



National Museums Scotland Admiralty Collection



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COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Admiralty Islands (Manus) collection, National Museums Scotland
Author(s)	Eve Haddow
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Principal Curator, Oceania, Americas and Africa
Date Completed	4 th September 2014
<p>There are eighty-five items from the Admiralty Islands (Manus).</p> <p>Thirty-two items were given to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by James Young Buchanan in 1901. Buchanan was on the HMS <i>Challenger</i> Expedition of 1872-6 which visited the Admiralty Islands in 1875. From the voyage are three belts of woven plant fibre, two shells worn by men, and an ornament of shell disc and worked turtleshell. There are three charms consisting of small bones and feathers. Buchanan also gave three carved wooden bowls. One has a double bowl with a bird's head at either end. The largest has two elaborately carved handles with a carved edge and bird motif on the side. The third has carved handles, each with two anthropomorphic figures. A set of musical pipes has been marked with corresponding musical notes.</p> <p>The earliest item in the collection is a spear with obsidian blade from the University of Edinburgh collection which was transferred to National Museums Scotland (then the Royal Museum) in 1854. This is one of fourteen similar spears (five from the <i>Challenger</i> expedition) in the collection. There are two daggers with obsidian blades from the Webster collection and two daggers with blades of stingray spines, one bought from Oldman in 1922 and the other acquired from a Dr Ritchie in 1873. The collection also includes three fishing spears.</p> <p>There is a barkcloth skirt decorated with seeds, glass and shell beads and grass. This was acquired in 1926 with two other items of clothing worn around the waist consisting of woven plant fibres decorated with shell and job's tears, leading to shell bead openwork. Both have remnants of feathers.</p> <p>Also from the Admiralty Islands are two decorative spoons, a further four carved wooden bowls, four further ornaments of shell with worked turtle shell, five decorative combs, and a headband of glass beads and decorated dog's teeth on plant fibre.</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.1873.5; A.1926.31; A.1956.864)</p> <p>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Vol. XXXV (A.1956.864, A.1956.865, A.1956.866, A.1956.874, A.1956.1168)</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>	

Produced as part of *Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their knowledge and potential* project 2013-2014. For full information and resources visit www.nms.ac.uk/pacific

