coghlan's collection was sold to the Museum, rather than donated. Roth's three major donations were each accompanied by detailed lists of material, and were sent in 1900, and 1903. Roth had long since left Australia, and Coghlan was only two years from passing away when the Museum director, Hamlyn-Harris, opened the Aboriginal Life diorama in 1914, an exhibit which has been previously described in this thesis as the culmination of decades of interest and research into Aboriginal people in Queensland.

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LIFE DIORAMA

The appointment of Hamlyn-Harris, in 1911, to the post of Director of the Queensland Museum was greeted in the popular press by expressions of faith and enthusiasm for the progressiveness of the State government's policy. 'H.A.L.' stated, in *The Queenslander* on 25 May 1912 that 'it was recognised by the Kidston Government that the time had come for a more progressive policy for the State Museum'.⁴⁴⁰ By 'progressive', 'H.A.L.' was referring to more attention to science, education, and government engagement in creating public awareness. In November of the same year, similar sentiments were also expressed in the *Courier*. In a retrospective on fifty years of the Museum's policy and social impact, an unnamed commentator wrote that:

The Queensland Museum authorities are to be commended for their laudable endeavour to place some of the higher branches of education within easy reach of the children attending the primary schools. That the initial effort was appreciated was shown by the fact that no fewer

⁴⁴⁰ H.A.L., 'The Queenslander for May 25, 1912', in *The Queensland Museum: Historical Sketch*. This source was preserved in a scrap book in the Museum library, composed of other clippings from newspapers and magazines. No page numbers are given in the source, and the original numbers can only be determined if the clipping preserves them. In the case of this reference, they do not. This scrap book is an unpublished compilation.

than 1500 boys and girls attended Dr. Hamlyn Harris's lecture a fortnight ago upon the 'Homes and Loves of the Insect'.⁴⁴¹

The author went on to praise another lecture sponsored by the Museum which was delivered to the 'little sons and daughters of men'.⁴⁴² The envisioning of the Museum as the ideal class room is clear in these articles. The Museum, according to the author, was fostering the correct spirit of knowledge in the young, and contributing to the best features of society.

This is an age of science, and it is pleasing to find our leading scientists coming cheerfully forward to inculcate in the young a knowledge and love of popular science . . . The Museum lectures embody the essence of the kindergarten system, for the whole magnificent collection of specimens in the institution are at the disposal of the lecturers. They also carry into effect the spirit of educational socialism, for those lectures are absolutely free for all.⁴⁴³

In January 1914, *The Brisbane Courier* featured an article on museums and their role in society. The article dealt with the under-funding and limitations of the Museum, and read distinctly as if it had been penned by a staff member of the institution. The article stated:

We in Australia have set up museums of our own which are designed rather for the purposes of education than for mere show. Mainly the Queensland Museum is attractive because of its Natural History and Ethnological sections. If we are to leave these out of consideration we have not much to boast about, the fact being that generally the Museum has been financially starved.⁴⁴⁴

The lack of funding, according to the author, was an acute problem for the Museum, as well as for the nation. As the article argued:

The cult of the private collector . . . is rather 'going out' and the general trend now is that the State should maintain public collections of works of art, antiquities, natural history, and scientific specimens . . . A young country dealing with bread and butter problems cannot afford to vie with them, and so we are well advised, as in the case of Queensland, to specialise in sections which may be handled with modest means, and which are of peculiar educative value. Thus a Queensland Museum should be the resort of all visitors to the country who desire to study our native animal life—our marsupials, fishes, birds, reptiles, and so on—and of those who seek information respecting the aboriginal race of the country, that peculiar and interesting people into the mysterious temples of whose minds and rites so few whites have returned.⁴⁴⁵

Aboriginal people, associated so closely by the author with the other curiosities of the land—marsupials, fishes, birds, and so on—became the means by which to interest and educate the people of Queensland. Certainly, by placing Aboriginal people in

⁴⁴¹ 'Fifty yrs ago', in *Courier*, 15 November 1912. Cited in *The Queensland Museum: Historical Sketch*. As above, no page numbers are discernible.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ 'Museums: Their Uses' in *The Brisbane Courier: Saturday*, 10 January 1914. Cited in *The Queensland Museum: Historical Sketch*. As above, no page numbers are discernible.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

such a position of scientific curiosity, the author was also ensuring that the reader of *The Brisbane Courier* understood that Aboriginal people were merely fascinating inhabitants of Queensland, not participants in the political and social life of the state. The citizens of Queensland were intended patrons of the Museum, not the state's indigenous people.

In 1914 Hamlyn-Harris mounted the display in the Queensland Museum which became known as the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama. The display was also sometimes known as the Camp Fire display, or the Australian Aboriginal Life exhibition. The permanency of this display is integral to a consideration of its social impact, and this has been noted throughout the thesis. The exhibition remained in place until the Museum left its site on Wickham Terrace and moved to its present location in 1985. This display was the principal way in which the Museum educated three generations of Queenslanders on Aboriginal people. The display consisted of a glass case in which a supposedly typical scene of Aboriginal life would be displayed for Museum visitors. The exhibit was described in the *Queenslander* of 31 January 1914:

The most interesting of these new cases is entitled Australian aboriginal life, a side view and a partial front view of which are given. A space of no less than 25ft. by 13ft. is taken up by the objects here shown. This case is in reality a comprehensive illustration of a typical aboriginal scene. Three adult figures and a pickaninny are shown.⁴⁴⁶

The timeliness of this display was expressed in the *Brisbane Courier* on 4 March 1914, in a review of a lecture given by Hamlyn-Harris at the Museum. The title of the lecture, 'Echoes of Man's Past History', alone indicates that the Museum was accepting the mainstream anthropological view that Aboriginal people were of chief interest because they were analogous to the European Stone Age. The reviewer summarised the tone and intent of the lecture thus:

He [Hamlyn-Harris] termed it a shame the way the Anglo-Saxon people had permitted the last survivors of the earliest race to pass without having studied their habits. The Australian and the Tasmanian peoples were both wrapped in mystery, he said, but while the latter was a race the Australian aborigine was a hybrid.⁴⁴⁷

Indicative of the Museum's sentiment is the fact that Hamlyn-Harris's lecture placed the shame on the fact that Aboriginal people had not been properly *studied* before

⁴⁴⁶ 'Our Illustrations: At the Brisbane Museum' in *Queenslander*, 31 January 1914. Cited in *The Queensland Museum: Historical Sketch*. As above, no page numbers are discernible.

⁴⁴⁷ 'First Museum Lecture: Man's Past History' in *Brisbane Courier*, March 1914. Cited in *The Queensland Museum: Historical Sketch*. As above, no page numbers are discernible.

they had ‘passed’, rather than the fact that they had supposedly passed away at all. As the brain-child of Hamlyn-Harris, the Aboriginal Life diorama was therefore one way of educating Queenslanders as to the nature and habits of their ‘mysterious’ indigenous inhabitants. That it was also intended to be a display of a vanished people says much of the tone of the exhibit itself. There were no public memorials to Aboriginal people, so in a sense the exhibit was to serve as an epitaph.

As has been made evident in the previous chapter, Hamlyn-Harris engineered the Aboriginal Life diorama as a way of impressing the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which visited Queensland in 1914, and as a means of preserving the cultural remnants of what he considered to be a ‘doomed race’. For Hamlyn-Harris, the Queensland Museum was to be the principal site at which this preservation of Aboriginal ‘life’ would occur. The actual style of the exhibit, and the objects which were selected to be displayed, confirms that the Museum was primarily interested in displaying what was considered, in its own view, to be ‘authentic’ and ‘typical’ Aboriginal culture.

Unusually, current Museum archives concerning the Aboriginal Life diorama are brief and missing substantial information on the objects which were included in the exhibition, at the time of dismantling. The archives themselves consist of a handful of folders of photocopied details which were originally drawn as a makeshift map of the exhibit, compiled just prior to the dismantling in 1985. There is no record on these notes as to who wrote or drew them. These sketches are displayed as scanned copies in Appendix A. The sketches cover four pages, which depict various cases of objects with some catalogue numbers written beside them. In the majority of instances, the catalogue numbers are either vacant, or followed with the addition of a question mark, to indicate that the identity of the object was unknown at the time of the sketch. A further 14 pages of information—most of which have scant details on them—were used to record notes on the objects. However, as these pages are not headed with any descriptive text, it is uncertain if these refer to the entire collection of objects in the exhibit, or when they were recorded. These 14 pages list 45 objects, of which only 19 have any catalogue numbers recorded next to them.

These notes complement the other records in the Museum, particularly those found in the photographic archive, of which examples will be displayed shortly. The image that the Aboriginal Life diorama was intended to capture was, as the *Queenslander* recorded in 1914, that of a ‘typical aboriginal scene’. The reality was that, as far as Aboriginal life in Queensland was concerned, this typicality or authenticity was a scene imagined by Europeans. The scene is more akin to Aboriginal life before European contact, rather than one typical to the contemporary setting. The mannequins representing the Aboriginal people in the display manifest this European imagination of a people who were perceived as Stone Age and backward.

The modern Queensland Museum now stores the mannequins with their Secret Sacred collection as the Museum believes that the identities of the people used for the sculpts are traceable. The images included in this thesis are culturally sensitive, and should not be viewed by someone who is likely to take offence at their display. These images, therefore, will only be shown after a full page warning, which will enable the reader to skip ahead with reference to the page numbers (located in the top right corner of every page) should they wish to avoid seeing the photos. I also wish it to be known here that these images are only being displayed with the consent of the Queensland Museum, and it is understood that no publication beyond this thesis will utilise these photos. Two photos from Roth’s collection, available both at the Queensland and Australian Museum appear after the photos of the Aboriginal Life diorama. Although nothing in these images has the same Secret Sacred status, they do include numerous (now deceased) Aboriginal people. If this is likely to offend the reader, then they can be likewise avoided.

The first two photos show a wider and a close in shot of part of the Aboriginal Life diorama. In these images, we can see four mannequins of Aboriginal people—two men, one woman, and a child. One man is seated before a bark dwelling, rubbing a stick to make a fire. The other man holds a clutch of spears, while the woman carries the child and holds a lizard by the tail. Stuffed animals, such as dingoes, and a dead wallaby are close to the recreated camp scene. Numerous objects of Aboriginal manufacture are dispersed around the stage, the floor is covered in dirt, and the exhibition has a painted background of a ‘wilderness’ to add to the picturesque authenticity of the scene. The impression the viewer is intended to get is as if they are

staring into the outback of Australia, seeing Aboriginal people frozen in a recreation of their traditional camp life.

These two photos give the best perspective on as much of the display as possible, without providing too much detail on the mannequins themselves. Other photos provided alternate perspectives, but as the lighting was not as clear as in these images they have not been used. Through an examination of the images, as well as the Museum's sketched and database records, I have been able to determine that there are no objects in any of the images which show the use of European materials. The intention for the display was to represent the 'authentic', so objects considered to be inauthentic because of the admixture and entanglement of cultures were excluded.

That this scene was considered to be typical of traditional Aboriginal life is also evident in an analysis of other photographic images taken by collectors. As proof of this, two photos taken by Roth are used. The first shows an Aboriginal woman carrying her child, in a manner reminiscent of the Aboriginal Life diorama, standing next to the framework of a shelter. The second image shows a large group of Aboriginal men—almost all naked—standing in semi-circle watching other Aboriginal men. These images are just as remarkable in what they show as what they do not. For instance, no European materials are evident at all, either as objects, or as clothes. This is in spite of the numerous comments by observers that, shown in the previous chapter, Aboriginal people had become increasingly 'civilised', with men and women wearing European clothing and carrying guns. There are no iron hatchets, no tobacco pipes, or any other objects which would seem out of place in a supposedly Stone Age setting.

Roth's photos are more interesting in light of the above discussion when it is realised that he actively engaged in dressing down his subjects for photography. McDougall has pointed out that photography had long been an important tool of ethnological studies, from at least the 1850s.⁴⁴⁸ Roth took numerous photographs as part of his research, although by his own admission they were usually poorly done. As examples of ethnographic research, what is noteworthy about Roth's photos was his propensity

⁴⁴⁸ Russell McDougall, 'The Making of Great Benin: Felix Norman Roth and Henry Ling Roth' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 83.

to stage Aboriginal people in a way which conformed to what he saw as their traditional appearance. Ganter has discussed an example of this when Roth photographed Keppel Islanders in an ‘unadulterated’ state. Another photo of the same group—which he did not tender as evidence of their good health and tradition—showed them to be wearing European clothes and with their mixed-descent children.⁴⁴⁹ This demonstrates Roth’s conception of what a traditional Aboriginal community looked like, as well as what was excluded from it. In terms of contextualising the Aboriginal Life diorama, we can also see that Roth’s imagining of a traditional scene and the Museum’s were in concert.

⁴⁴⁹ Ganter, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 165. The photos can be seen on p. 166 of the same source.

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES FOLLOW, TWO FROM THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LIFE DIORAMA, AND TWO FROM ROTH'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION STORED AT THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM AND THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM.

THE MANNEQUINS USED IN THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LIFE DIORAMA ARE CLASSED AS SECRET SACRED MATERIAL AND, THEREFORE, ARE HIGHLY CULTURALLY SENSITIVE. THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO SEE THESE IMAGES WILL BE ABLE TO AVOID THEM BY TURNING ONLY THE TOP CORNERS OF THE PAGE UNTIL NUMBER 151 IS REACHED.

THE TWO PHOTOS FROM ROTH'S COLLECTION CONTAIN IMAGES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE WHO ARE NOW DECEASED. IF THE READER ALSO WISHES TO AVOID THESE IMAGES, THEY SHOULD CONTINUE TURNING TO PAGE 152.

ALL IMAGES USED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE QUEENSLAND MUSEUM.

Photo 5. Australian Aboriginal Life Diorama.



Photo 6. Australian Aboriginal Life Diorama, closer photo.



Photo 7. EH 854: Photo by Roth, locality unlisted.



Photo 8. EH 2455: Photo by Roth, 'Dance of the Body-louse of the Koko-yimindir Blacks at the McIvor River'.



In a sense, the Queensland Museum stood apart from mainstream state museums in Australia, if only because of its relative dearth of material. The Museum's ethnographic collections during the late nineteenth century were small when compared to inter-state competitors.⁴⁵⁰ This is partly explained by the limited funds available for purchase and storage of material culture available to the Museum—something Robins refers to as a possible explanation for Roth's sale of material to the Australian Museum in 1904—and also partly explained by the Museum's focus.⁴⁵¹ Every director of the Queensland Museum had been a natural scientist and, thus, their interests were not strictly geared towards anthropology.⁴⁵² Despite views of Aboriginal people as 'children of nature', past Museum directors preferred such disciplines as zoology and geology.

With the appointment of Hamlyn-Harris, the situation for the Museum's ethnographic collections improved. Although Hamlyn-Harris was also a natural scientist, he was passionate about collecting Aboriginal material culture while the opportunity remained.⁴⁵³ Hamlyn-Harris dramatically increased the Museum's collections, and his pleas to collectors to acquire more material have already been discussed at length in Chapter Three. Nonetheless, Hamlyn-Harris was biased, like the collectors who acquired his material, towards that material which displayed evidence of the 'Stone Age' culture assumed to be evidenced by Australian Aboriginal people. Robins argues that the Museum had little control over what it collected, simply reacting with its limited funds to the material which was offered to it.⁴⁵⁴ Although this is true to an extent, it does not acknowledge the fact that the Museum ultimately decided upon the presentation of its acquired material and that, despite having been supplied with ample evidence of Aboriginal adaptation, as for example in the Roth and Coghlan collections, the Museum chose to instead display objects of a traditional nature, preserving the preferred image of Aboriginal people as a Stone Age culture, static and unchanging.

⁴⁵⁰ Richard Robins, 'Reflections in a Cracked Mirror: What Collections Representing "Them" Can Say about "Us" and the Role of Museum Collections' in *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 62.

⁴⁵¹ Robins, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, p. 178.

⁴⁵² Robins, *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 62.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 67

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 73.

Whatever the original motivation of the Aboriginal Life diorama, the Museum portrayed Aboriginal culture as frozen in time. The reality was that, at the time the collections were made, Aboriginal people were rapidly adapting to circumstances on the frontier, in a way which was not acknowledged by the Museum's exhibition. The issue of the direct contribution of the Roth and Coghlan collection to the Aboriginal Life diorama, and how this relates to this adaptation and the manufacturing of a Queensland Aboriginalism will be discussed after each collection has been analysed in terms of the entanglement.

METHODOLOGY

The collection bias of Roth and Coghlan, and the accession bias of the Queensland Museum in the 1890s to 1914 will now be examined with reference to the primary source material in the Museum's storehouses and archives. The data presented here will demonstrate that the Roth and Coghlan collections showed significant evidence of entanglement, but that the display of objects was based upon a deliberate ignoring of this material. As I will now show, these collections included objects with metals, objects made with metals, objects that included whole cloth and other objects that appear to have been made by the reworking of cloth into twines or fibres that could be used in the same way as traditional materials. In short, objects which demonstrate entanglement are objects which show foreign (usually European) materials used by Aboriginal people to make, or form part of an object of their material culture. For example, Roth discusses types of entanglement he observed in the case of the materials used to make Dilly Bags. In his bulletins, he observed:

The material employed in their manufacture is "white-fellow's" twine and blanket-thread, opossum string, human hair mixed with twine, &c, or plant fibre . . . When made from the usual Government blankets, the threads are carefully picked out and sorted, the bluish-gray and black ones being respectively utilised for patterns: in other kinds of blankets, the red and yellow may be similarly sorted, and the bag woven in various linear-coloured stripes.⁴⁵⁵

I anticipate the counter-argument to entanglement that the adoption of European materials by Aboriginal people was merely *scavenging*, and not adaptation. There is no reason why scavenging cannot be adaptation and, in my view, it matters little how material was acquired. What is important, in the context of this thesis, is that new

⁴⁵⁵ Roth, *Ethnological Studies of the North-West-Central-Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 102-103.

material was used in innovative ways, to supplement existing material culture, or to create new objects.

Two other categories—orthodox and ambiguous—will be used to contrast with the entangled objects. Orthodox objects refer to those objects collected which are made in traditional styles and using only those materials which were indigenous to Aboriginal people at the time of collection. Unlike entangled objects, orthodox objects do not show evidence of foreign stylistic or material influences, such as the use of canvas cloth, iron, or European house paint. Although the use of the word ‘traditional’ was a tempting category for ‘orthodox’ objects, it must be realised that ‘entangled’ objects were still made in a traditional manner, albeit with some non-traditional source material or tools. Ambiguous objects refer to those objects which most probably do show signs of entanglement, though it was impossible to determine for certain whether or not they did. In most cases this involved a material which I judged would require more specialist analysis to determine its origin. Since the case I am making for this thesis did not require such a determination for all objects in the collection, I did not deem it necessary to solicit such specialist analysis.

The data presented in this chapter comes from four distinct but inter-linked sources. First, the Roth and Coghlan collections are the principal source upon which all other research and reflections are based. The Roth and Coghlan collections are kept either in storage or on display at the Queensland Museum’s Southbank centre in Brisbane. In a few rare instances, some of the material is on loan, and some of the objects are in different storage locations.⁴⁵⁶ Of the original collections, some of the material has been deaccessioned, lost, mislabelled, exchanged, destroyed, or removed to the Secret Sacred collection at the Museum.⁴⁵⁷ In all of these cases, it was impossible to examine this material.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ For example, the Grindstones in the Roth collection are held at the Hendra storage site of the Queensland Museum.

⁴⁵⁷ The Secret Sacred room at the Queensland Museum includes human remains (excluding Tibetan skull-bowls) and objects considered to be of a sensitive nature, spiritually or culturally. Access is restricted to a very limited number of people.

⁴⁵⁸ Although I was privileged to be allowed to look at some basic database information regarding some of the Secret Sacred material, a desire to be respectful to issues of cultural sensitivity meant that this information was not included in my evidence or discussion.

The objects which I was able to examine represent the vast majority of the original collections. The process I employed in examination was systematic. In each case, the object was retrieved, measured, photographed, observed and described in detailed notes, and cross-referenced with database and archival material. Object measurements sometimes differed in small degrees from the originals taken by the Museum and, consequently, the Museum measurements were not used.

Where possible, objects were photographed in order to capture the entire object in one frame. Further photos showing close-ups of details were then taken whenever possible, although some objects on display were in immovable glass cases and, thus, were not able to be photographed or examined. However, most objects currently held on display were photographed. In roughly thirty instances, I made sketches of objects in the Roth and Coghlan collections. My purpose here was to become more acquainted with the details of the object—a technique which I found enabled another way of examining an object not always afforded by examining photographs. Objects always came with identification cards, which occasionally provided useful information for research and observation purposes. These cards were sometimes factually inaccurate, or had become attached to the wrong object. In these instances, the information was ignored and corrected in agreement with Museum staff.

I recorded my own observations on the objects in note form, and then cross-referenced these with the details available in the Museum's database. While the database does not currently record more than cursory notes for the majority of the objects, it is intended that the Museum will be able to incorporate my descriptions and research into their database post-submission. Although some errors in the database exist, the notes kept by the Museum were useful in helping to verify the identity of the objects, and in providing insight into the material used. The term 'database', in the context of the Queensland Museum, refers to the electronic database currently used by the Museum as the first point of reference for the objects in their storage. The Museum also uses two other databases when accession history details are required. The first of these is the original accession list of objects held by the Museum (the Ethnology Register) and the second is the Queensland Ethnology list. Both lists exist only in print form, in limited hand-written or photocopied copies, and both were compiled in the early part of the twentieth century. The Museum's electronic

database often refers to the information in both lists, though not always consistently, or in great detail.

Finally, the archival letters of Roth and Coghlan often refer to specific donations sent by the two men. In Roth's case, the letters are sometimes accompanied by extensive lists which detail the objects donated by his own specific numbers and locations. Roth often painted his own numbers on to the objects he acquired, which better enabled me to trace his collection. Coghlan's letters lack this detail, and my information here is presented in a far more generic format. The primary benefit of these letters was in verifying the accession notes in the database, and in using them to ascertain if the objects examined were actually from the Roth and Coghlan collections. In a small number of cases, some objects were incorrectly listed as Roth and Coghlan donations, when they were actually acquired by other collectors. This was established with reference to information found on object cards, in the Ethnology Register, and through consultation with curatorial staff. In these cases, objects discovered to be erroneously listed as Roth or Coghlan acquisitions were eliminated from this study. Roth's letters enabled a great deal of extra information to be inserted into the descriptions of his collection. Due to Coghlan's writing and collection style, the same level of detail was not always possible to provide. Further, the database acquisition dates do not always correspond with the years Coghlan sent his material to the Museum. The most likely explanation for this is that the acquisition dates recorded by the Museum actually refer to the years in which the objects were first catalogued by the institution. Consequently, the years of acquisition for Coghlan's objects are sometimes unreliable.

Where I make an argument that an object shows the use of a certain kind of material, I do so only where I know that the material is what I claim it to be. In establishing the nature of a certain kind of material, there were three main sources of information which could provide such certainty. Firstly, the Museum database often lists what material is evident in an object. For example, QE 1801.1 is an armlet identified in the database as being made from pandanus leaves. In cases where an object has no database information regarding the material used, it was possible to determine this material by reference to other objects which have the same material and *also* have descriptions of this material in the database. For instance, QE 1903 and 1904 are both

lengths of string. QE 1903 is identified as being ‘native string’, though 1904 is simply identified as being ‘very well made’ string. A direct comparison of the two materials indicates that QE 1904 is the same as 1903, therefore, it can be said that 1904 is also ‘native string’. Finally, where there was any doubt as to the nature of material in an object, the curatorial staff of the Museum were available to provide their opinions. The curators Michael Quinnell and, in particular, Trish Barnard, were very helpful in giving their learned analyses regarding an object’s material, authenticity, and manufacturing methods.

The notes I took while making my first round of observations on the objects in the Roth and Coghlan collections are presented in Appendix B. Appendix B is not intended to be anything more than a presentation of my research in its rawest form. An elaboration of this data will occur in a complete catalogue of the Roth and Coghlan collections to be published by the Queensland Museum. These notes were compared to the database notes, sometimes at the moment they were written, and sometimes afterwards. The notes are largely descriptive and, in the case of the Roth collection, also deal with the evidence in the correspondence regarding object identity. Because of this, the notes I made of Roth’s material appear to be more extensive. The Museum database notes (and the Australian Museum notes for the Roth Collection) are not appended. To do so would potentially give away sensitive storage information. These notes are presented as typed versions of the handwritten pages I created, which are brief and often refer to information available in the various databases and, thus, was not always recorded.

The data in this chapter is presented under a number of headings. Objects are divided into categories primarily based on their type, with a few less numerically significant objects being categorised with objects of a similar function. For example, spears are kept under the category of ‘spears’ because there are so many of these objects in the collections. Headdresses and shell necklaces are grouped under ‘ornamentation’, due to their lesser number; bags, baskets, and koolamons are grouped together as ‘receptacles’. Within each category, the objects are divided into those objects from Coghlan and those from Roth. Coghlan’s objects, being the first acquired by the Museum, are presented before Roth’s. Both Coghlan’s and Roth’s objects are further divided into the most significant categories for the data—orthodox, entangled, and

ambiguous. Within these sub-headings, objects are listed in order of the Museum's numbering system (for example, QE 6266 comes before QE 9357).

The objects are presented where possible in equal proportions of orthodox and entangled. For example, if three entangled shields are presented as data, then at least three orthodox shields are presented for contrast. Every object determined to be entangled is discussed in this chapter. Where some categories of objects display no obvious examples of entanglement, a selection of objects proportional to the size of that category are presented for context. For instance, boomerangs form a significant portion of the Coghlan collection and, although none display definite evidence of entanglement, a proportional selection is nonetheless discussed (although there is strong evidence in the collection, and in Roth's observations that metal tools were used to inscribe patterns on these objects). Categories are presented in alphabetical order with one exception: A discussion of chisels is reserved until the final category, as the implications for entanglement here have ramifications for the entire collections.

Object descriptions are presented in a formulaic manner, describing their appearance, materials, and database details. Measurements are provided only for descriptive purposes, and to give proportion to the images. These measurements usually only refer to length, though other measurements are given in Appendix B where, as indicated, the entire list of objects examined is presented in note form. Each object used in this chapter is accompanied by one or more images which, wherever possible, are focussed on the most salient areas of the object being discussed. Some objects, such as many of the spears, could only receive one photograph, and these are often too long to be of more than superficial use for discussion. For a number of the larger objects, it was decided to include close-up images of the most important elements of the object (for purposes of categorisation) rather than show the complete object.

A detailed discussion follows each category. Where claims for entanglement are made in the object descriptions, these are expanded upon in the discussion. The discussion incorporates the observations of Roth, from his 1897 publication and consequent supporting bulletins, which are crucial to analysing the extent and implications of entanglement, as well as the bias exhibited in the collections. As mentioned above, the presentation of information in the categories is formulaic. The

descriptions serve only as basic descriptions of the objects, whereas the discussion justifies the observations made therein.

The material discussed in this chapter will later be used for two catalogues of objects, one for Roth, and the other for Coghlan. These catalogues are in preparation and will be finalised in concert with the Museum. This will also include all of the objects in the collections that were available to be examined. The purpose is to contribute to the communities of the traditional owners, in order to enable them see their material culture in print form. Also, these catalogues will prove invaluable in protecting these objects from any damage that may come from over-examination.

THE OBJECTS

AXES

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 5. QE 4159

QE 4159 – A stone axe head from Glenormiston, measuring 151mm by 126mm in dimension. This object is a large, rounded, and smoothed axe head, with the flatter side being heavily pitted. Where the edge has been ground, there are numerous scratches showing use-wear. Traces of red ochre stain part of the surface. The stone face has the Ethnology Register number of 832 marked on one side in black. The Ethnology Register confirms this number, though provides no specific notes. P.J. Coghlan is listed as the donor in the Register, though this is most likely a simple error regarding the initials. The error is not replicated in the other databases, which all confirm J.A. Coghlan as the collector. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 6. QE 22812

QE 22812 – A stone axe head from Glenormiston, measuring 175mm by 152mm in dimension. This object is a large, rounded, and very rough stone. The surface is extensively pitted, and only one section of the axe head has been smoothed—where the tool was designed for striking. Remnants of a stamp are affixed to one side of the stone, where a part of the word ‘tomahawk’ can be distinguished. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #120, with the accompanying description: ‘Tomahawk’. The Museum acquired this axe in 1892.

Coghlan - *Ambiguous*



Photo 7. QE 2266

QE 2266 – A stone axe from Glenormiston, the handle measuring 391mm long, and the axe head being 195mm by 48mm. This object is a hafted stone axe, with the axe head being a large, rounded stone bound to a lightweight wooden handle with twine and resin. The Museum database lists the twine as being human hair. The consistency of the twine tends to confirm this detail, especially in comparison with other objects (such as QE 2265), although the colour of the majority of the twine is light and almost blonde, which might suggest that the hair itself could have come from a non-Aboriginal person.

Thus, the hair used to bind the axe haft might possibly be from either a European, or from a horse. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #159, with part of the accompanying notes being illegible. Those notes which are legible read: 'Irregularly oval sub . . . faces mostly ground'. This axe was acquired in 1897.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 8. QE 2212

QE 2212 – A stone hammer collected from the Palmer River, measuring 230.5mm long. This hammer is made from a large piece of stone hafted to two pieces of thin wood which form the handle. Gum resin and fibre bind the stone to the handle and wood. Some of the resin has flaked off, exposing the fibre beneath. The stone has been smoothed all over, except at the impact point, where it remains rough, possibly from use. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2549, with the accompanying description: 'Hammer stone in handle'. In his 1903 letter, Roth noted that he was sending a 'stone-hammer in handle, Palmer 1899', referring to this object.



Photo 9. QE 2265

QE 2265 – A stone axe collected from South Queensland, measuring 344mm long. This object is a smoothed stone fastened into a long wooden handle with a small amount

of gum resin, and is bound in the centre with human hair twine. Roth has numbered this object as 'ST.64', visible on both the stone and the wood. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2550, with the accompanying description: 'Tomahawk'. This object was acquired in 1903.



Photo 10. QE 2399

QE 2399 – A stone axe head collected from Logan, measuring 92.5mm long. This is a single piece of stone, smoothed and sharpened. The axe shows signs of possible use wear, with scratches and chips visible at the impact point. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2399, with the accompanying description: 'Tomahawk'. Remnants of a stamp remain on one face of the axe, identifying the object type and its collection locality. Roth sent 11 axes to the Queensland Museum in 1903, including one described as being from Logan. This axe is from that donation.



Photo 11. QE 2455

QE 2455 – A stone axe head collected from Boulia, measuring 97mm long. This object is a single rounded and smoothed stone, broken in half near the centre. The object has

been repaired with glue binding the two halves. The axe shows signs of possible use wear, with scratches and chips visible at the impact point. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2558, described as: 'Tomohawk'. Roth sent an axe from Boulia in 1903, along with ten other stone axes from different localities. This object is from that donation.

Stone axes, by Roth's own observations (he referred to them usually as 'tomahawks'), had become an almost vanished tool in the North-West-Central Queensland region when he published his 1897 book. As Roth wrote:

The Stone Tomahawk . . . used to be made years ago, previous to the advent of the whites and their more serviceable metal ones, by the Kalkadoon, Mitakoodi, &c., from a kind of greenstone obtained in the Leichardt-Selwyn Ranges . . . From descriptions given me by the older blackfellows I find that the stone-head itself used to be cut as follows:- A lump about the required size was first of all broken away, and parts chipped off here and there with another similar piece of rock until the necessary shape would be roughly attained. A whole day perhaps would be occupied in doing this, while another twenty-four hours would be required for the grinding down, with water, along another smooth piece of the same material until such time as the edge would be sharpened enough for use.⁴⁵⁹

However, Roth believed that the making of these objects was no longer being carried out. 'It is very rare now-a-days,' he observed, 'to meet with one of these weapons in its entirety'.⁴⁶⁰ Although his initial observations were confined to the North-West-Central Queensland region, Roth later wrote that the same was true of all of Queensland, with the manufacturing of stone axes being a thing of the past across the State.⁴⁶¹

Despite these observations, none of the axes collected by Roth and Coghlan display any use of iron in their manufacture. This is not entirely surprising, as an iron axe would not need to be manufactured, only *acquired*. Further, such objects would not have been considered evidence of genuine Aboriginal material culture, and would thus be of little interest to a collector of the 'authentic'. Given that iron axes were one of the most common trade goods collectors used to exchange for items of Aboriginal material culture, it is not at all surprising that they were not collected by Roth or Coghlan. Instead, the axes collected by these two men from the Aboriginal people

⁴⁵⁹ Roth, *Ethnological Studies of the North-West-Central-Queensland Aborigines*, p. 151.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ Walter Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7. Domestic implements, arts, and manufacturers* (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1904), pp. 18-20.

they dealt with are mostly what would have been considered products of the vanished art of stone axe manufacture.

Of the stone axes discussed above, three have been fitted to axe handles made of unlathed wood (i.e. wood which has not been turned on a machine). Many are described in the Ethnology Register as being ‘tomahawks’, suggesting that they may have at some stage been known to be attached to wooden handles, although this could also just be a catch-all phrase for ‘indigenous axe’. Only one of the axes displays any possible signs of entanglement, and this is from Coghlan’s collection. QE 2266 is described in the Museum database as having its stone hafted to wood with resin and human hair. The material is consistent with the look and feel of human hair although, as noted in the description, it is of a much lighter and almost blonde colour. This may suggest that the hair is from a European, or a horse, although the hair does not feel coarse enough for the latter. If the human hair is from a European or, indeed, is horse hair, this presents a clear and novel example of entangled material. However, blonde hair does occur infrequently among Aboriginal people, particularly in the central regions of Australia. As the origins of the hair are not able to be known with certainty, this object is included in the ambiguous category.

BOOMERANGS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 12. QE 1839

QE 1839 – A curved wooden boomerang from an unknown locality, measuring 1115mm long. The boomerang has parallel fluted patterning on its surface. The Museum database describes this boomerang as ‘ornate’, although this piece does not appear to be any more elaborately engraved than other boomerangs with the same kind of fluting. Some droplets of white paint mark one side. These stains appear random, and are not likely to be part of the design. The Ethnology Register identifies this object

as #773, with the accompanying description: 'Boomerang elaborately engraved'. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 13. QE 1844

QE 1844 – A slightly curved wooden boomerang from Glenormiston, measuring 1352mm long. The boomerang is made from a single piece of wood with fluted patterns on either side. One side has elaborate engraving, in a mixture of parallel lines, and cross-cutting patterns; the reverse side is more plainly fluted with linear scoring. The Museum database records this object as a boomerang used for fighting purposes. The Ethnology Register records this object as #772, with no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 14. QE 2889

QE 2889 – A curved wooden boomerang from Dawson River, measuring 599mm long. This boomerang exhibits no fluted patterning. There is a faint black 'x' mark on one end, flanked on either side of the x with a border line, which appears to have been burnt into the wood. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1001, with the accompanying description: 'Boomerang etched on one side'. As this boomerang has no fluting, this description is either in error, or it refers to the x pattern. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1898.



Photo 15. QE 2917

QE 2917 – A curved wooden boomerang from an unknown locality, measuring 724mm long. This object has been stained with red ochre. The boomerang is engraved with a plain fluted pattern, and the curve is slightly off-centre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #909, with the accompanying description: ‘Boomerang red, grooved’. The Museum acquired this boomerang in 1897.



Photo 16. QE 2921.

QE 2921 – A curved wooden boomerang from the Boulia District, measuring 614mm long. This boomerang is made from a single piece of wood, with the curve slightly off-centre. One side is plainly fluted with linear scoring, while the other is pitted and lacks engraving. The wood is stained red with ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1004. The accompanying description is a single, illegible word, which may be ‘reddied’ or ‘raddled’. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1898.



Photo 17. QE 2939

QE 2939 – A slightly curved wooden boomerang from Boulia, measuring 712mm long. There are traces of red ochre on the wood, although this does not stain the entire object. Both sides exhibit a fluting pattern, with the linear scoring on the reverse side being wider. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #7, with the name of ‘Weera’ which is identified as a local name for boomerang in the notes. The Museum acquired this

boomerang in 1892.



Photo 18. QE 2940

QE 2940 – A slightly curved wooden boomerang from Boulia, measuring 758mm long. The boomerang's curve is slightly off-centre. The wood is stained a faint red from ochre. This object exhibits a plain fluting pattern on one side. There is an old stamp fixed to the centre of the object on which it is still possible to read: 'Weera: 9 . . . Glenormiston . . . Mr J Coghlan'. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #9, with the accompanying note: 'Weera'. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1892.



Photo 18. QE 3001

QE 3001 – A curved wooden boomerang from the Dawson River, measuring 565mm long. This boomerang has no fluted or scored patterns of any kind. Each end of the boomerang is sharply pointed, and the boomerang curves off-centre. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #993, with most of the accompanying notes, besides 'Boomerang', being illegible. The Museum acquired this object in 1898.



Photo 19. QE 3021

QE 3021 – A curved wooden boomerang from the Dawson River, measuring 625mm

long. This object has no engraved patterns. The corners of the boomerang are both sharply pointed, and are decorated. One edge is scored with a black design of an 'x' enclosed with border lines, while the other edge is pattered with numerous small etchings. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #996, incorrectly recording it as QE 3001. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1898.



Photo 20. QE 3023

QE 3023 – A curved wooden boomerang from Glenormiston, measuring 535mm long. The museum database describes this object as being 'plain' with no designs, or staining. The object is made from wood of an irregular thickness. The ends of the boomerang are slightly pointed. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #914, with the accompanying description: 'Boomerang rough, not ochred'. This boomerang was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 21. QE 3027

QE 3027 – A goose-necked boomerang from Glenormiston, measuring 694mm long. This boomerang displays a linear fluted pattern, and has traces of red ochre colouring. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #880, with the accompanying description: 'Goose neck boomerang red'. The museum acquired this object in 1897.

Roth describes boomerangs in the North-West-Central-Queensland district in universal terms. Except for a stylistic difference in the manufacture of ornate boomerangs in the Upper Georgina district, Roth characterises the region as displaying evidence of the same methods. As Roth donated no boomerangs to the

Queensland Museum, only those methods that pertain to Coghlan's collection area are relevant to this discussion.

Sections 240 through to 244 of Roth's *Ethnological Studies* detail the manufacture of the various types of boomerangs, beginning with section 240 describing all varieties generically, excluding specific patterning. According to Roth, the boomerang is:

... originally cut out from the side of a tree-trunk *en bloc*, then gradually got into shape with a chisel, &c., and finally smoothed off with a piece of sharp-edged flint or glass. With wood of suitable grain, white-gum, for example, the original block may be split down and two boomerangs made of it. Any defect in shape, in the nature of a bend or twist, can be remedied by the various artificial means which have already been discussed (sect. 151).⁴⁶²

The section Roth refers to (section 151) describes the artificial bending of timber by means of a dry or moist heat, or the soaking of wood in water in order to render a specimen more pliant. Once a desired shape has been achieved, the wood is then fixed into this shape with the use of grease and animal fats.⁴⁶³

Roth's description of the typical manufacture of the ornate boomerang bears reading for his reference to changing customs in indigenous weapon manufacture. Roth explained:

The ornate boomerang, which is always coloured black by means of charcoal grease, bears certain typical gravings on its upper convex surface only. In the old days *i.e.*, before the advent of the whites, this graving was effected by means of an opossum-tooth or sharp flint fitted into a suitable handle. At the present time, though it is still occasionally followed, it is being rapidly supplanted by iron in its various forms, obtained by filing or grinding down discarded shear-blades, springs, barrel-bands, knife-blades, &c., to the suitable shape required.⁴⁶⁴

Roth's description of the incorporation of European methods and materials into the manufacture of boomerangs in traditional styles does not deal with this phenomenon in depth. The description also markedly contradicts the use of the boomerang as evidence for Aboriginal backwardness, as argued by Meston. As quoted in Chapter One, Meston had written on the 'Evolution of the Boomerang' that: 'Painfully slow was the process of evolution, for it had to fight against a merciless hatred of innovation in what was one of the most bigotedly conservative races of mankind'.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶² *Ibid*, p. 142.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 102.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 143.

⁴⁶⁵ Meston, *Steele Rudd's Magazine*, p. 367.

Eight years after the publication of Roth's *Ethnological Studies*, Meston's own observations did not refer to the evolution of manufacturing methods in the boomerang discovered by Roth. However, it must be stated that Roth himself merely observed these new methods—namely the use of iron and glass in producing engravings and patterns on boomerangs—without much commentary.

The boomerang had become a commonplace item of collection in colonial Australia, with almost all households reporting to have one on their mantelpiece.⁴⁶⁶ As unlikely as this seems, there was nonetheless a glut of donations to the Museum which included boomerangs. According to a Dublin University article in 1838, the boomerang had become so commonplace as to appear almost comic:

Of all the advantages we have derived from our Australian settlements, none seems to have given more universal satisfaction than the introduction of some crooked pieces of wood shaped like the crescent moon, and called boomerang, or kilee. Ever since their structure has been fully understood, carpenters appear to have ceased from all other work; the windows of toy shops display little else; walking sticks and umbrellas have gone out of fashion; and even in this rainy season no man carries anything but a boomerang; nor does this species of madness appear to be abating [sic].⁴⁶⁷

Undoubtedly this article is an exaggeration of the truth, yet it informs us through satire of the popularity and iconic status of the boomerang. Roth did sell dozens of boomerangs to the Australian Museum, curiously withholding these from his donations to the Queensland Museum. This will be elaborated on later in this chapter, where the Australian Museum material is specifically discussed.

Coghlan, on the other hand, donated numerous boomerangs from the Glenormiston and Boulia districts to the Queensland Museum. None of the boomerangs in Coghlan's collection display any clear or even ambiguous evidence of incorporation with European materials or methods in manufacture. For this reason, the boomerangs in Coghlan's collection are all used as evidence of orthodox objects. The burnt 'x' marks on objects such as QE 2889 could have been made with heated metal, however, Roth did observe burnt wood and charcoal grease being used to mark other wooden objects in such a manner. It must be stated that the chance of entanglement in the manufacture of boomerangs is likely to be high. Roth's account of the methods used to engrave boomerangs in the North-West-Central districts suggests that iron or glass

⁴⁶⁶ Philip Jones, *Boomerang: Behind an Australian Icon* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2004), p. 129.

