



National Museums Scotland Fiji Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Fiji Collection, National Museums Scotland
Author(s)	Eve Haddow
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Principal Curator, Oceania, Americas and Africa
Date Completed	9 th September 2014
<p>There are 462 items from Fiji. This is a large collection.</p> <p>The greatest proportion of items from an individual is a collection of 120 objects from Constance Frederica Gordon Cumming who was in Fiji in the 1870s. This includes twenty-five pieces of pottery, forty-seven items of clothing and personal ornaments, including nine skirts (<i>liku</i>), and three baskets. An unusual item is a tally stick used in Fiji by a young man from Vanuatu to mark the moons until he could return home (A.1924.805). She also collected a presentation tooth (<i>tabua</i>), which is one of eight in the entire Fiji collection, and one fringed piece of patterned barkcloth (<i>masi</i>).</p> <p>In addition to the barkcloth from Gordon Cumming, there are another twenty-one pieces, the earliest of which were acquired in 1857. There are two wooden beaters for the barkcloth preparation and two printing boards with pattern in relief for decoration of the cloth. One board, acquired in 1935, is of carved wood and the other is of plant leaf with stems forming the pattern. This was acquired from John W Bradley in 1865 and is part of a collection of thirty-eight items. The Bradley collection also includes a man's wig of human hair, two headrests, a headdress of barkcloth and a fringed mat. He also collected a 19th century carved wooden male figure which he describes as having come from a temple.</p> <p>There are a total of 131 wooden clubs in the collection of varying Fijian styles. Twelve of these are from the University of Edinburgh collection dating them to pre 1854, including one from the collection of Sir Thomas Brisbane, Governor of New South Wales 1821-5.</p> <p>Other notable collectors include Everard Im Thurn (12 items) and Captain Knollys (2 items).</p>	
<p>Have any aspects of the collection been published? Please provide bibliographic references if available.</p>	
<p>Idiens, D (1982), <i>Pacific Art in the Royal Scottish Museum</i>. Edinburgh: Royal Scottish Museum (A.1868.79.5; A.1881.23.24F; A.1893.286; A.1893.319; A.1924.762; A.1924.771; A.1956.979)</p> <p>Hooper, S (2006), <i>Pacific Encounters: Art and Divinity in Polynesia 1760-1860</i>. London: British Museum Press. (A.1869.79.2; A.1868.79.5)</p> <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>	