

***Collecting the Solomon Islands:
Colonial encounters & Indigenous experiences in
the Solomon Island collections of Charles Morris
Woodford and Arthur Mahaffy (1886-1915)***

Aoife O'Brien

PhD Thesis

University of East Anglia
School of World Art Studies and Museology
Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas

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For John & Ann

Abstract

As tangible manifestations of past and present interactions between humans and the material world, objects force us to reckon with the messy and often contradictory aspects of history. The establishment of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate in 1893 marked the formalisation of European control and dominance over the region, and brought about the cessation or alteration of many cultural traditions and practices. The transformations of the subsequent twenty years brought Islanders, colonial officers, and plantations owners together in the formation of a colonial society predicated on hierarchies of race and economics. Focusing on the museum collections of Charles Morris Woodford (1852-1927), an amateur naturalist and first Resident Commissioner to the Solomons, and Arthur Mahaffy (1869-1919), the first District Officer of the region, this thesis elucidates colonial micro-histories and indigenous perspectives embodied in these forms. Utilising these collections, alongside the men's writings, photographs, and archival colonial records, this project reveals the various strategies and techniques employed to create their collections in the field and the complexities of the period's cross-cultural interactions. The thesis also contributes to current ethnohistorical and theoretical understandings of how social relations are made and embodied in objects, complicates current colonial histories of the Solomons, and methodologically demonstrates the potentials of collections in historical based anthropological research.

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Preface

The path which led me to the Pacific, and more specifically to the Solomon Islands, began in 2002 when I was employed by the National Museum of Ireland. Working as a Documentation Assistant on their ethnographic collections, I was struck by the beauty and power of objects from the Pacific, and intrigued particularly by those from the Solomon Islands. I wanted to know more. In 2004 I applied to, and was accepted by, the Sainsbury Research Unit (SRU) to undertake their Masters program during which I focused on Solomon Island canoe prow figureheads for my dissertation. Research on these objects led to Mahaffy, which in turn led to Woodford and ultimately to my doctoral research on their collections.

I began research in Dublin, on the Mahaffy collection, and in London, on the Woodford collection at the British Museum. However, it quickly became clear that these were not isolated collections. Both men had associations with other museums, so detective work began on locating museums which also held objects collected by them. Research on archival material, including the Colonial Office records held at the National Archives, papers held at the Natural History Museum and the Royal Geographical Society gradually filled out my understanding of these men, their work and their collecting.

Research for the thesis required me to travel to the Pacific and grants from both the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the SRU enabled me to do so. The archival research undertaken in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the Solomon Islands proved to be the vital in augmenting what I had already discovered at the various institutions in Europe. In particular, the Graham Officer collection at Museum Victoria, and his private papers held at The State Library of Victoria, proved invaluable. In addition, whilst at Museum Victoria, a chance sighting of an object which I believe had been carved by a Roviana Lagoon-based artist named Ango (credited in Mahaffy's catalogues as a regular creator of objects), led me to consider the role of the artist within collections more fully. Long term fieldwork in the Solomon Islands was not necessary for this research, but it was important to visit the Solomons, to gain an understanding of the place and the people.

The core thrust of my work had always been focused on the objects themselves and on collections. Yet, through my research, I came to understand the critical value and importance of the textual and photographic resources which were associated with these collections.

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three weeks in the Solomons but the kindness of the people and the beauty of their landscape have left an indelible mark on my soul.

My thanks also to John Tennent and the library staff of The Natural History Museum, Steven Innes at the University of Auckland Library, Lucie Carreau (for kindly sharing information pertaining to the Woodford/Beasley objects), Ali Clark (The Centre for Anthropology at the British Museum), Sarah Strong (The Royal Geographical Society), and to library and archive staff at the following institutions: The National Archives (UK), The National Archives (Ireland), The Wellcome Institute, The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, The Mitchell Library, The State Library of Victoria, Auckland Museum, The Turnbull Library, Wellington, The Solomon Islands National Archives, Honiara, and The National Archives of Fiji, Suva.

I was constantly moved by the incredible kindness and support from people I encountered during my research. I am exceptionally grateful to Joan and Keith Presswell for their hospitality and for allowing me to document Woodford's unpublished photographs and papers. Peter Sheppard and his family were also extraordinarily hospitable while I stayed in Auckland, and in London, Jeff and Esther Jessop kindly accommodated me while I undertook research at The National Archives. My thanks also to numerous people who helped me during the course of this research: Tim Thomas, Rhys Richards, Gordon Leua Nanau, Edvard Hviding, David Akin, Pei-yi Guo, Debra McDougall, Michael W. Scott, Mark Elliott, Ludovic Coupaye, Clive Moore, Takuya Nagaoka, Conor and Sarah Smyth, David and Greg Woodford, Nancy Pollock, David Field, Warren Paia, Henrietta Usherwood and Robin Collett.