⁴⁶⁷ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 125.

may have been used in the engraving of patterns and fluting on the wood of the objects. It is possible that this was not the case, or that the use of iron and glass in engraving boomerangs was not practiced when Coghlan collected these objects, though this is unlikely. As we will see, all but one of the chisels collected by Coghlan have clear evidence of having iron heads, and it is not implausible to consider that these chisels may have been used to create engravings in wood. Therefore, although Coghlan's boomerang collection shows no definitive proof of entanglement, Roth's discussions of boomerang manufacturing techniques for the region strongly suggest that European materials were used in their crafting.

CLUBS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 22. QE 1551



Photo 23. QE 1551, alternate photo

QE 1551 – A wooden club from Comet Waters, measuring 730mm long. This club is made from dark wood, with the proximal and distal ends having carved designs. At the distal end, there is a simple etched pattern which runs around the rim of the club. A single nail hole cuts through the centre of this design, most likely from where Coghlan had driven a nail to hang the object. At the proximal end, there are two bands of carved squares, resembling flattened nail heads, separated by a carved trench coloured with red ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1085, with the accompanying description: 'Toothed into bands, one red'. The Register does not identify this object as being from Coghlan. The closest donor name on the page of the Register is Roth, although this appears to be an error, as the database confirms this as a Coghlan object

which was acquired by the Museum in 1899.



Photo 24. QE 1566

QE 1566 – A wooden club from Dawson River, measuring 754mm long. The club is sharply pointed at the proximal and distal ends, with the proximal widening to a heavy head. There is some faint linear scoring running half way down the club from the proximal, with a small section near the distal region being etched around the rim of the object. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1018, with the accompanying description of its shape as: ‘Sub pyramidal’. The Museum acquired this club in 1898.



Photo 24. QE 1858

QE 1858 – A wooden club from Glenormiston, measuring 1008mm in length. The Museum database describes this object as a ‘gin’s fighting club’. The wood has a reddish-hue, with the proximal tip being marked with three black bands, and the distal with four faintly etched lines running around the rim. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #770, with the accompanying description: ‘Club or truncheon, cylindrical tapering to butt, red, 3 black bands’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 25. QE 2681



Photo 26. QE 2681, alternate photo

QE 2681 – A wooden club from an unknown locality, measuring 685mm long. The

proximal and distal tips of this club are sharply pointed. Faint linear scoring decorates this club, with some etching running in the opposite direction at the distal region. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1089, with the accompanying description: 'Nulla, plain'. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1899.



Photo 27. QE 4553

QE 4553 – A wooden club from Glenormiston, measuring 1178mm long. This club is exceptionally long compared to others from the region, and is plainly decorated with slight and irregular etched patterns on each end. A small amount of grass twine is tied around the base of the club, though this does not cover any split in the wood. The Ethnology Register does not have a discernible number for this object and, even though the number '797' can be seen on the club itself, this number matches a different object in the Registry. The Museum acquired by this club in 1897.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 28. QE 1564



Photo 29. QE 1564, alternate photo

QE 1564 – A wooden club collected from Raglan, measuring 752mm long. This club

has been fashioned from heavy, dark wood, with designs carved into the proximal and distal ends. The proximal end of the club has five columns of teeth carved into the face, each four rows deep, with flattened spaces between some of the columns. The distal end of the club has a series of etched lines carved laterally around the surface of the wood. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2371, with the accompanying description: ‘Nulla, rows of cut knobs on each side’. This is an example of Roth’s own numbering system, as he has painted the identification ‘FS.28’ near the distal end. The number corresponds to the details in the letter preceding the donation. The Museum acquired this club in 1903.



Photo 30. QE 2730

QE 2730 – A wooden club collected from Miriam Vale, measuring 623mm long. This club exhibits small bumps in the wood, serving as the only etchings on the object’s surface. The proximal end has a large split in the wood, having caused the tip to break free. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2349, with the accompanying description: ‘Nulla—common, plain, painted head’. This object was marked by Roth as ‘FS 14’, visible on the club. This object was one of 19 ‘fighting sticks’ donated to the Museum by Roth in 1903.

Roth - Ambiguous



Photo 31. QE 2734



Photo 32. QE 2734, alternate photo

QE 2734 – A wooden club collected from Raglan, measuring 737mm long. This club

has been made from a heavy, dark wood. The proximal and distal ends have both been carved to form patterns, and the centre of the club is wrapped in fine string. The distal end has lateral incisions, creating a dotted line pattern around the base of the club. The proximal end of the club has flat wooden points carved around the head, in a pattern reminiscent of a pineapple. The string tied around the centre of the club is exceedingly fine, and is most likely of European origin. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions in examining this piece (the object was on display), there was no means of verifying the precise nature of the string. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2370, with the accompanying description: 'Nulla, 5 rows cut knobs - repaired with twine'. Roth numbered this object as 'FS.27.', which is also marked on the wood. The Museum acquired this object in 1903.

Roth describes clubs of Aboriginal manufacture as being either 'fighting-poles' or 'nulla-nullas'.⁴⁶⁸ The distinction between the two kinds is found in their length and application, though both are used as weapons. Roth begins his discussion of clubs by making clear that the majority of European observers have mistakenly called most fighting-poles 'yam-sticks', which are universally much thinner than the fighting-pole.⁴⁶⁹ The fighting-pole:

... varies from about 4 feet to 4 feet 6 inches, in diameter it is sometimes over 2½ inches: each extremity tapers to a point. Being made from gidyea, mulga, "box", or other hardwood it is correspondingly heavy. In the Boulia District the surface is generally smoothed, though if an "old friend," or the owner attaches particular importance to it, it may be covered with a longitudinal fluting.⁴⁷⁰

Concerning the nulla-nulla, Roth wrote that:

The manufacture of the throwing-stick or nulla-nulla ... is gradually dying out in the Boulia District where it is not employed for purposes of barter, though it is still pretty common along and to the north of the Leichardt-Selwyn ranges ... The nulla-nulla ... is not so much a "hand" instrument as a throwing implement – i.e., it is used more for throwing at short distances than for hitting at close quarters.⁴⁷¹

Although Roth discusses fluting and other incised patterns as common on clubs, he does not go into detail on how these patterns are created. However, as Roth had previously discussed how incised patterns were made on other objects, it can be assumed that the same methods were used for clubs. It is possible then that the clubs in the Roth and Coghlan collections were carved and engraved with iron or glass.

⁴⁶⁸ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 150.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 105 & p. 150.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 150.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.151.

The identification of the clubs in the Museum database is not always consistent with Roth's classification of either 'fighting-poles' or 'nulla-nullas'. For example, where Roth described object FS.27 (which was later renamed by the Museum as QE 2734) as a fighting stick, the Museum notes describe it as a nulla. The distinction between the two categories may have been difficult to tell at a glance, or perhaps the Museum did not agree with Roth's own definitions. If the latter is true, this serves to illustrate that objects can be perceived in numerous ways but that the Museum's own classification system holds precedence over that of its collectors.

There are comparatively fewer clubs in Roth's collection than in Coghlan's, and there is no conclusive evidence in either that European or other foreign materials were involved in the manufacture of these objects. Only two clubs in the combined collections display any possible evidence of entanglement. In the Coghlan collection, this object is QE 4553; and in the Roth collection, the object is QE 2734. Both objects have a single piece of European twine, though neither piece shows any indication that they were placed there by the original owners of the object. The twine in QE 4553 appears purely decorative—with no break in the wood which it is binding, its use on the object is practically superfluous. The twine in QE 2734 does bind a small break in the wood, and the Ethnology Register confirms that this was done for purposes of repair. Unfortunately, the Register does not indicate whether the repair was made by the manufacturer, the collector, or the Museum. For these reasons, neither object is being shown as evidence of definite entanglement, though they are included to demonstrate the reasonable possibility that the original manufacturers had used European material.

KNIVES

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 33. QE 2022

QE 2022 – A wooden knife collected from the Mitchell River, measuring 301mm long. This knife is a single piece of wood with eight shark teeth embedded in, and facing out of, one edge. The base of the knife is coated with gum resin where, according to the Ethnology Register, a lanyard was fixed. Some of the resin has eroded, exposing bark fibre beneath. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2122, with the accompanying description: ‘Shark tooth knife with lanyard gone’. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1901.



Photo 34. QE 2294

QE 2294 – A stone knife collected from Glenormiston, measuring 121mm in length. The knife is made from a sharp piece of chalcedony, mounted into a gum resin handle. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #802, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, broken chalcedony’. The object does not appear broken in any way, so the Register description is curious. There are two stamps in the gum resin which are faintly visible, although it is unclear what they are. Most likely these markings occurred after acquisition, and are the imprints of a hot object carelessly placed too near the resin, causing it to melt. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 35. QE 2333

QE 2333 – A stone knife and sheath from the Georgina River, measuring 155mm long. The knife is a piece of sharpened stone mounted with gum resin into a wooden handle. The wooden handle is decorated with a black 'x' and faded white ochre dots. The sheath was not examined in detail, due to its fragility. However, it was observed that the sheath is made from paper bark and wound with twine. The sheath is not shown here due to poor image quality. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2114, with the accompanying description: 'Stone knife, black cross, haft rounded'. The Museum acquired this knife in 1901.



Photo 36. QE 2335

QE 2335 – A stone knife from the Georgina River, measuring 152mm long. This knife has been made from a sharpened piece of stone, mounted with gum resin in a flat wooden handle. The wood has the appearance of having been smoothed and incised, though is otherwise undecorated. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2115, with the accompanying description: 'Haft rounded and rude [crude?] no sheath'. The Museum acquired this object in 1901.



Photo 37. QE 2339

QE 2339 – A stone knife from Glenormiston, measuring 136.5mm long. This knife is made from a piece of sharp stone mounted into a handle of gum resin. The knife has no decorative schemes or etchings. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #797, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, mounted gum flint’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 38. QE 2341

QE 2341 – A stone knife from the Georgina River, measuring 157mm long. This knife is made from a piece of flaked quartz, mounted with gum resin to a flat wooden handle. The handle is marked with white ochre and a painted black ‘x’. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2113. The accompanying notes are partly illegible, and read: ‘Black cross, white spots on each side, quartzite chest [or chert]’. The Museum acquired this knife in 1901.



Photo 39. QE 2344

QE 2344 – A stone knife from the Georgina River, measuring 150mm long. The knife has been made from a sharpened piece of quartzite, mounted in a wooden handle with gum resin. The Museum database describes this object as having netted twine wrapped around the blade, although there is no longer any evidence of this. The description may have referred to a sheath subsequently lost, or has since been erroneously associated with another object. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1243, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, quartzite, brown gum’. The Museum acquired this object in 1901.



Photo 40. QE 2345

QE 2345 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 171mm long. This knife has been made from a sharpened piece of quartzite, mounted with gum resin to a wooden handle. The handle is largely obscured by resin, and the stone has broken free of its mounting (it was placed in its join for the photo). The sheath is made from paper bark, wound about with human hair. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #817, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, quartzite’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 41. QE 2353

QE 2353 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 107mm long. The knife is made from a sharpened piece of quartzite, mounted into a gum resin handle. The sheath is made from paper bark, tightly wound about with twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #798, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, tea-tree sheath, quartzite’. The Museum acquired this knife in 1897.

Coghlan - Entangled



Photo 42. QE 2329

QE 2329 – A stone knife and sheath from the Georgina River, with the knife measuring 180.5mm long. The knife is made from stone fixed to a wooden handle with gum resin. The sheath consists of dried grass or straw covered by European sack cloth wound with string. The knife is dotted with white ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1069, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, mounted wood and gum coloured red, quartzite’. The Museum acquired this object in 1899.



Photo 43. QE 2343

QE 2343 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 130mm long. The knife has been made from a piece of sharp chalcedony, mounted in a handle of gum resin. The Museum database records that the sheath was made from bark and European cloth. Unfortunately, the sheath could not be located to photograph. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #811, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, wrapped in cloth, chalcedony jaspery’. This object was acquired in 1897.



Photo 44. QE 2347

QE 2347 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 265mm long. The knife is now permanently fixed into the sheath, and is immovable from its cover; therefore, it is impossible to verify all the details in the Museum database with direct examination. The knife is mounted into a wooden handle with gum resin. The handle has faint traces of a black ‘x’ mark on the wood. The sheath is made from European sack cloth, covered in paper bark, and held in place with twine. Emu feathers decorate the sheath. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #800, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, flint and wood, cloth feather sheath’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 45. QE 2349

QE 2349 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 140.5mm long. The knife is now permanently fixed into the sheath, and is immovable from its cover; therefore, it is impossible to verify all the details in the Museum database by direct examination. The knife is mounted in a handle of gum resin. The sheath is made from a single piece of hessian sack, bound with twine that appears to have been made from the same material. The sack cloth is coloured with bands of red dye. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #799, with the accompanying description of: ‘Stone knife, wrapped in cloth’. The Museum acquired this object in 1899.



Photo 46. QE 2351

QE 2351 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 215mm long. The knife is now permanently fixed into the sheath, and is immovable from its cover; therefore, it is impossible to verify all the details in the Museum database by direct examination. The knife is mounted into a flat wooden handle with gum resin. The sheath is made from cloth, decorated with emu feathers, and is bound with a thick twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #814, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, emu feather, striped jasper’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.

Coghlan - Ambiguous



Photo 47. QE 2023

QE 2023 – A wooden knife collected from the Mitchell River, measuring 363mm long. The wooden handle of this knife has 13 shark teeth embedded and facing out of one edge. At the base of the knife, a cord lanyard is attached to the wood with resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register number can be seen written in black on one face of the knife. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2117, with the accompanying description: ‘A wooden implement like a loom bat but beset with 13 shark teeth on one edge, with a double suspending lanyard at one end’. The Museum acquired this knife in 1901.



Photo 48. QE 2332

QE 2332 – A stone knife and sheath from the Georgina River, measuring 163.5mm long. The knife is a piece of sharpened stone mounted with gum resin into wood. The sheath is made from paper bark, wrapped in twine, which is most likely of European manufacture. The wood of the knife handle has a black ‘x’ painted onto its surface, with further decorations of white ochre dots surrounding it. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2112, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, mounted, bark sheath, square ended wood haft’. The Museum acquired this object in 1901.



Photo 49. QE 2340

QE 2340 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 201mm long. The knife was made from a single piece of sharp stone, mounted with gum resin into a flat wooden handle. Due to the fragility of the sheath, it was not examined in detail, although simple observation and the database confirms that this piece is paper bark wrapped in twine. The twine is most likely of European manufacture. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #815, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, bark with sheath’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 50. QE 2346

QE 2346 – A stone knife and sheath from Glenormiston, measuring 221mm long. The knife is now permanently fixed into the sheath, and is immovable from its cover; therefore, it is impossible to verify all the details in the Museum database by direct examination. The handle of the knife is gum resin, and the sheath is made from bark, bound in twine, and ornamented in emu feathers. The twine is consistent with European string. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #818, with the accompanying description: ‘Stone knife, flint and emu feathers’. The Museum acquired this knife in 1898.



Photo 51. QE 5914

QE 5914 – A wooden knife collected from the Mitchell River, measuring 318mm long. The knife has lost all but one of the shark teeth which were previously embedded in it. The base of the knife has a cord lanyard fixed to the wood with resin and fibre. Where the resin has eroded, some of the fibre can be seen. The Ethnology Register lists this as object # 2118, with the accompanying notes: ‘As above with 10 teeth’. The notes referred to as ‘as above’ are from QE 2023. The Museum acquired this object in 1898.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 52. QE 2004

QE 2004 – A knife collected from the Bloomfield River, measuring 186.5mm long. This knife is fashioned from a flattened piece of iron shovel head, fastened to a short wooden handle with fibre and gum resin. The blade of the knife has been sharpened on the front and one side. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2512, with the accompanying description: ‘Iron made from shovels’. Roth donated two iron shovel knives in 1903, of which this is one. The other knife has since gone missing from the collection.

In his 1897 publication, Roth describes all knives as falling under the category of ‘stone-knife’, although many of the knives collected by Roth and Coghlan use no stone whatsoever. According to Roth:

The stone-knife consists of a chipped flint-flake blade fixed into a rounded or oval handle made of cementing-substance . . . The cement handle is either smoothed nicely off to fit the hollow of the hand, or else may be lengthened by the addition of a piece of wood . . . Along with the implement there is very often a sort of sheath made of fine strips of bark longitudinally placed, wound round and round with opossum-string, and enclosing at its apex some emu-feathers which, projecting inwards, protect the knife point.⁴⁷²

Roth was aware that the majority of stone-knives in the region were now being made with European materials. He argued that this was a result of contact with a superior civilisation:

The stone-blade, certainly in the eastern portions of North-West-Central Queensland, owing to contact with a higher civilisation, is gradually being replaced by the iron, filed and ground down, obtained from disused shear-blades, barrel-hoops & c. ; the handle is similarly undergoing modifications, a pretty common form being its encasement in the testicle-pouch removed from sheep, goat, or kangaroo.⁴⁷³

The three knives which Coghlan collected, which did not use stone, all come from the Mitchell River. Each knife consists of a piece of wood, fixed with shark-teeth, and attached to a cord lanyard. The lanyard for QE 2022 is no longer extant, though reference is made in the Museum database to there having been one at some stage. As this cannot be physically confirmed, QE 2022 is not being used as evidence of entanglement. The other two shark-tooth knives have their lanyards attached. The use of a lanyard is peculiar, and is not specifically referenced in any of Roth's writings on this particular region.

Although it is possible that Roth simply never observed any lanyards on the knives he saw, it may also be the case that the lanyard is a European influence. Lanyards were commonly used, especially by European police or soldiers to attach to the butts of their pistols and/or batons. The lanyards themselves are made from a thick cord with a highly regular weave pattern, in a manner reminiscent of European manufactured rope or cord. However, as the material feels more consistent with other indigenous fibre cords, the possibility of entanglement here is ambiguous at best. Further, Khan's catalogue records the Australian Museum Roth object E.13934, as being a shark-toothed knife made with a lanyard attached, without any comment dismissing the use of cord here as orthodox.⁴⁷⁴ In his 1904 bulletin, Roth describes the practice of Aboriginal people making use of cords to hang knives around the back of their head,

⁴⁷² *Ibid*, p. 151.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷⁴ Kate Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland, Volume 4* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 1993), p. 77.

so as to conceal their weapon and use it in surprise.⁴⁷⁵ Clearly, the use of cords in weapons has precedence in Aboriginal warfare, and there is nothing more than circumstantial evidence to attribute European influence to this custom. Therefore, these objects are discussed only as examples of potentially entangled objects.

Coghlan donated many knives actually made from stone in the manner described by Roth. Several of these knives were also acquired with sheaths made mostly from paperbarks and, in a few instances, the knives have become irremovably fixed to the sheaths, and cannot be examined without damaging the object.

Most of the stone knives collected by Coghlan fit into the orthodox category, though there is a significant proportion of the remainder which are entangled. All of the entangled stone knives have sheaths, and consist of a piece of sharpened stone fixed into either a handle made from gum resin, or a handle made from both gum resin and wood. The evidence of entanglement in every case comes from the sheath, which all exhibit the use of sack cloth on either the inner or outer layer. The sack cloth is either fixed into place with paper bark and/or twine. As an inner lining, the sack cloth substitutes for either paperbark or dried grass bedding found in orthodox examples. Unfortunately, the sheath for QE 2343 could not be located for photographic purposes, although the database notes confirm that it was made from bark and European cloth. In the case of QE 2329, there may be further evidence of entanglement in the packing of the sheath. A material which could be either dried grass or straw has been used as lining. No references in the database confirm the nature of the material, and there was no comparative material to be found in another object. My first impression was that the material was straw. If so, this could be from an introduced crop and is therefore entangled. In any case, QE 2329 is clearly an entangled object on the basis of the sack cloth used for the sheath, regardless of the nature of the straw/grass.

In the case of the three stone knives listed as ambiguous—QE 2332, 2340, and 2346—it is highly likely that the twine found to bind the sheaths is actually thin European string. The feel of the material and the regularity of the weave is consistent

⁴⁷⁵ Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7*, p. 23.

with European string, as evidenced in other objects in the collections. Due to the fragility of the sheaths, a more detailed examination could not be conducted. As there is no specific indication in the database or registries that the material is not of indigenous manufacture—and for lack of any other conclusive evidence—QE 2332, 2340, and 2346 are being counted as ambiguous, though there is a high probability that they are entangled objects.

Roth donated only two knives to the Queensland Museum. In both cases, the objects were entangled. Both knives were manufactured from flattened iron shovel heads, cut and sharpened to form a stabbing or cutting point. There is no doubt whatsoever that these objects are entangled, and they follow the pattern of European influence discussed in Roth's own writings referenced above, regarding the use of iron. Unfortunately, only QE 2004 has been examined, as the other knife has long since been lost from the collection. The knife may be mistakenly registered under another number and, as it could not be physically examined, it has not been shown with the previous objects. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that both Queensland Museum Roth knives demonstrate entanglement. Other knives were donated to the Australian Museum, and these are both entangled and orthodox, as will be discussed later. Considering that Roth donated the more aesthetically pleasing or 'traditional' objects to the Australian Museum, he may have devalued entangled knives as objects of Aboriginal manufacture, as they were strongly influenced by European materials and, thus, showing signs of what he perceived to be adulteration.

FIRESTICKS

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 53. QE 11940

QE 11940 – A fire stick collected from an unknown locality, measuring 1289mm long. This object is composed of two thin pieces of wood fixed together at the head with grass twine and gum resin. The head of the fire stick is covered in seeds. The Museum database description is at odds with the object, describing this piece as ‘one shaft only, a drill’. The Ethnology number is impossible to determine with complete accuracy, although it is most likely #2406 or 2407. Roth sent two donations which included firesticks. If this firestick was from the Batavia River, then it was donated to the Museum in 1900, along with multiple specimens (including firesticks) from the region. Otherwise, this object must have been sent in 1903, along with QE 6302.

Roth - Ambiguous



Photo 54. QE 6302

QE 6302 – A fire stick collected from the Pennefather River, measuring 1057mm long. This object is made from a single piece of wood, decorated by black bands of ochre, and tipped at the proximal end with gum resin and seeds. Most of the seeds have broken free from the resin. The wood has a split through it, and the resin appears to be covering a woollen substance which has stained with age. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2404, with no accompanying descriptive notes. Roth marked this object as ‘X.1’, visible on the shaft. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1903.

In detailing the use of firesticks in his *Ethnological Studies*, Roth does not make mention of the specific materials, other than wood, or designs which made up the object. Given that Roth observes that ‘as a rule, these fire-sticks . . . are thrown aside or discarded after use’, it is likely that firesticks from North-West-Central Queensland were unadorned.⁴⁷⁶ The firesticks he donated, however, did not come from this region.

⁴⁷⁶ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 105.

The first of the firesticks is QE 11940, which was collected from an unknown locality. Roth sent one firestick from the Batavia River in 1900 and, considering that his only other surviving firestick came from the Pennefather River, it is possible that QE 11940 is from the 1900 donation. The other firestick discussed above is QE 6302, which is the object recorded as being from the Pennefather River. Both objects share similar designs and were most probably made without foreign materials. QE 6302 does have a small amount of wool-like material emerging from under the wax binding agent, though there is so little of this substance that it is impossible to ascertain its precise nature. Furthermore, there is no mention of this feature in the Museum's database. As such, I have identified the object as ambiguous only.

ORNAMENTATION

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 55. QE 910

QE 910 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 221mm long. The plume consists of grey and bright red cockatoo feathers tied together at the base with fibre, resembling animal sinew. A single quill has come loose. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #936, with the description: ‘Bunch of feathers’. The Museum acquired this plume in 1897.



Photo 56. QE 6053

QE 6053 – A shell necklace collected from the Mitchell River, measuring 340mm long. This necklace is made from square-shaped sections of pearl shell, strung together with twine. One side of the pearl shell is encrusted with dirt or ochre, while the reverse remains clean. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate the object in the Register. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1901, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.



Photo 57. QE 6058

QE 6058 – A shell necklace collected from Normanton, measuring 465mm long. The necklace is made from pearl shell, with each piece being roughly oval-shaped. Some of the shell pieces are encrusted with dirt or ochre, although most remain clean. The necklace is bound together with twine. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate the object in the Register. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1901. As with QE 6053, this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.



Photo 58. QE 6062

QE 6062 – This object listing includes two separate shell necklaces from the Mitchell

River, one measuring 730mm, and the other being 325mm long. Both necklaces are made from pearl shell, with each piece of shell being roughly oval-shaped, and attached with twine. Some of the pieces are encrusted in dirt or ochre, though most are clean. There is no record of why a single QE number has been assigned to two separate objects, or why the usual process of listing each object individually as .1 or .2 has not been followed (in the case of other separate objects sharing QE numbers). The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate the object in the Register. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1901, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.

Coghlan - Entangled



Photo 59. QE 912

QE 912 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 162mm long. The Museum database describes this object as a ‘feather headdress around cloth bandage’. The cloth bandage binds the feathers to the stick. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #922, with the accompanying description: ‘Plume of feathers on a pointed stick’. The Museum acquired this plume in 1897.



Photo 60. QE 913

QE 913 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 103mm

long. Most of the feathers of this object have come apart and been lost, and little remains above the bandage used to bind the remaining feathers to the stick. Precisely when this damage occurred is unknown, although it is likely to have happened after the object was entered into the Ethnology Register. The Ethnology Register describes this object without reference to the damage, as #928: ‘Plume of feathers on a pointed stick’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 61. QE 6039

QE 6039 – A forehead pendant from Glenormiston, measuring 92mm long. This pendant was made from a fragment of china plate, mounted in gum resin. Each side of the pendant displays significant staining from age. The Ethnology Register records this object as #947, with the accompanying description: ‘Forehead pendant, fragment of a china plate mounted in gum’. This object was acquired in 1897.



Photo 62. QE 6221



Photo 63. QE 6221, alternate photo

QE 6221 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 280mm long. The feathers are from an unspecified bird, and are tied to a pointed stick with

European bandage. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate the object in the Register. This object was acquired in 1897.



Photo 64. QE 6223

QE 6223 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 278mm long. The feathers are tied to a pointed stick at the base with human hair twine. European sack cloth is identifiable, emerging from beneath the feathers and twine. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate the object in the Register. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1897, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.

Coghlan - Ambiguous



Photo 65. QE 911



Photo 66. QE 911, alternate photo

QE 911 – A plume of feathers collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 143mm long. The plume is made from cockatoo feathers, tied together at the base with a small amount of exceptionally fine string, resembling spun canvas. The Ethnology Register

identifies this object as #929, with the accompanying description: 'Plume of feathers on a pointed stick'. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 67. QE 6048

QE 6048 - A necklace collected from Normanton, measuring 372mm long. This object is a series of oval pieces of nautilus shell on a red string. The string is an addition made by the Museum and, therefore, it is unknown what material was used for the original string, or whether there was one at all. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1998, with the accompanying description: 'Nautilus necklace, oval'. In 1900, Roth sent six necklaces in an iron box to the Queensland Museum. This object forms part of that donation.



Photo 68. QE 6049

QE 6049 - A necklace collected from Normanton, measuring 400mm long. This object is a series of oval pieces of nautilus shell on a red string, with some shell pieces remaining unattached. The string is an addition made by the Museum and, therefore, it is unknown what material was used for the original string, or whether there was one at all. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1996, with the accompanying description: 'Nautilus necklace, oval'. In 1900, Roth sent six necklaces in an iron box to the Queensland Museum. This object forms part of that donation.



Photo 69. QE 6050

QE 6050 - A necklace collected from Normanton, measuring 290mm long. This object is a series of oval pieces of nautilus shell on twine. The shell pieces and the twine are heavily encrusted with dirt or ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1997, with the accompanying description: 'Nautilus necklace, oval'. This necklace was acquired in 1900.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 70. QE 6070

QE 6070 - A necklace collected from the Batavia River, measuring 240mm long. The necklace is made from rectangular pieces of pearl shell, threaded on to a piece of string. The string is a thick European type, attached to a red and yellow piece of cloth. The individual pieces of shell are mostly clean on one side, and encrusted with dirt or ochre on the reverse. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2008, with the accompanying description: 'Nautilus necklace—rectangular'. In 1900, Roth sent six necklaces in an iron box to the Queensland Museum. This object forms part of that

donation.

Roth - Ambiguous



Photo 71. QE 6266

QE 6266 - A necklace collected from Atherton, measuring 87mm long. This object is made from grass reed bugles, threaded through their hollow interiors with a very fine piece of twine. The twine is dusty and has a regularity of weave found in European string, not Aboriginal manufacture. There is not enough information in the database or Ethnology Register to determine the ER# of this object with remote certainty. In 1900, Roth sent six necklaces in an iron box to the Queensland Museum. This object forms part of that donation.



Photo 72. QE 9357



Photo 73. QE 9357, alternate photo

QE 9357 - A necklace collected from Butcher's Hill, measuring 520mm long. This object is made from grass reed bugles, threaded through their hollow interiors with a very fine piece of twine. The twine is dusty where it hangs free of the bugles, and is a much lighter colour where it threads through the necklace. The twine has a regularity of weave found in European string, not Aboriginal manufacture. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2506, with no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this necklace in 1903.



Photo 74. QE 9358

QE 9358 - A necklace collected from Normanton, measuring approximately 1500mm long. This object is made from grass reed bugles, threaded through their hollow interiors with a very fine piece of twine. The twine has a regularity of weave found in European string. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as either #2505, or 2507, with the accompanying description: 'Grass bugles'. The Museum database is unclear on the ER #, though either of these two entries may be the object in question. This object was acquired in 1903.

Roth devoted a chapter of his 1897 publication to the subject of ornamentation, titled 'Personal Ornamentation and Decoration. Mural Painting, &c.'. ⁴⁷⁷ The chapter dealt with a variety of objects, all of which were unified under the category of being specifically worn or intended for personal adornment. Whether the wearing of an object had a ceremonial, formal, or purely decorative function, Roth's categorisation has been followed here, with all objects of this nature in the collections now being considered.

Roth's 1897 publication mentions an instance of entanglement relating to the collection of blood in a jam tin which, although it relates to decoration, is discussed in the section on Raw Material. *Ethnological Studies* has several references to the incorporation of European material for decorative purposes, although Roth does not discuss this phenomenon in any depth. The most common European material mentioned in this context is any kind of handkerchief, or strips of 'linen, calico, or riband, especially anything of a red colour'. ⁴⁷⁸ According to Roth, 'where the supply of opossum-string is deficient, the red worsted obtained from a blanket may be

⁴⁷⁷ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 108-116.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 108, and 110.

substituted'.⁴⁷⁹ Roth makes particular mention of handkerchiefs being used by Aboriginal people:

Handkerchiefs.- . . . The red and other handkerchiefs, obtained originally from civilised centres, and then bartered from tribe to tribe, throughout North-West-Central Queensland, are commonly worn by the aboriginals as articles of head-dress . . . The handkerchief is folded diagonally, and the two extremities of the fold tied in a knot over the forehead: under the knot a knife, pipe, &c, may be carried, while the angle falling over the back of the head and neck serves to protect these parts from the heat of the sun.⁴⁸⁰

Despite his acknowledgement of the popularity of handkerchiefs amongst Aboriginal people, Roth never collected any as objects of Aboriginal material culture. This fact neatly demonstrates Roth's predilection for objects which were more strongly associated, in his imagination, with a conception of Aboriginal people as exemplifying the Stone-Age. Roth even goes so far as to suggest that band-fillets used by Aboriginal people, which feature cloth, ribbon and so on, were 'strictly speaking not an aboriginal ornament'.⁴⁸¹

Amongst Coghlan's collection of object types within this category, there are some noteworthy examples of entanglement. Key amongst these are the collection of headdresses which Coghlan sold to the Museum, all but two of which demonstrate clear evidence of entanglement. QE 912, 913, 6221, and 6223 are all made from a plume of feathers bound to a stick using cloth bandages. The material in QE 6223 is consistent in feel with hard sack cloth, and the material is certainly not of indigenous manufacture. The only question which remains as to this material's precise nature is what kind of cloth it comes from. Most likely it is hessian sack or canvas, though it may also be from such material as a workman's vest or jacket. QE 911 uses a material which resembles canvas of spun threads, and is not human hair, bark, or grass twine. However, as it was not possible to determine the precise nature of this string, QE 911 is being listed in the ambiguous category.

The other objects acquired by Coghlan, in this category, are mostly orthodox. The necklaces shown above display no evidence of European influence or materials. However, Roth had observed that, at Glenormiston (Coghlan's collection area), there was at least one example of an entangled necklace, having been 'manufactured after

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 110.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid*.

the same plan, but, instead of opossum-string, the cotton threads pulled out of an old sock were brought into requisition'.⁴⁸² QE 6039, a forehead pendant acquired by Coghlan, does not exhibit this characteristic, although the pendant itself is a fragment of china plate, mounted in gum resin—a clear example of entanglement of one decorative piece of European material into an ornamental role in Aboriginal culture.

Roth donated several necklaces, made either from nautilus or pearl shells, or grass reed bugles. Although QE 6048 and 6049 clearly have red string tying the shell pieces together, there is no evidence to suggest that European material was used in their manufacture. In both cases, the dye in the string is strong and has not faded as would occur with age, and the Museum records indicate that the string was added to the objects by Museum staff. QE 6070, on the other hand, is threaded with European string, and tied to red and yellow cloth. This string and cloth is muddied with the same dirt which encrusts the reverse side of the shells and, thus, is a clear instance of an entangled object.

QE 6266, 9357, and 9358 each have a piece of twine which holds the necklace together. The string itself has a regularity of weave which is found in European twine, not in grass or fibre twine hand-spun in a traditional style in Aboriginal communities. Examining the string in more detail with these objects was not possible, owing to the fact that the necklaces needed to be taken apart to do so. Further, the Museum records show no indication of the origins of the material, besides the grass bugles themselves. For these reasons, these objects are categorised as ambiguous, though it is believed that they are most likely entangled.

⁴⁸² *Ibid*, p. 112.

RECEPTACLES

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 75. QE 563



Photo 76. QE 563, alternate photo

QE 563 – A bag from the Mitchell River, measuring 655mm long. This bag resembles loose netting, tied together at the mouth with draw-string. The string is exceptionally fine, and is bound in four places along the draw-string with small sections of gum resin. There is no record of this object in the Ethnology Register, and no listing in the Museum database of the ER number; therefore, there was no means of cross-referencing the donor details and collection dates stated in the database. According to the Museum database, this object was acquired by the Museum in 1901, although this figure could simply be the year in which the object was originally catalogued.



Photo 77. QE 2479

QE 2479 – A koolamon from Glenormiston, measuring 550mm in length. This object is made from a single piece of dark wood, with numerous linear scores on the interior and exterior. The pattern of scoring on the exterior is wider than on the interior. There are a few scratches and breaks along the rim of the object, although it is otherwise unmarked. The Ethnology Register records this object as #872, with the accompanying description: ‘koolamon’. The year of acquisition is not noted.



Photo 78. QE 2490

QE 2490 – A basket from Comet Waters, measuring 58mm long. This object is made from reed for the basket, with a draw-string of thin twine. The Ethnology Register does not record this object, nor does the QE register or the Museum database indicate what the ER number may have been. Therefore, it is not possible to verify that the database information for this object is completely accurate. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1899, although this date could simply be the first time the object was catalogued.



Photo 79. QE 4255

QE 4255 – A koolamon from Glenormiston, measuring 775mm long. The object is made from a single piece of curved dark-hued wood, forming a large bowl. The Ethnology Register does not exactly match this object to a number. The closest match in the Register is #2884, though it is possible this may refer to another koolamon, as insufficient information is given in the listing to determine the exact object match. The year of acquisition is not listed.

Coghlan - Entangled**Photo 80. QE 2478**

QE 2478 – A kangaroo skin water bag from Pituri Creek, with the largest piece measuring 277mm long. This bag has begun to disintegrate, so measuring the dimensions and handling the object was problematic. The bag is now in three sections, and was originally tied at the mouth with European cloth. The cloth is still intact. As the Ethnology Register confirms, the bag had also been repaired by the original owners with human hair. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #281. The Museum acquired this object in 1894.

**Photo 81. QE 2491**

QE 2491 – A dilly basket from Comet Waters, measuring 145mm long. This object is made from grass reeds for the basket, and partial grass reed for the handle. Half of the handle has also been made from European sack cloth, tied to the basket and the other section of handle. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1092, and describes the basket as one of a pair of grass baskets. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1899.



Photo 82. QE 2495

QE 2495 – A basket from Burketown, measuring 327mm long. This basket is made from a variety of materials, with the body of the basket being tightly woven grass string. The basket has then been decorated with an abundance of European cloth, hanging in strips like streamers, in colours of red, green, and a sandy brown material. The bag also has sections of red cloth wound around the grass string to form borders and highlights for the differently coloured sections of the bag. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1037, with the accompanying description: ‘Bag, plaited - grass trimmed’. The Museum acquired this bag in 1897.



Photo 83. QE 5940



Photo 84. QE 5940, alternate photo

QE 5940 – A pituri bag from the Mulligan River, measuring 439mm long. The bag is made from grass twine with coloured threads woven throughout. The interior of the bag is lined with thick canvas sack cloth. The Ethnology Register number is impossible to determine, due to a lack of information in the databases. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1901.

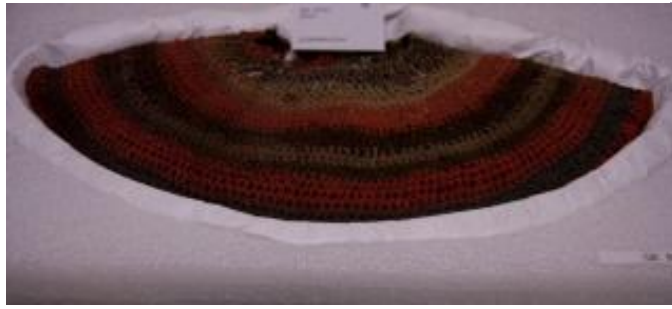


Photo 85. QE 6001



Photo 86. QE 6001, alternate photo

QE 6001 – A pituri bag from Glenormiston, measuring 425mm long. The Museum database describes this bag as having been used for carrying pituri, and the design having been knitted into multi-coloured bands. The vibrant and varied colours of the bag originate from European material. The twine is not analogous to grass, bark or any other material seen in the orthodox examples. The material is most likely canvas. Multi-coloured threads have been woven throughout this bag in a way which is atypical of most other bags of Aboriginal manufacture in the collections. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #778, with the accompanying description of: ‘Pituri bag, knitted coloured bands’. The Museum acquired this bag in 1897.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 87. QE 1456

QE 1456 - A bark basket collected from Cardwell, measuring 348mm long. This basket has been made from bark with a threaded lip, attached to a handle. The object has suffered some damage, having numerous splits in the bark, one of which almost tears through the entire body. The threaded bark handle is also torn. The Ethnology Register number is unknown. This object was acquired by the Queensland Museum in 1900, in Roth's first major donation.



Photo 88. QE 1961

QE 1961 – A bag collected from Cape Bedford, measuring 406mm long. This is a netted bag of closely threaded twine, in alternating colours of dark and light brown material. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2103, with the accompanying description: ‘Many bands’. The Museum database claims this object was acquired in 1900, however, this is most likely in error as there is no record of any Cape Bedford material in Roth’s letter accompanying his 1900 donation. The correct donation year is more likely to be 1903, as Roth sent material from Cape Bedford in that year.



Photo 89. QE 1972

QE 1972 – A netted bag collected from Normanton, measuring 481mm long. The bag is made from loose, fine netting, which the Museum database describes as having been ‘properly netted’. The mouth of the bag is very narrow, with the bag itself gradually widening towards the base. The cord attached to the lip of the bag is broken, and is made from twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2098, with no accompanying notes. The object was originally listed in error in the database as ER#2096, although this number belongs to QE 1979. The Museum acquired this bag in 1900.



Photo 90. QE 6169

QE 6169 – A dilly bag collected from Bloomfield, measuring 337mm long. This is a basket woven from grass twine with two lateral bands forming the lip of the basket. This dilly bag has a single small cord attached to the lip, acting as the carrying string. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2090, with the accompanying description: ‘Dilly-Bag double edging’. This object was sent with other dilly bags, encased in an iron box and forwarded to the Museum by Roth in 1900.



Photo 91. QE 6468

QE 6468 – A dilly bag collected from the Bloomfield River, measuring 359mm long. This object is an unfinished grass dilly bag, where the lip and cord had not yet been attached. There are a series of brown discolourations on the grass twine. The bag is shaped in a beehive fashion, with the widest section being where the mouth of the bag would have been. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2084, with no

accompanying descriptive notes. This dilly bag was sent by Roth to the Museum in 1900, packed with other objects of its type into a metal box.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 92. QE 1970

QE 1970 – A netted bag collected from Normanton, measuring 294mm long. The Museum database describes this object as being both coarse and fine. The strands of the net are loose, fine, and of a light brown colour. The draw string is made from $\frac{3}{4}$ European red cotton cloth, woven into the twine in a chequered pattern. There are two small lumps of gum resin fixing the draw string to the lip of the bag. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2096, with the accompanying notes being largely illegible. What can be read from the notes is most likely: '(2 specs?)', which may mean two specimens, though this seems unlikely. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1900.

For the purposes of this discussion, all objects apparently intended as receptacles for other objects, materials, or water have been considered. Koolamons, water skin bags, baskets and such might all carry different kinds of materials, but they are all intended as receptacles of one sort.

Roth wrote extensively on the manufacture of bags and baskets, categorised by various types, and about the numerous methods of creating the weaves and netting. The methods he discussed could sometimes be interchangeable with the manufacture of bark blankets; although no blankets were donated to the Queensland Museum by either Roth or Coghlan. The construction of bags and baskets would not markedly differ in technique from other objects of their type and locality even if the material used was of indigenous origin, or from European blankets, string, and twine.

By the time Roth had published his 1897 book, the practice of manufacturing bags, baskets, and water carriers had become thoroughly influenced by European materials.

