



University of Aberdeen Museums Samoa Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Samoa collection, Aberdeen University Museums
Author(s)	Eve Haddow
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Head of Museums, Library, Special Collections & Museums
Date Completed	15 th August 2014
<p>There are eleven items from Samoa.</p> <p>The collection includes a head band (<i>pale fuiono</i>) of velvet adorned with pieces of pearl shell collected by A J L Gordon, private secretary to Sir Arthur Gordon in Fiji in the period 1875-80. This would have formed part of a much larger ceremonial headdress (<i>tuiga</i>). Also from this period are five adze blades collected by Sir William MacGregor, Medical Officer under Sir Arthur Gordon.</p> <p>There is a loom and shuttle with partially woven mat still attached collected on the Navigator Islands, a historical name for Samoa. This was collected by the Countess of Kintore, Sydney Charlotte Keith Falconer, an avid collector who travelled in the Pacific around the 1890s. It possibly originates from elsewhere in the Pacific.</p> <p>There are two fish hooks, both of composite type, with the body of the hook in shell with turtle shell barb attached using plant fibre. There is a Samoan style comb of plant strips bound with black thread and decorated with white beads acquired from Colonel William Allardyce in 1904. This comb was previously attributed to Fiji and may have been collected there.</p> <p>A model of a Samoan bonito canoe (<i>va'a alo</i>) has been identified as one originally donated to the Royal Scottish Museum, now National Museums Scotland (NMS), by Maggie Stevenson, the mother of author Robert Louis Stevenson. Mrs Stevenson lived in the Pacific with her son and returned to Scotland in 1894 following his death. This model with other Samoan material was gifted to NMS in 1897 after Maggie Stevenson's death but the model was transferred to Aberdeen University Museums in the 1940s.</p>	
Have any aspects of the collection been published? Please provide bibliographic references if available.	
<p>Gathercole, P & A. Clarke (1979), <i>Survey of the Oceanian Collections in Museums in the United Kingdom and Ireland</i>. UNESCO.</p> <p>Kwasnik, Elizabeth (ed.) (1994), <i>A Wider World: Collections of Foreign Ethnography in Scotland</i>. National Museums of Scotland</p>	