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List of Abbreviations

ATL	The Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
AM	The Australian Museum, Sydney
AM[A]	The Australian Museum Archives, Sydney
BM	The British Museum, London
BM[A]	The British Museum Archives, London
CO	Colonial Office Records, London
MAA	Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Cambridge
MAA[A]	Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology Archives, Cambridge
ML	The Mitchell Library, Sydney
MV	Museum Victoria, Melbourne
MV[A]	Museum Victoria Archives, Melbourne
NMI	The National Museum of Ireland, Dublin
NMI[A]	The National Museum of Ireland Archives, Dublin
NHM[A]	The Natural History Museum Archives, London
PRM	The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
RGS	The Royal Geographical Society, London
RGS[A]	The Royal Geographical Society Archives, London
SLV	The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne
WL[A]	The Wellcome Museum Archives, London
WML	The World Museum, Liverpool
WPHC	Western Pacific High Commission

Chapter 1

Introduction

Topic and research questions

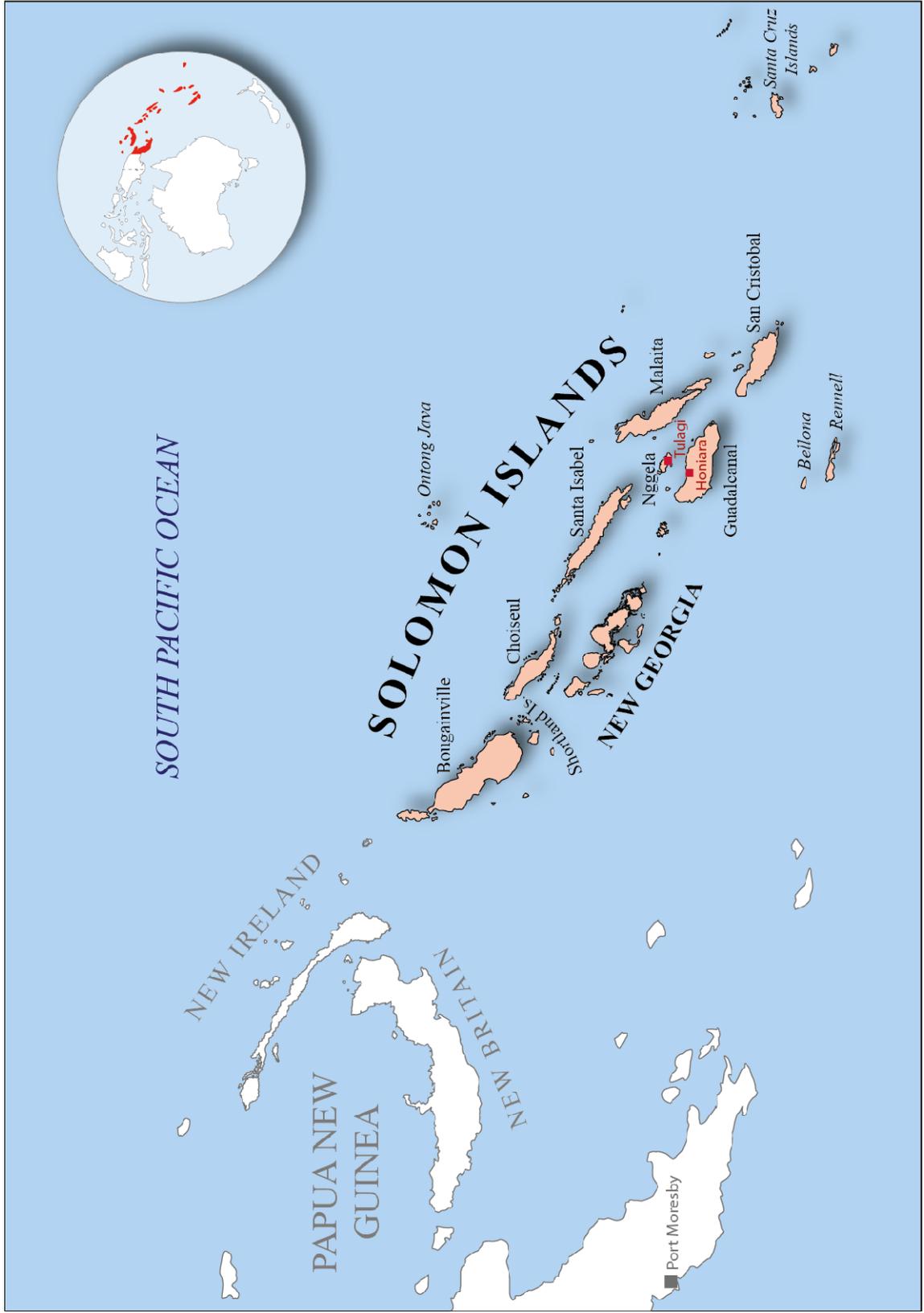
As tangible manifestations of past and present interactions between humans and the material world, objects challenge us to engage with the messy and often contradictory aspects of history. Examining them allows us to engage with the particular specificities of the entanglement between Europeans and indigenous communities, in the case presented here in the developing colonial political economy of the Solomon Islands. They speak to us of intersecting histories and lives, of the partibility of people and things, and how objects which were entangled in these historical processes of change helped mediate such events.