As Roth noted:

For the conveyance of water over long distances, water-bags . . . used to be manufactured whenever and wherever this commodity was scarce, such as along the Leichardt-Selwyn Ranges, and also on the ranges on the other side of Carlo. They were formerly made at Boulia, but what with the far better canvas water-bags obtainable from the whites, their manufacture both here and everywhere has long since ceased. They are as rare now in these particular districts as the complete stone-tomahawk.⁴⁸³

Roth was specifically discussing skin water bags made from paddymelon, kangaroo, or opossum, though he observed that ‘traditional’ manufacturing techniques and materials were scarcely used for other receptacles in the region. As mentioned in the methodology section of this chapter, concerning the manufacture of Dilly-bags, Roth wrote that:

Dilly-bags are made somewhat after the manner of a satchel, in such a way that, when empty, the two sides lie upon the other perfectly flat. They vary between a square and a boat-shape, all intermediate forms being discoverable . . . The material employed in their manufacture is “white-fellow’s” twine and blanket-thread, opossum string, human hair mixed with twine, &c, or plant fibre . . . When made from the usual Government blankets, the threads are carefully picked out and sorted, the bluish-gray and black ones being respectively utilised for patterns: in other kinds of blankets, the red and yellow may be similarly sorted, and the bag woven in various linear-coloured stripes.⁴⁸⁴

Despite these observations, Roth went on to describe the weaving of bags and baskets in terms of more traditional material usage. In his later bulletins, in which he described the uses and manufacture of bags and baskets in the greater Queensland area, Roth characterised methods and materials as universal, and made little comment on the implications of entanglement in these objects, except in how they related to vanished customs.⁴⁸⁵

Roth’s observations regarding the entanglement of European materials into traditional manufacture are borne out by many of the bags, baskets, and water carriers collected by Coghlan. It is highly likely, given Roth’s observations regarding chisels, that the koolamons acquired by Coghlan are in fact entangled objects. This point will be elaborated upon in the forthcoming discussion in this chapter of chisels. However, as

⁴⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 102.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 102-103.

⁴⁸⁵ See, for example: Walter Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.1. String, and other forms of strand: basketry-, woven bag-, and net-work* (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1901), p. 13; Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7*, pp. 27-28.

there is no record of the specific tools used to manufacture these koolamons, they are not identified here as evidence of entanglement.

One kangaroo skin water bag, two baskets, and one bag collected by Coghlan demonstrate clear and unambiguous proof of entanglement. QE 2478, the kangaroo skin water bag, has a strip of European cloth tied around the mouth of the bag to act as a sealant. Although the bag has now disintegrated into three separate sections, this cloth has still maintained its original position. The two baskets share the use of European cloth in the materials. QE 2491 has its handle partially made from sack cloth, while QE 2495 is flamboyantly decorated with streamers of multi-coloured cloth. The decorations, being superfluous to the practical use of the bag, demonstrate a clear example of the use of European materials to augment the appearance of an Aboriginal object. Similarly, QE 6001 has been colourfully decorated with European material, which is most probably canvas cloth.

Indicative of Roth's own predilection for collecting objects which he felt used more 'traditional' Aboriginal manufacturing methods, there is only one bag donated by Roth to the Museum which clearly demonstrates evidence of entanglement. The other objects in this category have been made from bark, and grass twine. QE 1970 is a netted bag which uses red cotton cloth, woven into the body to present a chequered pattern. The entanglement here is both practical and aesthetic although, given that the bag could probably have been completed with indigenous twine, the use of cloth was probably intended to be aesthetic.

In the case of koolamons, Roth does not specifically observe any impact that contact with Europeans has had on the manufacture of the objects, although, as noted above, his description implies it by association with another object:

The Koolamon, or elongate wooden trough . . . is manufactured out of the same material as the shield . . . they are cut out straight away, two, three, or four at a time, like the shields, into the particular shape required, and then finished off with the native chisel.⁴⁸⁶

Roth's observations regarding 'native chisels' have yet to be discussed in detail. Suffice it to say here that he remarked on how they had universally become made with pieces of iron attached. Therefore, the fact that he specifically mentions chisels

⁴⁸⁶ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 101.

being used to create the fluted patterns of koolamons is an indication that all koolamons in the region, made in the period of his observations, most probably exhibit evidence of entanglement.

SHIELDS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 93. QE 1870

QE 1870 – A wooden shield from Glenormiston, measuring 590mm long. This shield is made from a single piece of wood and is brightly coloured with red, yellow, and black ochre. The designs are replicated on the reverse of the shield almost exactly, allowing for a few differences in colouration. The shield shows no sign of obvious use, such as impacts, dents, or scratches, though the designs on the reverse facing have faded. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #854, with the accompanying description: ‘Shield, oblong-pattern in red, yellow + black, split + mended’. This object was acquired in 1897.



Photo 94. QE 4224

QE 4224 – A wooden shield from Glenmormiston, measuring 611mm in length. What remains of this shield has been fashioned from a single piece of wood. There are no designs on this object, and only the faintest trace of red ochre stains the reverse. The most noteworthy thing about this shield’s appearance is the fact that it has been broken roughly in half, with the face exhibiting a number of minor dents and scratches. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to locate

the object in the Register. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1897, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.

Coghlan - Entangled



Photo 95. QE 2519



Photo 96. QE 2519, alternate photo

QE 2519 – A wooden shield from Glenormiston, measuring 480mm long. This shield is made from pieces of wood, being the main body and the handle. The shield is coloured red with ochre, and the handle has been hammered in place with iron nails. European cloth is wrapped around the handle, and this has likewise been painted with ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #859, with the accompanying description: ‘Shield, painted’. The date of acquisition is not known.



Photo 97. QE 2523



Photo 98. QE 2523, alternate photo

QE 2523 – A wooden shield from Comet Waters, measuring 528mm long. The shield is made from a single piece of wood, with the face brightly coloured with black, yellow, and red bands. Traces of resin are on the face, giving a glossy appearance to a small section. The reverse of the shield is plain, except for the handle, which has strips of coloured European cloth wrapped around it. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1077, with the accompanying description: ‘Oval—black, white chevrons + lips’. The Register does not specifically name Coghlan as the donor for this object, and the nearest listed donor name is Roth. The Museum database confirms this is a Coghlan object. As

there is no further information to suggest that this object was a Roth donation, the Museum's current record is being trusted. The year of acquisition is not known.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 99. QE 2524

QE 2524 – A wooden shield collected from Glenprairie, measuring 520mm long. This object is made from a single piece of wood, patterned with a red and white ochre designs, resembling an 'x' on the face. The reverse side has a similar pattern, resembling two 'k's turned on each other back to back. Roth describes this object as having a St. George's Cross pattern, though the similarity is only superficial. The face of this shield has been marked as 'S 19' by Roth. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2381, with the accompanying notes; 'Shield, oblong, plain, white + red'. A small image of the shield has been sketched beside the ER notes. This object was acquired in 1903.



Photo 100. QE 4239

QE 4239 -A wooden shield from Miriam Vale, measuring 643mm long. This object is made from a single piece of wood, without any ornamentation or patterning. Numerous small scratches, gouges, and dents on the surface of the shield indicate the possibility of the use of this shield in combat. Thick green stains, the consistency of paint, mark one

section of this object. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2374, with the accompanying notes: 'Shield; oblong plain'. Roth has marked this object as 'S.3'. Roth's 1903 donation records nine swords he sent in to the Museum in that year. No record of sword donations to the Queensland Museum from Roth exist and, therefore, it seems likely that the 'swords' in the letter actually refer to shields. This is further evident when the correspondence refers to a sword being 'S.3', which corresponds to this shield's number.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 101. QE 4236



Photo 102. QE 4236, alternate photo

QE 4236 – A wooden shield from Miriam Vale, measuring 516.5mm long. This object has been made from two pieces of wood, being one for the body of the shield itself, and the other for the handle. The handle has been fixed into place through the use of iron nails, and these can also be seen driven into the shield for repairs. There are fourteen nails embedded in this shield, and the shield's design is otherwise plain. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2372, with the accompanying notes: 'Shield; black'. Roth has marked this object as 'S/6'. Roth's 1903 donation records nine swords he sent in to the Museum in that year. As for QE 4239 above, no records of sword donations to the Queensland Museum from Roth exist. The 'swords' in the letter actually refer to shields. This is further evident when the correspondence refers to a sword being 'S/6', which corresponds to this shield's number.

Roth discussed the manufacture of shields in the North-West-Central Queensland region in detail. According to Roth:

. . . shields are all cut somewhat after the same pattern, varying from about 22 to 26 inches in length, 7½ to 9 inches in width, and having the handle cut into the back . . . A fluting is to be seen on both sides, though how far this is purposely or accidentally present in the Leichardt-Selwyn and Cloncurry District . . . it is impossible to say . . . Both front and back may be further painted, especially on the “walk-about” &c., with red and yellow ochre and charcoal, according to the pattern indicated by the fluting: on other occasions, the weapon may either be left uncoloured, or else be painted all over with the one pigment, especially when the supply of the other runs short.⁴⁸⁷

There are two shields within the Coghlan collection which show evidence of entanglement. Both shields have clear evidence of European influence on their handles, although QE 2519 displays further evidence of entanglement elsewhere on the reverse. In the case of QE 2519, the handle is fixed into place with the use of iron nails. The handle has also been covered with European cloth, which has in turn been painted with ochre.

QE 2523 uses European materials in a decorative manner which also affords some small measure of practicality. The handle on the reverse of the shield is wrapped in brightly coloured cloth which has the effect of making the piece look striking when seen from its reverse, as well as protecting the hand from any splinters. The cloth also affords a more comfortable and stable grip on the handle; however, it is merely conjecture whether the cloth was placed to make the object more attractive or more useful. There is a possibility that QE 2523 belongs in the Roth collection, rather than Coghlan’s. The Ethnology Register does not specifically record Coghlan as the donor, with the nearest collector name on the same page being Roth. With no further evidence to dispute the collector of this object, the Museum’s identification of this object as being acquired by Coghlan is not challenged.

QE 4236, collected by Roth, shows that the entanglement is purely a matter of practicality—the handle and several other breaks in the shield have been reinforced with the use of iron nails hammered into the wood. Roth describes shield handles from the region as having been cut into the wood, rather than fixed to it at a later point. Fourteen nails have been used in this shield in a manner which appears somewhat gratuitous, and may even be ornamental. In this instance, the handle of QE 4236 has been hammered into place with the use of iron nails, rather than having been carved from the same block of wood. This indicates that either the handle had been

⁴⁸⁷ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 150.

constructed with the use of nails in the first instance, or that it had been repaired after breaking off at a later point. The use of so many nails to fix one small piece of wood in place indicates that the work was done by someone most likely unused to working with the material.

The other shields in the Roth collection display no evidence of entanglement, and conform to his description of the construction of shields. Although Roth describes QE 2524 as having a St. George's Cross pattern painted upon it, this was most likely a comment by Roth on what the pattern reminded him of, rather than what was actually intended by the manufacturers. Assuming this supposition to be incorrect, and Roth had reason to believe the so-called St. George's Cross pattern to be a deliberate intention at copying by the manufacturer, then this would be a most interesting example of entanglement. However, as there is no evidence to support the notion that the pattern was a representation of the Cross, this object is not being used as evidence of entanglement.

SMOOTHING BOARDS

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 103. QE 2036

QE 2036 – A wooden smoothing board collected from the Bloomfield River, measuring 221mm long. There are remnant traces of gum resin on both sides of the object, and there is no indication that the wood had any further material augmentations. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2521, with the accompanying notes: 'Smoothing Board plain'. In his 1903 letter to the Queensland Museum, Roth lists '3 plain smoothing boards'. As this year corresponds with the Museum records for the acquisition, there is little doubt that this object was sent to the Museum in 1903.



Photo 104. QE 5894

QE 5894 – A wooden smoothing board collected from the Pennefather River, measuring 148.5mm long. This object is made from a single piece of wood for the board, and a broken wallaby tooth and thin piece of wood fixed to one end with gum resin and fibre. Both sides of the object are heavily encrusted with gum resin. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #1992, with the accompanying notes: ‘Spokeshave; tooth set in a broad, thin wooden haft’. Roth sent three spokeshaves in an iron box in the year 1900, of which this object forms part of that donation.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 105. QE 5896

QE 5896 – A wooden smoothing board collected from the Pennefather River, measuring 182.5mm long. This object is made from a single piece of wood, with a kangaroo tooth attached to one end with thin canvas string for use as a groover. There are some traces of gum resin and some scratching on the surface of the wood. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2515, with the accompanying notes: ‘Smoothing board + kangaroo tooth’. Roth sent two kangaroo tooth smoothing boards to the Museum in 1903, of which this is one.

Smoothing boards, according to Roth, were flat and thin pieces of wood used in the making of domestic implements and weapons. The board was designed to be held in the hand and used to work heated gum resin.⁴⁸⁸ Roth observed these implements in a number of places, including the Pennefather, Endeavour, and Bloomfield rivers; Princess Charlotte Bay, and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The smoothing boards discussed above come from the Bloomfield and Pennefather rivers, and fall into Roth's description of them in his bulletin. The objects have resin stains from use, where they most likely accrued these marks in the process of rubbing against gum cement.⁴⁸⁹

QE 5896 demonstrates evidence of entanglement at the point where the actual grooving tool attaches to the smoothing board. A kangaroo tooth has been fixed into place by the use of a thin piece of canvas string. Although no other foreign materials are to be found on the object, it is noteworthy that the string had been used as an adhesive. This is most likely a feature of its original manufacture, as no traces of resin on or near the tooth suggest that orthodox adhesives were previously used.

SPEARHEADS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 106. QE 2088

QE 2088 – A wooden spearhead collected from the Mulligan River, measuring 341.5mm long. This spearhead is made from a piece of flat, sharpened wood, bound at two points with bark twine. A small piece of sharp wood is held under bark twine binding at the proximal end. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #945, with the

⁴⁸⁸ Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7*, p. 14.
⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

accompanying description: 'With bark lashed on'. This object was collected in 1897.



Photo 107. QE 2090

QE 2090 – A wooden spearhead collected from Glenormiston, measuring 263mm long. This spearhead is made from a piece of flat, sharpened wood, with traces of gum resin on one side of the distal end. Identifiable on the object is the writing: 'D.6570', followed by the ER number. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #260, with the accompanying description: 'Hard wood'. The Museum acquired this object in 1891.



Photo 108. QE 2123

QE 2123 – A stone spearhead collected from Pituri Creek, measuring 108mm long. This spearhead is made from a single piece of sharp flint, with one edge being serrated. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #375. The accompanying description is partly illegible, and reads: 'Long leaf shaped, chest [chert?]'. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1894.



Photo 109. QE 2126

QE 2126 – A stone spearhead collected from Pituri Creek, measuring 122mm long. This

spearhead is made from a single piece of sharp jasper, forming a roughly arrow shape. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #377, though it does not provide any descriptive notes. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.

Roth wrote more of the nature and manufacture of spear shafts, or of spears as a whole, than he did on spearheads. Nonetheless, he did observe common types of spearheads in the various regions of Queensland he studied. Roth mentions spear types extensively in both his 1897 publication, and in his thirteenth bulletin.⁴⁹⁰ European and foreign materials introduced as spearheads were observed by Roth, though he does not comment on this extensively. Much more shall be said of this phenomenon in the discussion of spears themselves, though it should be pointed out here that Roth donated no spearheads to the Queensland Museum unless they were attached to spear shafts. Coghlan also donated comparatively few of these objects, none of which can be said to be entangled objects. An entangled spearhead may be a piece of glass or iron and, taken on its own without a spear shaft may appear unremarkable to a European observer, at least as an example of Aboriginal material culture. Coghlan's collection includes some wooden spearheads, and some stone spearheads, discussed above. There is no evidence of entanglement, within the collections, in this category.

SPEARS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 110. QE 4690

QE 4690 – A wooden spear collected from Glenormiston, measuring 2,486mm long. The spear is carved from a single piece of wood, with the spearhead being carved from the same piece of wood as the shaft. The spear is inlaid with thin fluting, running along the entirety of the shaft. The Ethnology Register lists this object as ER# 755, though provides

⁴⁹⁰ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 146-148; Walter Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 13. Fighting Weapons* (Sydney: Records of the Australian Museum, F. Cunninghame & Co., Printers, 1909), pp. 192-194.

no accompanying description. This object was acquired in 1897.



Photo 111. QE 4691

QE 4691 – A wooden spear collected from Glenormiston, measuring 2,579mm long. This spear is carved from a single piece of wood. The spearhead is long and flat, and is stained with traces of white ochre. The spear shaft is decorated with minute fluting. The Ethnology Register records this object as #751, though there is no accompanying description. The Museum acquired this spear in 1897.



Photo 112. QE 4695.2

QE 4695.2 – A wooden spear collected from Glenormiston, measuring 2,907mm long. The shaft and spearhead are formed from the same piece of wood. No decorative patterns are obvious, and the spear has a break at roughly the mid point where part of the wood has been removed. Judging by the consistency in colouration, this does not appear to have occurred recently, and may have been present in the wood before it was fashioned into a spear. The Ethnology register identifies this object as #754, though provides no accompanying description. This spear was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 113. QE 4695.3

QE 4695.3 – A wooden spear from Glenormiston, measuring 2,924mm long. The spear is made from a single piece of wood. Unlike other one-piece spears fashioned in this style, this object has a narrower head and has evidence of restorative work by the Museum. A single piece of white string is wound near the head, binding a crack. Although restorative

work by the Museum is rare, the string is undoubtedly the institution's repair work, as it is the exact kind of string evident in other objects where the Museum records its own material additions. The Ethnology Register lists this as #756, though there is no accompanying description. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 114. QE 4704.1

QE 4704.1 – A wooden spear collected from Glenormiston, measuring 2,545mm long. The spear is fashioned from wood, with minor fluting apparent on the shaft. The spear has three wooden hooks—two facing backwards, and one facing forwards—beginning shortly after a black band of resin running around the base of the spearhead. The Ethnology Register lists this as #746, with no accompanying descriptive notes. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 115. QE 4716

QE 4716 – A wooden spear collected from an unknown locality, measuring 2,671mm long. There is a large amount of resin at a point along the upper third of the spear where a probable join exists between two pieces of wood, after which minor fluting patterns can be discerned. The spearhead consists of seven stingray barbs fixed to the head with gum resin and twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2189, with no accompanying descriptive notes. The Museum acquired this spear in 1901.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 116. QE 4680



Photo 117. QE 4680, alternate photo

QE 4680 – A wooden spear from Glenormiston, measuring 2,550mm long. This is a single-piece wooden spear, bound at three points with bark twine. The wood is stained a heavily-faded red. There is no barb at the wooden spearhead, though the pattern of bark twine there indicates that there once was. The twine bindings appear to have been used to repair splits in the wood, rather than to make a composite spear. The binding closest to the base of the spear is covered in a thin, faded purple string which is not of Aboriginal manufacture. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #747, with the accompanying notes: ‘Had barb’. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 118. QE 4681

QE 4681 – A wooden spear from Glenormiston, measuring 2,189mm long. This spear is made from a single piece of wood, with gum resin and bark fibre used in two separate places to bind splits. Over each section of fibre, a thin piece of purplish string is wound, which is not of Aboriginal manufacture. At the very tip of the spear, a third section of this European string can be seen binding a split, this time not wrapped around any fibre. The Ethnology Register lists this spear as #761, identifying the wood as being from a sapling. This spear was acquired by the Museum in 1897.



Photo 119. QE 4695.5



Photo 120. QE 4695.5, alternate photo

QE 4695.5 – A wooden spear from Glenormiston, measuring 3,025mm long. This is a single piece spear made from thin wood, and is bound in a few spots with bark twine and gum resin, to protect the wood from small splits. In one place, over twine bindings, a thin piece of purple string of European manufacture is tied to further strengthen the spear shaft. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #758, with no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this spear in 1897.



Photo 121. QE 4696.6



Photo 122. QE 4696.6, alternate photo

QE 4696.6 – A wooden spear from Glenormiston, measuring 2,952mm long. This spear is made from thin wood, and is bound in a few places with bark twine and gum resin to repair damage. The spearhead may be from a different piece of wood, as it appears thicker than the rest, though it is not possible to be certain of this without removing the nearby bindings. Like QE 4680, 4681, and 4695.1, this spear uses a small amount of faded purple European string to bind over against breakages. The string is tied to the base of the spear, with the twine partially covering the string. This suggests that the string was used in the original manufacture of the object, rather than being wound about it afterwards by Coghlan or the Museum. This spear was acquired in 1897.



Photo 123. QE 4778.1

QE 4778.1 – A wooden spear from an unknown locality, measuring 2,749mm long. No evidence in the registers or on the object card suggests the location from which this spear was collected. This spear is made from a thick piece of dark red wood, which becomes thinner closer to the base. Gum resin coats the bottom third of the spear extensively, below which a section of lighter coloured wood extends. This suggests the spear may be a composite piece. The wooden spearhead has a long iron barb fixed to the head with fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2177, though there are no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this spear in 1901.



Photo 124. QE 4778.2

QE 4778.2 – A wooden spear from an unknown locality, measuring 2,726mm long. This spear is almost identical to QE 4778.1. The shaft appears to be a single piece of dark red wood, though there is extensive gum resin near the base which may suggest either repair work, or a join with another piece of wood. The iron barb is fixed to the wooden spearhead with resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2179, but provides no accompanying notes. There is no record in the database of the year of acquisition though, owing to the similarity in type and the sequence of record in the Ethnology Register, it is probable that this spear was donated at the same time as QE 4778.1.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 125. QE 4712.1

QE 4712.1 - A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 3,217mm long. This is a composite spear made from three pieces of wood, bound together with twine of Aboriginal manufacture. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2484, with the accompanying descriptive notes: ‘Sapling - wood point, loose nicked . . . harpoon, barbed head’. Roth donated ten spears from Bentinck Island in 1903, and this object is from that donation.



Photo 126. QE 4712.2

QE 4712.2 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 2,240mm long. The spear consists of a wooden shaft and spearhead tied together with twine. Regular black bands, burnt into the wood, mark the spear. The QE register identifies the wood as being from a sapling, while the Ethnology Register simply identifies the object as a spear #2483. As with QE 4712.1, this is one of ten spears from Bentinck Island which Roth donated in 1903.



Photo 127. QE 4712.3

QE 4712.3 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 2,697mm long. This spear is a single piece of bent wood, with regular black bands decorating the shaft. These markings have been burnt into the wood, though it is not known whether this was done with heated metal or other wood. Unlike most other Bentinck Island spears in the Roth collection, this object’s spearhead is fixed to the shaft with string and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2490, with the accompanying description: ‘Spear . . . harpoon, barbed head’. As with QE 4712.1, this is one of ten spears from

Bentinck Island which Roth donated in 1903.



Photo 128. QE 4718

QE 4718 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield River, measuring 2,563mm long. This is a composite spear with an uncharacteristically detailed physical description in the Museum's database. The description reads: 'Shaft - 3 piece Aftershaft - reed, split and broken. Midshaft reed, hafted to aftershaft, bound with fibre and gum. Splinted, bound with fibre and gum at proximal area. Foreshaft tapers to a point. 4 stingray barbs, hafted to a foreshaft, bound with fibre and gum. Foreshaft hafted to midshaft, bound with fibre and gum'. The Ethnology Register lists this as object #2475, with accompanying notes describing it as having four stingray prongs. Roth sent four spears from the Bloomfield River in 1903, of which this is one.



Photo 129. QE 4719

QE 4719 – A bamboo wooden spear from the Wenlock (formerly Batavia) River, measuring 1,973mm long. The Ethnology Register incorrectly labels this piece as ER# 2032, 'woomera fish'. The QE database describes this as a bamboo spear tipped with 13 stingray barbs, bound with fibre and coated with gum, and painted in red, white, and black. There is no marking from Roth on the spear, although he sent 30 spears from the Batavia River to the Queensland Museum in 1900. This spear is most likely from that donation.



Photo 130. QE 4724.2

QE 4724.2 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield River, measuring 2,400mm long. The Ethnology Register identifies this as ER# 2443, 'softwood mostly—3 prongs, bone barbs'.

This spear has one more prong than the Ethnology Register records. The spear is bound with gum and fibre, which is mostly black palm fibre or animal sinew, and consists of a one-piece shaft, tipped with four wooden prongs attached to which are four bone barbs. Roth sent a bundle of thirty spears from the Bloomfield District in 1900, of which this is one.



Photo 131. QE 4726

QE 4726 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock River, measuring 1,806mm long. The shaft is a single piece of wood, attached to which are three wooden prongs fixed in place with fibre and resin. The prongs are each tipped by a single bone barb, attached by sinew. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #2037, with the accompanying notes of ‘sapling’ and ‘bone barbs’. As QE 4724.2, this is one of 30 spears from the Bloomfield District Roth donated in 1903.



Photo 132. QE 4761

QE 4761 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock River, measuring 1,904mm long. This spear is made from a single piece of wood, with ochre colouring the shaft. Some gum resin covers the shaft, though this does not appear to be to join two separate pieces of wood. There is some fibre twine at the distal base of the wood. The Ethnology Register lists this as object #2049, with no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 133. QE 4763

QE 4763 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock, Embley & Pennefather Rivers, measuring

1,861mm long. Although the database claims this spear is a 'one-piece', and the object card identifies it as a 'composite', the spear is clearly made from two pieces of wood joined in the centre with gum resin and fibre. The proximal piece is the head, and the distal is the spear shaft. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2615, with the accompanying description: 'Spear, plain painted'. The Museum acquired this spear in December of 1903.



Photo 134. QE 4771.2

QE 4771.2 – A composite wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,867mm long. The spear consists of three wooden pieces, one being the tip, and two being the shaft of the spear bound in the centre with gum. The base of the spear has a split bound with gum and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this as ER# 2064: 'Barbed tip, 2 piece'. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900, along with 29 others Roth sent from the Bloomfield District.



Photo 135. QE 4771.3

QE 4771.3 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,724mm long. The spear is a composite of three pieces of wood forming the shaft and the spearhead, bound with resin and fibre. A break near the proximal end has been repaired by the Museum with white cloth and string. A wooden barb is attached to the spearhead with resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2067, with the accompanying notes: 'Barbed tip, 2 piece'. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 136. QE 4771.6

QE 4771.6 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,958mm long. This spear has two separate pieces of wood forming the shaft and spearhead, both of which show linear scoring. A wooden barb is attached to the spearhead with resin and fibre. The fibre can be seen below the resin at the barb. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2058, with the accompanying notes: ‘Barbed tip, 2 piece’. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 137. QE 4771.7

QE 4771.7 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,811mm long. This spear is made from a single piece of wood for the shaft, and another for the spearhead, with a wooden barb attached to the spearhead with gum resin and fibre. The spear is fluted, and has traces of ochre staining. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2064, with the accompanying notes: ‘Barbed tip, 2 piece’. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 138. QE 4775.2

QE 4775.2 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock, Embley & Pennefather Rivers measuring 2,339mm long. This is a one piece wooden spear with the base and tip bound with gum and fibre. The tip shows a space for a barb to be attached, though the QE and ER databases do not mention a barb ever having been attached. In all likelihood, the spear was acquired by Roth with the barb already missing. The Ethnology Register records this as ER# 2435, following a list of two piece barbed spears. The Museum acquired this

spear in December of 1903.



Photo 139. QE 4798

QE 4798 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 2,724mm long. The shaft of the spear is made from a single piece of wood, with three wooden prongs bound to the shaft with string. The Ethnology Register lists this as ER# 2492, with no further notes attached. The Museum acquired this spear in 1903.



Photo 140. QE 4811



Photo 141. QE 4811, alternate photo

QE 4811 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 3,869mm long. The spear has three parts, each bound together by string, with a further binding of string wrapped around the bottom third of the spear head. The spear is overly long, unwieldy, and awkwardly bound, suggesting that this piece was used for ornamentation and ceremony, or for trade with collectors only. The spearhead has 21 teeth carved into the wood. Old registry cards attached to the spear indicate that it was sent in by Clement Wragge (another collector who donated to the Museum), although the Ethnology Register identifies this as # 2488, with ‘Roth’ written next to the donor name. The QE register book once indicated that Wragge was the donor, though his name has been crossed out and replaced with Roth’s. The Museum acquired this spear in 1903.



Photo 142. QE 6219

QE 6219 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock, Embley & Pennefather Rivers, measuring 1,800mm in length. This spear consists of one piece for the shaft, with traces of red, black, and white colouring. Three prongs have bone barbs attached to them with bound fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this as ER# 2440: ‘Soft wood mostly 3 prongs bone barbs’. The database claims the source year as 1899. This is most likely a mistake, and the spear was more probably sent in with other objects from the same region in December of 1903.



Photo 143. QE 6236

QE 6236 – A wooden spear from Normanton, measuring 2,714mm long. This spear has a wooden shaft attached to a reed base with gum. The spearhead is a sharpened point, from which the previously attached barb is missing. The Ethnology Register simply records the old number as 2455, and has no descriptive notes. Whether the barb was missing at the point of donation or after is unclear. The spear shaft is numbered by Roth as ‘Sp. 36’, and the Queensland Ethnology register claims the source date as 1899. There is inconclusive evidence in Roth’s letters to discount this, although the numbering system proves that the object was sent by him.



Photo 144. QE 6252

QE 6252 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock River, measuring 2,476mm long. The Queensland Ethnology register identifies this as a fishing spear with three wooden prongs tipped by three bone barbs. The Ethnology Register lists this as ER# 2443, following a sequence of similar spears listed as ‘soft wood 3 prong barbs’. Database information suggests that this spear was sourced from 1899, and no other notes or markings are available to accurately claim which of Roth’s three major donations this spear arrived with.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 145. QE 4721

QE 4721 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield River, measuring 2,988mm long. The shaft is made from a single piece of wood, with gum and fibre bindings at the proximal and distal regions. The spearhead consists of five iron prongs fixed into the shaft of the spear with fibre and gum. Some very faint white staining appears at the base of two of the iron prongs. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #2474, with the accompanying notes: ‘Spear, lightwood’. Roth sent four spears from the Bloomfield River in 1903, of which this is one.



Photo 146. QE 4722

QE 4722 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,351mm long. This is a single piece wooden spear, tipped with five metal prongs, fixed into the shaft with gum resin and twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2075, and lists this under similar spears all described as being used for fishing and having four metal prongs on the head. This spear has five prongs; otherwise the Registry is not in error. The

Museum database lists the year of acquisition as 1903. Roth sent 40 spears to the Museum in 1903, of which four were from the Bloomfield River. This spear forms part of that donation.

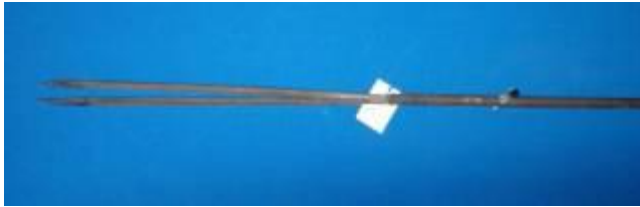


Photo 147. QE 4724.1

QE 4724.1 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield River, measuring 2,904mm long. This spear is made from a single piece of wood forming the shaft, with four wooden prongs being fixed to the proximal end with a small fibre binding. Each wooden prong is tipped with a small iron barb, attached with gum and fibre. The proximal end has a few splits in the wood, which have been bound with twine. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2472, listed under spears which are described as being made from lightwood, and having four iron barbs. Roth sent four spears in 1903 from the Bloomfield River.



Photo 148. QE 4730

QE 4730 – A wooden spear from the Wembley, Embley & Pennefather Rivers, measuring 2,248mm long. The shaft is made from one piece of wood which is broken at the base. This break has been rudimentarily repaired by the Museum with white string and a piece of wood, tying the two pieces together to prevent their separation. The spearhead consists of three wooden prongs with iron barbs attached to each with gum resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2448, listed under other spears sharing the characteristics of ‘softwood’ and ‘three barbed prongs’. The acquisition date is 1903, which corresponds with Roth’s December donation of 38 spears from the regions of the Batavia, Embley, and Pennefather rivers, in that year.



Photo 149. QE 4762.1

QE 4762.1 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,287mm long. The spear shaft is made from a single piece of wood, with a long iron prong bound into the proximal shaft with gum resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2076, with the accompanying notes of ‘fish spear’. Roth sent 30 spears from the Bloomfield District in 1900, and this object is from that packet.



Photo 150. QE 4762.2

QE 4762.2 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,425mm long. A single piece of wood forms the shaft, with the spearhead bound to this shaft with gum resin and fibre. The spearhead is made from a single, long, iron prong, roughly one fifth of the length of the spear. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #2077, with the accompanying description of ‘two reeds’. The ER notes are unusual in that they do not appear to match the object itself. As no alternative listing is available in the Register, it is evident that the description is in error. As with QE 4762.1, this is one of 30 spears Roth collected from the Bloomfield District in 1900.



Photo 151. QE 4762.3

QE 4762.3 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,862mm long. This is a composite spear made from two pieces of lightweight reed wood, with an iron spearhead fixed to the shaft with gum resin and fibre. The spear tip is unlike many others of this type, in that the iron forms the entire length of the prong, rather than being attached as a barb to a wooden prong. The Ethnology Register lists this as #2079, with the

accompanying description of ‘fish spear’ and ‘2 reeds’. As with QE 4762.1, this is one of 30 spears Roth collected from the Bloomfield District in 1900.



Photo 152. QE 4764

QE 4764 – A wooden spear from Normanton, measuring 2,773mm long. The shaft of the spear is made from a single piece of wood, which has broken near the dorsal tip and been bound together with wood and string by the Queensland Museum. The spearhead is a long iron prong, fixed to the shaft with gum resin and fibre. The prong has evidently been driven into the shaft of the spear, as the layer of resin is very thin and could not hold the tip in place of its own strength. Roth had marked this spear as ‘SP20’, which is visible near the tip. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2478. Owing to Roth’s numbering system, this spear can be determined as having been sent to the Museum in December of 1903.



Photo 153. QE 4771.1

QE 4771.1 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,663mm long. The spear is a composite of two long pieces of wood bound together with gum resin and fibre. There is some linear scoring down the wood, creating basic ornamentation. The wooden spearhead has an iron barb attached with gum and fibre. The Ethnology Register lists this as #2054, with the accompanying description: ‘Barbed tip, 2 piece’. As with QE 4762.1, this is one of 30 spears Roth collected from the Bloomfield District in 1900.



Photo 154. QE 4771.4

QE 4771.4 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,683mm long. This spear is a composite piece made from two pieces of wood, fixed together with gum and fibre. The tip of the spear has an iron barb, also attached with gum and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2068, and lists it as a ‘barbed tip, 2 piece’. As with QE 4762.1, this is one of 30 spears Roth collected from the Bloomfield District in 1900.



Photo 155. QE 4771.5

QE 4771.5 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,899mm long. The spear is a composite piece made from multiple sections of wood. A break in the upper third of the spear has been repaired by the Museum with white cloth and string. The spearhead is wooden, with an iron barb fixed to the prong with gum resin and fibre. There are traces of white ochre bands nearer to the proximal end of the spear. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2041, with the accompanying description: ‘Barbed, 2 piece’. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 156. QE 4775.1

QE 4775.1 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock, Embley & Pennefather Rivers, measuring 2,455mm long. This spear is made from one piece of wood, with an iron barb attached to the head with gum resin and fibre. Most of the gum resin has begun to flake off, revealing some of the fibre binding beneath. The Ethnology Register identifies this

object as #2435, with the accompanying description: 'Barbed, 2 piece'. This note is misleading as, within the Registry, the prong or barb is not usually counted as a separate piece, even when they come from different source materials. This creates the impression that the wooden shaft is a composite piece, which in this case it is not. The Museum acquired this object in 1903.



Photo 157. QE 4776

QE 4776 – A wooden spear from Normanton, measuring 2,872mm long. The shaft of the spear is a single piece of wood, with a wooden head joined with fibre and resin. A metal barb is attached to the wooden spearhead with gum resin and fibre. Some of the resin has disintegrated, exposing the fibre underneath. The spear is stained red from ochre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2454, with the accompanying notes: 'Barbed, 2 piece'. This object was designated by Roth as 'Sp. 40', and was donated to the Museum in 1903.



Photo 158. QE 4787

QE 4787 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,866mm long. The shaft of the spear is a composite of two pieces of wood, joined together with resin and fibre. The spear tip has an iron barb, also attached with resin and fibre. The gum resin near the barb has largely flaked away, revealing the fibre underneath. The Ethnology Register lists this object as #2186, with the accompanying notes: 'Spear, two piece, barbed tip'. The Museum acquired this spear in 1900.



Photo 159. QE 4791

QE 4791 – A wooden spear from Cooktown, measuring 2,752mm long. This is a composite spear formed from two pieces of wood. The proximal piece is covered in resin, while the distal piece has linear scoring along the shaft. The spear tip has an iron barb fixed to the shaft with resin and fibre. An old object card incorrectly listed this spear as a Clement Wragge donation, though the QE and ER details confirm this as a Roth object. The Ethnology Register erroneously listed this object as #2463. The correct ER listing is #2083. This object was designated as ‘SP51’ by Roth, which corresponds to his 1901 donation.



Photo 160. QE 4797

QE 4797 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,410mm long. The spear shaft is fashioned from one piece of lightweight wood, with four metal prongs fixed to the shaft with gum and fibre. The gum resin has eroded enough to expose the fibre pattern, and a split in the wood near the iron prongs. The Ethnology Register identifies this as #2074, with the accompanying description of ‘reed only’. As with QE 4762.1, this is one of 30 spears Roth collected from the Bloomfield District in 1900.



Photo 161. QE 4804

QE 4804 – A wooden spear collected from Cooktown, measuring 1,932mm long. The spear consists of a lightweight bamboo shaft hafted to a wooden head, upon which a leaf-shaped iron spear point is attached. Gum and fibre bind the various parts of this spear,

covering an area of the bamboo shaft itself, suggesting repair work on the behalf of the manufacturers. The Ethnology Register identifies this spear as #2480 and only provides a short accompanying description of ‘iron bar’. The spear is marked by Roth as ‘YS.3’. As confirmed by the Museum records and the characteristic numbering system used on the spear shaft, this object was donated in 1903.



Photo 162. QE 4816

QE 4816 – A wooden spear from the Bloomfield District, measuring 2,882mm long. This is a composite spear, with the distal end being made from bamboo, while the proximal is from a heavier wood. There are traces of red ochre paint towards the proximal, and the spear tip has an iron barb attached to it with resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2087, with no accompanying notes. This spear was acquired by the Museum as part of Roth’s 1900 donation.



Photo 163. QE 6220

QE 6220 – A wooden spear collected from the Wenlock, Embley, and Pennefather Rivers, measuring 2,619mm long. The spear is a composite piece, with the lower section being lightweight reed, and the upper portion being heavier iron bark. The spearhead has an iron barb attached with gum resin. There are very faint traces of white paint on the lower reed section of the spear. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2460, with the accompanying description: ‘Heavy wood mostly iron bark’. Although the database claims that this spear was donated in 1903, Roth’s correspondence claims this particular spear was from Normanton. In all probability, this is an error in the records of the Museum, as Roth donated no spears from Normanton in 1903. The actual acquisition

date, therefore, is unknown.



Photo 164. QE 6234

QE 6234 – A wooden spear from the Palmer River, measuring 3,490mm long. The distal shaft of the spear is bamboo, which is fixed with resin and fibre to the harder wooden proximal head of the spear. An iron barb is attached to the wooden head with fibre and resin. Linear scoring is evident upon both sections of the spear. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2469, with the accompanying notes: ‘Mostly light wood iron’. The QE database claims the acquisition year is 1899, which is too early to be a Roth donation. Most likely, this object was sent to the Museum in 1900.



Photo 165. QE 6235

QE 6235 – A wooden spear from Cooktown, measuring 2,770mm long. The spear is a composite piece of a reed base and a wooden head. Both sections are joined by extensive resin and fibre. An iron barb is fixed to the spearhead with resin and fibre. The resin is beginning to flake off, exposing the fibre underneath. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2459, with no accompanying descriptive notes. The QE database claims the acquisition year is 1899, which is too early to be a Roth donation. Most likely, this object was sent in by Roth in 1900.



Photo 166. QE 6237

QE 6237 – A wooden spear from the Wenlock, Embley, and Pennefather rivers, measuring 2,643mm long. The shaft of the spear is made from a single piece of wood, with four wooden prongs forming the spearhead. Each prong is tipped by a single iron barb, with the prongs and the barbs attached to the spear with resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2471, with the accompanying description: ‘Mostly light wood 4 prongs’. Roth has numbered this spear as ‘Sp. 28’, painted on the shaft. According to the Museum database, this object was acquired in 1899. This is in error, as Roth’s first donation occurred in 1900.



Photo 167. QE 6240

QE 6240 – A wooden spear collected from the Wenlock, Embley, and Pennefather rivers, measuring 1,634mm long. This spear is made from one piece of very thin wood, and the iron spearhead has been driven into the head of the wood and partially fixed there with gum resin. Whether the wood has broken away from the base of the iron tip, removing part of the resin, or whether the resin was not applied evenly around the base of the tip is unclear. In any case, this enables the viewer to perceive more clearly how the spearhead has been driven into the wood. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2479, with the accompanying description: ‘An iron wire prong’. According to the Museum, Roth donated this object in 1899. This does not correspond to any of the donation dates of the Roth collection. The Museum date is in error, and the actual acquisition date is most likely 1900.

Roth - Ambiguous



Photo 168. QE 1987

QE 1987 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island. There was no opportunity to measure this object. The spear is a broken, composite piece, with the separate parts currently being held together with wood and white string. This kind of repair work is typical of the Queensland Museum, and is simply intended to prevent the pieces of wood becoming separated and impossible to identify. The spearhead has 17 carved teeth, and the composite pieces of wood were originally bound together with string, by the manufacturers. There is a single nail driven through the distal end of the spear. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2487, with the accompanying description: ‘Sapling, wood loose nicked’. This is one of 10 spears Roth donated from Bentinck Island in 1903.



Photo 169. QE 4812

QE 4812 – A wooden spear from Bentinck Island, measuring 3,480mm long. The spear is made from three separate pieces of wood bound together by string of Aboriginal manufacture. The head of the spear is wood and has 18 teeth carved into its surface. The spearhead is bound in place by string and metal wire. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2485, with the accompanying description: ‘Orig 3 notched points’. This spear was sent to the Museum in 1903 by Roth. There are no accompanying photos of this object.

Roth observed and collected a large variety of spears in his research into the Aboriginal people of Queensland. His 1897 publication records five distinct indigenous spears in the North-West-Central Queensland region—the Acicular-tip hand-spear, the spatulate-tip hand-spear, the spatulate-tip wommera-spear, wommera-

reed spears, and quartz-tip wommera reed-spears.⁴⁹¹ According to Roth, ornamented spears were particularly prized in the Boulia district, and ‘such [a] one is not easy for white strangers to get hold of’.⁴⁹² Of the five kinds of spears indigenous to the North-West-Central Queensland region, Roth recorded that the Acicular-tip hand-spear sometimes exhibited European materials. Roth wrote that:

Occasionally, previous to fighting, some cementing substance, spinifex- or beefwood-gum, is stuck on in the form of a ring about ½ inch thick at a distance of, perhaps, a couple of feet from the tip: into this band some iron nails, pieces of flint or glass, &c., may be found stuck.⁴⁹³

Roth also discusses what he calls ‘non-indigenous spears’, which comprise all of those spears traded from beyond the North-West-Central Queensland region. This category, according to Roth’s observations, included spears which had barbed prongs of filed iron-wire.⁴⁹⁴ Roth’s thirteenth bulletin details the manufacturing methods and types of spears he encountered in the rest of Queensland, which included spears being made from diverse kinds of wood, including bamboo.⁴⁹⁵ The effort and time invested in the manufacture of spears was largely dictated by the kind of wood employed. Amongst these kinds of spears, Roth observed that, by 1900, quartz had largely been superseded by the use of glass for spear tips.

Spears are the largest category in terms of objects and evidence of entanglement in the combined collections. The spears acquired by Coghlan for the Queensland Museum include six objects which show clear signs of entanglement with European material. The two most obvious of these are QE 4778.1 and 4778.2, both of which have iron barbs attached to the heads of the wooden spears. The fact that these objects were from unknown localities may be consistent with Roth’s own observations that spears which were not indigenous to the North-West-Central region of Queensland could sometimes use iron in place of wood or stone. This is purely supposition and, despite their local origin, these two spears still remain objects made by Aboriginal people which exhibit the use of European material.

⁴⁹¹ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 146-148.

⁴⁹² *Ibid*, p. 146.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid*.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 148

⁴⁹⁵ Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 13*, pp. 190-194.

QE 4680, 4681, 4695.5, and 4696.6 likewise share the same kind of foreign material. In each case, these objects have a piece of faded purplish-string which is wound around the indigenous fibre used to repair breaks in the wood. The string has a fineness and regularity of weave which is not consistent with indigenous twine, and is undoubtedly of European origins. Given the fact that the string covers indigenous twine, and is of the same variety and colour, it may be reasonable to assume that the material was added by Coghlan or the Museum. However, the string can also be observed to be partially covered by the indigenous twine it binds, indicating that the use of the string and the twine occurred at roughly the same time. Further, the fact that the string is of the same type on all of these objects is unremarkable when it is realised that all four of these spears were collected from the same locality. This may just as easily indicate that the spears were made by the same people, or that the string was garnered by a number of manufacturers from the same source. Especially considering the fact that the twine partially covers the string, these objects are counted as evidence of entanglement.

Roth donated 23 spears which demonstrate clear entanglement. Each one of these spears uses iron. These have either longer iron prongs, or iron barbs attached to wooden prongs. Yet Roth's bulletins say very little about the use of iron in spears, observing only that the material was used. He also observed that glass had become commonplace, and that nails were used although, significantly, he donated no examples of either. Still, the spears Roth donated to the Queensland Museum show overwhelming evidence of entanglement. Interestingly, this is not the case with the spears he sold to the Australian Museum, as discussed at the end of this chapter.

QE 1987, and 4812 have been listed in the ambiguous category because the iron nail, and the iron wire evident upon them, may have been placed to aid display. The nail at the base of QE 1987 serves no practical purpose, and the wire around 4812 displays no hint that it was added by the manufacturers. QE 4812 may likewise have had the iron wire added by Roth in order to hang the piece securely. As there is no evidence to confirm or refute this, both objects are counted as ambiguous.

SPEARTHROWERS

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 170. QE 108



Photo 171. QE 108, alternate photo

QE 108 – A wooden spearglance from the Boulia district, measuring 565mm long. The object is a leaf-shaped spearglance with a piece of chert attached by resin to the proximal end. A wooden peg is fixed with twine to the distal end. Both faces of the spearglance are engraved with patterns. The Ethnology Register details are unknown, and the acquisition date is uncertain. The Museum records that the object was acquired in or before 1898, but does not provide a definite date.



Photo 172. QE 2587

QE 2587 – A wooden spearglance from Glenormiston, measuring 890mm long. This

object is long and thin, and—ignoring the peg attachment—is more reminiscent in basic appearance to a club. The object has a wooden peg fixed with gum to the distal end, though there are no other attachments or remnants of such at the proximal. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #4, and describes it as a ‘throwing stick’. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1894.



Photo 173. QE 2840

QE 2840 – A wooden spearthrower from Glenormiston, measuring 597mm long. This object is leaf-shaped, with a wooden peg at the distal region, and a lump of resin at the proximal. Both sides are engraved with etched patterns. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #359, with the accompanying description: ‘Scored in cross bands, split and repaired’. There is no note as to whether the repairs were done by the manufacturers, or the Museum. This object was acquired in 1894.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 174. QE 1636

QE 1636 – A wooden spearthrower collected from Mapoon, measuring 661mm long. This object is made from dark brown wood. A wooden peg is attached to the distal end, and a shell attached to the proximal, both with gum resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register number is just discernible on the wooden face, listed as #1832, with no descriptive notes attached. The Museum acquired this object in 1903, along with other spearthrowers from Mapoon.



Photo 175. QE 1642

QE 1642 – A wooden spearthrower collected from Mapoon, measuring 701mm long. The body of this spearthrower is made from dark brown wood. A wooden peg is attached to the distal end, and a shell attached to the proximal, with gum resin and fibre. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2402, with no accompanying descriptive notes. As with QE 1636, this object was acquired in 1903.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 176. QE 1647

QE 1647 – A wooden spearthrower collected from Mapoon, measuring 741mm long. This spearthrower is made from a red-brown wood, with a notched peg at the distal end, and a broken shell at the proximal. Gum resin binds both ends of the spearthrower, with thread of non-Aboriginal manufacture having been wound under the gum at the distal end. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2396, with the accompanying notes: ‘leaf shell; leaf broken’. As with QE 1636, this object was acquired in 1903.



Photo 177. QE 2562

QE 2562 – A wooden speargun collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring 690mm long. This object is made from dark brown wood, coloured with a brown pigment all over. The distal end has a peg, fixed in place with resin and a thick European string. The proximal end is rounded, and has no evidence of anything having been attached to it. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2028, with the accompanying description: ‘woomera; old, curved, no shell; supposed to be old’. Roth donated 18 spearguns to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag ‘W.67’, which is also noted in Roth’s letter of 1900 describing the donation.



Photo 178. QE 2563

QE 2563 – A wooden speargun collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring 697.5mm long. This object is made from a piece of wood with traces of red ochre over it. According to the Museum database, the peg is missing, although it is not known if this was lost before or after acquisition. The distal end shows that the peg was bound with a

thick European string, and resin. The proximal end is rounded, and has no remnants of resin or other objects. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2027, with the accompanying description: 'Woomera; curved, no shell; pale red'. Roth donated 18 spearthrowers to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag 'W.52', which is noted in Roth's letter of 1900 describing the donation.

Roth - Ambiguous



Photo 179. QE 1639



Photo 180. QE 1639

QE 1639 – A wooden spearthrower collected from Mapoon, measuring 706mm long. This object is made from red-brown wood. The distal end has a notched wooden peg attached with fibre and gum resin. The proximal end has a split through the wood, and has been repaired by the Museum with a piece of string. Gum resin is evident near the split, where another item may have been attached, or intended to have been attached. The resin covers what appears to be cloth, although it is impossible to ascertain the nature of this material for certain. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2390, with no accompanying descriptive notes. Roth sent spearthrowers from Mapoon to the Queensland Museum in 1903, and this object forms part of that donation.



Photo 181. QE 2560

QE 2560 – A wooden spearthrower collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring

710.5mm long. This spearthrower is made from red-brown wood, faded in parts, with the distal end having a notched peg fixed to it with gum resin and fibre. The fibre appears to be some kind of cane fibre. The proximal end is rounded, and has no signs of anything having been attached to it. A single piece of string, stained with ochre, is tied around the distal end. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2017, with the accompanying description: 'Woomera; curved, no shell, red; no handle'. Roth donated 18 spearthrowers to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag 'W.49', which is also noted in Roth's letter of 1900 describing the donation.



Photo 182. QE 2564

QE 2564 – A wooden spearthrower collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring 760.5mm long. This object is made from a piece of wood stained with red ochre. A peg is attached to the distal end by means of resin and fibre, fed through holes drilled into the wood. The fibre has the appearance of rattan. The proximal end is smooth and rounded. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2020, with the accompanying description: 'Woomera; curved, no shell, red; no design on end; no handle'. Roth donated 18 spearthrowers to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag 'W.64', which is also noted in Roth's letter of 1900 describing the donation.



Photo 183. QE 2565

QE 2565 – A wooden spearthrower collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring 676mm long. This object is made from a piece of wood stained with a brown pigment. The distal end is broken and frayed, though the remnants of fibre and resin remain. The fibre is fed through holes drilled into the wood and has the appearance of rattan. The proximal end is rounded, with numerous scratches from wear. The Ethnology Register identifies this as object #2029, with the accompanying description: ‘Woomera; curved, no shell’. Roth donated 18 spearthrowers to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag ‘W.61’, which is also noted in Roth’s letter of 1900 describing the donation.



Photo 184. QE 2568

QE 2568 – A wooden spearthrower collected from the Bloomfield district, measuring 736mm long. This spearthrower is made from a piece of wood stained with red ochre over. A peg is attached to the distal end with fibre and resin. The fibre has the appearance of rattan. The Ethnology Registry number is not discernible, either from an examination of the old database notes, the object, or the ER listings themselves. Roth donated 18 spearthrowers to the Queensland Museum in 1900, of which 17 came from the Bloomfield district. This object is marked in white with the tag ‘W.73’, which is also noted in Roth’s letter of 1900 describing the donation.

Roth observed and collected spearthrowers in numerous districts in Queensland. He termed the objects as woomeras, despite regional differences in nomenclature, and considered their use to be universal.⁴⁹⁶ The spearthrower was designed to aid the aim and reach of a thrown spear, by:

. . . fixing it between the fore-finger and middle digit, clasping its free end on to the palm with the middle, ring, and little fingers, and at the same time grinding, or rather steadying, the spear between the fore-finger and thumb.⁴⁹⁷

Roth wrote that they were one of the few objects of Aboriginal material culture in Queensland that involved any drilling through the object in its manufacture.⁴⁹⁸ Holes were drilled through the object in which tendons or twine, aided by gum resin, were used to fix pegs into place. Although Roth claimed in his 1897 publication that, outside of the Boulia district, pegs were fixed without the aid of drilled holes, his subsequent donations from other regions contradict this.

There are three spearthrowers in the Roth collection which demonstrate clear incorporation of European material. QE 1647, 2562, and 2563 each have European string wound around the distal region, helping to bind the peg in place. The string has the consistency of European material, and the regularity of the weave makes this a certainty. Further, there is no chance that the string was attached after the manufacture of the objects in question, as the gum resin also binds the string in place, partially covering them. Some string of non-indigenous manufacture can be identified on other objects, such as QE 1639, though this has been placed much more recently by the Museum's conservation and repair staff.

There are many spearthrowers in the ambiguous category, of which a number have been shown as examples above. Except for the case of QE 1639, which may have some European cloth just under the surface of the resin, all the remainder *may* have been made with rattan fibre for binding. QE 2560, 24564, 2565, and 2568 each exhibit cane fibre threaded through drilled holes at the distal region. Although it is possible that this fibre could come from lawyer cane or another indigenous cane fibre,

⁴⁹⁶ For Roth's written observations on the spearthrower, see: Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 148-149; Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7*, p. 9, and 11-14; Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography. Bulletin no. 13*, pp. 194-200.

⁴⁹⁷ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 149.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

the material itself has the distinct appearance of having been taken from furniture made from rattan. If this assumption is correct, this demonstrates an interesting example of European or Asian furniture being incorporated into traditional Aboriginal weapons manufacture. This is merely a supposition based on the observations of three people who considered it possible.⁴⁹⁹ However, as there is far from conclusive evidence to confirm whether or not the fibre does come from furniture, these objects are not being treated as evidence of entanglement.

RAW MATERIAL

Coghlan - Orthodox



Photo 185. QE 2009.1-.2

QE 2009.1-.2 - According to the old collection card, these objects are lumps of spinifex gum ‘used for fixing tools and weapons’, collected from Glenormiston. The QE Register lists QE 2009 as having two associated objects, while the Ethnology Register lists three. The objects have no marking on them besides ‘QE 2009’, making it impossible to distinguish which is .1, .2, or whether there is a .3. Although the objects resemble grey rocks, they have the distinctive odour of gum resin, and each possess flattened bases. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #851. The Museum acquired these specimens in 1897.

⁴⁹⁹ Besides myself, Trish Barnard and Ken Mulvaney (a PhD candidate working on Aboriginal rock art, with experience in Aboriginal material culture) also considered rattan as a distinct possibility for the material.



Photo 186. QE 2011

QE 2011 – This is a specimen of beefwood gum collected from Boulia, measuring 97mm long. Some of the resin has broken free and is contained in a small plastic bag, visible in the photo. The Museum notes describe this item as having been used ‘for cementing purposes’. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #318, with the accompanying description: ‘Gum of *Grevillea Striata*, beefwood, used as cement’. This specimen was acquired by the Museum in 1892.



Photo 187. QE 6370

QE 6370 - This is a specimen of downy weed collected from Waidwa. This specimen was not measured in order to preserve the entirety of the sample in its packaging. According to the Museum database, this material was ‘struck with blood in patterns on the men’s bodies at corroborees’. The Ethnology Registry details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum database to verify the ER details. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1897, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.



Photo 188. QE 6482

QE 6482 – This is a specimen of pituri collected from Boulia. This specimen was not measured, in order to preserve the sample in its packaging. The object card accompanying the specimen describes the pituri thus: ‘Sample of pituri: the leaves and twigs are used as a stimulating tonic, by being chewed, and cause intoxication. In Central Australia the leaves are utilised to poison emus’. The Ethnology Registry details are unknown, and no number is listed in the Museum databases to verify the ER details. According to the database, this object was acquired in 1892, although this date may simply refer to the year in which the object was first examined by Museum staff.

Roth - Orthodox

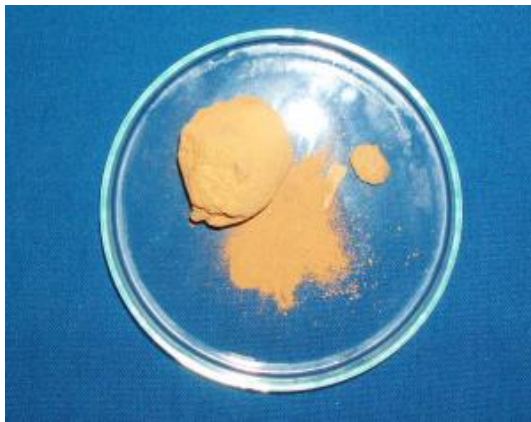


Photo 189. QE 2065

QE 2065 - A sample of yellow ochre collected from Bathurst Heads. Due to the nature of the object, no measurements were taken. The object is a small sample, described in the database as ‘sand and pebbles’, used for colouring purposes. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2003, with the accompanying description: ‘Yellow clay’. Roth sent eight pigments to the Museum in 1900, of which this is one.



Photo 190. QE 2075

QE 2075 - Kangaroo tail bones collected from an unknown locality, measuring 192mm long. This object is comprised of kangaroo tail bones wrapped in paper bark and bound with bark fibre. The database records that this object was collected in a state of being 'ready for barter'. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2510, with the accompanying notes of: 'Kangaroo tendon on tail end ready for barter, mostly destroyed'. This object was donated by Roth to the Museum in 1903.

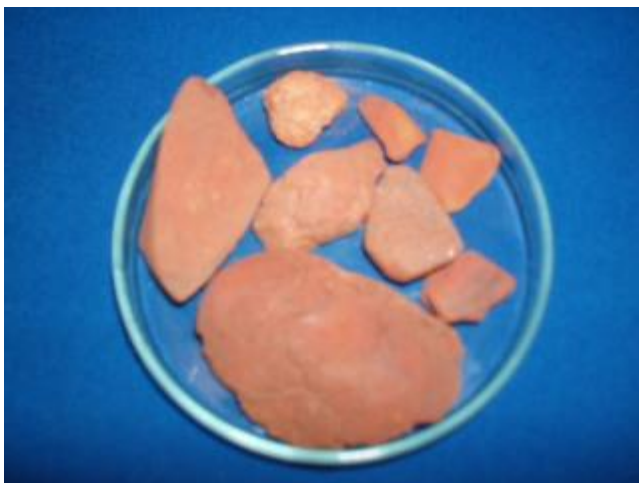


Photo 191. QE 5946

QE 5946 - A sample of red ochre collected from Bathurst Heads. Due to the nature of the object, no measurements were taken. This sample consists of eight pieces of red ochre, of which seven have abraded surfaces. The Museum database and Ethnology Registry do not record this object's ER number with enough accuracy to provide certainty. Roth sent eight pigments to the Museum in 1900, of which this is one.

Roth - Entangled



Photo 192. QE 2077

QE 2077 - A bundle of stingray barbs collected from the Palmer River, measuring 114mm long. This object is a bundle of stingray barbs wrapped in European cloth for purposes of transportation and barter. The Ethnology Register records this object as #2502, with the accompanying description of: ‘stingaree barbs ready for barter’. The year of acquisition is not known.

Gum cement or resin can be found on many of the objects in the Roth and Coghlan collections, typically used as an adhesive to bind one material to another. Resin is also to be found on some objects, such as stones and smoothing boards, where the object has somehow come into contact with the material through use. Roth characterised gum cement and resin as ‘the Native Cementing Substance’, and claimed that it was available in every region of Queensland he studied either because it is indigenous to the region, or it has been traded from another.⁵⁰⁰

Roth described its use thus:

The plant [spinifex, porcupine etc] is gathered in large quantities, broken up into small pieces with the fingers, and still further disintegrated and pounded with stones: it is then rolled over and over, pounded upon a heated flattened stone, and so with the sticky matter in it, rendered down into a dullish brown-black pasty mass, which, soon hardening, is put by for subsequent use. No water, wax, or other ingredients are used for in its manufacture.⁵⁰¹

Roth’s subsequent writings on the creation and use of gum cement detailed various other kinds of plants, whose roots were stripped bare and slowly cooked over a fire until a sticky mass could be collected. This would then be typically beaten between stones until it became pliable.⁵⁰² According to Khan, Roth had the Curator of the Technological Museum of Sydney analyse gum cement for its usefulness, after which

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 101-102.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁰² Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.7*, pp. 11-14.

it was concluded that, despite a tendency to fracture, the cement was excellent for its intended purpose.⁵⁰³

Of the raw materials collected by Coghlan, two of the examples shown above are hardened lumps of gum resin or cement. QE 2009.1-.2 (which is actually three separate objects), and QE 2011 are spinifex gum and beefwood gum, respectively. These objects show no signs of entanglement, nor is there any reason to expect European alternatives for cement were used in object manufacture—glues may be expensive, nails impractical for many objects, and cord too prone to decay.

Another plant material, acquired by Coghlan, is shown in the examples above. Unlike the two resins made from the roots of other plants, QE 6370 was not intended for use as an adhesive for other objects. This downy weed was instead, according to Museum records, ‘struck with blood in patterns on the men’s bodies at corroborees’.⁵⁰⁴ There is no evidence of entanglement with this specimen.

Coghlan sent a sample of pituri from Boulia to the Queensland Museum. This plant was used as a narcotic and was in high demand within the region, owing to its relative scarcity. Coghlan’s observations on the use of the pituri trade as a diplomatic tool between tribes has already been discussed in the previous chapter. Roth also wrote a substantial section of his *Ethnological Studies* on the uses and importance of pituri to Aboriginal people. Concerning Coghlan’s collection area for pituri, Roth observed:

If all is well, pituri arrives in Boulia in the rough at the beginning of March. By “in the rough” is meant the condition, very much in the half-green half-yellow tea with plenty of chips, in which it is conveyed in dilly-bags for barter, &c . . . From Boulia and Marion Downs, from Herbert Downs and Roxburgh, messengers are sent direct to the Ulaolinya tribes at Carlo with spears and boomerangs, “Government” and other blankets, nets, and especially red-coloured cloths, ribbons, and handkerchiefs to exchange and barter for large supplies of the drug.⁵⁰⁵

From this excerpt it is possible to see how this natural resource was affecting the incorporation of European materials in the Aboriginal trade networks. Pituri was a highly sought after and desirable drug, and the goods traded for it would have to be considered either on a parity of worth, or at least in larger quantities to be of equal value. This lends itself to the conclusion that the European goods Roth mentions

⁵⁰³ Kate Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection of Aboriginal Artefacts from North Queensland, Volume 2* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 1996), p. 124.

⁵⁰⁴ Although it is possible that ‘stuck’ was meant instead of ‘struck’, the database uses the latter word.

⁵⁰⁵ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 100.

above were either as highly valued as Pituri, or had become commonplace enough in Aboriginal society that they could be traded in large amounts for the narcotic.

Roth further observed that:

Among the aboriginals themselves everywhere as great a craving appears to exist for pituri as alcohol for Europeans, a fact which is put into practical and economical effect by drovers, station-managers, and others. Mr. Reardon, the manager at Carlo (1895), tells me that when on the Mulligan the supply of tobacco runs out the aboriginals will smoke pituri in their pipes.⁵⁰⁶

This suggests a number of things about the nature of pituri in Aboriginal communities. First, Europeans observed that it had popularity on par with alcohol for Europeans. Second, and seemingly in contradiction to the above, pituri's use was gradually diminished by the introduction of foreign drugs. Roth mentions the fact that when 'tobacco runs out the aboriginals will smoke pituri in their pipes', implying that tobacco was actually the new drug of preference for Aboriginal people, and that pituri may have been smoked to alleviate a temporary loss of tobacco. Although, from this single quote, it cannot be established for certain if this was the case, it is noteworthy that the use of foreign drugs like tobacco had become entangled with Aboriginal life. This is also evident in the material culture collected by Roth, although, as these examples were donated to the Australian Museum, they will be discussed in a later section.

These conclusions are not inconsistent with Isabel McBryde's research into the pituri trade.⁵⁰⁷ As McBryde observes, pituri leaves were the most sought after trade item for Aboriginal people in their own trade networks.⁵⁰⁸ Pituri had higher nicotine content than tobacco, and was not only used for ceremonial purposes. Pituri was also imbibed in less formal gatherings.⁵⁰⁹ It may have been the case that some Aboriginal people preferred the milder effect of tobacco, or that tobacco's introduction as a recreational narcotic meant that pituri could be used more exclusively for ceremony. Roth's observations may also have been in error, although the existence of numerous tobacco pipes in his Australian Museum collection certainly indicate the popularity of tobacco to Aboriginal people.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁷ Isabel McBryde, 'Goods from Another Country: Exchange Networks and the People of the Lake Eyre Basin' in *Australians to 1788*, D.J. Mulvaney and P.J. White [eds] (Sydney: Fairfax, Syme and Welda Assoc., 1987).

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

Two ochres, donated by Roth, are shown as examples of the raw materials which he collected from Aboriginal people. QE 2065 and QE 5946 are yellow and red ochres, respectively. The specimens themselves show no signs of any entanglement, though Roth's observations on the use of pigments and colours for ceremonies do record some interesting examples of such. Notably, Roth describes the methods of painting and feathering the body for ceremony and appearances, the latter he described as reflecting a desire by the decorated person to look 'flash'.⁵¹⁰ Roth observed a practice he thought to be 'in vogue throughout all these ethnographical districts', of using ochre to dust or grease feathers which were later stuck to flesh with a daubing of blood.⁵¹¹ The evidence of entanglement with European materials comes from the collection of blood, which Roth described as having been 'obtained by the ordinary bleeding process [and which] is collected into any convenient receptacle—anything, from an old disused jam tin to a piece of curved bark or a koolamon'.⁵¹²

The use of old jam tins recurred in other ceremonies that Roth witnessed, although not for the collection of blood. In his description of the Molonga corroboree, Roth noted this novel form of entanglement of European materials in Aboriginal ceremonies: 'With regard to the dancers, their head-gear instead of being cone-shaped is flattened from before backwards (sometimes made on the foundation of a disused bent jam-tin)'.⁵¹³ This ceremony also serves as a reference to the above discussion on the penetration of European mild narcotics into Aboriginal life. Roth described that, in the Molonga corroboree, the performers would break between dances to be served tea by the women of the community.⁵¹⁴

The final two examples of raw materials collected by Roth were both intended as trade goods. Although it is unclear whether Roth had informed the Museum of the purpose of QE 2075 and QE 2077, both objects are noted in the Ethnology Register as being 'ready for barter'. QE 2075 is a sample of kangaroo tail bones wrapped in bark, and displays no evidence of entanglement. QE 2077 is a sample of stingray barbs, wrapped in European cloth for purposes of transportation. Trade is limited by the

⁵¹⁰ Roth, *Ethnological Studies Among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 114.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁵¹² *Ibid.*

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

amount that can be transported, and the better a commodity can be stored or carried, the more lucrative an exchange is likely to be. Therefore, the use of European cloth to carry items for trade demonstrates that foreign goods had become important in Aboriginal trade patterns. This is also borne out by the discussion of pituri above, and by some of the objects in the Australian Museum's Roth collection. This will be discussed later in the chapter.

CHISELS

Coghlan - Entangled



Photo 193. QE 2027



Photo 194. QE 2027, alternate photo

QE 2027 – A wooden chisel from Boulia, measuring 516mm long. The chisel is made from a single piece of curved wood, with a flat piece of iron inserted into the proximal end of the wood, and fastened in place with gum resin and twine. The twine is consistent with human hair, although the database does not specify the exact material. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #173, and the accompanying notes are partly illegible. The notes read: 'Chisel, a piece of . . . iron . . . ground to a round edge + fastened by cord + gum in a rough wood handle'. This object was acquired by the Museum in 1894.



Photo 195. QE 2040



Photo 196. QE 2040, alternate photo

QE 2040 – A wooden chisel from Glenormiston, measuring 565mm long. The chisel is made from a single piece of wood, with a flat piece of iron inserted into the proximal end of the wood, and fastened in place with gum resin and cord. The Museum database describes the cord as being 'rope', and the regularity of the weave is consistent with European cord or twine identified in other examples. The wood has a white stone inserted into the base,

fastened in place with gum resin. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #749, though there are no accompanying notes. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.



Photo 197. QE 2041

QE 2041 – A wooden chisel from Glenormiston, measuring 603mm long. The chisel is made from a single piece of wood, with a piece of flat iron fixed into the head with gum resin and twine. The twine is consistent with human hair, and there is a white stone fastened to the base with resin. The shaft has a slightly glazed look and feel, as if a wood finish had been applied. Although this appearance is consistent with some pieces of shovel wood, the wood is slightly curved and lacks the straightness of most manufactured tools. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #793, with the accompanying notes being partly illegible. They read: ‘Chisel . . . flint at one end, iron at the other’. The Register does not specifically list this object as being collected by Coghlan, although the Museum database does. The closest name on the same page of the Register is Roth, although this does not discredit the notion that it was collected by Coghlan. The Museum acquired this object in 1897.

Coghlan - Ambiguous



Photo 198. QE 2043

QE 2043 – A wooden chisel collected from Glenormiston, measuring 571mm long. This chisel is made from a single piece of wood, with the ends having the remnants of gum resin on them. Both the blade and flint are missing from this object. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #795, with the accompanying description: ‘Quartz only, red + black bands’. The Register does not specifically list this object as being collected by Coghlan, although the Museum database does. The closest name on the same page of the Register is

Roth, although this does not discredit the notion that this was collected by Coghlan. This chisel was acquired by the Museum in 1897.

Roth - Orthodox



Photo 199. QE 5852

QE 5852 – A wooden chisel collected from Boulia, measuring 597mm long. This object is an adze-hafted chisel with a wooden shaft flanked at each end with hardened gum resin. The adze is difficult to distinguish from the gum, as the stone is almost completely covered in resin. The Ethnology Register identifies this object as #2408, with the accompanying description: ‘Chisel . . . curved—chert in wax’. Roth has marked this object as ‘S.C.3’, visible on the wooden shaft. Roth donated this chisel to the Museum in 1903, although he notes in his letter that it was actually collected in 1895, before he held the office of the Protector.

‘The Native Chisel’, as Roth describes, is:

. . . one of the most useful tools in the possession of the aboriginals, and universal throughout North-West-Central Queensland, is not used for purposes of exchange or barter. It consists of a smoothed and rounded piece of wood up to 2 feet in length and thick in proportion, generally made of gidyea, and bent into the shape of an arc. At either end of this wooden handle is a piece of flint-flake . . . firmly secured into position with cementing substance: it is this sharp little stone which is responsible for the fluted ornamentation so commonly found upon the other weapons, &c. Of recent years, one of these flints has been substituted by a portion of disused shear-blade . . ., barrel band, or other form of iron ground down or rounded off to the required shape, and with this modification the implement is most commonly now found.⁵¹⁵

The importance of the presence of iron in Aboriginal chisels cannot be over-stated. If a chisel has an iron blade instead of a flint-flake, then every object made with a chisel is an entangled object. Although neither Roth’s or Coghlan’s collection correspondence mention any details on the manufacture of the specific objects they sold or donated, it is entirely possible that many of the objects which display incised patterns were engraved with an entangled chisel. If Roth’s observation that the substitution of iron for flint-flakes is now ‘most commonly found’, then it becomes

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 101.

probable that most wooden and all engraved objects in the collections from the North-West-Central Queensland region are entangled objects. However, as there is no record of which tool was used to make each object, this must remain as speculation. There are ways to prove entanglement in this case which were beyond the scope of the thesis. These will be mentioned in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

All but one of the chisels collected by Coghlan display conclusive proof of entanglement. QE 2027, 2040, and 2041 all have iron heads at the proximal end of the wood. Although stone is also used in the distal positions of QE 2040 and 2041, the use of iron in these objects unquestioningly puts them into the category of entangled tools. QE 2043, which is listed in the Museum database as a Coghlan object, lacks either flint or iron. Although gum resin remains, the material used for chiselling has long since fallen out. The Museum records do not state whether the object used flint or iron, and it is not known whether the object was collected with the material missing. There is a chance that the object may actually be a chisel collected by Roth, as the Ethnology Register does not specifically cite Coghlan as the collector, and has Roth as the closest collector name on the same page of the Register. As there is no evidence to discount this object as part of the Coghlan collection, the Museum's description of it as such has been accepted.

Of the objects recorded as collected by Roth, only one chisel has been donated. This object is QE 5852, and displays what Roth may have termed traditional manufacturing methods. No iron or other foreign materials are used in this object, with the head being made from flaked stone adze fixed to wood. This object comes from Boulia, which is in the area he acknowledges as being dominated by iron-hafted chisels. That Roth did not collect an iron-hafted chisel from this locality, despite their frequency, is indicative of his collection bias. Whereas Coghlan collected four chisels, of which three display absolute evidence of entanglement, Roth collected only one, being an object which conforms to his description of orthodox objects from the region.

SUMMARY

The following table summarises the basic information regarding the three collections examined:

Table 3. Summary of the Roth and Coghlan collections

	<i>Collection</i>		
	Coghlan	Roth (QM)	Roth (AM)
Total Objects Examined	232	194	1617
Total Ambiguous	9	15	
Total Entangled	26	33	98
<i>Entangled Material:</i>			
<i>Cloth/Canvas</i>	15	3	
<i>Iron</i>	6	26	
<i>String/Twine</i>	7	5	
<i>China</i>	1	0	
Total Orthodox	197	146	
Orthodox objects showing probable <i>chiseling</i>	33	32	
Total Entangled objects if chiseled Orthodox objects included	59	65	

The Australian Museum figures are given here as a basic comparison and, for reasons to be discussed shortly, do not present the same depth of information as the Queensland Museum collections. The tallies for *Entangled Material* refer to the dominant materials which are absolutely evidence of entanglement, and some objects include a number of these. Figures are also given for a consideration of entanglement within the context of the prevalence, according to Roth, of the use of iron-headed chisels for engraving. The data relating to this refers only to objects which show definite engraved patterns, not any objects which *may* have been smoothed with a chisel. Further, this figure does not include objects which are engraved and have

already been included in the entangled category. It is entirely possible that iron or bottle glass may have been used to smooth some of these objects, however, it is certainly probable that iron was used to engrave numerous objects in the collections. If Roth is to be believed, then it is likely that *every* engraved object is an entangled object.

Comparing the incidence of entanglement in the Coghlan collection to the Roth collection, we find that: A contingency chi-square test revealed that there was no significant difference in the number of entangled compared to non-entangled objects between the Roth and Coghlan collections, $\chi^2(1, N = 426) = 1.81, ns$.

Likewise, a comparison made of the total entangled objects if chiseled orthodox objects are included, we find that: A contingency chi-square test revealed that there was no significant difference in the number of entangled compared to non-entangled objects, when chiseled items were included, between the Roth and Coghlan collections, $\chi^2(1, N = 426) = 2.70, ns$.

These figures show an incidence of entanglement—either with or without chiselled orthodox objects included—which is consistent across both collections. At first glance, this would seem to suggest that there is no significant difference in entanglement between the two collections. The difference in the entanglement, however, is not one of numbers, but in differences in objects. Over half of the Roth collection shows the use of iron as the primary entangled material, and the majority of this use is evident in the spears he donated. The Coghlan collection has greater variety of materials in the entangled objects, with the use of less iron and more cloth and canvas.

Roth's observations in his 1897 publication and bulletins have been discussed at length, and there are numerous references by him to the prevalence of European materials in Aboriginal material culture. But Roth was a systematic collector across a number of regions, while Coghlan acquired what he could from his local area. That the incidence of entanglement is not higher is a striking revelation, given the frequent admissions by Roth of the common-place nature of European material in Aboriginal communities (and in the many references to this in the correspondence from various

collectors discussed in Chapter Three). Roth's observations conform with those of other collectors, so this cannot be explained by Roth having been mistaken. Instead, the fact that there is not more evidence of entanglement in the collections (excluding a consideration of engraving) is indicative of a clear bias towards collecting material culture which was considered to be indexical of 'authentic' or traditional Aboriginal culture. Iron is not representative of a Stone Age object, so it would not have been as compelling to collectors who were motivated by aims of authenticity. That iron was collected at all is actually profound evidence of how common-place the material had become in the Aboriginal material culture.

These biases are also evident in the ethnographic literature of the major collectors and theorists of colonial Australia. For example, Spencer and Gillen were concerned about the dangers of European goods entering Aboriginal possession. They warned:

The idea of making any kind of clothing as a protection against cold does not appear to have entered the native mind, though he is keen enough upon securing the Government blanket when he get one, or, in fact, any stray cast-off clothing of the white man. The latter is however worn as much from motives of vanity . . . The very kindness of the white man . . . is by no means conducive to the longevity of the native . . . The natural result [of European garments being passed around a tribe], no sooner do the natives come into contact with white men, then phthisis and other diseases soon make their appearance, and, after a comparatively short time, all that can be done is to gather the few remnants of the tribe into some mission station where the path to final extinction may be made as pleasant as possible.⁵¹⁶

Spencer further condemned the influx of European materials into Aboriginal communities, in other writing. In particular, he despised the use of red rags, which had become so popular amongst the Aboriginal people he encountered.⁵¹⁷ In 1912, he wrote: 'It shows how readily the blackfellow succumbs to the temptation to use some white man's material and at once spoil his own originally simple but beautiful work'.⁵¹⁸

That ethnography focused on the physical 'degradations' of culture and linked this to radical changes in material culture was not surprising. Ethnography paid greater attention to what was physically quantifiable.⁵¹⁹ And despite the fact that European

⁵¹⁶ Baldwin Spencer and F.J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (New York: Dover Publications, 1968), pp. 17-18.

⁵¹⁷ John Mulvaney, "'Annexing All I Can Lay Hands On': Baldwin Spencer as Ethnographic Collector' in *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 147.

⁵¹⁸ Cited in *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁹ Michael Davis, *Writing Heritage: The Depiction of Indigenous Heritage in European-Australian Writings* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007), p. xiii.

material had become integral to Aboriginal material culture, and trade, European collectors were more concerned with orthodox objects. Stone tools were the priority collection piece of the European collector.⁵²⁰ Collectors sought the ‘authentic’ Aboriginal Australia.⁵²¹ When presented with evidence of integrated material, they either did not recognise it, or considered these objects as degenerations.

Roth was aware of entanglement in Aboriginal objects, as were many of his contemporaries. Although Roth collected entangled objects, he only collected these if the European material did not constitute the whole. Roth did not collect a single object of purely European manufacture, such as blankets, jam tins, handkerchiefs, and so on, even though he observed them as being commonly in use by Aboriginal people.⁵²² Herbert Basedow, who was the Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory, also preferred to collect objects with no evidence of European influence.⁵²³ Spencer and Gillen likewise sought what Mulvaney describes as ‘uncontaminated’ objects of Aboriginal material culture, displaying none of the admixture of foreign materials.⁵²⁴ Aware of his tastes, Spencer’s agents would sometimes collect iron-headed adzes and have the iron replaced with flint for greater ‘authenticity’. Not only was object entanglement being ignored, it was sometimes being erased from the material record in order to construct an ideal of Aboriginal culture.

As has been mentioned, Hamlyn-Harris and the Museum were especially interested in the idea of preserving Aboriginal culture through material acquisition and display. The correspondence examined in Chapter Three has already demonstrated that, by the time of Hamlyn-Harris’s requests for more material, correspondents advised that they could not dispatch objects as there were no longer any authentic examples to be found. The Aboriginal Life diorama was the product of Hamlyn-Harris’s drive for more material, as well as the consequence of decades of gradual collection for the Museum. Records at the Queensland Museum regarding the display history of objects are not always detailed pre-1985. Nonetheless, it can be established that there is no

⁵²⁰ Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, p. 115.

⁵²¹ Davis, *Writing Heritage*, p. xvii.

⁵²² Satterwait, *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 38

⁵²³ Kaus, *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 303.

⁵²⁴ Mulvaney, *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*, p. 147.

record of any of the entangled objects in the Roth and Coghlan collections having been exhibited in the Aboriginal Life diorama. A careful examination of the photographs also shows that the objects included fit the category of orthodox. This is a clear indication of the bias of the Museum in representing Aboriginal culture only with material that was considered to be authentic. The ‘imagined community’ of Aboriginal people that Europeans envisioned had no place for objects showing an admixture of cultures, or anything which did not fit with the description of Aboriginal people as Stone Age.

THE ROTH COLLECTION AT THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

The collection of material sold to the Australian Museum by Roth in 1905 exceeds the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum. Not only is the Australian Museum collection roughly ten times larger, it also represents, in the words of Khan, ‘one of the most complete collections of Aboriginal artefacts ever gathered together from one area’.⁵²⁵ The Roth Collection, as the material at the Australian Museum has come to be known, has been extensively referenced and researched by scholars and communities interested in the material.⁵²⁶ Although it has never been the intention of this thesis to examine the material at the Australian Museum in the same depth as that held in the Queensland Museum, it was necessary that the Roth Collection be both considered and referred to.

Khan’s four-volumed catalogue of the Roth Collection is an invaluable tool for understanding the material held in storage at the Australian Museum. The catalogue was primarily designed to serve as a tool for research, and to help preserve the collection from unnecessary harm. Nonetheless, Khan did not have the same intent as this thesis, which was to examine the Roth material in the context of its acquisition and display. Therefore, it became necessary, in the latter stages of my research to investigate the Roth Collection directly for examples of entanglement in the material.

⁵²⁵ Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection, Volume One* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 2000), p.11.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

The actual research undertaken on the Roth Collection at the Australian Museum was conducted in two stages. The first was to examine Khan's catalogues and determine the level of entanglement recorded therein, and the second was to visit the Australian Museum and to directly examine the objects for any further evidence of entanglement. Khan uses 310 images of separate objects in her catalogues of the Roth Collection (not counting images repeated in the introduction section of each volume). Of these images, only 22 show any examples of entanglement.⁵²⁷

Time constraints and the availability of staff required to oversee the examination of the Roth Collection meant that my research into the Australian Museum collection was limited. As such, the same kind of examination methods which were used at the Queensland Museum—such as measuring, photographing, recording detailed notes, and cross-referencing archives—could not be conducted. Further, the Australian Museum no longer holds much of the correspondence from Roth, these being noted by their archive department as missing or having been deliberately destroyed a century ago. Hence, the aim of the thesis to connect the material with the documentary archives could not have been achieved in the case of the Australian Museum's Roth material.

The material at the Australian Museum was examined in as detailed a manner as time constraints allowed. The objects were examined for specific instances of entanglement and, therefore, it is possible that a few instances may have been overlooked, and that the level of entanglement could be slightly higher than was observed. The Australian Museum's database was also referred to for any notes regarding the materials in the objects, and in many cases the Museum records confirmed that an object used European materials. As is the case with both the Coghlan and Roth collections at the Queensland Museum, the Roth Collection at the Australian Museum is no longer entirely intact, and thus cannot be studied in its original entirety. There were 2,139 objects listed in the Australian Museum's database as being part of the Roth Collection. Of these, 522 objects have either been

⁵²⁷ These images can be found in: *Ibid*, p. 91, 98, 129, 133, and 172; Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection, Volume Two* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 1996), p. 39, 118, 123, 113, and 164; Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection, Volume Three* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 2003), p. 50, 69, 74, and 82; Khan, *Catalogue of the Roth Collection, Volume Four* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 2004), p. 18, 29, 45, 54, 60, 74, 96, and 100.

de-accessioned, loaned out, listed as Secret Sacred, are missing, or have not been correctly located in storage.⁵²⁸ Only those objects which were locatable could be examined for evidence of entanglement.

Appendix C presents data from 98 of these objects, which were all found to show evidence of entanglement. Though a numerically higher figure than the amount of entangled objects in the Roth material at the Queensland Museum, this figure is not as proportionally significant. When the Roth collection at the Queensland Museum was compared to his Australian Museum collection, on the basis of the incidence of entanglement: A contingency chi-square test revealed that there was a significant difference in the number of entangled compared to non-entangled objects between the Queensland Museum and Australian Museum Roth collections, $\chi^2(1, N = 1811) = 7.31, p < .05$. Entangled objects were more frequent in the Queensland Museum collection.

The evidence of entanglement in the Roth Collection bears out the observations of Roth regarding the use of European materials in indigenous tools and manufactures. Three chisels, described by the Australian Museum as ‘wooden gouges’, use flat iron blades instead of stones.⁵²⁹ Five other spokeshaves in the collection use sharpened iron pieces instead of wood or stone, and iron is also used in numerous other objects, such as fish hooks. Like the sheaths for stone knives collected by Coghlan, five sheaths in this collection show evidence of entanglement. In the case of these objects, each has either sack or blanket cloth on the interior of the paper bark sheaths.⁵³⁰

The largest concentration of European material in any one object category in the Roth Collection is to be found amongst the dilly bags. There are 25 dilly bags in the collection, each of which uses European cloth or thread to create either bands of colour in the body of the bags, or to use as carry-strings. The most common use of cloth or canvas in these bags appears to be for aesthetic reasons. Nonetheless, it is also possible that canvas was chosen as a primary material for many of these bags

⁵²⁸ I am grateful to Anna Grey, the Collection Manager at the Australian Museum for supplying me with these figures, which she hand-wrote on to a database print-out. She gathered the information from the Australian Museum’s database.

⁵²⁹ These objects are E 013485, 013487, and 013488.

⁵³⁰ These objects are E 013549-002, 013554-002, 013560-002, 013563-002, and 013571-002.

because of its durability or availability in comparison to orthodox indigenous materials.

The Australian Museum material also includes a number of objects with no direct comparison in the Queensland collections. The most interesting of these, because they are entangled objects made from orthodox materials, is a collection of eight smoking pipes. The Australian Museum records indicate that these pipes were specifically used to smoke European tobacco. However, the objects themselves use no European material in their construction. The evidence for entanglement comes from their intended purpose. Roth noted, in his third bulletin, that if European tobacco pipes could not be found then Aboriginal people would manufacture their own from bamboo.⁵³¹ These pipes resemble rudimentary flutes or bamboo cylinders, stopped at either or both ends with wax. E 013507 is stuffed in one end with hessian sack, rather than the customary beeswax. As a new object, modeled after a European one, and intended to facilitate the consumption of a European trade good, these tobacco pipes are unique and fascinating examples of entangled objects.

Despite some flamboyant and novel examples of entangled material, the Australian Museum collection of Roth objects is noteworthy for its lack of comparative entanglement in relation to the Queensland Museum collection. Of the eighty spears examined, not a single object showed any sign of entanglement. Considering that the Queensland Museum collection of Roth spears display more than a fifty percent rate of entanglement, this lack of entanglement in the Australian Museum spears is surprising. The reason for this can be seen when the Australian Museum collection is considered as a whole. Although quality, value, and aesthetics are subjectively defined, it is not unreasonable to say that the quality of objects Roth sold to the Australian Museum was of a generally very high standard, when compared to the material donated to Queensland. Whereas some necklaces and pendants in the Queensland Museum had no carry-strings, every object of this nature in the Australian Museum collection does. Most of the stone axes in the Australian Museum are hafted, whereas most of those in the Queensland Museum are not. The fact that the Australian Museum Roth collection is of a generally higher aesthetic standard lends

⁵³¹ Walter Roth, *North Queensland Ethnography: Bulletin no.3. Food: its search, capture, and preparation* (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1901), p. 31.

itself to the conclusion that Roth held boomerangs in higher regard as specimens of Aboriginal culture. As has been observed previously, Roth donated no boomerangs to the Queensland Museum, and their presence in his Australian Museum collection could indicate that he valued them as either more pleasing, or more interesting examples of traditional manufacture.

According to Roth, the Australian Museum material was his own private collection, gathered with his own finances. Roth claimed that the Queensland Museum collection was gathered with funds secured from the Government specifically for artefact collection. Whether this is true or not, it is certainly a fact that Roth had kept what he felt was the best material for himself and donated the less commercially viable part of his collection to the Queensland Museum. Indicative of Roth's own devaluation of inauthentic material, proportionally more entangled objects were donated to the Queensland Museum than sold to the Australian Museum. This is a crucial point to realise when considering Roth's interests in Aboriginal culture. Although he observed evidence of entanglement, which has been abundantly demonstrated in his writing quoted in this chapter, he did not extensively comment upon it. His interest in the Aboriginal culture was an interest in their perceived authenticity, not in their capacity to adapt and survive to their new circumstances. As a discussion of the literature in Chapter Two, Three, and this chapter has demonstrated, these views were commonplace amongst those interested in Aboriginal culture.

CONCLUSION

Although Roth was far more sympathetic than many of his contemporaries, it is certainly the case that he was predisposed to observe and record so-called traditional Aboriginal ways of life. As he told Spencer in 1898: 'Personally I admire and respect the aborigines – so long as they are not corrupted by opium, alcohol and syphilis'.⁵³² These three detriments were all foreign influences on Aboriginal people, and Roth's displeasure here is an indication not only of his concern for the health of Aboriginal

⁵³² Cited in: John Mulvaney, 'From Oxford to the Bush: WE Roth, WB Spencer and Australian Anthropology' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, Russell McDougall and Iain Davidson [eds] (United States of America: Left Coast Press, 2008), p. 113.

people under his authority, but also his desire to see them retain their own cultural purity.

The commercial element of Roth's collection has relevance for Jones's argument, cited in Chapter One, that Reuther was deliberately using *toas* to respond to a commercial market—especially in regards to the collector's desire for indigenous artefacts. I do not believe that Roth was motivated by commercial aims when he was collecting objects from Aboriginal people. Roth's curiosity and passion for ethnography are amply demonstrated in his correspondence, and his ethnographic literature. This interest is not only demonstrated in his own writing, but in the fact that many members of his family were also authors of ethnographic literature.⁵³³ However, the bitterness Roth must have felt at having been virtually hounded from the Office of Protector may have influenced his decision to sell his private collection to the Australian Museum, so as to deny Queensland the benefit of his larger collection. The fact that this material was more numerous, better kept and documented than the Queensland Museum collection, and showed a lower incidence of entanglement, can be explained as a result of his own taste for that material. That he then sold his private collection was partly a matter of necessity—it would have been impractical and costly to have taken it with him to Guyana. Regardless of his motivations, the sale of the collection earned him a great deal of money and demonstrates that there was a commercial demand from museums for Aboriginal material culture.⁵³⁴

Irrespective of the commercial element in material culture collection in Australia, this chapter has demonstrated a strong link between Aboriginal adaptation and their collected material. This adaptation is evidence of the survival, endurance, and continuity of Aboriginal people in the colonial context. Roth observed frequent evidence of entangled objects in his literature and, although Coghlan did not make comment on this, he obviously also saw the use of European materials in Aboriginal material culture. This is likely the case when Roth's observations from Glenormiston and Boulia are considered, as well as the incidence of entanglement in Coghlan's

⁵³³ Reynolds, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, pp. 41-55.

⁵³⁴ The sale occurred in 1905, and was worth a year's salary to Roth, or £450. See: Khan, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, pp. 187-188.

collection itself. The two collections include numerous objects which are clearly entangled, as well as the same amount of engraved objects which were most probably the product of the use of iron. When these two categories are considered together, there is no doubt that the rate of entanglement in the collections is noteworthy. Yet, entangled objects were maligned as adulterated material, and inauthentic degenerations of traditional Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal people were interesting to collectors and the Museum because they were considered a Stone Age culture and, as such, any evidence that their material culture was not Stone Age was ignored. The complete lack of engagement with this reality in the Australian Aboriginal Life diorama demonstrates this notion. These ideas will now be turned to in the concluding chapter of the thesis, where the intersection of perceptions of Aboriginality, through school text books, collector correspondence, and the use of the material record will be discussed. The implications these perceptions had for colonial policy, especially as manifested through museums, will be outlined.

CONCLUSION

In the Introduction I put forward the notion that the Queensland Museum had engaged in the manufacturing of Aboriginal identity through acquisition and display. I also stated that this manufactured identity was based on a false interpretation of the actual evidence that the Museum had acquired. My discussion of the Roth and Coghlan collections and the Queensland Museum's Australian Aboriginal Life diorama, as well as the documents associated with them, has demonstrated that the Museum participated in the manufacturing of Aboriginal identity as an imagined 'other'. As proposed, I have also demonstrated that this imagining of Aboriginal people through display was a false interpretation of the material evidence in the collections themselves. The evidence of entanglement in the collections challenges the views in the primary literature, and presents an image of the frontier as an entangled place itself—of cross-cultural exchanges and interactions, and where Aboriginal people used new materials in an imaginative and adaptive fashion, recontextualising them within their own material culture. Yet this frontier was not the image which was displayed by the Museum, which instead presented an orthodox view of Aboriginal stagnation and conservatism. This creation of an Aboriginalism was a central element in the administration of colonial power over indigenous peoples.

The notion that museums have participated in creating 'others' lends itself to a discussion of the nature of power and narrative in pedagogical institutions. In a public lecture given at the University of New England in 2003, historian Janis Wilton commented that national museums are seen as:

... sites of national remembering, as places where the nation's narratives are put on display and invite a reinforcement of national values and ideals. They are also increasingly sites of debates about whose memories and whose histories should dominate.⁵³⁵

Wilton argued that this debate had particular relevance for Australian museums, and formed part of a larger debate on 'white' and 'black' relations. The debate, which centred on Australia's record of guilt about the treatment of Aboriginal people, has generally been divided into a 'black armband' and a 'white blindfold' view of

⁵³⁵ Janis Wilton, *Museums and Memory* (University of New England: Publications Office, UNE, 2004), p. 5.

history.⁵³⁶ The National Museum became a central element of this issue in 2001 when it opened an exhibit called 'Contested Frontiers', in which massacres of Aboriginal people were presented too uncritically.⁵³⁷ The consequent publication of Keith Windschuttle's revisionist history, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, in which it was claimed that evidence of violence against Aboriginal people was either distorted, embellished, or made up, began a vigorous debate over issues such as alleged frontier violence, death tolls, and exploitation.⁵³⁸

Instead of addressing the issue of the debate surrounding the National Museum with a discussion of the National Museum, I am now offering my analysis of the Queensland Museum's own creation of Aboriginal history as an example in which narratives of identity were conducted by pedagogical institutions. The narrative in the Queensland Museum was constructed through the interpretation of culture by display. The spectacle of museum exhibits of indigenous peoples preserved the cultural divide by containing and displaying material culture with the aim of education and entertainment.⁵³⁹

Museums promoted the idea of the nation by presenting the preserved objects of peoples who were foreign and virtually unknown to the European inhabitants of the Empire.⁵⁴⁰ Civic museums had the authority of the state behind them and, therefore, their exhibitions held the sanctioned agreement of the powerful and the learned. This institutionalisation of knowledge was part of a growing trend in the latter half of the Victorian period to link the sciences and the arts with colonial government. As Carol Breckenridge argued: 'The commodified, colonised and textualised object became a

⁵³⁶ For a fuller extrapolation of this debate, see: Bain Attwood and S.G. Foster [eds], *Frontier Conflict: The Australian Experience* (Canberra: National Museum of Australia, 2003), pp. 13-17. The phrase 'black armband' was coined by historian Geoffrey Blainey to denote a politicisation of histories of racial conflict in Australia, where European settlement is vilified. 'White blindfold' was coined by Reynolds, who was referring to histories which ignored issues of guilt and violence towards Australia's Aboriginal population.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 16.

⁵³⁸ Keith Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, Volume One: Van Dieman's Land 1803-1847* (Sydney: Macleay Press, 2002). For responses and criticisms to this work, see: Robert Manne [ed.] *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (Melbourne: Black Inc. Agenda, 2003).

⁵³⁹ Coombes, *Oxford Art Journal*, p. 59.

⁵⁴⁰ Amiria Henare, *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 210.

vehicle and a metaphor for the global extension of culture itself'.⁵⁴¹ This is a direct example of the arguments I discussed in Chapter One by Smith and Said that European inquisitiveness and study of foreign people was a pervasive element in their control.

Museum collections could display the power of the state by showcasing the material culture of its subjugated peoples. More than this, however, the display and categorisation of material gave the institution the ultimate authority on how to define, and to confine.⁵⁴² The fact that these categorisations generally agreed with those made by collectors or scientists who were not always directly linked to the institution mattered little: it was the museum and, by extension, the state which decided which interpretation would prevail. Ethnological and anthropological displays, therefore, created the impression of control over the people to whom the objects had once belonged.⁵⁴³ By the categorization of objects, cultures could be differentiated and rendered as archetypes.⁵⁴⁴ This interrelation between ethnological displays and Empire is further reinforced when it is remembered that it was commonplace in the nineteenth century for government agents to collect.⁵⁴⁵ Walter Roth exemplifies this because he continued to collect Aboriginal material culture after he became Protector of Aborigines. Roth also cultivated good relations with museum officials, such as Robert Etheridge, head curator, and Charles Hedley, malacologist from the Australian Museum.⁵⁴⁶

At the close of the nineteenth century, museums had become integral to the research and theory of anthropology.⁵⁴⁷ Henry Ling Roth recommended that museums were best used when they displayed ethnological materials to demonstrate the relative development of an indigenous people, and to educate Europeans as to the nature of

⁵⁴¹ Carol A. Breckenridge, 'The Aesthetics of Colonial Collecting: India at World Fairs' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Apr., 1989), pp. 214-215.

⁵⁴² I paraphrase Griffiths here, who observed that 'Collection therefore defined – and confined – the indigenous culture'. See: Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, p. 55.

⁵⁴³ Breckenridge, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, p. 209.

⁵⁴⁴ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 170.

⁵⁴⁵ Breckenridge, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, p. 209.

⁵⁴⁶ Khan, *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Museum Collections*, p. 166.

⁵⁴⁷ Henare, *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange*, p. 210. For a summation of the colonial and institutional growth of anthropology, see: Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, pp. 25-27.

the world's people.⁵⁴⁸ Anthropology, in the Victorian age, assumed that the physical evolution of 'man' was related to everything he did, and that material culture studies could demonstrate the links between them.⁵⁴⁹ Museum curators, therefore, had to make their exhibits informative by visually explaining the evolution of technology and indigenous peoples. This would often involve the presentation of objects in hierarchies, so as to emphasise a dichotomy between the old and the new. Hence, the evolutionary system of classification used in the Pitt Rivers Museum was ideal for this purpose. As Henry Ling Roth explained its virtues:

Now as regards the ethnological arrangement, the idea is to give within a certain or uncertain perspective a view of the manufactures of any given people, in order that we may get some notions it may be as to their productions, or to understand their position in the scale of art or manufactures, or to get some knowledge as to their general state of culture, or a fair idea as to what sort of people they are.⁵⁵⁰

Henry Ling Roth also explicitly envisioned the links between anthropology and government as one giving power and knowledge to the other. The implications of anthropology for government were that the discipline could advise colonial authorities as to the nature of the indigenous people they governed. If authorities could understand their populations, they could control them. Robert Hampson has identified this element of Henry Ling Roth's conception of the use of anthropology for government. Henry Ling Roth wrote:

[Anthropology] . . . is essential to every civilised community which trades with, or is called upon to govern native communities . . . A thorough knowledge of the native races . . . can teach what methods of government and what forms of taxation are most suited to particular tribes, or to the stage of civilisation we find them.⁵⁵¹

The imagination of indigenous communities, through the mindset the anthropological discipline inspired, could see people categorised as best suited government. Classifying colonised people as Stone Age, or using museum displays to show their static or doomed existence, could limit any chance indigenous peoples had of being considered full and equal citizens of the colonial state. Through the act of display, indigenous people's sense of agency and continuity with the present could be denied and, thus, so too could their participation in national narratives be excluded.

⁵⁴⁸ Roth, *The Museums Journal*, pp. 286-288.

⁵⁴⁹ Coombes, *Oxford Art Journal*, p. 60

⁵⁵⁰ Roth, *The Museums Journal*, p. 287.

⁵⁵¹ Cited in: Robert Hampson, 'Henry Ling Roth: *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*' in *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*, Russell McDougall and Iain Davidson [eds] (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008), p. 70.

I have approached my analysis of the Queensland Museum's participation in the manufacturing of Aboriginal people as an 'other' by using both material and documentary evidence as crucial components in the structure of my argument. I have shown that the documents are linked, not only to the actual collection of objects, but also to European perceptions of Aboriginal people and the perception of the material culture itself. Therefore, the documents and the material collections are inextricable. I have also employed a discrete discussion of two kinds of frontiers throughout this thesis in order to make my point. The first frontier I have consistently discussed is the imagined frontier. This frontier is akin to the textual frontier which Healy conceived, and that I discussed in Chapter One. This was the written expression of the frontier, created from school-books and half-knowledge of indigenous people as an imagined primitive. Material culture was conceived as part of this imagined frontier when it played into conceptions of the primitive. Spears, knives, and stone axes were all menacing weapons of the unknown Aboriginal, for instance. These conceptions could come from those who operated on the actual frontier, as well as from those who only read about it. This imagined frontier formed the contextual background of observers who set out into the 'wilderness'. They encountered the 'other' in Aboriginal people partly because they had already imagined it to be there. Yet, it was the sustained interaction of these observers with Aboriginal people which produced the second kind of frontier I have described.

This second frontier is the 'actual' frontier, at least as it would be conventionally understood. This is the physical space where European settlement encountered and crossed over with Aboriginal settlement. This is the kind of frontier that Reynolds, Reece, and Roberts have described (whose views I discussed in Chapter One). It was in this space that two distinct cultures interacted and contested, and it was in this frontier that collectors and observers formed their opinions of Aboriginal people. Yet, I have shown that the frontier was more than a contestation of identity. The frontier was not simply the space of absolute cultural and racial differences that Turner conceived, though I have shown that Europeans did define themselves by contrast with Aboriginal people. Nor was the frontier merely a place of exchange, where goods and customs were bartered. The prevalence of entanglement in the collections I have examined demonstrate that the frontier was a place of exchange, but it was also a place in which this exchange could complement identities. For example, the

incorporation of cloth in the shield QE 2523 had a useful function, which shows the practicality of entanglement. It also had a purely decorative function, and this helps us to understand that there was a sense of appreciation for the produce between cultures. Just as collectors appreciated Aboriginal material culture for its aesthetic or 'authentic' value, Aboriginal people appreciated the material culture of Europeans for its aesthetic or practical value. There may have been an appreciation of the European 'authentic' object by Aboriginal people as well, though this element needs to be examined in the context of trade relations and, though this is beyond the intent of my thesis, it is hoped that these issues will be explored in the future.

Finally, I have envisioned a third kind of frontier. This was the preserved frontier, which synthesised elements of both the imagined and the actual. Yet it was a preservation of something which did not truly exist and, thus, was an extension of the imagined frontier. The preserved frontier was the Museum's depiction of Aboriginal people, as constructed by the Aboriginal Life diorama. This preserved frontier had a tangible and physical presence, embodied in its use of objects of an 'authentic' Stone Age culture. But, this third frontier was dominated by pre-conceptions. So, despite the heavy reliance on material elements of the actual frontier, the interpretation of these objects as traditional and authentic meant this new frontier was itself an unreality. The thinking of curatorial staff was dominated by the imagined frontier and used their storehouse of material to portray the other side of the frontier as simply different, alien, and stagnant. This third frontier, therefore, was a physical manifestation or enshrinement of the first.

Although there were traces of Aboriginal participation in the creation of the actual frontier—through their resistance, trade, guidance and presence—the imagined frontier was one in which Aboriginal people had no living influence. This frontier was a realm in which Europeans admired, reviled, catalogued and described a fictional embellishment of Aboriginal people and culture. The Queensland Museum used its own storehouse of real Aboriginal artefacts to present the evidence of this imagined frontier, but their interpretation was flawed. The evidence that the Museum had acquired from its collectors, as shown in this thesis by the Roth and Coghlan collections, demonstrated proof of adaptation through the entangled objects. However, adaptation was adulteration and degeneration in the eyes of observers, and

this evidence was not considered to be indicative of the authentic Aboriginal culture that empathetic Europeans wanted to help preserve. As such, objects which proved that Aboriginal people were Stone Age—and apparently incapable of adjusting to the frontier—were preferred and displayed. The consequent display was therefore an imagining of pre-contact Australia. This was an imagination that was different from the original imagination of the ‘other’, and from the reality of the entangled frontier which was concealed in plain sight among the collected objects by the preconceptions of the frontier. This display took no account of contemporary Aboriginal people and the ready and frequent adaptation to foreign materials they were engaging in. The categorisation of material culture by observers and collectors denied the original manufacturers the right to impose their own meanings on their objects.⁵⁵² Aboriginal culture, by the definition of European observers, was unchanging. Changes in culture only served to prove what every European took to be an incontestable fact—that Aboriginal people were soon to be extinct. The display was as much about entombment as it was preservation.

In regards to the debate on museums and the right to narrate Aboriginal history, the Queensland Museum demonstrated in 1914 the exclusion from this history of Aboriginal contributions. The contributions which were made were only the objects themselves, and these were entirely interpreted through the peculiar vision of non-Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal Life diorama presented a view that Aboriginal people had limited imagination, which went unchallenged through much of the twentieth century, but in reality it was the limited imagination of the Museum that ignored the evidence in its own store rooms. This means that Aboriginal people were denied participation in conveying to Museum visitors who they were. This denial lasted at least as long as the display.

But a careful examination of the Roth and Coghlan collections, as well as the wider documentation surrounding them, has revealed that Aboriginal people were not as the Museum imagined them to be. At the time of collection, they showed remarkable tenacity, survivalism, and adaptability, not only in maintaining their traditions but also augmenting them with whatever resources proved to be more useful for the adverse

⁵⁵² Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 174.

circumstances with which they were confronted. Cultural resistance was a reality on the frontier, though this thesis has demonstrated that cultural resistance was less of a norm than it appeared.⁵⁵³ Through the connection of Roth's and other collectors' writing to the objects, I have demonstrated that the prevalence of European materials in objects of traditional Aboriginal manufacture was common. While others may take this argument as part of the process of ambivalence or hybridisation, I chose to focus on entanglement.

Bhabha coined the term 'ambivalence' when referring to the mimicry of the coloniser by the colonised.⁵⁵⁴ He drew on the work of the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who defined mimicry as 'like the technique of camouflage practised in human warfare', and applied the concept to his own theory of cultural resistance in the colonial context.⁵⁵⁵ Ambivalence, according to Bhabha, is a form of mimicry which implies that the colonised adopt the cultural norms and trappings of the coloniser in a selective fashion which makes them 'almost the same, *but not quite*' as their colonial masters.⁵⁵⁶ This mimicry could also lead to a heightened sense of the 'other', through the incongruity of familiarity and physical difference. The effect of this ambivalence is to create a compromise between cultural independence, resistance, and the need for a static and secure society.⁵⁵⁷

Ambivalence implies an agency on the part of the colonised which the reality of the Queensland frontier does not entirely support. Cultural exchanges certainly occurred between European and Aboriginal people, though the process was not entirely mutual, nor always rapacious. Eco defines exchange as a 'two-way process of reciprocal influence and respect' in which one culture interacts with another to barter goods,

⁵⁵³ The literature on frontier violence and resistance is so vast it could almost stand un referenced. Some examples of sources which deal specifically with this topic are: Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier*; Henry Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain: The question of genocide in Australian history* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 2001); Henry Reynolds, 'Aboriginal-European contact history: Problems and issues' in *Pastiche I: Reflections on 19th century Australia*, Penny Russell and Richard White [eds] (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1994); A. Dirk Moses [ed.], *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005); McGrath, *The Roth Family, Anthropology, & Colonial Administration*.

⁵⁵⁴ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

⁵⁵⁵ Bhabha uses the same quote in his *The Location of Culture*. Quote from: Jacques Lacan, *Of the Gaze* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1977), p. 99.

⁵⁵⁶ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 86.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

customs, or language on an essentially equal basis.⁵⁵⁸ Eco is not so naïve to think that this model is realistic, and instead opts to define interactions between cultures in more complex terms. According to Eco, ‘conquest, cultural pillage, and exchange are abstract models, and in reality there are a variety of cases in which these attitudes are merged’.⁵⁵⁹ The Queensland frontier of the colonial period represents one of the ‘variety of cases’ in which exchange, conquest, and pillage are themselves entangled. Added to this mix of frontier encounters are a distinct sense of adaptation, ingenuity and survivalism on the part of Aboriginal people, and this is demonstrated in the collections. The evidence I presented in Chapter Four shows that utility was a common element in entangled objects. Cloth was not adopted to ‘mimic’ the coloniser, it was instead used as an alternative material in a traditional object. This is innovation and cross-cultural entanglement, not an attempt to camouflage or deceive. Aboriginal people were not simply being displaced and depopulated helplessly, but they demonstrated their own agency in trying circumstances by using the manufactures of the Europeans for their own ends and, sometimes, in trading this new kind of material with inquisitive observers for some gain. Though the balance of power was almost always with the Europeans, this does not diminish the agency of Aboriginal people.

The material examined in this thesis could be re-examined by someone from another discipline with different research methods and interests than mine, such as archaeology. For example, forensic analysis of the materials in the objects could be conducted to find further examples of entanglement. Such tests might also be able to indicate how frequently entangled objects were used as opposed to orthodox ones. A comparison of the width of iron chisels and chiseled marks may also be able to prove my assertion that all engraved objects collected in the period Roth studied are most probably examples of entangled objects.

I have also used the phrase ‘value’ to convey a vernacular understanding of the concept. Yet, new research into trade records between collectors and Aboriginal people, in the context of my findings, would be another means of re-examining frontier relations. It may in fact be possible to ascertain precise values of entangled

⁵⁵⁸ Eco, *Serendipities*, p. 54.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

objects in comparison with orthodox objects, and to see if and how valuations of these differed between the collectors and the manufacturers. These are some examples of future possibilities of research on the Roth and Coghlan collections, but the same methods and approach I have employed on these could be used on any collection of indigenous material culture. It is my intention to continue the research I have begun here and examine whether or not other collections exhibit the same rates of entanglement as Roth's and Coghlan's. Of particular interest to me is research on those collectors who, like Roth, were also agents of colonial governments, and what a direct comparison of their collections may tell us for historical analysis and power relations. These are implications for future studies.

At least three generations of visitors to the Queensland Museum would have seen the Aboriginal Life diorama. No other display of Aboriginal material culture at the Queensland Museum challenged this exhibition in the time in which it was enshrined. The exhibition barely changed until its dismantling. Indeed, the removal of the Investigator Tree from the exhibit was the only major change in the seventy years of the diorama that is recorded in the Museum's own notes.⁵⁶⁰ The significance of the display's permanency must not be downplayed. The state had two dominant pedagogical institutions, the Museum and the school system, and it was through these two institutions that Aboriginal culture was primarily reinterpreted and described for young Australians. The Museum acted as a supplement to the school room, in the same way that Dewey was discussed in Chapter One as having envisioned it as the 'ideal classroom'. School children then, as now, were brought through the Museum five days a week to interact with and observe its many displays. Many of the teachers who brought the children to the Museum had no doubt been through as school-children themselves, and may have found it natural to show their students one of the major sources by which they acquired their own knowledge of Aboriginal people. That the dominant display of Aboriginal material culture was also a fundamentally misrepresented display of Aboriginal culture means that children were being ill-informed. The diorama emerged from the culmination of Victorian-era science and prevailing views and obsessions about 'race', evolution, and progress. That the

⁵⁶⁰ The 'Investigator Tree' was reputedly carved with the name of Matthew Flinders ship ('The Investigator') in 1802. It was rediscovered in 1842 when the captain of 'The Beagle', famous for Darwin's voyage came across it on Sweer's Island. The tree is now stored by the Queensland Museum.

diorama stood unchanged for so long meant that a Victorian-era conception of Aboriginal people formed a dominant part of the state's depiction of Queensland's indigenous inhabitants for most of the way through the twentieth century. Consequently, due to the process of Federation, the Queensland narrative forms part of the national narrative, and Aboriginal participation in conveying their sense of being in the colonial period is denied on the national scale.

In the first chapter I proposed a perceptual model, based on the museum theory literature, regarding the ways in which visitors and museums operate in the act of display and perceiving the display. This model conceptualised the Queensland Museum as having formed its interpretations from the prevailing attitudes of its staff and from the scientists and collectors who communicated their own ideas with it. The acquisition and interpretation of material culture was also based on these attitudes and imaginings. The product of this interpretation, in the context of Queensland's Aboriginal population, was the Aboriginal Life diorama. This display was the work of the Museum's then director, Hamlyn-Harris, and it was the Museum's own synthesis of collector opinion, cultural and educational background, and objects which formed the dominant element of interpretation. Visitors to the Museum had less at their disposal with which to form their own interpretations. Besides the Museum's visualisation of Aboriginal culture in the Aboriginal Life diorama, visitors could only draw on their pre-existing knowledge which was itself based on dominant cultural attitudes and another apparatus of state-education—school text-based education. Individual visitor discernment may have varied dramatically, but there is no reason to suppose that many people would have substantial practical knowledge of the displays they viewed. Whatever the exposure of the Museum staff to the particular texts analysed here, there is no reason to suppose that other texts, perhaps in other countries, were any better.

This perceptual model did not just provide the theoretical framework for the thesis, however. The model also illustrates the fact that all of the information presented in the thesis is inter-linked, that in the perception of Aboriginality by Europeans, the Museum display cannot be considered in isolation. The fact that the Museum and school books form part of the state's pedagogy is crucial. By discussing this source, I have shown the kinds of perceptions that Museum visitors brought to their

interactions with the Aboriginal Life display, as well as the kinds of ideas which formed the cultural basis of collectors, Museum staff, and possibly even Roth (who would have taught through these books while he worked as a school teacher). As the Museum was envisioned as an educative tool akin to the class room, my discussion of school-based education in Queensland conveyed the state's endorsed views on depictions of Aboriginal people as marginal, savage, helpless, and rapidly vanishing.

Likewise, my discussion of the Museum archives showed that, although the correspondents had more ready and substantial access to Aboriginal people, their views were not remarkably different from those propounded by the school books. My presentation of data on the letters also demonstrated the incontestable fact that there was a clear bias in letter writing towards issues unrelated to Aboriginal culture. This indicates that, like the school text-books, the Museum was much more interested in non-Aboriginal material and issues. Where Aboriginal people were discussed they were inherently objectified as curiosities or impediments. Subsequently, Aboriginal material culture was more relevant to collectors than Aboriginal people themselves, demonstrated by the appearance that the dead held more value than the living.

These depictions were utilised to show the foundation on which Roth and Coghlan and, more importantly, the Museum based their own interpretations of the material culture. Crucially, I also used the collections to demonstrate orthodox perspectives which informed the Museum and its collectors were false. It is undeniable that Aboriginal people were readily capable of adaptation to a new way of life and survival. The fact that Aboriginal people have survived needs no further elaboration. Yet, my purpose was to demonstrate that ample evidence of Aboriginal adaptation to new materials and circumstances was either overlooked or deliberately ignored. The reason for this ignorance was a pre-conception of Aboriginal culture as Stone Age. Collectors took the knowledge they had gathered of Aboriginal people before they had even had substantial dealings with them. For example, Roth taught at Sydney and Brisbane Boys Grammar schools, instructing his students through text books whose depictions of Aboriginal people must have caused him to wonder at their true nature. Roth's oldest brother Henry Ling Roth had already dealt with Aboriginal people while employed around Mackay, and it is possible (though not documented) that he gained some perspective here too. But Roth was more empathetic than most of his

contemporaries and his keenness to convey the wonder of Aboriginal people has been demonstrated in the literature I have discussed. He sought to communicate the cleverness and uniqueness of their traditions and, as such, he collected objects which conformed to the prevailing notions of Aboriginal authenticity.

The problem with Roth's approach, as well-intentioned and scientific as it was, was that it prejudiced an idea of Aboriginal people that was no longer a reality. That his and other collections were interpreted by the Museum in the light of notions of authenticity demonstrates that objects which contradicted the idea that Aboriginal people were a Stone Age people was considered an aberration and a sign of clear degeneration of that culture. So ensconced in European perceptions of the 'other' were ideas of conservatism and an incapability to adapt that whatever did not support this view was simply written off as inauthentic. This is absolutely demonstrated by the Museum's display of the Aboriginal Life diorama which was created with the intention of conveying Aboriginal tradition.

Contact with European people was considered to be deleterious to Aboriginal people and culture. Concurrently, Aboriginal culture was viewed as dying and stagnant. Where Aboriginal people remained 'pure' and authentic examples of what Europeans considered them to be, they were praised but simultaneously condemned for this authenticity. Where they were observed to adapt, they were condemned for having degraded their own culture. In each characterisation the assumption was that Aboriginal people were doomed, either to fade away as an inevitable process of their own unchanging way of life, or as a result of their perceived degeneration when mixed with European culture.

My discussion of Roth and Coghlan collections has shown that Aboriginal material culture demonstrated clear evidence of entanglement. However, the Museum chose not to display any material which showed signs of adaptation, preferring to portray Aboriginal people as static, unchanging, and traditional. This portrayal was seen as an indisputable fact (given that all signs of change were not considered to be authentic Aboriginal culture), but it also proved convenient for an imagination of Australian identity as a European identity. If Aboriginal people were doomed to perish, there was no need to include them in conceptions of citizenship or nation-building.

Museums began to lose ground to universities as the primary area for the dissemination of anthropological theory. By the 1930s, Australian Social Anthropology was firmly ensconced in the university, with the museum being of peripheral importance to the field.⁵⁶¹ The conception of Aboriginal people as Stone Age was so enshrined in the European imagination that, even when the museum's importance to anthropology was replaced by the university, observers could still conceive of Aboriginal people in terms of their displayed material culture. The idea that Aboriginal people were unchanging, stubborn, and resistant to adaptation lingered for decades, and this is an indication of just how readily accepted the stereotype was. As late as 1951, the anthropologist A.P. Elkin wrote, in *The American Anthropologist*, that: 'In Australian Aboriginal culture, however, the individual is trained not to show curiosity, indeed, not to be curious'.⁵⁶² When Stanley D. Porteus, a Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Hawaii was invited to study the Aboriginal people in 1928, his various researches and tests came to the single conclusion: 'They [Aboriginal people] are not unintelligent, but are certainly inadapted to a civilized environment'.⁵⁶³ Porteus had virtually reached his conclusion before he departed Hawaii for Australia, a fact which was made evident by his characterisation of the prevailing trends in thought on Aboriginal people. His preface includes this summation of his unique opportunity:

I received an invitation from the Australian National Research Council to visit Australia and carry out a series of investigations on the mental status of the aborigines of that continent. With the exception of one or two very minor studies involving small groups of half-castes as well as full bloods, nothing whatever had been attempted in the way of psychological examinations of individuals of this most interesting race. Yet here in Australia are the remnants of a Stone Age people, cut off, in all probability, from other racial contacts for thousands of years and universally considered as belonging in the most primitive stages of culture.⁵⁶⁴

But this idea of Aboriginal people as 'the primitive' and as the 'other' in relation to European Australia has not yet disappeared. For example, in his third volume of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Windschuttle discusses how abuse and vilification of people of mixed Aboriginal and European descent by Aborigines forced those of

⁵⁶¹ Philip Jones, 'The "Idea behind the Artefact": Norman Tindale's early years as salvage ethnographer' in *Collections as Artefacts*, p. 315.

⁵⁶² A.P. Elkin, 'Reaction and Interaction: Food Gathering and European Settlement in Australia' in *The American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Apr.-Jun, 1951), p. 164.

⁵⁶³ Stanley D. Porteus, *The Psychology of a Primitive People: A Study of the Australian Aborigine* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1931), p. 420.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. v.

mixed descent to abandon their Aboriginality and ‘emulate white people and live like other Australians’.⁵⁶⁵ Here, Windschuttle slips, or deliberately articulates ‘white people’ as the Australians and Aboriginal people as separate from his national conception of Australians.

Collection, an often-times well-meaning or simply inquisitive pastime, became embroiled in the process of othering on the Queensland frontier. But collection alone did not create the ‘other’ rather, as I have shown it was European perceptions of the imagined and the entangled frontier which created the preserved frontier of the Museum. Roth and Coghlan participated in this process by collecting Aboriginal material culture and, in Roth’s case, making extensive observations about this culture. These collections were two of many which were gathered by the Queensland Museum and, when the perceived decline of Aboriginal people seemed most imminent, they were used to create the Museum’s own depiction of Aboriginal culture. Crucially, the actual evidence which disproved the prevailing attitudes towards Aboriginal people were ignored in favour of an exhibition which fixed Aboriginal people as a scientific curiosity to be regarded by numerous visitors to the Museum over the course of three generations.

These conceptions of Aboriginal people as inherently conservative and traditional did not consider the possibility that traditions are, as Hobsbawm has argued, imagined. Nor did they consider that anything like what Eliot thought of tradition, that it relies primarily on innovation to sustain itself. Besides the fact that Aboriginal people were adaptive in the colonial period, and that European observers ignored this, my thesis has also demonstrated that the frontier was not exclusively a place of exploitation and violence. The Roth and Coghlan collections have demonstrated, through an analysis of their material and associated documentary evidence, that trade and exchange with Aboriginal people were also persistent realities. This reintroduces the notion of value, and by assessing the value of Roth’s and Coghlan’s contribution to frontier histories, I have shown that this value does not lie in the display of these objects, which has been demonstrated to be flawed, but in what a re-examination of them has and can tell us about European and Aboriginal relations on the frontier, Aboriginal reactions to

⁵⁶⁵ Keith Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, Volume Three: The Stolen Generations 1881-2008* (Sydney: Macleay Press, 2009), p. 19.

European material, and European reactions to Aboriginal material (at the time of collection, and while in the Museum). Aboriginal people also used European material to reinforce their own notions of Self. Where they adopted European materials, such as iron axes, they frequently used these in ways which were familiar to themselves. So, an iron shovel head would be used not for its intended purpose of digging, but reattached with gum resin and utilised as a traditional Aboriginal knife (albeit with new materials, such as QE 2004).

This evaluation of the Roth and Coghlan collections has enabled a discussion of the process of othering through collection in the context of Queensland. Further, I have used these collections to indicate the true nature of adaptation and exchange on the frontier. This use of the two collections has also helped to show that Aboriginal participation in Australian historical narratives has been marginalised. An acknowledgement of this enables us to begin to incorporate more actively and consistently any trace of the many silenced voices of the frontier.

My argument has demonstrated that the observer will sometimes believe their own thesis to the exclusion of reality. Where collectors on the Queensland frontier saw Aboriginal people, they knew from what they had read in school books, or read in literature on race that Aboriginal people were inherently conservative. When confronted with evidence of profound Aboriginal creativity and adoption of new materials, they saw this as degeneration. This willingness of the observer to believe their own ideas to the exclusion of any contradictions is phrased best by Eco, who said that: 'the real problem of a critique of our own cultural models is to ask, when we see a unicorn, if by any chance it is not a rhinoceros'.⁵⁶⁶ To use this in the Queensland context, the fantastical notion of a 'unicorn' represents the equally fantastical idea that Aboriginal people were stagnant, unchanging, and authentic examples of the Stone Age. The 'rhinoceros' represents the reality of Aboriginal entanglement with European goods, and their creativity, innovation, and survivalism. Roth sought to catalogue the authentic as it conformed to this fantastical notion of Aboriginality. Though he collected numerous entangled objects, and wrote about the phenomenon, his collection bias was overwhelmingly for the 'unicorn'. Coghlan's

⁵⁶⁶ Eco, *Serendipities*, p. 115.

motivations are less clear, though we do know that he simply collected what was available to him. In this sense, he collected the 'rhinoceros'. The collections were used by the Museum staff which interpreted the actual frontier through the imagined frontier and, through their display of the preserved frontier they created a vision of Aboriginal people which was an unconscious fabrication. They saw the unicorn when, in fact, the rhinoceros was in plain sight.

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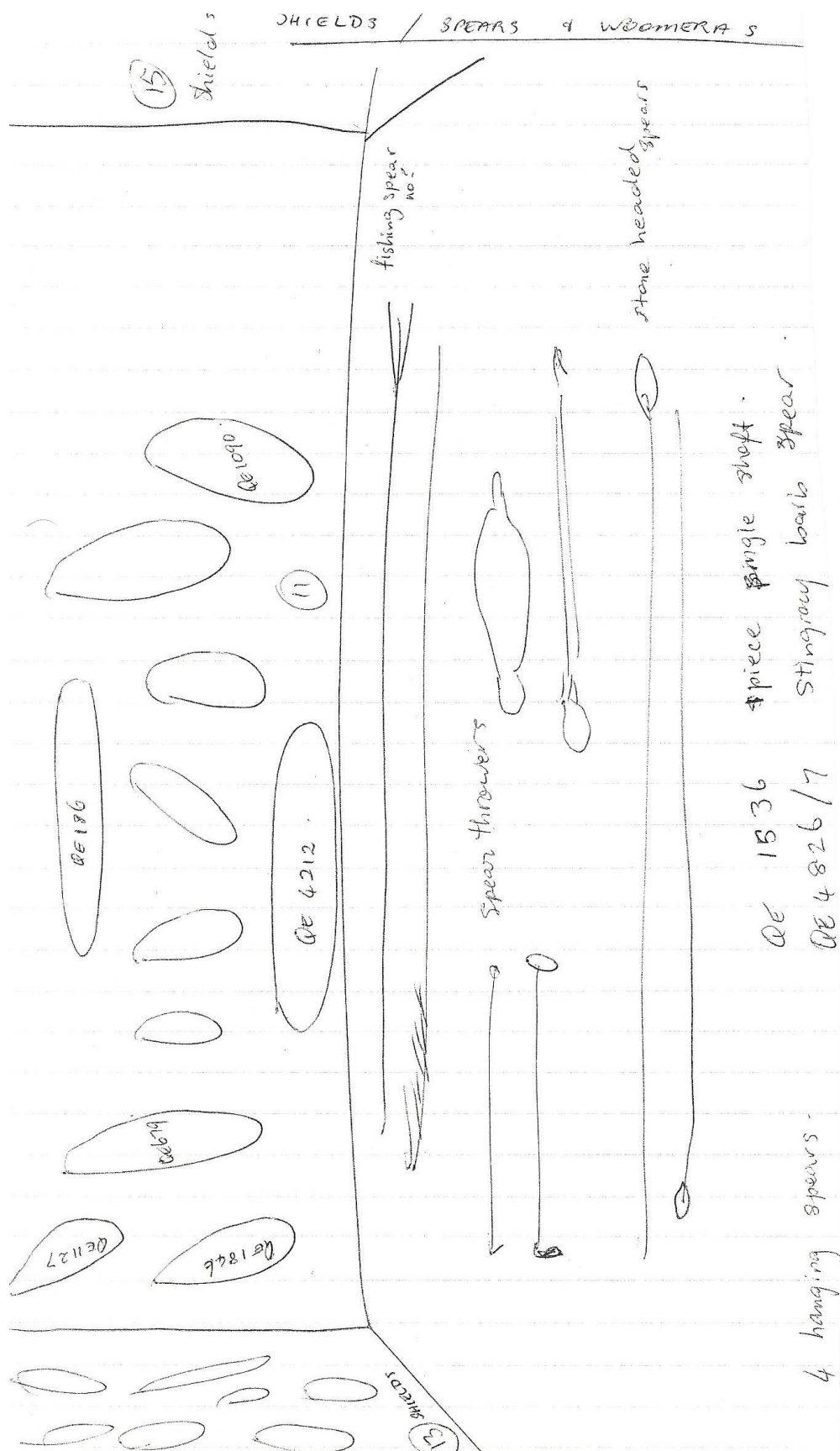
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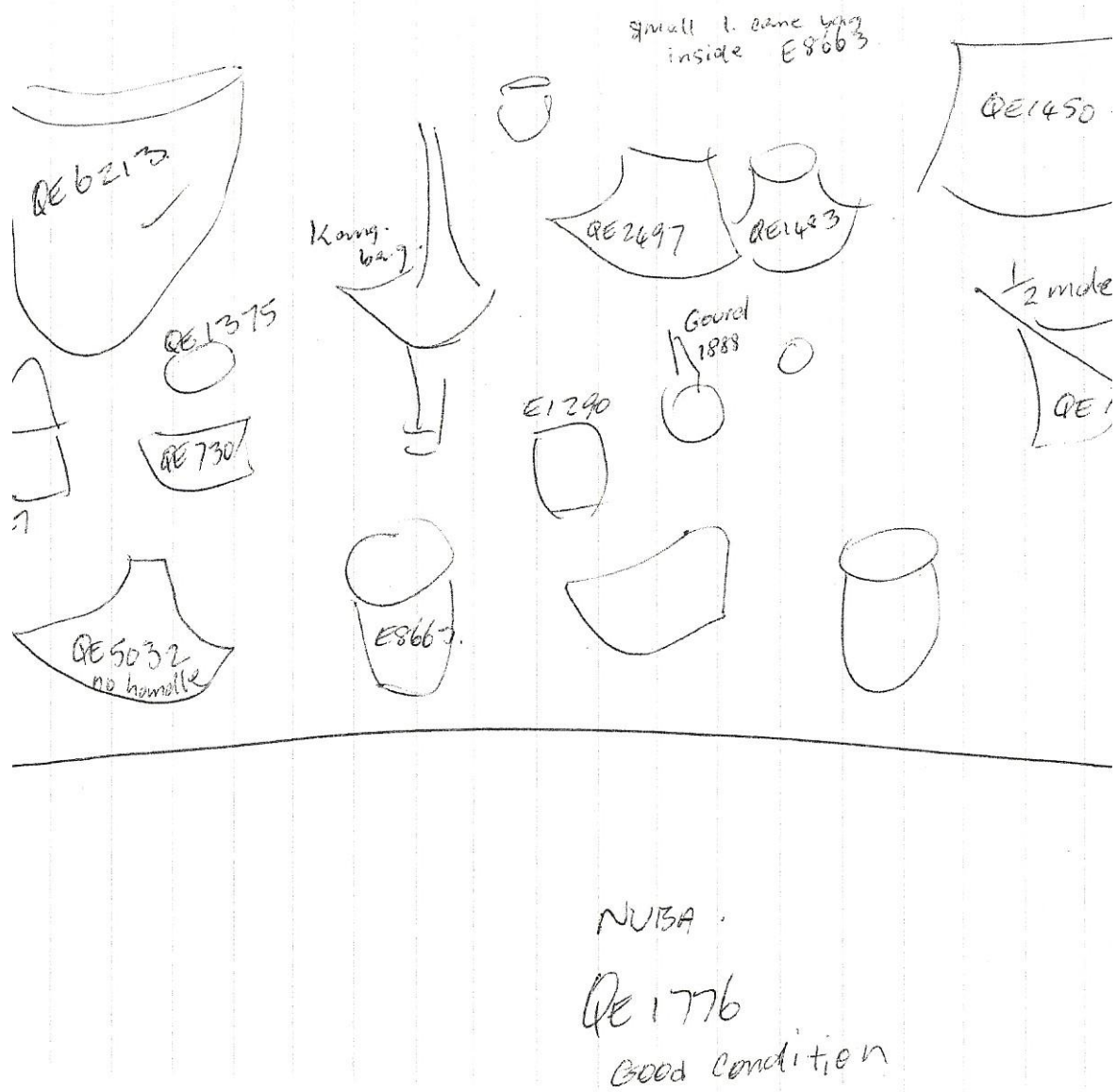
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Sketch 3. Containers cabinet, edges of sketch missing from cited copy.



Sketch 4. Food gathering cabinet display notes.

DISPLAY CASE - FOOD GATHERING.

Small cane dilly bag (bicornual) QE 7289 Daintree R.

ART & DESIGN.

1 decorated shield.

(namun + small boss -
could be local)

1 small decorated bicornual

GAMES & AMUSEMENTS

Toy boomerangs

Dunk Is



QE 12/106/2



tops

CAPE YORK, QLD.

QE 1833

D: 9737

NECKLACES etc

Headband of pearl shell

CARDWELL

QE 18 . .

OPP. MORETON Bay CASE

Bark cloth Blanket N.Q.

APPENDIX B

Coghlan collection:

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 108	WOMMERA	565 L	Leaf-shaped woomera	Boulia	ER 1015; woomera, leaf shaped wood peg chert chisel [measurements] ornate
QE 563	BAG	655 L; 274 W	Very finely stringed brown bag	Mitchell River	ER# unknown
QE 587	KNIFE	100 L; 40 W	Stone knife; un-mounted - lump of gum resin on one edge at base	Boulia	ER# unknown. There is a faint '13' written on one face, though 13 is definitely not the ER#
QE 709	RAW MATERIAL	not taken due to nature of object	'Ba-Ba' or papha seeds: Seeds of the gum-topped box ('Eucalyptus Hemiphloia') used as an article of food'	Pituri Creek	ER# 379: 'Seed of gum-topped box'
QE 910	HEADDRESS	221 L	Plume of cockatoo feathers used for decoration	Mulligan River	ER# 936: 'Bunch of feathers'
QE 911	HEADDRESS	143 L	Plume of cockatoo feathers on a stick, used for decoration	Mulligan River	ER# 929: 'Plume of feathers on a pointed stick'
QE 912	HEADDRESS	162 L (from bandage)	Feather headdress around cloth bandage	Mulligan River	ER# 922: 'Plume of feathers on a pointed stick'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 913	HEADDRESS	103 L (from bandage)	Feather headdress; stick; very tattered	Mulligan River	ER# 928: 'Plume of feathers on a pointed stick'
QE 1551	CLUB/NULLA NULLA	730 L	Club, nulla-nulla, head toothed in 2 bands	Comet Waters	ER 1085; toothed into bands, one red
QE 1566	CLUB	754 L; 44 W near head	Wooden nulla; upper part fluted with black stains in wood; lower part smoother, with scratched patterns running across base; base and head both pointed	Dawson River	ER# 1018: 'Sub pyramidal'
QE 1650	SPEARTHROWER	917 L; 72 W	Wooden woomera - long and flat with peg and gum resin; shell appears to have broken off	Mitchell River	ER# 2847: 'Lath woomera'
QE 1653	SPEARTHROWER	784 L; 67 W	Wooden woomera; flat and long; gum resin; peg and shell; shell is cracked in half	Mitchell River	ER# 2141: 'Shell woomera'
QE 1812	SHELL NOSE ORNAMENT	173 L	Semi-circular shell ornament used for the nose, slight staining	Mitchell River	ER# 2124
QE 1831	THROWING STICK	518 L	Toy nulla-nulla or throwing stick	Boulia	ER 310; referred to as 'muckaberry', roughly fashioned

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 1835	BOOMERANG	1390 L; 65 W (at centre)	Fighting boomerang, almost completely straight; wooden boomerang with fluting in the style of sequences of straight lines in groups of 4 or 5; crosswise fluting at ends.	Glenormiston	ER# 775: 'Boomerang nearly straight'
QE 1836/1	BOOMERANG	1318 L; 61 W (at centre)	Fighting boomerang, almost straight; wooden boomerang with plain fluting - parallel lines scratched into surface, in groups of 8 or 9	Glenormiston	ER# 776: 'Boomerang nearly straight'
QE 1838	BOOMERANG	1275 L	Boomerang, fighting, ornate	Glenormiston	ER 774; boomerang, fighting elaborately engraved
QE 1839	BOOMERANG	1115 L; 75 W (at centre)	Boomerang; database describes this as 'ornate' though it does not appear particularly detailed - fluting in parallel patterns - some white stains, resembling ordinary paint, on one surface	Unknown	ER# 773: 'Boomerang elaborately engraved'
QE 1843	BOOMERANG	1297 L; 82 W (at centre)	Boomerang, barely curved; wooden, fluted with parallel lines, except at edges and centre - small nail holes visible (probably for previous display)	Glenormiston	ER# 771: 'Boomerang - fighting elaborately engraved'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 1844	BOOMERANG	1352 L; 84 W	Wooden fighting boomerang; one side has elaborate scratching patterns, reverse is plainly fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 772
QE 1851	BOOMERANG	721 L; 56 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; goose-necked and faint fluting, with raised sections of 'flutes' appearing blackened. - Reddish hue all over surface; nail holes from display.	Glenormiston	ER# 878: 'Goose-necked boomerang red'
QE 1852	BOOMERANG	766 L; 55 W (at centre); 89 W (at neck)	Wooden boomerang; goose necked and fluted - reddish hue - reverse side (of photo) very pitted	Glenormiston	ER# 886: 'Goose-neck boomerang red'
QE 1853	BOOMERANG	849 L; 73 W (at centre)	Wooden goose-neck boomerang; fluted - reddish hue - nail holes from display	Glenormiston	ER# 879: 'Goose-neck boomerang red'
QE 1858	CLUB	1008 L	Database note: 'Gin's fighting club'	Glenormiston	ER 770; club or truncheon, cylindrical tapering to butt, red, 3 black bands
QE 1870	SHIELD	590 L	Shield, red, yellow & black	Glenormiston	ER 854; shield, oblong-pattern in red, yellow & black, split & mended
QE 1877	CASTANET	553 L	Castanet, plain, slightly curved	Mulligan River	ER 935; truncheon, boomerang shape
QE 1879	CASTANET	582 L	Castanet, plain, slightly curved	Glenormiston (QE location marked as '?')	(no ER cross-reference; closest ER references ~ER 1711:QE 1878 and location as Boulia)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 1880	CASTANET	630 L	Castanet, plain, flattened one end	Glenormiston	ER 804: 'flattened at one end, plain'
QE 1911	FIBRE	not listed	Thick stained fibre	Glenormiston	ER# 247: 'strong fibre cord about 3m long'
QE 1913	NET	not listed	Net - see photo	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 1914	RAW MATERIAL	not listed	Some kind of bark fibre used for making fibre	Glenormiston	ER# 806-7 - 2 bundles of fibre; seems to have been put together under 1 QE #
QE 1931	HEAD NET	180 L; 143 W (at mouth) - all measurements are approx.	'Tirka tirka' - made from netted twine; worn on the head	Glenormiston	ER# 780: 'small knitted bag, open at bottom'
QE 1943	MESSAGE STICK	315 L	Message stick, large, length 12 1/4, location listed as 'Bourke River'	Burke River	ER 2123; message stick, 318x34 - incised & figured in white at one end
QE 2007	RAW MATERIAL	71 L; 54 W	Old card reads: 'Gum resin prepared for use as a cement'	Mitchell River, Glenormiston	ER# 2150: 'Gum'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2009.1-.2	RAW MATERIAL		3 objects, with no clear designation of which is .1 and which is .2 - old card reads: 'Spinifex Gum; used for fixing handles etc and tools and weapons' - each piece has a flattened base, which enables them to sit on level ground	Glenormiston	ER# 851 - QE Register lists '2 pieces'; ER lists 3
QE 2011	RAW MATERIAL	97 L; 56 W	'Gum of beefwood tree; used for cementing purposes'	Boulia	ER# 318: 'Gum of Grevillea Striata, beefwood, used as cement'
QE 2019	YARN STICK	550 L	Yarn stick, handle coated with gum	Glenormiston	ER 766; yarn stick, hardwood
QE 2022	KNIFE	301 L; 47 W	Shark tooth knife with wooden handle stained with gum resin and (possibly) fat - 8 teeth - gum resin on handle	Mitchell River	ER# 2122: 'shark tooth knife with lanyard gone'
QE 2023	KNIFE	363 L; 53 W	Shark tooth knife on wooden handle stained with red ochre - 13 teeth - lanyard attached to gum resin base	Mitchell River	ER# 2117: 'A wooden implement like a loom bat but beset with 13 shark teeth on one edge, with a double suspending lanyard at one end'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2027	CHISEL	516 L	Chisel, with blade of iron inserted in end	Boulia	ER 173; chisel, a piece of thin iron [measurements] ground to a round edge & fastened by cord & gum in a rough wood handle [measured]
QE 2040	CHISEL	565 L; 38 W at wood centre	Chisel - wood with flat piece of iron fixed with gum and rope; stone at base, fixed with gum	Glenormiston	ER# 749
QE 2041	CHISEL	603 L	Chisel, iron in wood, flint in handle	Glenormiston	ER 793; chisel, flint at one end, iron at the other
QE 2043	CHISEL	571 L	Chisel, straight, gum each end, blades missing	Glenormiston	ER 795; quartz only, red & black bands
QE 2052	RAW MATERIAL	52 L; 41 W	'Gypsum: roasted and pounded as plaster of paris, and used as a pigment' - material resembles muddy glass	Glenormiston	ER# 847: 'Gypsum crystalline'
QE 2055.1	RAW MATERIAL	75 L; 50 W	Red ochre – 'Haematite: This is ground red ochre and is then used as a pigment'	Glenormiston	ER# 848: 'Haematite ferred(?) ochre'
QE 2055.2	RAW MATERIAL		Details all as above, except this is the ochre in a powdered form		
QE 2066	RAW MATERIAL	52 L; 50 W	'Yellow Ochre' - small 'rock' or nugget of yellow ochre	Mayne River	ER# 2148: 'Yellow ochre'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2068	RAW MATERIAL	34 L; 21 W	'Yellow ochre: (native name MAR COOLA); this is used as a pigment'	Boulia	ER# 319: 'Yellow ochre - alaminated arenaceores(?)'
QE 2088	SPEAR HEAD	341.5 L; 20.5 W	Wooden spear head with bark twine wrapped at two points; some traces of gum resin remain at one point	Mulligan River	ER# 945: 'With bark lashed on'
QE 2089	SPEAR HEAD	200 L; 24 W	Wooden spear head with bark twine and gum resin at the base	Mulligan River	ER# 946: 'Without bark'
QE 2090	SPEAR HEAD	263 L; 24 W	Wooden spear head with traces of gum resin at base. <u>No</u> traces of twine remaining	Glenormiston	ER# 260: 'Hard wood'
QE 2104	WHETSTONE	135 L	Whetstone	Dawson River	ER 103; an oblong piece of pale fine grained sandstone, [lists measurements] one edge made convex by use
QE 2123	SPEAR HEAD	108 L; 30 W	Stone spear head (flint); curved and smooth, with one side having a naturally 'serrated' look	Pituri Creek	ER# 375: 'Long leaf shaped, chest/chert(?)'
QE 2125	SPEAR HEAD	83 L; 46 W	Spear head of jasper, thin and sharp	Pituri Creek	ER# 377
QE 2126	SPEAR HEAD	122 L; 34 W at tip centre	Spear head of jasper, thin and sharp	Pituri Creek	ER# 377
QE 2138	BOOMERANG	847.5 L; 66 W (at centre)	Boomerang; fluted, wooden boomerang with 'dusty' stains.	Cotton Bush Creek	ER# 919: 'Boomerang longitudinal engraved lines'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2186	PUBIC COVER	260 L (Est.)	Pubic cover, bunch of bilby tails	Mulligan River	ER 931; bunch of tails
QE 2234	RAW MATERIAL	38 L; 26 W	'Tula adze flake' - small re-touched flake	Glenormiston	ER# 849: 'Scraper chest/chert(?)'
QE 2239.1	RAW MATERIAL	51 L; 27 W	See QM database	Glenormiston	ER# ? - listed in QE register as 4 scrapes, though it is not found as yet
QE 2239.2	RAW MATERIAL	28 L; 22 W/H	See QM database	Glenormiston	
QE 2239.3	RAW MATERIAL	43 L; 16 W	See QM database	Glenormiston	
QE 2266	AXE	handle: 391 L; 42 W stone: 195 L; 48 W	'Hafted edge ground axe' - wooden handle bound with human hair, twine and gum resin	Glenormiston	ER# 159: 'Irregularly oval sub cuneiform faces mostly ground'
QE 2274	RETOUCHED FLAKE	192 L; 98 W	Wide, leaf-shaped stone knife - high at back though flat elsewhere	Dawson River	ER# 1060 'Quartzite'
QE 2283	STONE KNIFE	61 L, 36 W (widest point)	Stone knife, no handle - simply like a stone head of a knife; very small	Glenormiston	ER# 820: 'Stone knife, not mounted, white chest/chert (?)'
QE 2285	STONE KNIFE	71 L; 42.5 W	Stone knife, no handle - small stone 'head' of knife	Glenormiston	ER# 819: 'Stone knife, not mounted, white chest/chert (?)'
QE 2290	STONE KNIFE	111 L; 22 W	Stone knife, un-mounted - database reads: 'stone knife blade, quartzite, butt gum covered'	Pituri Creek	ER# 371: 'Oblong, jasper'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2294	STONE KNIFE	121 L; 40 W	Stone knife mounted in handle of gum cement - made of chalcedony - two stamps/imprints in gum - difficult to read	Glenormiston	ER# 802: 'Stone knife, broken chalcedony' although it doesn't appear broken to me
QE 2298	STONE KNIFE	103.5 L; 44 W	Stone knife mounted in gum cement	Pituri Creek	ER# 367: 'Knife, chert (?)', mounted in gum'
QE 2329	STONE KNIFE and SHEATH	knife: 180.5 L; 63 W sheath: 121 L; 33.5 W (measurements are from 'compressed' form)	Stone knife, mounted in gum with wooden haft extending beyond gum resin - white dots on gum and wood - sheath is cloth wound bundle of straw, fixed with twine and clay	Georgina River	ER# 1069: 'Stone knife, mounted wood and gum coloured red, quartzite'
QE 2332	STONE KNIFE and SHEATH	knife: 163.5 L; 51.5 W sheath: 101 L; 31 W	Stone knife mounted in gum with a wooden handle as haft; wood is stained red, with numerous faded white dots and a black diagonal X across wood - sheath is paper bark, fixed with twine and resin	Georgina River	ER# 2112: 'Stone knife, mounted, bark sheath, square ended wood haft'
QE 2333	STONE KNIFE and SHEATH	knife: 155 L; 40.5 W sheath: not measured, due to fragility	Stone knife with gum resin, and wooden haft emerging from base of resin - sheath is paper bark; fixed with twine - wooden haft has faint dark rings, like dots, and is crossed by a black X	Georgina River	ER# 2114: 'Stone knife, black cross, haft rounded'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2335	STONE KNIFE	152 L; 32 W	Stone knife with gum resin middle; wooden haft extending from base of resin	Georgina River	ER# 2115: 'Haft rounded and rude no sheath' (perhaps they meant 'crude'?)
QE 2339	STONE KNIFE	136.5 L; 47.5 W	Stone knife fixed into gum resin base; database claims this is a flint knife	Glenormiston	ER# 797: 'Stone knife, mounted gum flint'
QE 2340	STONE KNIFE and SHEATH	knife: 201 L; 38 W sheath: not measured, due to fragility	Stone knife fixed into gum resin, with flat wooden handle from the base of resin - paper bark sheath wrapped in twine	Glenormiston	ER# 815: 'Stone knife, bark with sheath'
QE 2341	KNIFE	157 L; 54 W	Quartz knife mounted in gum with flat wooden handle - handle is stained red, with white dots, crossed with a black X	Georgina River	ER# 2113: 'Black cross, white spots on each size, quartzite chest/chert(?)'
QE 2342	STONE KNIFE	202.5 L; 38 W	Stone knife mounted in gum with wooden haft - fragile bark sheath, bound with twine	Glenormiston	ER# 816: 'Stone knife, flint'
QE 2343	KNIFE and SHEATH	130 L; 40 W	NO SHEATH! - stone knife with gum bond - no sign of bark sheath which is supposed to be with it	Glenormiston	ER# 811: 'Stone knife, wrapped in cloth, chalcedony 'jaspery''
QE 2344	STONE KNIFE	150 L; 37.5 W	Stone knife mounted in gum with a wooden haft - database claims there is netted twine wrapped around the blade, though there is none	Georgina River	ER# 1243: 'Stone knife, quartzite, brown gum'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2345	STONE KNIFE	knife: 171 L; 51 W sheath: 128 L	Stone knife mounted in gum with wooden haft - bark sheath bound with human hair- gum has broken away from the stone (as seen in photos)	Glenormiston	ER# 817: 'Stone knife, quartzite'
QE 2346	STONE KNIFE	221 L; 42.5 W	Stone knife mounted in gum handle - stone blade is obscured by the sheath which is now immovable from the blade - bark sheath bound with twine, and ornamented with emu feathers	Glenormiston	ER# 818: 'Stone knife, flint and emu feathers'
QE 2347	STONE KNIFE	265 L; 55.5 W	Stone knife mounted in gum, with haft of reddish coloured wood - bark sheath, bound with twine, fixed hard to the knife with cloth underneath the bark, ornamented with emu feathers	Glenormiston	ER# 800: 'Stone knife, flint and wood, cloth feather sheath'
QE 2349	STONE KNIFE	140.5 L; 56.5 W	Stone knife, mounted in dark black gum - sheath of 'hessian' style sack, bound with twine or 'coloured yarn', sheath is immovable	Glenormiston	ER# 799: 'Stone knife, wrapped in cloth'
QE 2351	STONE KNIFE	215 L; 41 W	Stone knife with wood handle, mounted in gum- cloth sheath fixed with thick cord and ornamented with emu feathers, sheath is immovable	Glenormiston	ER# 814: 'Stone knife, emu feather, striped jasper'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2353	STONE KNIFE	107 L; 39 W	Stone knife mounted in gum- paper bark sheath. wrapped in twine	Glenormiston	ER# 798: 'Stone knife, tea-tree sheath, quartzite'
QE 2413	AXE HEAD	191 L; 152 W; 48 thick	Stone axe head - rock is very pitted and grey, un-mounted	Pituri Creek	ER# 363: 'Roughly pitted surface, edge ground'
QE 2428	AXE HEAD	174 L; 113.5 W; 45 thick	Stone axe, dark brown hue, un-mounted	Glenormiston	ER# 137
QE 2443	AXE HEAD	98 L; 78.5 W; 43.5 thick	Stone axe, dark brown hue, un-mounted, one side tapers in	Comet River	ER# 1074: 'Truncated oval pale green stone'
QE 2451	AXE HEAD	84 L; 57 W; 30.5 thick	Stone axe, un-mounted, almost black in colour and very smooth	Comet River	ER# 1075: 'Oval blackstone, diorite'
QE 2456	AXE HEAD	115 L; 87 W; 41 thick	Stone axe, un-mounted, slight pitting, mostly smooth and rounded	Glenormiston	ER# 842: 'Stone tomahawk, diorite'
QE 2457	AXE HEAD	112 L; 99 W; 56 thick	Stone axe, un-mounted; very pitted, with surface smooth and tapering to an edged point	Glenormiston	ER# 131: 'Sub quadrate pebble'
QE 2458	AXE HEAD	109 L; 104 W; 37 thick	Stone axe, un-mounted; surface is irregular with much pitting and smooth areas	Pituri Creek, Glenormiston Station	ER# 364: 'partly worked partly ground diorite'
QE 2466	AXE HEAD	148.5 L; 123 W; 28 thick	Stone axe, un-mounted, heavily pitted, smoothed on one edge	Glenormiston	ER# 829: 'diorite' porphyry

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2478	BAG	277 L (problematic due to shape and damage)	Kangaroo skin water bag, partially decayed and in 3 sections, tied at mouth with European cloth	Pituri Creek	ER# 381: 'Kangaroo skin tarred with blood wood bark repaired with human hair of same description'
QE 2479	COOLAMON	550 L	Coolamon, wooden	Glenormiston	ER 872; 'koolamon'
QE 2490	BASKET	58 L; 52 W at base	Reed bag with thin string	Comet Waters	ER# Unknown
QE 2491	DILLY BASKET	145 L; 120 W	Dilly basket, small	Comet Waters	ER 1092; grass bags (pair)
QE 2495	BASKET	327 L; 145 W	Tightly woven basket, decorated with strips of red, green, and sandy brown material	Burketown	ER# 1037: 'Bag, plaited - grass trimmed'
QE 2519	CLUB SHIELD	480 L	Club shield	Glenormiston	ER 859; shield, painted
QE 2523	CLUB SHIELD	528 L	Club shield	Comet Waters	ER 1077; oval - black, white chevrons & lips
QE 2554	SPEARTHROWER	940 L; 59 W at centre	Wooden woomera, pegged - fixed with gum, white shell on other end	Mitchell River	ER# 2139: 'Red wood shell woomera'
QE 2587	SPEARTHROWER	890 L; 33 W at centre	Wooden woomera with peg fixed with gum; no shell or gum etc at other end	Boulia	ER# 4: 'Yatala' describes as a 'throwing stick'
QE 2677	NULLA	635 L	Nulla, plain pointed head	Dawson River	ER 1020; lip short, conical, pointed?

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2677	NULLA	650 L	Nulla, plain pointed head	Dawson River (QE register has location marked '?')	ER 1613; incised rings at tips
QE 2680	CLUB	660 L; 40 W at head	Nulla, wooden; possibly very vague fluting; no particular designs; nail hole at base where piece was probably hanged	Unknown	ER# 1088: 'Nulla, plain'
QE 2681	CLUB	685 L; 40 W at head	Nulla, wooden; plain, vague fluting; base has a carved design	Unknown	ER# 1089: 'Nulla, plain'
QE 2833	SPEARTHROWER	624 L; 99.5 W	Wooden woomera; no peg brake; flat and wide; gum resin on one point; red coloured	Boulia District	ER# 1014
QE 2834	SPEARTHROWER	460 L; 84 W	Wooden woomera; peg fixed to end with gum and bark twine; gum resin thick on other end; flat, leaf shape; red-coloured	Boulia District	ER# 1016
QE 2835	SPEARTHROWER	640.5 L; 113 W	Wooden woomera; peg fixed to end with hum and bark twine; gum resin thick on other end; leaf-shaped; red-coloured	Boulia District	ER# 1013
QE 2836	SPEARTHROWER	583 L; 122 W	Wooden woomera; red coloured; wooden peg fixed with gum and twine; thick gum resin on other end; leaf-shaped	Boulia District	ER# 863

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2838	SPEARTHROWER	62 L; 140 W at centre	Wooden woomera - leaf shaped; peg attached with twine; large lump of glossy black gum at one end	Glenormiston	ER# 867
QE 2839	SPEARTHROWER	590 L; 144 W at centre	Wooden woomera - leaf shaped; no peg - gum remains where peg was fixed, gum at end	Glenormiston	ER# 869
QE 2840	SPEARTHROWER	597 L; 39 W	Wooden woomera - leaf shaped 'Clove leaf' written on surface; peg fixed with gum and twine; gum resin with stone showing on other end; scratched line design; surface is glossy, like resin, split down centre, held in place with twine	Glenormiston	ER# 359: 'Scored in cross bands, split and repaired'
QE 2844	WOMMERA	623 L	Woomera, leaf shape, chert? chisel	Glenormiston (no location listed in QR reg.)	ER 358: 'leaf shaped with chalcedony? spear sharpener used'
QE 2882	BOOMERANG	635 L; 60 W at centre	Boomerang, wooden - plain; one end inscribed with small line design	Unknown	ER# 1081: '(fighting)'
QE 2882	BOOMERANG	628 L	Boomerang, plain, reddish wood	Dawson River	ER 1002; 'crescent - nearly-chord?'
QE 2889	BOOMERANG	599 L; 47 W (at centre)	Boomerang; plain wooden boomerang, not fluted; faint cross pattern on one end only.	Dawson River	ER# 1001: 'Boomerang etched on one side'
QE 2900	BOOMERANG	643 L	Boomerang, plain, dark wood	Dawson River	ER 1008: 'goose necked chord'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2902	BOOMERANG	624 L; 58 W (at centre)	Boomerang; plain wooden boomerang, not fluted.	Dawson River	ER# 1000: no specific notes
QE 2906	BOOMERANG	718.5 L; 61 W (at curve, thickest point)	Wooden boomerang; reddish hue, with darker brown patches at edges, fluted across whole surface - wood appears old and much worn, with holes etc.	Glenormiston	ER# 910: 'Boomerang red grooved'
QE 2909	BOOMERANG	871 L; 72 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; reddish hue; fluted across whole surface.	Glenormiston	ER# 909: 'Boomerang red grooved'
QE 2913	BOOMERANG	724 L; 65 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; red ochre stains; fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 899: 'Boomerang red grooved'
QE 2914	BOOMERANG	733 L; 63 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; dark brown; fluted; cracked at one end	Glenormiston	ER# 8: 'red on both sides'
QE 2915	BOOMERANG	672 L; 52 W	Wooden boomerang; red ochre stains; fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 894: 'Boomerang red grooved'
QE 2916	BOOMERANG	729 L; 52 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; red ochre stains, slightly faded; fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 896: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2917	BOOMERANG	724 L; 51 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red-ochre hue		ER# 909: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2920	BOOMERANG	661 L; 67 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue; small break in the wood on one side, near where the QE number is written over white, break looks recent	Glenormiston	ER# 897: 'Boomerang red, grooved'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2921	BOOMERANG	614 L; 56 W (widest point, just off curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue; reverse side of photo is more pitted and less 'smooth'	Boulia District	ER# 1004: entry is one word and is illegible....reads something like 'reddied'?
QE 2922	BOOMERANG	733 L; 51 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue; reverse side of photo is flatter and smoother in parts - also pitted	Glenormiston	ER# 898: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2923	BOOMERANG	662 L; 56 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted; reverse side of photo is flatter; only small traces of red ochre in some parts - mostly appears to have been 'un-ochred'	Glenormiston	ER# 916: 'Boomerang rough, not ochred'
QE 2924	BOOMERANG	763 L; 71 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre stains, reverse side of main photos is wider spaced in its fluting and has a different pattern	Glenormiston	ER# 10: simply lists measurements
QE 2925	BOOMERANG	726 L; 53 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, no apparent ochre hue, smoother at ends with slightly darker wood	Glenormiston	ER# 901: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2926	BOOMERANG	755 L; 60 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue, more pitted on reverse of main photos	Glenormiston	ER# 911: 'Boomerang red, grooved'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2928	BOOMERANG	793 L; 65 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue - fluting pattern on reverse differs and there is more pitting	Glenormiston	ER# 904: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2933	BOOMERANG	867 L; 74 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue - fluting pattern in reverse is wider spaced	Glenormiston	ER# 895: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2934	BOOMERANG	717 L; 62 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue; reverse side has wide pattern spacing	Glenormiston	ER# 906: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2938	BOOMERANG	662 L; 52 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre; reverse is pitted, one hole through wood, obviously used for hanging purposes	Glenormiston	ER# 908: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2939	BOOMERANG	712 L; 68 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted; faint traces of red ochre all over, reverse fluting pattern is wide	Boulia	ER# 7: lists nearly the same measurements - also notes place as 'Weera' which, according to Trish Barnard and Michael Quinnet, 'Weera' is the name of the boomerang
QE 2940	BOOMERANG	758 L; 66 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre mostly dulled - paper fixed to wood, reads: 'Weera: 9...Glenormiston...Mr J Coghlan'	Boulia	ER# 9: list of measurements - listed as 'Weera'

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 2941	BOOMERANG	814 L; 71 W (at curve)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue - darker wood at edges; reverse pattern wider in fluting. - in red crayon, on reverse, the number 10 is scrawled. According to Michael Quinnet red crayon was used in the 1880s and 90s to mark specimens	Glenormiston	ER# 900: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 2942	BOOMERANG	788 L	Boomerang, fluted, ochred red	Boulia	ER 11: 'bent towards one end - very coarsely worked on flatter side'
QE 2973	BOOMERANG	528 L; 52 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted; very faint, all over, red ochre hue; the end is pointed rather than curved	Glenormiston	ER# 917: 'Boomerang red, grooved'
QE 3001	BOOMERANG	565 L; 52 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain boomerang with no designs; pointed at both ends; slightly curving upwards at one point, due to wood being uneven	Dawson River	ER# 993: barely legible 'Boomerang....' then measurements
QE 3006	BOOMERANG	636 L	Boomerang, fluted one side	Dawson River	ER 994: 'boomerang, brescentic-nearly-chord?'
QE 3021	BOOMERANG	625 L; 56 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain wooden boomerang with etched designs at either end (both ends pointed)	Dawson River	ER# 996: as QE 3001

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 3022	BOOMERANG	567 L; 61 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain, no designs, pointed ends hole through one side, possibly for display	Dawson River	ER# 997: as QE 3001
QE 3023	BOOMERANG	535 L; 44 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain, no designs; pointed ends; uneven thickness	Glenormiston	ER# 914: 'Boomerang rough, not ochred(?)'
QE 3026	BOOMERANG	709 L; 66 W (at centre)	Wooden boomerang; plain fluted, red ochre hue; reverse fluting wide	Boulia District	ER# 1006: as QE 3001
QE 3027	BOOMERANG	694 L; 55 W at centre	Wooden boomerang - red coloured; goose-necked; fluting	Glenormiston	ER# 880: 'Goose neck boomerang red'
QE 3032	BOOMERANG	788 L	Boomerang, goose-necked ochred red, long neck	Boulia	ER 1011: 'boomerang goose necked chord [measured] beak [measured]'
QE 3034	BOOMERANG	860 L	Boomerang, goose-necked ochred red, long neck	Glenormiston	ER 884: 'gooseneck boomerang - red, spliced chord'
QE 3035	BOOMERANG	812 L	Boomerang, goose-necked ochred red, long neck	Boulia	ER 1010: 'boomerang goose necked chord [measured] beak [measured]'
QE 3036	BOOMERANG	715 L; 45 W at centre	Wooden goose neck boomerang - red coloured, fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 887: 'Red and black'
QE 3051	CLUB	1168 L, 45 W	Wooden club, thick - undecorated except at one end, with rough scratching and incisions	Glenormiston	ER# 769

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 3625	BOOMERANG	582 L; 41 W at centre	Wooden boomerang - almost club shaped; no designs; short and thick	Boulia	ER# ?
QE 3638	AXE HEAD	130 L; 122 W; 36 thick	Greyish-green stone axe head, un-mounted; pitted, though smoothed to cutting edge	Boulia	No ER# located
QE 3779	AXE HEAD	132.5 L; 126 W; 50.5 thick	Grey axe head, un-mounted, chipped, though very smooth, esp. at cutting edge - old card calls it a 'Nardoo Crusher' for crushing seeds	Glenormiston	ER# 830: 'Stone tomahawk head, sub circular diorite'
QE 3780	AXE HEAD	142 L; 112 W; 41 thick	Dark grey axe head, un-mounted, chipped and pitted, though very smooth, esp. at cutting edge	Glenormiston	ER# 836: 'Stone tomahawk head, suboval diorite'
QE 3789	AXE HEAD	139 L; 125 W; 142 thick	Dark grey axe head, un-mounted; some flaking, largely very smooth	Boulia	ER# 840: 'Stone tomahawk head, sub triangular diorite'
QE 3792	AXE HEAD	159 L; 105.5 W; 50.5 thick	Dark brown stone axe head, un-mounted, pitted and smoothed, mostly around the edges	Pituri Creek	ER# not recorded
QE 3793	AXE HEAD	192.5 L; 158 W; 33 thick	Dark brown stone axe head; very pitted/rough; smoothed at cutting edge	Glenormiston	ER# not recorded
QE 3795	AXE HEAD	185 L; 160 W; 33 thick	Axe head; smooth on one side, slightly pitted on one side, most of the stone is dark grey with a reddish brown	Mayne River	ER# not recorded

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 3800	AXE HEAD	139 L; 126 W; 25 thick	Dark brown stone axe head with reddened pits, un-mounted; very pitted, with smoothed cutting edge	Glenormiston	ER# not recorded
QE 3801	AXE HEAD	160 L; 140 W; 30 thick	Reddish brown with grey; slightly pitted on both sides, axe head; smooth on one edge	Glenormiston	ER# not recorded
QE 3802	AXE HEAD	108 L; 108 W; 36 thick	Dark grey axe head with brownish pits; fairly small and smooth with a red mark	Georgina River	ER# not recorded
QE 3803	AXE HEAD	131 L; 106 W; 43 thick	Dark grey axe head; pitted at one edge; slightly smooth	Glenormiston	ER# not recorded
QE 3812	AXE HEAD	149 L; 120 W; 47 thick	Light grey axe head; slightly rough pits with smooth edges	Pituri Creek	ER# not recorded
QE 3814	AXE HEAD	120 L; 87 W; 45 thick	Brownish orange; axe head; brown pits; very smooth with heavy pitted edges	Pituri Creek etc	ER# not recorded
QE 3816	AXE HEAD	140 L; 95 W; 40 thick	Dark grey axe head; a few mud in pits; smooth edges with rough edges at the other	Glenormiston	ER# not recorded
QE 3818	AXE HEAD	91 L; 57 W	Stone axe head, rough, with only small portion at 'front' smoothed; stone is dark, almost black	Unknown	ER# 1076? - # is written on stone, though it is not identified in QE register - 1076:- ER suggests it is accurate.

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 3825	AXE HEAD	121 L; 105 W	Stone axe head, dark almost black stone - prob. basalt; smoothed surface with fewer rough edges	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 3826	AXE HEAD	157 L; 106 W; 38 thick	Large stone axe head, flat one side, rounded other - smooth; one side has a slightly dusty appearance	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 3830	AXE HEAD	99 L; 89 W	Smooth, rounded stone axe head with much pitting	Glenormiston	ER# 838 (written on stone, not QE register) P.J. Coghlan?
QE 3831	AXE HEAD	99 L; 84 W	Smooth, rounded stone axe head with white scratches all over head, suggesting use-wear	Glenormiston	ER# 843 (written on stone, not QE register) P.J. Coghlan?
QE 3833	AXE HEAD	134 L; 119 W; 44 thick	Large stone axe head, smooth with much pitting and fracture points	Glenormiston	ER# ? - registry claims 'source unknown'
QE 3866	AXE HEAD	122 L; 85 W	Almost rectangular shaped stone axe head, reddish hue	Glenormiston	ER# 823 (on stone) P.J. Coghlan?
QE 3867	AXE HEAD	97 L; 92 W	Small round stone axe head, smooth with minute scratch marks	Glenormiston	ER# 831 (on stone) P.J. Coghlan?
QE 4064	BOOMERANG	1292 L	Boomerang (large killing type)	Boulia	(no registry number given, closest location is ~QE 4052:ER 2884)
QE 4159	AXE HEAD	151 L; 126 W	Large round stone axe head, smooth with very pitted surface, esp. on flat side	Glenormiston	ER# 832 (on stone) P.J. Coghlan?

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 4224	SHIELD	611 L; 158 W	Broken wooden shield - shield is broken exactly in half, down the centre. Possible red-ochre stain one reverse, though the shield has an otherwise bland appearance	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 4230	SHIELD	576 L; 252 W	Thick wooden shield, no designs or ochre stains, many dents and spear holes, etc. in surface - reverse has burn marks	Comet Waters	ER# 1079?
QE 4234	SHIELD	599 L; 234 W	Patterned wooden shield - black charcoal lines with remnant red and yellow ochre - some impact marks on face of shield	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 4241	SHIELD	631 L; 302 W	Very large oval wooden shield - numerous scratches and dents though it is unclear whether this is rot or battle fatigue	Dawson River	ER# ?
QE 4244	SHIELD	522 L; 219 W	Plain wooden shield, split and broken - partly from use and partly from wood rot	Glenormiston	ER# ? (850 written on shield, though this is <u>not</u> the ER #)
QE 4248	SHIELD	562 L; 259 W	Large oval, dark wooden shield - no visible signs of use, such as battle scars, etc.	Glenormiston	ER# ?

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 4249	SHIELD	536 L; 265 W	Plain wooden shield with scratch marks and a few other damage points	Comet Waters	ER# ?
QE 4251	COOLAMON	561 L	Coolamon, wooden	Glenormiston (QE register lists 'locality unknown')	(no ER reg. number given, closest number is ~QR 4052:ER 2884)
QE 4255	COOLAMON	775 L, 276 W	Coolamon, wooden	Glenormiston	(no ER reg. number given, closest number is ~QR 4052:ER 2884)
QE 4553	CLUB	1178 L	Very long and thick wooden club, slight scratching patterns on ends	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 4558	CLUB	1147 L	Very long and thick wooden club, slight scratching patterns on ends	Unknown	ER# ?
QE 4680	SPEAR	2550 L	Wooden spear, probably one-piece bound at spear head and towards base with bark twine. Red-stained; slight	Glenormiston	ER# 747 - note says 'had barb'
QE 4681	SPEAR	2189 L	Wooden spear, one-piece - fixed in places with bark twine and gum resin; red-stained; not as straight in centre as the other spears from Glenormiston	Glenormiston	ER# 761: notes say it is from a sapling
QE 4690	SPEAR	2486 L	One-piece thick wooden spear, fluted - spear head is long and flat; base is pointed	Glenormiston	ER# 755

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 4691	SPEAR	2579 L	One-piece thick wooden spear, fluted - spear head has white ochre stains	Glenormiston	ER# 751
QE 4695.1	SPEAR	2572 L	Wooden spear - all one piece with flattened spear head	Glenormiston	ER# 753
QE 4695.2	SPEAR	2907 L	One piece wooden spear with flattened spear head	Glenormiston	ER# 754
QE 4695.3	SPEAR	2924 L	The spear head is narrow and there is some white string tied at the base of spear head (from Conservation)	Glenormiston	ER# 756
QE 4695.4	SPEAR	3244 L	As above: except the spear head is thinner and has a break at the very tip.	Glenormiston	ER# 757
QE 4695.5	SPEAR	3025 L	This spear has thinner and more cracked wood, bound in a few spots with bark twine, possibly to repair cracks	Glenormiston	ER# 758
QE 4695.6	SPEAR	2952 L	Spear head may be different piece of wood; bark twine bindings with some traces of gum resin	Glenormiston	ER# 759
QE 4695.7	SPEAR	2898 L	Spear head looks like different piece of wood fixed with bark twine	Glenormiston	ER# 760

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 4698	SPEAR	2575 L	Wooden, one-piece spear with long, flat spear head fashioned from same piece of wood	Boulia	ER# ? - Spear has 'D 6965' written on shaft
QE 4704.1	SPEAR	2545 L	Wooden one-piece spear with spear head fashioned from same piece of wood - head has 3 hooks (2 backwards facing) - black band on spear head	Glenormiston	ER# 746
QE 4704.2	SPEAR	2900	Wooden one-piece spear as above, except with 3 backwards facing barbs and one frontal - stains of white ochre on spear head	Glenormiston	ER# 746?
QE 4716	SPEAR	2671 L	Reed wooden spear with 7 stingray barbs fixed to head with twine and gum resin; large amount of gum resin on upper third at a possible join	Unknown	ER# 2189
QE 4720	SPEAR	2476 L	Wooden spear with two long barbs fixed to make spear head; stingray prongs	Unknown	ER# 2190
QE 4733	SPEAR	2387 L	Wooden spear, fluted and stained red; spear head very sharp and pointed and encrusted with much gum resin - card erroneously claims this is a Meston spear - this is a COGHLAN spear (verified with M. Quinnell)	Glenormiston	ER# 749

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 4739	SPEAR	2651 L	Dark red wooden spear, spear head is long and sharp; very lightly fluted	Glenormiston	ER# 764
QE 4768	SPEAR	2330 L	Dark red wooden spear - wooden spear head; very thick piece which gets slightly thicker at lower third after gum resin	Boulia	ER# ?
QE 4778.1	SPEAR	2749 L	Spear head has an iron barb fixed to head with twine and gum resin	Unknown	ER# 2177
QE 4778.2	SPEAR	2726 L	Also with iron barb	Unknown	ER# 2179
QE 4792	SPEAR	2738 L	2 piece wooden spear, fixed with twine and gm, with 8 stingray barbs pointing back along spear head	Unknown	ER# 2192
QE 5914	KNIFE	318 L; 57 W	Shark tooth knife on wooden handle, stained with red ochre and traces of gum resin and/or fat - 1 tooth remains (others clearly fell out) - lanyard attached to base with gum resin	Mitchell River	ER# ?
QE 5940	BAG	439 L; 161 W	See QM database	Mulligan River	ER# ?
QE 5962	STRING	254 L	Human hair twine	Glenormiston	ER# ?
QE 6001	STRING BAG	425 L	String bag, coloured bands, for pituri	Glenormiston	ER 778; pituri bag, knitted coloured bands

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 6039	FOREHEAD PENDANT	92 L	Forehead pendant, fragment of china plate mounted in gum	Glenormiston	ER 947: 'forehead pendant, fragment of a china plate mounted in gum'
QE 6053	NECKLACE	340 L est.	Pearl shell necklace with square-shaped sections, dirty on one side	Mitchell River	ER# ?
QE 6058	NECKLACE	465 L	Oval pearl shell necklace; dirty on one side	Normanton	ER# ?
QE 6062	NECKLACE	NQ - 730 L est.	Two necklaces; both oval pearl shaped necklaces on string - size varies between necklaces	Mitchell River	ER# not listed
QE 6063	NECKLACE	595 L est.	Oval pearl shaped necklace - ends of ovals are slightly pointed	Mitchell River	ER# ?
QE 6221	PLUME	280 L (from tip of wood to top plume)	Plume of feathers on pointed stick; tied at base with cloth (clearly European)	Mulligan River	ER# ?
QE 6222	PLUME	285 L (from tip of wood to top plume)	Plume of feathers on pointed stick; tied at base with European cloth	Mulligan River	ER# ?
QE 6223	PLUME	278 L (from tip of wood to top of plume)	Plume of feathers on pointed stick; tied at base with hair twine	Mulligan River	ER# ?

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 6360	RAW MATERIAL		“Ba-ba’ or papha seeds. Seeds of the gum-topped box (Eucalyptus Hemiphloia), used as an article of food’ - from card description	Pituri Creek	ER# ?
QE 6369	RAW MATERIAL		‘Seeds of Mitchell Grass (Astrebla Elympides), used as an article of food’ - on card	Glenormiston	ER# not listed
QE 6370	RAW MATERIAL		‘Downy Weed: This is stuck with blood in patterns on the men’s bodies at corroborees’	Waidwa	ER# ?
QE 6482	RAW MATERIAL		‘Sample of pituri: the leaves and twigs are used as a stimulating tonic, by being chewed, and cause intoxication. In Central Australia the leaves are utilised to poison emus’ - on card	Boulia	ER# ?
QE 6513	FLAKED	75 L; 26 W	‘One chalcedony blade with bilateral retouch’	Wills River	ER# ?
QE 6514	FLAKED	53 L; 22 W	‘Chalcedony blade with bilateral retouch’	Wills River	ER# ?
QE 6515	FLAKED	41 L; 19 W	‘Chalcedony scraper edge retouched’	Wills River	ER# ?
QE 10357	AXE HEAD - EDGE GROUND	136 L; 111 W	Stone axe-head, edge is ground to a smoother and sharper point	Pituri Creek, Glenormiston Station.	ER# ?

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER
QE 10358	AXE HEAD - EDGE GROUND	137 L; 114 W; 39 thick	Rounded stone axe-head, smooth with sharpened edges - pitted surface	Pituri Creek, Glenormiston Station.	ER# 2152 - described as 'tomahawk'
QE 22809	AXE BLANK	178 L; 133 W	Large, rounded, very rough and pitted stone axe head	Glenormiston	ER# 834 (on stone)
QE 22812	AXE HEAD	175 L; 152	Large, rounded, very rough and pitted stone axe head - remnants of stamp on surface	Glenormiston	ER# 120 - described as 'tomahawk'

Roth Collection:

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 182	SMOOTHING BOARDS		Exchanged to Natal Museum			
QE 278.1- .4	NEEDLE	106L (approx)	Needle made from a quill attached to twine - twine is hoarse & not likely human hair - listed in database as four separate objects - all four are tied together; also listed on the attached card as one object	Glenormiston	ER# 2511 – 'Knitting Needles of feather quills, 4-on hair twine' - old card says 'for knitting human hair twine' but I think it should be 'for knitting; human hair twine'	1903 letter notes these as '4 feather-quill netting needles Glenormiston 1903' - info in db accurate
QE 279	TWINE	82.5L; 40.5M	Old card identifies it as 'Human Hair Twine: Native Name 'LANA': Employed in any form of pair or sickness'- most likely for wrapping around sore spot	Palmer River	ER# - no number	In 1903 letter, Roth observes '1 hair twine' though notes not more specific
QE 593	SHELL - WATER BAILER	295L; 213W	Note says 'made of Melo Shell' - shell has numerous minute cracks, and one break at 'base of curl' - also has some green growth/algae etc. - written on the inside is 'Allen Isl 1903', in very faint orange marker	Allen Island, QLD	ER# 2548 - no special notes in registry	Database puts Coll. Date as 1903 - This is a Roth Artefact without a doubt

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1921/3	STRING	(none taken)	(none listed)	Bentinck Island	ER# - tag for a Mishin artefact: (fishing line with iron hook, QE 1926-7) had the # scratched out and QE 1921 written instead -> was attached to this object	1903
QE 4771/7	SPEAR	2811L; 1181 to resin; 75 tip	One piece wood shaft - Recessed butt - bound w/ remnant gum and twine, stained, fluted. - Single wood head hafted into shaft w/ gum, tipped w/ wooden barb attached w/ gum and twine	Bloomfield District	ER# 2064 – ‘barbed tip, 2 piece’	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 4771/6	SPEAR	2958L; 1162 to resin, 141 tip	Warped one-piece shaft - Recessed butt bound w/ twine, stained, linear scoring. Head - single wood piece hafted into shaft w/ gum and sinew, wood barb attached w/ gum and sinew, remnants of gum, Linear scoring	Bloomfield District	ER# 2058 – ‘barbed tip, 2 piece’	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 4771/5	SPEAR	2899L; 1037 to resin; 140 tip	Wooden composite spear, traverse mark 21.5cm from proximal, metal barb attached with gum and sinew, ochre bands at proximal, cloth tied on and in middle and end	Bloomfield District	ER# 2041 – ‘barbed tip, 2 piece’	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1918/2	STRING	L380 as pictured; 118 as pictured	Mourning string of fine twine, about 14 strings (one or two broken) knotted together at end	Maytown	ER# 2497 – '2 looped for females' F. 25	Dec-03
QE 1921/2	STRING	(none taken)	(Same details as above entry; this specimen does not appear to be as faded) - database notes: 'two lengths of bark twine manufactured by winding one single strand around a core strand. One length has remnant ochre, the other ochre covering' string has been wrapped around wooden rod, obviously by the museum	Bentinck Island	ER# 2494 - simply listed in registry as 'bundles of fibre twine'	1903
QE 4771/4	SPEAR	2683L; 1050 to resin; 129 to tip	Wooden composite spear, traverse mark 21cm from proximal, iron tip	Bloomfield District	ER# 2068 – 'barbed tip, 2 piece'	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 1456	BARK BASKET	348L; including handle; 207W at base; 100W at mouth	Basket made from bark (unknown tree), with a threaded bark lip around the mouth, & remnants of the handle - has many cracks, one almost splitting basket in half, & one large hole in one base corner	Cardwell Region	ER# - Indeterminate	Old card claims basket from Cardwell Region; donated by Roth in 1900

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1469	BICORNUL BASKET	530L, with strip; 231L, without strip; 264W, at base corners; 142W, at mouth	Database notes prolific (see database) - made from cane - in excellent condition; only the strap is split at end	Cardwell Region	ER# - old register (not ER - larger document) lists it under 'Dilly Bags'; ER register calls it cane basket, both attribute it to Dr. Roth	Roth donated Dilly Bags & Baskets in 1900, & I see no reason to doubt this is a Roth artefact.
QE 1542	THROWING STICK	738 L	Throwing stick, curved, incised spirals	Glenormiston	ER 803; curved round staff tapering to ends with a spiral band of engraved lines	
QE 1546	CLUB	726 L, 146 W (at base/head)	Club, nulla nulla, head double-beaked	Rockhampton	ER 2369; double beaked	
QE 1550	CLUB	765 L	Club, nulla nulla, head four pronged	Rockhampton	ER 2348; nulla, four pronged	
QE 1553	CLUB NULLA NULLA	726L; 45W, at widest point; 13W at base	Wooden club, with two inch raised wooden band around head - pointed end - fluted along whole length - some splitting in the wood, also some very slightly dented & smooth points, perhaps suggesting use	Miriam Vale	ER# (none listed) - old registry lists it as a 'nulla'	Roth donated 3 fighting sticks from Miriam Vale in 1903 - This object is one of these
QE 1554	CLUB	777 L	Club, nulla nulla, head merely swollen bulb	Rockhampton	ER 2367; nulla, knob ended	
QE 1561	CLUB	668 L	Club, nulla nulla, head white ochred	Rockhampton	ER 2372: 'nulla, pyramindalend?' (indecipherable)	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1564	CLUB	752 L	Club, nulla nulla, 5 rows teeth cut in head	Raglan	ER 2371; nulla, rows of cut knobs on each side	1903
QE 4771/3	SPEAR	2724; 1050 to resin; 118 to tip	Wooden composite spear, tipped with wooded barb, traverse mark 22cm from proximal, paper or cloth attached w/ string	Bloomfield District	ER# 2067 – 'barbed tip, 2 piece'	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 1632	SPEAR THROWER	839L; 63W at centre/elbow	Wooden spearthrower, tipped with wooden peg - fixed in possibly with gum & twine wood has numerous minute holes riddled throughout - see notes in database	Bloomfield District	ER# - registry lists this as a Woomera, no special notes besides 'no handle'	Roth donated 16 spearthrowers from Mapoon - this is one of these
QE 1633	SPEAR THROWER	73.5L; 53W at elbow	Wooden speathrower - Ochre tinges whole body red - faded white pattern at top, like a cross (more faded in reverse of photo) - head has no 'peg', slightly damaged, remnant gum and fibre which may have held peg	Bloomfield District	ER# 2016 - lists it as being red ochre, and white at end	Donated in 1903, Roth donated 16 spearthrowers from Mapoon

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1634	SPEAR THROWER	952L; 58W at centre	Smooth wooden spearthrower - see notes in database - gum on both ends - peg & handle - same red ochre stains on gum at handle end	Bloomfield District	ER# 2012; note in registry says 'projection as handle'	Donated 1900 - Roth donated 18 Woomeras in 1900, sent from Bloomfield - 1632 & 1633 may have the wrong year attached as Roth did not donate woomeras from Bloomfield in 1903
QE 1636	SPEAR THROWER	661L; 77W at centre (N.B. database measurements differ)	Wooden spearthrower - distal end, cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum and fibre - Proximal end, shell attached via gum, which extends up shaft	Mapoon	ER# - lists as Mapoon	Roth donated woomeras from Mapoon in 1903; no reason to doubt accuracy of database
QE 1639	SPEAR THROWER	706L; 80W, at centre	Distal end, notched cylindrical peg attached with resin - Proximal end, appears to be broken, with split down centre (held fast with string - appears to be recently applied) - gum extends part way up shaft on distal & proximal ends	Mapoon	ER# 2390 - no special notes in registry	Database claims collection date 1903 - likely correct, as Roth donated Woomeras from Mapoon in 1903
QE 1640	SPEAR THROWER	721L; 75W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - distal end, wooden cylindrical peg with very slight notch, attached with gum - proximal end, shell fixed with gum, rung part very up shaft - shaft shows some sign of warping, as well as possibly some wood rot (?)	Mapoon	ER# 2391 - no particular notes	Collection date 1903, conf. with Roth; letters

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1641	SPEAR THROWER	793L; 71W at widest part, not quite centre, closer to distal end	Wooden spearthrower - see database notes for loan history - Distal end, cylindrical wooden peg, no notch, attached with gum - proximal end, runted end, shell attached with gum - gum extends up shaft roughly 21cms	Mapoon	ER# 2394 - described as 'lath, wooden'	No reason to doubt this is a Roth artefact
QE 1642	SPEAR THROWER	701L; 57W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - see database notes for loan history - Distal end, cylindrical wooden peg, no notch, attached with gum - proximal end, narrower shaft compared to other mapoon woomeras, shell fixed to shaft with gum extending up shaft	Mapoon	ER# 2402 - no special notes	Collection date coincides with Roth's letters
QE 1643	SPEAR THROWER	770.5L; 68W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - see database notes for loan history - Distal end, notched (slightly) cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum and fibre - proximal end, runted shell attached with gum and fibre, gum extending 17.5cms up shaft	Mapoon	ER# 2402 - no particular notes besides generic description as 'shell, woomera'	No reason to doubt this is a Roth artefact

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1644	SPEAR THROWER	790.5L; 94.5W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - distal end, cylindrical wood peg fixed with gum and fibre to shaft - proximal end, ochre coated shells would normally be, it appears they have fallen off - gum & thread extends up shaft this woomera appears wider than most other Mapoon district ones - scratching on one side at proximal end which resembles something having been deliberately scratched out	Mapoon	ER# 2399 - no special notes in register, dittoed as above entry (QE 1643)	No reason to doubt this is a Roth donation
QE 1645	SPEAR THROWER	798L; 67W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - distal end, cylindrical wooden peg, fixed with gum and thread to shaft, peg has a very slight notch - proximal end, rounded shell fixed with gum and thread to shaft, shell is more chipped & less counted around the edges - a line of gum crosses the shell diagonally - wood shaft shows a little more pitting & scratching than other species	Mapoon	ER# 2397 - dittoed notes, same as QE 1643	No reason to doubt this is a Roth donation
QE 1646	WOOMERA	742 L, 65 W (at centre)	Woomera, lath, shell	Mapoon	ER 2400; shell woomera [measurements], blade cracked	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1647	SPEAR THROWER	741L; 95W, at centre	Wooden spearthrower - distal end, cylindrical wooden peg, notched, fixed to shaft with gum and thread, same thread 'exposed' from gum & wrapped about peg - proximal end, shell missing on one side, on other the shell is broken and much weathered, fixed to shaft with gum	Mapoon	ER# 2396, notes say 'leaf, shell' & (in ER) 'shell broken'	Nothing listed
QE 1648	SPEAR THROWER	709.5L; 93.5W, at centre	Wooden woomera - distal end, wooden cylindrical peg, notched, fixed to shaft with gum and thread - proximal end, rounded, though chipped, shells fixed to shaft with gum and thread - extends up shaft, giving a 'ridged' appearance to the gum - same gum on shells, perhaps suggesting something was fixed here previously	Mapoon	ER# 2398, no special notes in register	No reason to doubt this is a Roth donation
QE 1649	SPEAR THROWER	763L; 83W, at centre	Wooden woomera - distal end, cylindrical wooden peg, notched, fixed to shaft with gum and thread - proximal end, appears shells may have fallen off, as gum holds nothing - scratching, attempting to deface registry #	Mapoon	ER# 2389, no notes	No reason to doubt this is a Roth artefact

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1784	NECKLACE	coiled, tangled, bundled - impossible to measure	Necklace of grass bugles	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2506 - 'dittoed under 'Grass bugles'	Grass bugle necklace from Butcher's Hill, collected in 1898, sent in 1903
QE 1790	NECKLACE	as above - not possible to measure	Necklace of grass bugles - bugles thicker than in 1784	Cape Grafton	ER# 2507 - dittoed under 'Necklace Grass Bugles'	Roth collected a grass bugle necklace from Cape Grafton in 1902, sent in 1903
QE 1801.1	ARMLET	73 L, 83 W (at widest point)	Armlets, of pandanus leaf	Cape Bedford	ER 1989; armlet	
QE 1801.2	ARMLET	[none listed]	Armlets, of pandanus leaf	Cape Bedford	ER 1990; armlet	
QE 1806	FISHING LINE	197L (10m length, unfurled est.)	Fishing line made of native twine - according to Trish Barnard - would take about an hr to make	locality unknown, possibly cabbage palm twine from Cape York	ER# 2535, no notes besides 'fishing line'	Database lists donation yr as 1903 - Roth lists a bundle of 'fibre twine from Bentinck Island', which is most likely this piece
QE 1903	TWINE	300 L (wool spool -> highly unlikely part of object)	Native twine of very fine texture	Cooktown	ER 2536; string, macarangatanarius 'doangal'	
QE 1904	STRING	approx 10-15cms unfurled	Piece of string from Bentinck Island (incorrect) - database notes 'very well made and very fine twine'	Eight Mile Police Camp, not Bentinck Island	ER# 2537 (incorrectly listed as 2539, which is QE 1922)	Roth donated in 1902 - listed in letters

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1910	RAW MATERIAL	18L; 51W	Database lists as 'Prepared material: resource plant bark: fibre. One small packet. 'Fibre used for making rope''	Glenormiston	ER# 2534, lists it as 'Kahlo used for making rope'	Donated in 1903
QE 1915	STRING	L250 as pictured; W160	Mourning string overcast and ochred red	Mapoon	ER# 2525	Dec-03
QE 1916	STRING	L160 as pictured; W131 as pictured	Mourning string of native twine, chain plait and overcast - Some brown gum or resin in two places close together.	Bentinck Island	ER# 2495	Mar-03
QE 1917	STRING	L209 as pictured; W110 as pictured	Mourning string, made of native twine, overcast, might once have been smeared with yellow ochre - remnants faint.	Bathurst Heads	ER# 2496 - Didn't have a card attached, but is likely QE 1917, because it is the only string in the box without identification	Mar-03
QE 1918/1	STRING	L209 as pictured; W110 as pictured	Mourning string of fine twine, eight strings knotted together at end	Maytown	ER# 2497 - '2 looped for females' F. 25	Dec-03
QE 1919	STRING	L178 as pictured; W125 as pictured	Made of native twine, overcast, broken at one end, some fraying	Maytown	ER# 2498	Dec-03
QE 1920	STRING	L 250 as pictured; W125 as pictured	Mourning string made of native twine - overcast, eight thick strands knotted at end	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2499	Dec-03

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1921/1	STRING	(none taken)	Database notes: 'two lengths of bark twine manufactured by winding one single strand around a core strand. One length has remnant ochre, the other ochre covering' - string has been wrapped around wooden rod, obviously by the museum	Bentinck Island	ER# 2494 - simply listed in registry as 'bundles of fibre twine'	1903
QE 1922	STRING	about 15-20cms long	'Small piece of native cord' - very frayed	Bentinck Island	ER# 2539 - no special notes in registry besides QE#	
QE 1925.1 + .2	RAW MATERIAL	(none provided)	Bark plant fibre; Acacia Latifolia - database notes the local name as 'Ba-wal' - database also notes this is 'prepared' material; reddish in colour - according to Trish Barnard, may be later made into string/twine etc.	Princess Charlotte Bay	ER# 2533; simply described as 'Acacia Latifolia'	Sent in 1903 by Roth as 'Acacia Latifolia'
QE 1952	BAG	299L; 144W, at centre, base & mouth	Closely twined bag; alternating pattern of dark & light brown colours- held at mouth by fine string, which has one knotted and frayed section in the centre	Moreton	ER# 2100 - no special notes. Museum notes describe it as 'bag, netted twine'	Roth sent bags in 1903, though notes do not reveal if one came from Moreton - others are exactly specified, so I am dubious as to accuracy of the donation year (probably 1900, not 1903)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1953	BAG	349.5L; 222W, at base; 110.5W, at mouth	Loosely twined bag; alternating pattern of dark and light brown colours - cord is thicker at mouth	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2102 - no special notes in registry	No record of a Butcher's Hill bag in 1903 - probably 1900
QE 1960	BAG	336L; 307.5W, at base; 144.5W, at mouth	Bell-shaped bag of loosely nested twine, becoming tighter near the mouth	Normanton	ER# 2097 - no special notes	Record in Roth's letters confirms this is a dilly-bag he donated from Normanton in 1903
QE 1961	BAG	406L; 205W, at base; 156, at mouth	More closely netted bag than some prev. specimens - alternating dark & light brown colour	Cape Bedford	ER# 2103 - no special notes besides 'many bands'	Year of donation (1903) may be an error, as there is no specific record in Roth's letter about the locality - more likely to be 1900 (see 1900 letter)
QE 1964	BAG	326L; 219.5W, at base; 99.5W, at mouth	Fine twine, netted to moderate looseness - thin draw string at mouth	Wenlock River in database - but 'Batavia River' on cards / Wenlock River used to be Batavia River	ER# 2101 - no especial notes, listed as 'Batavia River'	Roth did donate items from Batavia R. in 1903, though no notes mention bags from there (in his letters) - may be from 1900, when he also donated from Batavia River

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1970	BAG	294L; 236W, at base; 88W, at mouth	Draw-string is 3/4 covered in European cloth (cotton), with a red chequered pattern, showing European influences & innovation - netting also has two small lumps of resin/clay etc seemingly to hold netting near the top	Normanton	ER# 2096 - only real notes are '2 specs?' in brackets	1900
QE 1972	BAG	481L; 243.5W, at base; 55.5W, at mouth	Register: 'bag, netted twine, properly netted' - fish-net style netting, very narrow mouth which gradually widens to base - cord at mouth is broken	Normanton	ER# 2098 - this had been listed with QE 1979 as ER 2096, however, this is actually ER 2098 (Michael Quinnell has updated database)	1900
QE 1973	BAG	164 L, 160 W (est.)	Bag, netted twine, in construction	Yaamba	ER 2095; net bag, in progress	
QE 1977	BAG	160 W at mouth (est.), 350 W at base (est.)	Bag, netted, twine, properly netted	Normanton	ER 2099; twine net bag	
QE 1982	BAG	370 L, 142 W (at base)	Bag, netted, twine, fairly closely netted	Cape Bedford	ER 2104; twine bag pattern	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 1987	SPEAR	UNMEASURED!!	Broken composite spear, which looks like it may have been intended for fishing purposes (spear head is barbed) - broken distal and proximal ends, held together with twine - a single rail has been driven through end piece - spear is very weathered; numerous scratches; head has a deep furrow about 15cm long	Bentinck Island	ER# 2487 - no esp. notes; dittoed under 'sapling, wood loose nicked'	Roth collected '10 Bentinck Island Spears' in 1903, this is one of them
QE 2004	KNIFE	186.5L; 66.5W, at tip; 22.5W, at butt base	Knife fashioned from an iron shovel, with 'sharpened' front & one side - haft made from hardened wood fibre & gum	Bloomfield River	ER# 2512 'Iron made from shovels'	Roth donated two iron shovel knives in 1903, this is one of them
QE 2033	SMOOTHING BOARDS	194.5L; 39W, at widest point	Wooden smoothing board - remnant gum, in various places on both sides	Bloomfield River	ER# 2520. Dittoed 'Smoothing Board plain'	Roth lists '3 plain smoothing boards' in 1903 letter - donation yr most likely accurate
QE 2035	SMOOTHING BOARDS	256L; 64.5W in middle	Card reads 'Groover: Smoothing Board and Groover' - Broken incisor at base, fixed with twine and resin to the board	Pennefather River	ER# 2540. 'Smoothing board, kangaroo tooth'	This is 1 of 2 smoothing boards with kangaroo teeth donated by Roth in 1903
QE 2036	SMOOTHING BOARDS	221L; 55W	Wood - remnant traces of gum, both sides, on surface	Bloomfield River	ER# 2521. Dittoed 'Smoothing Board plain'	Roth lists '3 plain smoothing boards' in 1903 letter - donation yr accurate

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2037	SMOOTHING BOARDS	207L; 49W	Wood, no peg - both ends rounded - small traces of gum on surface	Bloomfield River	ER# 2519 - 'smoothing board plain'	One of 3 plain smoothing boards donated in 1903
QE 2054	RAW MATERIAL	77.5L; 49.5W	Red ochre - 'a nodule of hematite with part of surface abraded into a concavity'	Bathurst Heads	ER# 2007: 'Hematite, Red Ochreous'	One of the '8 samples of pigment' Roth sent in 1900
QE 2056	OCHRE	(none taken)	Yellow ochre; sand and pebbles	Bathurst Heads	ER# 2003: 'Yellow Clay'	One of 8 pigment samples Roth sent in 1900
QE 2056	RAW MATERIAL	53W; 44L	Database mentions yellow colour to object, though I see no yellow about it, maybe the yellow has faded or is on the inside - base smooth and flat	Palmer River	ER# 2004: 'Red Ochre' - Card + registry only mention 'red' ochre	One of 8 pigment samples Roth sent in 1900
QE 2060	RAW MATERIAL	(none taken)	Sample of white clay	Wenlock River	ER# 2002 (listed as Batavia River): 'White Clay'	One of 8 pigments sent in 1900
QE 2067	RAW MATERIAL	(none taken)	'Yellow clay, used as a pigment'	Wenlock River/Batavia River	ER# 2005: 'Yellow Clay'	One of 8 pigment samples Roth sent in 1900
QE 2069	SHELL SPOON (check for any errors)	101L; 55W; 17.5H	'One value of shell with rough exterior' - two cards; 1: 'Shell Spoon; Warbo Pahka' 2: 'Velesunio Wilson (Lea)' followed by a list of place & river names	Cape Bedford	ER# 2524: 'Warbo parka'	Roth sent 3 shell-spoons in 1903 - this is one of them

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2074	RAW MATERIAL	est.: approx. 30cms if all unfurled	Card reads: 'Kangaroo tendon' - database reads: 'dried strips of tendon tied with tendon at one end'	Atherton	ER# 2508: 'Kangaroo tendon'	Roth sent in a box with kangaroo tendons in 1903
QE 2075	KANGAROO TENDON	192L; 24W (at base)	Tail bones of a kangaroo, wrapped in paper bark bound with bark fibre - database records state an old attached note read 'ready for barter'	Unknown	ER# 2510 - 'Kangaroo tendon on tail end ready for barter, mostly destroyed'	Roth sent in a box with kangaroo tendons in 1903
QE 2077	BARBS	114 L, 24 W (at widest point)	Bundle of stingaree barbs for barter	Palmer River	ER 2502; stingaree barbs ready for barter	
QE 2193	APRON	707L (top thread)	Pubic cover made from twine - database says it is a woman's apron	Pennefather River	ER# 1988 - no sp. notes	
QE 2194	APRON	482 (top thread, largest piece)	Pubic cover made from twine - database says 'woman's apron' - in two parts, connected with string	Penefather River	ER# 1987 - 'waist belt'	
QE 2212	HAMMERSTONE	230.5L (haft bone to top); 31.5W (haft)/184.5L (stone); 32W (stone thickness)	Hammer made from stone, with wooden handle (two thin pieces of wood fixed at base and stone with gum) - stone is smooth along all edges, slightly rough at edge point.	Palmer River	ER# 2549 'Hammer stone in handle'	Roth notes a 'stone-hammer in handle, Palmer 1899' in his 1903 letter
QE 2265	AXE	344L (haft); 30.5W (haft)/79L (stone); 62W (stone)	Long wooden handle with some gum residue - fastened in middle with human hair twine - marked in writing (ST.64)	South Queensland	ER# 2550 'Tomahawk'	Sent in 1903

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4771/2	SPEAR	2867L; 1240L to resin; 1210L of wooden tip	Composite wooden spear, wooden barb held on with gum and fibre, linear scoring, crack in shaft near hafted area	Bloomfield District	ER# 2064 - 'barbed tip, 2 piece'	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 4775/2	SPEAR	L2339; 264 to first gum; 1805 to second gum	One piece wood shaft, recessed butt bound w/ gum and fibre - Single wood head with gum and biased taper toward proximal, hafted into shaft with gum twine and fibre. - No barb and no mention of there ever having been one in any registry, yet one was obviously once attached	Wenlock River, Embley & Pennefather Rivers	ER# 2435 - dittoed from QE4771	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in Dec. 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 2399	AXE HEAD	92.5L; 88W; 32W (thickness)	Stone axe, un-hafted (grey) - smooth on 3 surfaces, except for the side which would be attached to haft - chipped at impact point	Logan	ER# 2399: 'tomahawk', no sp. notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (Letter 6849), this is the one from Logan
QE 2427	AXE HEAD	144L; 123W; 27.5W (thickness)	Stone axe-head, un-hafted, smoothed on impact side & along most surfaces - rough & chipped on various points	Herberton	ER# 2554: dittoed under 'tomahawk', no sp. notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849); this is St 56, from Herberton - stamp ST 56 from Roth himself

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2429	AXE HEAD	150L; 105.5W; 28W (thickness)	Stone axe, un-mounted - fairly rough, smoother edges, chipped on hitting edge	Cooktown	ER# 2553; dittoed for 'tomahawk', no sp. notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849); this is either ST 31 or ST 25 (both sent from Cooktown in 1903) (QE 2432 is the other)
QE 2432	AXE HEAD	104L; 62.5W (at hitting edge - i.e. the widest point); 22W (thickness - at thickest point)	Stone axe – un-mounted - fairly good condition - limited chips, quite smooth on curved side, less so on the flatter side - two grooves on flatter side - large chip out of the edge which would be fastened to the stick	Cooktown	ER# 2552; dittoed as 'tomahawk', no special notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849) - 2 from Cooktown - this is either ST 31 or ST 25 (QE 2429 is the other)
QE 2455	AXE HEAD	97L; 104.5W; 32.5W (thickness)	Stone axe – un-mounted - almost circular, deep crack through it all the way around, quite smooth, some rough patches on both sides - particularly towards the edge which would attach to a handle, limited chips on the hitting edge	Boulia	ER# 2558; 'tomahawk', no sp. Notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849) - one from Boulia - ST 13
QE 2467	AXE HEAD	184L; 143.5W; 31 (thickness)	Stone axe-head – un-mounted - quite smooth on both faces, heavy chipped edges	Glen Alice (via Herberton)	ER# 2556; dittoed for 'tomahawk', sp. notes - none	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849) - ST 52 marked
QE 2471	AXE HEAD	220.5L; 182.5W; 31W (thickness)	Stone axe head – un-mounted - Register Description: 'Basalt Axe' - quite flat, but also quite rough on both sides - edges - heavily chipped, large	Herberton	ER# 2561; dittoed for 'tomahawk', no sp. notes	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849) - 2 from Herberton - this is ST 54 (marked on item)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2514	CLUB SHIELD	497 L, 225 W	Club shield	(Marked in register as '?')	(No ER reference listed; nearest listing is ~QE 2512: ER 1489)	
QE 2522	CLUB SHIELD	526 L, 234 W	Club shield	Yeppoon	ER 2377; shield, oblong plain, red back	
QE 2524	CLUB SHIELD - S. 19/13/18/10	520 L, 235 W	Club shield - red and white ochre patterns	Glenprairie	ER 2381; shield, oblong, plain, white + red [drawn image of shield - oval shape with X-shaped pattern on front]	1903
QE 2535	CLUB SHIELD; S12 WRITTEN ON	546 L, 20 W	Club shield	Rockhampton	ER 2379; shield, oblong plain, incised lines	
QE 2541	CLUB SHIELD	576 L, 221 W	Club shield	Rockhampton	ER 2376; shield, oblong plain, incised band near each end	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2557	SPEAR THROWER	749.5L; 54W (middle); 17W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - curved, cylindrical piece of wood (peg) attached by bark (?) threaded through holes in the main section end slightly loose. - Register description: 'Wooden, convex similar Distal-cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum and fibre. Proximal - shaved, rounded end. Curved in form red ochre over entire surface.'	Bloomfield District	ER# 2019 dittoed for 'woomera', 'curved', 'red', 'no handle' - sp. notes: 'no design on end', 'no shell'	Roth sent 18 woomeras in 1900 (602), this is W63. (one of 17 from the Bloomfield district).- W63 is marked on the woomera
QE 2558	SPEAR THROWER	741L; 60W (middle); 67 (peg); 12.5 (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register description: 'Wooden, convex similar. Distal cylindrical wooden peg attached at acute angle to edge with gum and twine. Proximal - end tapering to obtuse point. Curved in form, broad at elbow. Plain, possible white stripe on obverse side.'	Bloomfield district	ER# 2023; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp. notes; dittoed for 'curved', 'pale', 'no shell' and 'no handle'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900, this is W59 (one of 17 from Bloomfield district)(602) - W59 marked on the woomera.
QE 2559	SPEAR THROWER	761L; 66W (middle); 67 (peg); 14W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, convex similar. Distal-cylindrical wooden peg attached with fibre and gum. Proximal - tapering to a shaved rounded point. Curved in form, broad at the elbow. Plain, red cross on obverse distal end.'	Bloomfield District	ER# 2026; dittoed for woomera - sp. notes - dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell' and 'pale', also 'red &'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602), this is W71 (one of possible 17 from Bloomfield district) - W71 marked on the woomera.

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2560	SPEAR THROWER	710.5L; 50.5W; 18.5W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, convex similar. Distal-cylindrical wooden peg attached with fibre and gum. Proximal - shaved to a rounded end. Curved in form. Red ochre over entire surface' - Also - split through middle all the way round & - almost all the way through	Bloomfield District	ER# 2017; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp. notes - dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell', 'curved', 'red' and 'no handle' - also [see ref. drawing] (?) (As in Aust. Ethnology Register 1_____ 3015)	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - 17 from Bloomfield district - this is W49 (marked on spearthrower & included in Roth's letter)
QE 2561	SPEAR THROWER	671L; 57W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, convex similar. Distal-cylindrical wooden peg attached with fibre and gum at acute angle to edge. Proximal - rounded end. Curved in form. Red ochre over entire surface. Distal reverse-round circle with dot in it in white.'	Bloomfield district	ER# 2018; dittoed for 'Woomera' - dittoed for 'curved', 'red', 'no handle' and 'no shell' - also [see ref. drawing] (?)	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - 17 from Bloomfield district - this is W48 (marked on spearthrower & included in Roth's letter)
QE 2562	SPEAR THROWER	690L; 46.5W; 14.5W (thickness); 51.5W (peg)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, convex similar. Distal-cylindrical wooden peg attached at acute angle with twine and gum. Proximal - tapering slightly to a rounded end. Curved in form. Elbow towards proximal end. Brown pigment over entire surface.'	Bloomfield District	ER# 2028; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp. notes - 'old', dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell', 'supposed to be old'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - this is W67 (marked on item & listed in letter)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2563	SPEAR THROWER	697.5L; 56W; 16.5W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, similar convex. Distal-tapering, peg, remnant string and gum attached. Proximal - tapering to a rounded shaved end. Curved in form. Elbow towards distal end. Biased taper towards proximal end. Remnant red ochre over entire surface. According to ER Register object is supposed to be pale red. Some markings visible but not discernible.'	Bloomfield District	ER# 2027; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp. notes - dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell' - also 'pale red' and '[see ref. drawing]'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - 17 from Bloomfield district - this is W52 (marked on item & listed in letter
QE 2564	SPEAR THROWER	760.5L; 57W; 15.5W (thickness); 63L (peg length)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, similar convex. Distal-tapering, cylindrical peg attached with gum and fibre. Proximal - tapering to a rounded end. Curved in form. Red ochre over entire surface.' - Peg attached by fibre thread through hole in the wood.	Bloomfield District	ER# 2020; dittoed for 'woomera' - dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell', 'red', 'no design on end' and 'no handle'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - this is W64 (marked on item and listed in Roth's letter)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2565	SPEAR THROWER	676L; 46W; 16W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower - Register Description: 'Wooden, similar convex. Distal-wooden peg missing, remnant fibre and gum. Proximal - tapering to a rounded point. Elbow towards distal, biased tapering towards proximal. Brown pigment over entire surface.' - Fibre which would have attached peg - threads through one hole in the wood, most strings of fibre -> broken	Bloomfield District	ER# 2029; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp notes - dittoed for 'curved' and 'no shell'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - this is W61 (marked on item and listed in letter)
QE 2566	SPEAR THROWER	752.5L; 655W; 13W (thickness)	Wooden spearthrower Register Description: 'Wooden, similar convex. Distal-tapering, cylindrical wooden peg attached at acute angle to edge with fibre and gum. Proximal - tapering to shaved, rounded end. Plain, decoration possible... at reverse distal end.' - Peg - very loose, fibre threaded through one hole in the wood.	Bloomfield District	ER# 2024; dittoed for 'woomera' - sp notes - dittoed for 'curved', 'no shell', and 'pale' & 'darker bars'	Roth sent 18 wommeras in 1900 (602) - 17 from Bloomfield district - this is W45 (marked on item & listed in Roth's letter)
QE 2567	SPEAR THROWER	720.5L; 50W, in centre	Wooden woomera - riddled with many holes - cylindrical wooden peg on distal side, fixed with resin - at base of resin there is a hole through the wood through which thread/fibre would pass - 'W.56' written on one side - '25697' on other	Bloomfield District	ER# '?' - in QE Register	1900

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2568	SPEAR THROWER	736L; 48W (at centre)	Wooden woomera - cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum and fibre on distal end - red ochre over entire surface - generally - blemished specimen, despite no gum residue near centre one side - 'W.73' written on one side	Bloomfield District	ER# ? - in QE registry	W.73 is recorded in Roth's 1900 letter (602), most likely authentic
QE 2570	SPEAR THROWER	716L; 44W @ distal; W100.5 @ proximal; W98.5 @ centre	Wooden spearthrower - cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum & fibre at proximal end - peg is notched - some traces of resin & possibly human fats etc.	No known locality	ER# 2011 - 'no shell'	Not enough info. to discount that this is a Roth spearthrower - most likely sent in 1900 as both letter & database claim
QE 2614	SPEAR THROWER	725L; 112W (proximal); 70W (distal); 99W (centre)	Wooden spearthrower - cylindrical wooden peg attached with gum and fibre at proximal end - peg is slightly notched - some white fibre visible where gum has worn away on distal and proximal	No known locality	ER# 2010 - 'dittoed under leaf-shaped' - object doesn't have a shell, but QE register says has a shell whereas ER makes no mention	Not enough info. to discount that this is a Roth spearthrower - most likely sent in 1900 as both letter & database claim
QE 2722	CLUB	51L; 23W (base); 26W (middle); 36W (head - at thickest part)	Registry description: 'Hardwood, Pointed end, markings from 3mms to 98mms. then worn fluting to tip. two incised lines around head at 570mms to 582mms.	Tilpal	ER# 2361; dittoed for 'Nulla'. - sp. notes; 'two incised lines near end' & dittoed for 'plain pointed end' and 'common form'	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' in 1903 (6798) - two from Tilpal. (FS 18 and FS 19) - faint marking on the club - FS 1? - looks to be FS 18
QE 2724	NULLA	779 L	Nulla, plain, pointed head	Tilpal	ER 2362; nulla, common form	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2725	CLUB	655.5L; 21.5W (base); 25.5W (middle); 35W (head - at thickest point)	Register description; 'Hardwood. Pointed ends with markings from 12mms to 95mms, then fluting to tip.'	Rockhampton	ER# 2363; dittoed for 'Nulla' - sp. notes - dittoed for 'plain.', 'pointed head' and 'common form,' also local name possibly 'Yaamba' (i.e. local name of Place of Origin)	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' - marking on club is FS 20 which is recorded by Roth as from 'Yaamba'- sent in 1903 (6798)
QE 2726	NULLA	73 L	Nulla, plain, pointed head	Rockhampton (Karabaran Tribe)	ER 2364; nulla, common form	
QE 2727	CLUB	603.5L; 20W (base); 23W (middle); 33W (head - at thickest part)	Register description: Softwood; light in colour, pointed end, worn fluting along shaft with spiked tip. patches of black colour.' - also very sharp/steep heavy narrowed point	Rockhampton, wooden club	ER# 2365; dittoed for 'Nulla' - sp. notes - 'for training youth' & dittoed for 'plain,' 'pointed head' and 'common form'	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' in 1903 (6798) - Club marked with FS 22 - marked by Roth as intended for 'teaching young boys at Rockhampton.'
QE 2728	CLUB	658L; 22W (base); 29.5 (middle); 35.5 (head - at thickest part).	Register description: 'Pointed end, markings from 33mm to 77mm. Large section missing from end, then fluting along shaft to head. Slightly curved.'	Yeppoon, wooden club	ER# 2360; dittoed for 'Nulla' - sp. notes - 'common form', & dittoed for 'plain' and 'pointed head'	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' in 1903 (6798) - one from Yeppoon - FS 17 (no marking on club but probably FS 17.)

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 2729	CLUB	613.5L; 19.5 (base); 24.5W (middle); 33.5W (head - at the thickest part of club)	Register description: 'Softwood. Pointed end, dark patch of colour on one side. tip is broken' - tip is splitting	Rockhampton, wooden club	ER# 2366; dittoed for 'Nulla' - sp. notes - dittoed for 'plain', 'pointed head', 'common form' and 'for training youth'	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' in 1903 (6798) - two for 'teaching young boys at Rockhampton' - FS 22 and FS 23 - This is FS 23 (marked on club)
QE 2730	CLUB	623L; 22W (base); 27W (middle); 40W (head - at the thickest part of club)	Register description: 'Softwood. Pointed end, markings from 15mms to 85mms with split. 3/4 major splits in shaft and head, colour darkens at head, tip broken off. Slightly bent.'	Miriam Vale, wooden club	ER# 2349, 'Nulla' - sp notes - 'common', 'plain', & 'painted head'	Roth sent 19 'fighting sticks' in 1903 (6798) - two from Miriam Vale - this is FS 14 (marked on club)
QE 2734	NULLA	737 L	Nulla, pineapple head (5 rows); String around mid-section likely European	Raglan	ER 2370; 'nulla, 5 rows cut knobs - repaired with twine'	1903
QE 2737	NULLA	706 L	Nulla, head 4 prong (2 broken short)	Rockhampton	ER 2347; nulla, four pronged	
QE 3595	AXE HEAD	190L; 159.5W; 28.5W (thickness)	Stone axehead – un-mounted - Register description: 'Stone hatchet' - fairly smooth, some rough patches, brown - speckled with black , limited chipping along the hitting edge - heavily chipped on the top edge	Tirrebellia via Herberton	ER# 2555; dittoed for 'tomahawk' and 'stone hatchet' - sp. notes - none	Roth sent 11 axe-heads in 1903 (6849) - one from Tirrebellia (via Herberton) - axe-head marked with a stamp (ST 61) from Roth

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 3804	AXE HEAD	171.5L; 111W; 22W (thickness)	Stone axe-head – un-mounted - edge-ground, very smooth, limited chips	Atherton	ER# 2560; dittoed for 'tomahawk' - (missing from Ethnography: QE Register - 3803 to 3821) - no sp notes	Roth sent 11 axe- heads in 1903 (6849) - one from Atherton (St. 48) - This is probably ST 48 (not marked on item)
QE 3834	AXE HEAD	134L; 99.5W; 38W (thickness)	Stone axe head – un-mounted - curved faces, quite smooth, a few small chips on the hitting edge, black, thick	Cape Grafton	ER# 2551; dittoed for 'tomahawk' - (registry # missing from Ethnography: QE Register) - sp notes - location of item in Ethnography QE Register is Kennedy Silver mines).	Roth sent 11 axe- heads in 1903 (6849) - one from Cape Grafton - ST 35 - ST 35 marked on item
QE 4236	SHIELD	516.5L; 261W; 60W (thickness); 162.5L (handle)	Wooden club Register description: 'Shield-black' - also - large split (top), handle nailed to shield (14 nails), three nails (holding a split together?) at the bottom	Miriam Vale	ER# 2372, 'shield' - sp. notes - 'black'	Roth sent 9 'swords' in 1903 (6798) from the same places as the 9 shields in the collection (there are no swords in the collections) - one of the 'swords' is from Miriam Vale is S/6 - this shield is from Miriam Vale & labelled S/6

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4239	SHIELD	643L; 206.5W; 87.5W (thickness)	Register Description: 'Slightly heavy wood shield, oval in shape with straight sides and curved ends. No decoration on shield. Recessed handle on back. No evidence of ochre used on shield. There are numerous marks on the shield as well as a small split in the face of the shield.' - also some gouge marks in face of shield- several green marks on the back of shield at the top - one hole in the middle of the bottom of shield on the back	Miriam Vale	ER# 2374; 'shield' - sp notes - 'oblong plain' - ER Registry number not listed in QE Register	Roth sent 9 'swords' in 1903 (6798) from the same places as the 9 shields in the collection (there are no swords in the collection) - one of the 'swords' from Miriam Vale is S.3 - this shield is from Miriam Vale and labelled S.3
QE 4246	SHIELD	517.5L; 214W; 74.5W (thickness)	Register Description: 'Light wooden shield with curved ends and slight taper to one end. Front is convex and decorated with a groove on across either ending. Back is flat to slightly concave with a recessed handle and no decoration.' - back - quite scratched, one long split, several holes.	Raglan	ER# 2375; 'shield' - (not in ethnography: QE Registry) - sp notes - dittoed for 'oblong', 'plain' - also 'incised band near each end'	Roth sent 9 'swords' in 1903 (6798) from the same places as the 9 shields in the collection (there are no swords in the collection) - one of the 'swords' from is S.8 from Raglan - this shield is labelled S.8 and is from Raglan
QE 4712.1	SPEAR	2240Ltip -> 958L	Registry description: 'spear - sapling, wood point, loose, nicked' - also barbed head, two pieces, tied in one place with twine - twine - loose	Bentinck Island, wooden spear	ER# 2484 'spear'	Roth sent 10 spears from Bentinck Island in 1903 (6849) - not listed however (apparently came named) - one of these

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4712.2	SPEAR	3217L	Registry description: 'spear-sapling, wood point loose, nicked'- also barbed head, 3 pieces - tied in two places with twine (?) - bottom tie - loose	Bentinck Island, wooden spear	ER# 2483 'spear' - sp. notes 'sapling - wood point, loose nicked' and 'harpoon, barbed head.	Roth sent 10 spears from Bentinck Island in 1903 (6849)- not listed however (supposedly came named)- one of these
QE 4712.3	SPEAR	2697L; tip -> 423L	Registry description: 'spear - sapling, wood point, loose, nicked' - Register sheet description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood, bent in midshaft, regular black bands (possibly burn marks) along shaft. - Head - one piece, wood. Carved barbs. Distal tapers to a point. Hafted to shaft, bound with fibre. - Butt - not recessed.	Bentinck Island, wooden spear	ER# 2490 'spear' - sp. notes - 'harpoon, barbed head.	Roth sent 10 spears from Bentinck Island in 1903 (6849) - not listed however (supposedly arrived named) - one of these
QE 4718	SPEAR	2563L 237L (from tip to the end of the gum resin).	Registry Description: 'Shaft - 3 piece Aftershaft - reed, split and broken. Midshaft reed, hafted to aftershaft, bound with fibre and gum. Splinted, bound with fibre and gum at proximal area. Foreshaft tapers to a point. 4 stingray barbs, hafted to a foreshaft, bound with fibre and gum. Foreshaft hafted to midshaft, bound with fibre and gum.'	Bloomfield River, wooden spear	ER# 2475; spear - sp. notes - bamboo - 4 stingray prongs.	Roth sent 4 spears from Bloomfield District in 1903 (6849 - sp. 31 sp. 86 and Sp 54 and 11 no sp.)- There were 32 spears sent from the Bloomfield district in 1900 however they aren't listed

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4719	SPEAR	1973L; 140L (tip to end of the resin)	Registry description: 'Aftershaft - one piece, tapers towards proximal. Aftershaft hafted to foreshaft with gum and fibre. Foreshaft - one piece wood, 13 stingray barbs hafted into foreshaft with gum and fibre. Painted red, black and white. Recessed butt, bound with fibre, coated with gum.' - accompanying description is correct - i.e. 'Bamboo wood, 13 stingaree barbs'	Wenlock River (formerly Batavia River); wooden spear	ER# 2032; labelled as a woomera fish (possibly incorrectly)	Roth sent 'one bundle of about 30 articles, ... spears, wommeras... from the Batavia River' in 1900 (602) object is one of these.
QE 4721	SPEAR	2988L; 234L - (until resin)	Register Description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood. Recessed butt, bound with fibre and gum at distal area. tapers to point. Head - 5 iron prongs, hafted to shaft.'	Bloomfield River; wooden spear	ER# 2474; dittoed for 'Spear' - Sp. notes - 'lightwood'	Roth sent 40 spears in 1903 (6849) - 4 from Bloomfield River - (?)11, sp. 31, sp. 54, sp 86
QE 4722	SPEAR	2351L; 295L (until base of the 2nd line of thread)	Registry Description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood. 5 metal prongs, hafted into shaft with gum and bound with twine. Recessed butt.'	Bloomfield District; wooden spear	ER# 2075; dittoed for 'spear' - sp. notes - 'dittoed for fish', '4 iron points' (there are actually 5) and 'reed(?)....' <- unreadable	Roth sent 40 spears in 1903 (6849) - 4 from Bloomfield River - (?)11, sp. 31, sp. 54, sp 86

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4724.1	SPEAR	2904L; 593 (to base of resin from tip.)	Register description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood, biased taper towards proximal - bound with gum and fibre at proximal end (possible split), two small fibre bindings at proximal end - number of splits. Butt recessed - bound with gum and fibre. Head - 4 metal barbs and points attached to four wooden prongs with gum and fibre, stained, hafted to shaft with gum and fibre.'	Bloomfield River; wooden spear	ER# 2472; dittoed for 'spear' - sp. notes dittoed for '4 barbed wood prongs', 'mostly lightwood' and '4 iron barbs'	Roth sent 40 spears in 1903 (6849) - 4 from Bloomfield River- This is either 11, sp. 31, sp. 54, sp 86
QE 4724.2	SPEAR	2400L; 549L (to base of resin)	Register Description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood, biased taper towards proximal, stained, bound with gum and fibre at proximal end. Butt recessed. Head - 4 bone barbs and points attached to four wooden prongs with gum and fibre, stained, attached to shaft with gum and fibre' - base of tips above resin - tightly wound fibre (black palm fibre or animal sinew)	Bloomfield River, wooden spears	ER# 2443; dittoed for 'spear' - sp. notes - 'dittoed for' 4 barbed wood prongs' (bone or wood?) and 'softwood mostly - 3 prongs, bone barbs' (actually four)	Roth sent 'one bundle of about 30 spears from the Bloomfield district' in 1900 (602) - not listed

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4726	SPEAR	1806L; 417L (largest tip); 77L (longest bone barb)	Register Description: 'Shaft - one piece, wood, biased tapers towards proximal, painted black? red and white? Butt recessed. Head - 2 tips and 3 barbs of bone, bound to 3 wooden prongs with gum and fibre, painted red, white and black? Hafted to shaft with gum and fibre.' - bone attached possibly with sinew	Wenlock River, wooden Spear	ER# 2037; dittoed for 'woomera-fish' - sp. notes - 'sapling' and 'bone barbs.	Roth sent 'one bundle of about 30 spears from the Bloomfield district' in 1900 (602) - not listed
QE 4730	SPEAR	2248L; 495L (longest barb)	Register description: 'One piece shaft - wood. Butt recessed, bound with fibre and gum. Head - 3 prongs, iron tips and barbs, bound with fibre and gum. Hafted into shaft, bound with gum and fibre, stained. Proximal area completely broken - held in place with splint.'	Wembley, Embley & Pennefather Rivers, wooden spear	ER# 2448; dittoed for 'spear' - sp. notes - 'three barbed prongs', 'softwood mostly'	Roth sent '38 spears from Batavia, Embley & Pennefather Rivers' in 1903 (6849)
QE 4761	SPEAR	1904L	Wooden spear - plain with some gum resin at 1/4 length, possibly fixing spear tip (though tip looks exactly the same as wood) - fibre twine at very base of spear - see database notes	Wenlock River	ER# 2049 - no sp. notes	Roth sent spears from Batavia (Wenlock) in 1900 - one of these
QE 4762.1	SPEAR	2287 (L); 492 (tip) L	One-piece wooden spear with iron spear head fixed to haft with gum + fibre	Bloomfield District	ER# 2076 - dittoed for a fish spear	One of 30 spears Roth sent from Bloomfield in 1900

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4762.2	SPEAR	2425L; 405L (tip)	Wooden spear with iron spear head fixed into shaft with gum & fibre - nb: the gum covers over the twined fibre/sinew	Bloomfield District	ER# 2077 - '2 reeds' unusual description that doesn't appear to match	Roth sent 30 spears from Bloomfield in 1900, this is one of them
QE 4762.3	SPEAR	2862L; 481L (tip)	Composite spear made from two pieces of wood, with iron spear point fixed into shaft with gum & fibre	Bloomfield District	ER# 2079 - titled under 'fish spear' & '2 reeds'	One of 30 spears Roth sent from Bloomfield in 1900
QE 4763	SPEAR	1861L; 824L (tip, to base of resin)	Database says 'one-piece', card says 'composite' - wooden spear, with wooden tip fixed to shaft with blackened gum & (possibly) fibre. - Base has traces of fibre & gum wound around it	Wenlock River, Embley & Pennefather Rivers	ER# 2615 dittoed under 'spear, plain painted'	One of the 'Bundle A' spears sent by Roth in 1903
QE 4764	SPEAR	2773L; 573L to resin	Wooden shaft with iron tip attached with gum and fibre; cracked toward dorsal end and reinforced with a piece of wood and string; Roth designation SP20 near tip	Normanton	ER# 2478 - 'dittoed pres.'	Object confirmed in Roth letter 15.12.3 under number sp20
QE 4771/1	SPEAR	2663L; 873L to resin; 177L of metal tip	Composite wooden spear; iron tip held on with gum and fibre, linear scoring	Bloomfield District	ER# 2054 - 'barbed tip, 2 piece'	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4775/1	SPEAR	2455L; 254 to proximal gum; 1929 to distal gum; 148 tip	One piece wood shaft, recessed butt. - single wood head, but with remnant gum and biased taper. - Metal barb attached with gum and fibre.	Wenlock River, Embley & Pennefather Rivers	ER# 2435 - 'dittoed QE4771	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in Dec. 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 4776	SPEAR	L2872; 2270 to gum; 123 tip	One piece wood shaft, recessed butt bound w/ gum and twine, linear scorings. Single wood head with biased taper toward proximal, hafted into shaft with gum and fibre, tipped with metal barb. - Pigment on hafting gum (red)	Normanton	ER# 2454 - dittoed from 4771	Object confirmed under Roth letter 15/12/3 under SP40
QE 4787	SPEAR	L2866; 885 to haft; 112 tip	Wood shaft, recessed butt hafted onto wood head tapering toward proximal with gum residue, perhaps a repair. - Metal barb attached with gum and fibre.	Bloomfield District	ER# 2186 - 'Spear, two piece, barbed tip	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and Roth letter claim
QE 4791	SPEAR	L2752; 871 to haft; 174 tip	Wooden shaft, recessed butt hafted onto wood head with gum, linear scoring. - Metal tip - Card has incorrect donor name of C.L. Wragge	Cooktown	ER# 2083 originally #2463	'Sp51' confirmed Roth spear sent in 1900 as database and letter claim

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4797	SPEAR	L2410; 239 prongs	One piece wooden shaft with four metal prongs hafted into shaft, bound by exposed fibre and gum. - Recessed butt	Bloomfield District	ER# 2074 - 'reed only'?	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and letter claim
QE 4798	SPEAR	L2724; ~300 prongs	Single piece, wood shaft with three separate wood prongs attached with string.	Bentinck Island	ER# 2492	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 4804	SPEAR	L1932; L1027 to haft L196 blade including part extending into wood head	Bamboo shaft hafted onto wood head which tapers at proximal. - Onto wood head is hafted a rounded, leaf shaped iron blade bound with gum and fibre. - Recessed butt, extra gum and fibre near haft where there could've been a repair	Cooktown	ER# 2480 - 'iron bar'	'YS.3' confirmed Roth spear due to characteristic numbering and claims of database and Dec 1903 letter

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 4811	SPEAR	L3869; L985 to first string of first joint; L2435 to first string of second joint	Three pieces (shaft, head, tip) - all wood, held at joints bit string. - Tip is razor-toothed with 21 teeth - Had two tags on it - QW4811 & QW4813, both with the donor of CC. Wragge. However, the registry numbers on the spear are QE4811 and ER2488 indicating a Roth spear, not Wragge whose name is scratched out in the QE register book	Bentinck Island	ER# 2488	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 4812	SPEAR	L3480; L903 to first string of first joint; L2460 to first string of second joint	Three pieces (shaft, head, tip) - all wood. - Held at shaft/head joint by string. - Held at head/tip joint but string and metal wire. - Tip is razor-toothed with 18 teeth.	Bentinck Island	ER# 2485 - 'orig 3 notched points'	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 4816	SPEAR	L2882; L1320 to haft; L148 of barb	Bamboo shaft with recessed butt including gum at distal. - hafted into wood head with possible red ochre/paint toward proximal. - Metal barb tip attached to head with gum and string.	Bloomfield District	ER# 2087	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth spear most likely sent in 1900 as database and letter claim
QE 5033	YAM STICK	178 L	Yam stick	Batavia	ER 2030 (number listed beside 2030 - 10422); yam stick	

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 5852	ADZE-HAFTED	597L; 35W	Wooden adze-hafted - Register description: 'Chisel - chert adze gum hafted to curved wooden shaft.' - difficult to tell what is chert and what is wax. - according to T. Barnard - no obvious signs it's been used - no human residue - human fats, etc. & the adze doesn't seem to be apparent (covered in resin, as ER notes)	Boulia	ER# 2408; 'chisel' - sp. notes - 'curved - chert in wax'	Roth sent '1 native Chisel Boulia 1895' in 1903 (6849) - This is the object (item marked with SC 3)
QE 5894	GROOVING TOOL	148.5L; 52W; 3.5W (thickness); 28.5L (length of handle)	Wooden grooving tool - Register description: 'Smoothing board/engraver. Wood/macropod incisor. Spatulate, flat-convex, remnant gum attached. Proximal - squared end. Distal - broken incisor attached with gum and sinew. Wallaby tooth set with resin and fibre twine in a wooden smoothing board. Used to incise designs and smooth newly applied resin in the manufacture of tools and equipment.	Pennefather River	ER# 1992; 'spokeshave' - sp. notes - 'tooth set in a broad, thin wooden haft'	Roth sent 'one iron box containing... 3 spoke-shaves... (all of them with localities named)' - this is one of these objects

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 5896	GROOVER	182.5L; 70W	Wooden smoothing board with tooth groover tied to tip - database says 'macropod incisor' - traces of remnant gum & some scratching on surface; in consultation with T. Barnard, I was advised that I was correct that the twine was non-indigenous	Pennefather River	ER# 1993 - 'spoke-shave', no sp notes	Roth sent an iron box with '3 spoke-shaves' in it - this is one of these objects
QE 5897	GROOVER	246.5L; 73.5W	Wooden smoothing board with tooth engraver fixed to tip with gum and fibre - traces of remnant gum on surface, as well as some darkening, possibly from human fats/grease (from use)	Pennefather River	ER# 1993 - dittoed under 'spoke-shave', no sp notes	Roth sent an iron box with '3 spoke-shaves' in it - this is probably one of them.
QE 5898	GROOVER	L245; W60.5; W10@tooth; D7; D10@tooth	Smoothing board/graver-wood/macropod incisor - spatulate, flat, remnant gum on surface Proximal-rounded, edged Distal-broken incisor attached with gum and fibre.	Pennefather River	ER# 2541	Not enough evidence to discount that this is a Roth groover most likely sent in Dec 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 5922	FISHING HOOK	63.5L; 6.5W	Tortoise shell, thin and straight, with a slight curve at the end - slightly broken at curve	Mapoon	ER# 2527 - 'fish hook tortoise shell'	2 tortoise-shell fish hooks' sent in 1903 - > one of these

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 5946	RAW MATERIAL	(none taken)	Red ochre - eight pieces of ochre, seven with abraded surface	Bathurst Heads	ER# not listed	Not enough info to discount that this is Roth raw material most likely sent in 1900 as database and letter claim
QE 6048	NECKLACE	372L; if lain out in single line	Oval pieces of nautilus shell on a string (string is a modern addition by Museum, see database)	Normanton	ER# 1998 - 'Nautilus necklace oval'	An iron box, containing '6 necklaces' was sent by Roth in 1900
QE 6049	NECKLACE	approximately 400L (necklace); shell: approx 20.5L x 12W (one piece)	Shell necklace - Register description: 'Necklace - oval pieces of nautilus shell.' - Original string/twine/hair replaced	Normanton	ER# 1996; 'nautilus necklace' - sp. notes: 'oval'	Roth sent 6 necklaces in 1900 (602) - cited in letter as 'all of them with the localities named'
QE 6050	NECKLACE	290 L (Est.)	Necklace, oval pieces of nautilus shell	Normanton	ER 1997; nautilus shell necklace - oval	1900
QE 6070	NECKLACE	approx. 240L; beads => 10.5L x 4W	Nautilus/pearl shell necklace - Register description: 'Necklace - small pearl shell sections' - red cloth with yellow spots attached, a few broken pieces of shell - very dirty	Batavia River/Cape York	ER# 2008; 'Nautilus necklace: - rectangular', no sp. notes	Roth sent 6 necklaces in 1900

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 6088	NET	L~1950 from stick to stick; ~1212 straight from one end of larger stick to other; L~960 straight from one end of smaller stick to other	Fishing net - stretched between two carved sticks - one longer and lighter brown/tan and the other shorter and darker brown - Net twine most likely bark fibre according to Trish Barnard	Miriam Vale	ER# 2384 - 'on hoop, 30mm mesh'	Not enough information to discount that this is a Roth net likely sent in Mar. 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 6169	BAG	337L; 171W (mouth); 216W (base)	Woven basket, grass twine with grass cord	Bloomfield	ER# 2090 - 'Dilly-Bag double edging'	One of the dilly-bags sent in an iron box in 1900
QE 6219	SPEAR	1800L; 410L (start of resin)	One piece wooden spear, with traces of 'paint/colouring; three wooden prongs for head; bone tips as barbs bound with fibre - colours are red, black & white	Wenlock River etc.	ER# 2440: 'Soft wood mostly 3 prongs bones barbs'	Database claims 1899 as source year (check!)
QE 6220	SPEAR	2619L; 132L (barb)	Composite spear - lower portion is reed; upper wood - both fixed with gum resin; barb at head is iron - vague remnant of white paint at lower section	Wenlock River etc.	ER# 2460: no sp. notes, dittoed under 'Heavy wood mostly iron bark'	Database claims Wenlock Rivers etc; 'Sp. 39' is listed in Roth: 1903 letter as from Normanton
QE 6234	SPEAR	3490L; 216L (tip to barb)	Reed spear with wooden head fixed by gum resin; iron barb fixed to head	Palmer River	ER# 2469: 'mostly light wood iron'	Sp. 55 or spear - database claims 1899 as source date
QE 6235	SPEAR	2770L; 157L (barb)	Reed base fixed with gum to wooden shaft - iron barb fixed to head	Cooktown	ER# 2459: no sp. notes	Source date 1899

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 6236	SPEAR	2714L; 117L (to resin)	Reed base fixed to wooden top with gum, sharpened wooden point for head - see database notes	Normanton	ER# 2455: no sp. notes	1899 source date in db - 'Sp. 36' on shaft
QE 6237	SPEAR	2643L; 525L (to start of resin)	One piece wooden spear with four wooden barbs fixed to head; iron prongs attached to each barb	Wenlock River etc.	ER# 2471: dittoed for 'mostly light wood 4 prongs'	'Sp. 28' on shaft - source date claimed is 1899
QE 6240	SPEAR	1634L; 273L (iron barb)	One piece, very thin, wooden spear with a long metal prong fixed into the head (driven into wood) with gum	Wenlock River etc	ER# 2479: dittoed under 'an iron wire prong'	Source date claimed 1899
QE 6252	SPEAR	2476L; 442L (to start of resin)	One piece, think wood - see notes	Wenlock River	ER# 2443: dittoed under 'soft wood 3 prong barbs'	Source date claimed 1899
QE 6266	NECKLACE	L~87 when stretched out; reeds ~10-15 each	Necklace of bugle reeds, over spiral twine (T. Barnard commented on the twine being most likely non-indigenous), tan and brown in colour	Atherton	ER# not located	Sent in 1900 as database and Roth claim
QE 6275	SPOON	L113; W64.5; D18	Shell spoon, traded from coast, chip at right end when concave side is facing upward, pigment possibly added	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2523	'MD32' likely a Roth spoon due to characteristic numbering and support in database and Dec 1903 letter

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 6302	FIRESTICK	L1057; 64 head	One stick with black bands along it - Remains of resin w/ seed depressions. - stick split at one end.	Pennefather River	ER# 2404	'X1', a Roth firestick due to characteristic numbering and support in database and Dec 1903 letter
QE 6467	BAG	(measured as pictured) L370; W214 @ centre; W167 @ taper; W65 @ tip	Unfinished grass dilly bag - 40mm of loose ends - beehive shape	North Queensland	ER# 2082	Not enough info to discount that this is a Roth bag most likely donated in 1900 as database and letter claim
QE 6468	BAG	(measured as pictured) L359; W222 @ centre; W175 @ taper; W60 @ tip	Unfinished grass dilly bag - beehive shape - patches of brown discoloration	Bloomfield River	ER# 2084	Packed in a metal box and sent to QM in 1900
QE 9323	HUMAN HAIR	~100 as pictured	Human hair twine 'lana' - A bit frayed and undone at one end	Palmer River	ER# 2509	Not enough info to discount that this is human hair twine sent by Roth most likely in Dec. 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 9352	DIGGING STICK	W1087; Diameter 21@center	Thin wooden stick, single piece, blackened at both ends, bends in several places, cracked in middle	Keppel Islands	ER# 2383 - 'dittoed above'	Roth digging stick most likely sent in March 1903 as database and letter claim

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 9357	NECKLACE	L520 when halved and stretched out; L330 of beads when halved and stretched out	Necklace of reed bugles threaded together with string (no comment from T. Barnard possible, though material is alike QE 6266)	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2506	Sent in Dec 1903 as database and letter claim
QE 9358	NECKLACE	1500 (est.)	Necklace reed bugles (twine alike QE 6266)	Normanton or Cape Grafton	ER 2505 or 7; necklace - grass bugles (same description for both ER entries)	1903
QE 9594	SPOON	L134; W60.5; D22	Spoon made of one piece of shell- off white with tan/grey spots and patches on concave. - white and red on convex with ridges of black - Melo amphora	Butcher's Hill	ER# 2522 - Reregistered from E8059. Possibly a duplicate. QE 6211 (Aboriginal studies) is also a shell spoon re-registered from E8059 - 'Karbs' traded from coast'	Confirmed Roth spoon with characteristic 'MD .31.' numbering and as Dec 1903 and database claim
QE 9595	SHELL	L123; W53.5; D15.5	One piece of shell off white with two faint grey splotches and a few red marks on convex. - off-white with darker and more numerous grew/brown spots and patches on concave. - Melo amphora	Bathurst Heads	ER# 2530 - registered from E8060	Confirmed Roth shell with characteristic 'W.80 D' numbering and as Dec 1903 and database claim

QE #	Label	Measurements	Description	Location	ER	Correspond/Date
QE 10065	BASKET	315L (approx.); 430W (approx. - opening); 185W (at the bottom)	Register description - 'Dilly bag - grass, string handle broken' - also - Black Palm fibre	Bloomfield, Grass basket	ER# 2088, dittoed for 'dilly bag' - sp. notes - 'finished with larger strings'	Roth sent in 1900 (602?) - 'one iron box containing 14 dilly- bags and baskets,... (all of them with the localities named) - This is object is one of those.
QE 11932	FIRESTICK	1289L	Wooden firestick - Register Description: 'One shaft only, a drill'	Unknown	ER# - unknown - possibly 2406 or 2407/no way to be certain - not listed in 'Ethnography: QE Register'	Roth sent 'one bundle of about 30 articles, ... firesticks ... from the Batavia River' in 1900 (602?) - If the firestick is from 1900 it is from the Batavia River - Otherwise it must be from 1903
QE 11933	FIRESTICK	L1260	Wood, one piece of shaft only, no head - Bend in the middle with pointed ends	Wenlock River	ER# 2031	Sent in 1900 as database and letter claim
QE 11940	FIRESTICK	L1554 from head to end of longer stick; L1513 from head to end of shorter stick; W53.5 of head; W33.5 of yellowband	Round resin head with red seeds pushed into it - Yellowband sheath - Four loose seeds. (13) - Gum underneath yellow band	Unknown location	ER# 2407, but not listed in large QE book; Possibly ER # 2406	Sent in Mar 1903 as database and letter claim

APPENDIX C

Entangled Objects in the Roth Collection at the Australian Museum

E 013318 – A water carrier collected from Bloomfield, made from a carved tree husk. A hole in the base of the object has been stopped with banksia cone and hessian sack cloth.

E 013363 – A skin water bag collected between Camooweal and the Urandangie. The natural openings in the bag have been sealed with bone, cloth and twine.

E 013364 – A skin water bag collected between Camooweal and the Urandangie. The natural openings and tears have been sealed or repaired with white and red cloth, and twine.

E 013365 – A skin water bag collected between Camooweal and the Urandangie. The tears and natural openings of the bag have been repaired or sealed with white cloth and twine.

E 013436 – A wooden shield collected from Cairns. The handle of the shield is wrapped around with white and red cloth, which is in turn coated in resin.

E 013485 – A double-ended wooden gouge collected from Boulia. One end of the gouge is stone, and the other is a flat iron blade, fixed to the shaft with resin and string.

E 013487 – A wooden gouge collected from the Bloomfield River. One end of the gouge has a thick piece of flat iron slotted into split wood, with two-ply rope used for binding.

E 013488 – A wooden gouge collected from the lower Gilbert River. One end of the gouge has a thick iron head jammed into split wood, and bound with rope and resin.

E 013499 – A wooden smoking pipe collected from Cooktown. The bamboo pipe has one end wrapped in red cloth and resin, leaving a small space for the passage of smoke. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco. This object is on display in the Australian Museum.

E 013500 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from Cooktown. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco. This object is on display in the Australian Museum.

E 013501 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from Cooktown. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco.

E 013502 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from Bloomfield. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco.

E 013503 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from the Batavia River. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco.

E 013504 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from the Batavia River. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco. This object is on display in the Australian Museum.

E 013505 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from the Batavia River. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco.

E 013506 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from the Batavia River. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco. The pipe is highly decorated with carvings of birds, turtles, and dugongs.

E 013507 - A wooden smoking pipe collected from the Wenlock River. The bamboo pipe has one end sealed in hessian sack cloth and resin, leaving a small space for the passage of smoke. The purpose of the pipe is for smoking tobacco.

E 013509 – A pituri bag collected from the Mulligan River. The bag is disintegrating, and has colourful canvas cloth in bands across its surface. The bag has a double-looped string handle.

E 013510 – A pituri spoon collected from the Roxburgh Downs. The spoon is made from wood, and is elaborately carved with designs depicting a bearded man smoking a pipe, and a horse's head. The carvings have been made in a non-traditional style.

E 013512 – A fly whisk made from emu feathers, collected from the Palmer Native Police Camp. Green canvas cloth is smeared with gum cement, and this layer rests underneath the emu feathers.

E 013549-002 – A bark knife sheath collected from Glenormiston. The sheath is made from paper bark, fur string, and emu feathers. An inner lining of sack cloth is under the bark.

E 013554-002 - A bark sheath for a stone knife collected from the Upper Georgina River. The sheath is made from paper bark, string, and emu feathers. An inner lining of sack cloth is under the bark.

E 013560-002 - A bark sheath for a stone knife collected from Avon Downs, in the Northern Territory. The sheath is made from paper bark, and fur string. An inner lining of sack cloth is under the bark.

E 013563-002 - A bark sheath for a stone knife collected from Avon Downs, in the Northern Territory. The sheath is made from paper bark, and is bound with fur string. An inner lining of sack cloth is under the bark.

E 013571-002 - A bark sheath for a stone knife collected from the Urandangie. The sheath is made from paper bark, and is bound with hair string and two-ply string. An inner lining of cloth is under the bark. The Australian Museum database indicates that the cloth came from a blanket.

E 013583-002 – A haft for a stone axe head, collected from Lawn Hills. The wooden handle is held together by an old piece of cloth. No other trace of alternate binding material is detectable.

E 013585-002 - A haft for a stone axe head, collected from Glenroy, on the Upper Leichardt River. The wooden handle is held together by a piece of blue cloth. No other trace of alternate binding material is detectable.

E 013587-002 - A haft for a stone axe head, collected from Lawn Hills. The wooden handle is held together by an old piece of cloth. No other trace of alternate binding material is detectable.

E 013703 – A charm collected from the Bloomfield River. The charm is a large piece of quartz crystal wrapped in red canvas cloth and bound with hemp cord. Resin stains the canvas and cord.

E 013735 – A head ornament collected from the Staaten River. The ornament consists of possum fur twine covered in grey clay, with possum fur tassels held in place by red cloth.

E 013745 – A mourning ornament collected from the Staaten River. The ornament consists of fibre twine from a cabbage tree, wrapped around in an old canvas cloth.

E 013801 – A clapstick collected from the Batavia River. The clapstick is made from a piece of smooth and rounded wood, which has the appearance of machined wood, such as a shovel or pick handle. The object is coated in red and white European house paint for decoration.

E 013802 – A clapstick collected from the Batavia River. The clapstick is made from a piece of smooth and rounded wood, which has the appearance of machined wood, such as a shovel or pick handle. The object is coated in red and white European house paint for decoration.

E 013873 - A fish hook collected from Innisfail. The fish hook is made from a piece of iron attached to fibre twine.

E 013874 - A fish hook collected from Innisfail. The fish hook is made from a piece of iron attached to fibre twine.

E 013880 - A fish hook collected from Mornington Island. The fish hook is made from a piece of iron attached to fibre twine.

E 0138882 - A fish hook collected from Mornington Island. The fish hook is made from a piece of iron attached to fibre twine.

E 013939-002 – A bark sheath for a stone knife, collected from Camooweal. The sheath is made from bark and an orange-brown string of European make. The inner sheath is lined with very fine sack cloth.

E 013933 – A shark tooth knife collected between the Staaten and Lower Mitchell River. The knife has a lanyard made from twine and white canvas cloth, each threaded through the other.

E 013940 – A spokeshave collected from Princess Charlotte Bay. A flat piece of sharpened iron is attached with resin to two pieces of flat wood.

E 013941 – A spokeshave collected from Bathurst Heads. A thin piece of curved and sharp iron is fixed with resin and twine to two flat pieces of wood.

E 013942 – A spokeshave collected from Maytown. A piece of shovel had has been cut and sharpened and attached with resin and twine to a wooden handle.

E 013943 – A spokeshave collected from Mornington Island. A piece of flat and sharpened iron has been wedged into a wooden handle without the use of resin or twine.

E 013944 – A spokeshave collected from Mornington Island. The Australian Museum database states that this object once had a piece of iron attached to its wooden handle. The iron is no longer present, though there was clearly an aperture for it to be attached to.

E 013945 – A knife collected from Cloncurry. Iron from a shearing blade is attached to a handle made from twine, cloth, and paper bark.

E 014323 – A spearthrower collected from Butchers Hill. The spearthrower has European sack cloth clearly visible, as well as partly exposed, under gum resin, at the proximal end.

E 014392 – A head ornament collected from Atherton. The headdress has a series of cockatoo feathers bound together with gum resin and red string.

E 014396 - A head ornament collected from Atherton. White cockatoo feathers are bound together at the base of the ornament with resin and brown sack cloth.

E 014403 – A feathered string collected from the Embley River. Grass twine, feathers, and red string have been woven to form the object.

E 014433 – A pearl shell necklace collected from Normanton. This pearl shell necklace has been wrapped around patterned European cloth.

E 014469 – A bugle reed necklace collected from Normanton. Scores of grass bugle reeds are tied to fawn fibre, which is in turn bound at either end to strips of orange-brown cloth.

E 014493 – A grass bugle necklace collected from Boulia. This object is comprised of scores of cotton strands upon which are threaded the grass bugle reeds. A strip of red cloth and grass twine is used to tie the object around the neck.

E 014497 – A shell ornament collected from Normanton. The object is made from a melo shell threaded onto opossum fur, human hair, and red wool.

E 014517 – A pearl shell breast ornament collected from Normanton. The individual pieces of shell are fixed to multi-coloured cloth, bound with gum resin.

E 014520 – A breast ornament for women collected from the Palmer River Native Police Camp. Pieces of nautilus shell are bound to a neck tie by means of a twine loop and interwoven red rag cloth.

E 014521 – A pearl shell chest ornament collected from Mapoon. Pieces of pearl shell are threaded to twine and red rag cloth.

E 014526 - A pearl shell chest ornament collected from the Embley River. The necklace hangs from a cord of dark brown canvas cloth, threaded through the individual pearl shells.

E 014537 - A melo shell chest ornament collected from the Staaten River. The necklace hangs from a cord of red canvas cloth, tied to a resin clasp

E 014543 – A forehead ornament collected from the Pennefather River. The ornament is made from emu feathers, grass, and fawn fibre. A length of red cloth is tied about the twine to form the neck holder.

E 014549 – A forehead ornament collected from Mornington. The ornament consists of teeth hung from a circlet of orange-brown string and metal wire.

E 014553 - A nautilus shell necklace collected from Cape Bedford. Twine threads through the individual pieces of shell, and red and white cloth is tied to the ends of the twine.

E 014554 - A nautilus shell forehead band collected from Cape Bedford. Two-ply string is used to thread the pieces of shell together, while red cotton material fastens the ends of the string together.

E 014555 - A nautilus shell headband collected from Butchers Hill. Pieces of nautilus shell are held together on human hair and grass twine, fastened at the extremities of the twine with red cloth.

E 014556 - A nautilus shell forehead band collected from Butchers Hill. Pieces of nautilus shell are held together on grass twine, fastened at the extremities of the twine with red cloth.

E 014600 - A length of feathered string collected from Mapoon. Emu feathers are wrapped around some grass twine, with red cloth interwoven between the two.

E 014673 – A dendrobium belt collected from Mapoon. This is a waistband made from three rows of yellow dendrobium, woven with fibre twine. Resin seals the twine tightly, and a small length of knotted red cloth is woven into the band.

E 014699 – An apron belt collected from Mapoon. The belt is made from fur twine, and is decorated with red and brown cotton tassels, woven into the fur.

E 014708 - An apron belt collected from Mapoon. This is a belt made from fur twine, interwoven with lengths of blue, red, and white cloth rags. The ends of the waistband are further decorated with a red and white dotted rag.

E 014715 – A pubic cover collected from Birdsville. This phallocrypt is made from white rabbit tail, and uses a cream coloured rag to bind the material together.

E 014784 – A sample of a white pigment collected from Carandotta. The pigment has been packed in a small cloth sack, with a note that it has been ‘packed for transport’.

E 014806 – A dilly bag collected from the Staaten River. The bag is made from plant fibre string, and is decorated with a red European fibre to create bands of colour.

E 014807 – A dilly bag collected from the Staaten River. The bag is primarily made from plant fibre, with strips of red-brown, red, and cream cloth wound around the final loops of twine at the mouth, and around the carry string.

E 014808 – A dilly bag collected from the Staaten River. The bag is primarily made from plant fibre, with strips of red and white European fibre material woven through to create coloured bands.

E 014809 – A dilly bag collected from the Staaten River. This bag is made from grass fibre, with red cloth woven around the carry string.

E 014811 – A dilly bag collected from the Staaten River. This bag is made from grass fibre and opossum fur, with red cloth woven around the carry string.

E 014812 – A dilly bag collected from the Batavia River. This bag is primarily made from plant fibre, with red European thread woven in bands around the bag's centre.

E 014813 – A dilly bag collected from Cape Melville. The bag is primarily made from canvas cord, with some small sections of fibre string. Multi-coloured bands of canvas are woven together to create a highly colourful bag.

E 014824 - A dilly bag collected from Normanton. The carry string of the object is made from twine, interwoven with a small section of canvas cloth.

E 014825 – A dilly bag collected from the Palmer Native Police Camp. A bag made in an hourglass stitch pattern, with the carry string being made from canvas cloth.

E 014828 – A dilly bag collected from the Palmer Native Police Camp. A bag made in an hourglass stitch pattern, with the carry string being made from red cord and fibre twine, interwoven with one another.

E 014837 – A dilly bag collected from Yeppoon. Two bands of colour along the bag are woven from black and red European fibre material.

E 014839 – A dilly bag collected from Normanton. Woven from both fur and fibre twine. The carry string is made from twine, canvas, and red cloth.

E 014840 – A dilly bag collected from the Palmer Native Police Camp. A bag made in an hourglass stitch pattern, with the carry string being made from red, black, and blue cloth.

E 014841 – A dilly bag collected from the Palmer Native Police Camp. Woven in an hourglass stitch pattern, with the carry string being made from red cotton cord.

E 014848 – A dilly bag collected from between the Mitchell and Staaten rivers. The bag is made primarily from plant fibre, though there are bands of green, red, and yellow European fibre. Multi-coloured wool also forms the carry string of this object.

E 014849 – A dilly bag collected from the Georgina River. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas twine, with black wool being used for the handle. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014851 – A dilly bag collected from Cloncurry. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas twine, with a 'V' woven into one face of the object. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014852 – A dilly bag collected from North Rockhampton. Very faint red and green European material is woven in to the bag to form almost indistinguishable bands of colour.

E 014858 – A dilly bag collected from Cloncurry. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas twine. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014854 – A dilly bag collected from Whitsunday Island. The bag is netted, and has pink European fibre woven into it to form three coloured bands.

E 014857 – A dilly bag collected from Boulia. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas cord, used for twine. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014859 – A dilly bag collected from Boulia. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas cord, used for twine. The handle of the bag is made from blue and white cloth. Some of the bag has ochre stains on it.

E 014860 – A dilly bag collected from the Mulligan River. The bag is made from canvas cord, with two orange and purple bands of colour near the base. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014861 – A dilly bag collected from the Roxburgh Downs. The bag is made from multi-coloured canvas cord, with a leather carry strap. All materials in this object are non-traditional.

E 014909 – A circular mat collected from Mapoon. Bird feathers and brown and red cloth have been woven into the twine of this object.

E 014944 – A dilly bag collected from Mapoon. The bag is made from twine, with a carrying cord made from both twine and a handkerchief.

E 014964 – A large fishing net collected from Cloncurry. Plant fibre is woven into what is most likely a small strand of four-ply European string.

E 015018 – A club used for hunting fish, collected from Normanton. The base of the club has a strip of gum resin which covers a red canvas cloth.