The establishment of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (hereafter BSIP) in 1893 marked the formalisation of European control and dominance over the region, and brought about the cessation or alteration of many cultural traditions and practices. As will become evident, in many cases indigenous people were forced to comply with the standards imposed by the new colonial government. This doctoral dissertation utilises objects (conceived widely to include ethnographic artefacts, artworks, texts and photographs) to illuminate the intricacies of colonial relations in the Solomon Islands between 1886 and 1915, and thus elucidate the micro-histories, particularly muted indigenous experiences, embodied in museum collections. My research utilises two previously unstudied collections accumulated between the years 1886 and 1915 by Charles Morris Woodford (1852-1927), the first Resident Commissioner to the Solomons from 1896 until 1915, and Arthur William Mahaffy (1869-1919), the first District Officer from 1898 until 1904, but who was resident in the Western Pacific until 1914. These collections, which number 546 objects (Woodford) and 530 objects (Mahaffy), are held primarily by The British Museum in London and The National Museum of Ireland in Dublin, but objects collected by both men are found also in The Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford), The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Cambridge), The World Museum

(Liverpool), The Australian Museum (Sydney), Museum Victoria (Melbourne), and The Royal Geographical Society (London).

Key agents in the refashioning of the region after the British Solomon Islands Protectorate's establishment in 1893, Woodford and Mahaffy both collected artefacts (e.g. shell valuables, model canoes, weaponry and decorated skulls) as part of their official and unofficial activities with local communities. In the process, objects of ritual importance and items of daily use were reconfigured into trophies, gifts and scientific specimens. Each collection is reflective of the various colonial social networks that defined these officers' knowledge of, and power in, the region as well as their attempts to gain social capital (Bourdieu 1984) by contributing to the developing scientific fields of anthropology, geography and natural history. The biographies of these objects entangle both men's actions with those of local communities and force us to examine the often contradictory aspects of the Solomons' colonial history, as their trajectories point to the duality of these men's roles, enforcing colonial suppression of headhunting while also acting as patrons to locally named craftsmen and artists. This study foregrounds these histories of interactions and exchanges between colonial officials and other resident Europeans and Islander populations through a detailed study of the collections. Objects from both collections are my point of entry to explore these histories with the particular aim to examine the following questions: (1) how did local people negotiate within the parameters of the new colonial rule?; (2) what role did objects play in these negotiations?; (3) what was the nature of indigenous agency in colonial exchange relations?; (4) how are these relations manifest in the collections?, and (5) what was the extent of mutual appropriation between all residents in the Solomons?

Understanding Woodford and Mahaffy's roles in the social transformation of the Solomons, in particular through pacification and the suppression of headhunting in the Western Solomons (in order to help secure land for government sanctioned coconut plantations), and examining how these actions affected, altered and shaped chiefly polities within the region, will reveal how their actions fed into local social and material discourses. It will also help map out how these entanglements affected relationships between persons and things in the region. The complexity of each man and their relationship with each other forms an important research area. Both men, prior to and following their work in the Solomons, had wider experience in the Pacific, which is also reflected in their collections. Woodford first visited the Solomons as a naturalist and explorer (1886-1888), and was encouraged by the British Museum to send examples of his



Map 1: The Solomon Islands. The Polynesian outliers are in italics.

Map produced by Joanne Lai

finds back to them (cf. Raffles 2002a). Prior to arriving in the Solomons in 1898 Mahaffy was a District Officer in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (1895-1898), where he began his collection, and where he allowed himself to be liberally tattooed in the traditional Gilbertese fashion. Later he worked as Assistant High Commissioner for the Western Pacific High Commission (1904-1914), based in Fiji, during which time he visited the Solomons on several occasions. Woodford and Mahaffy's aims and objectives in forming collections correspond with a wider culture of collecting within the British Empire that took place across the region (see Lawson 1994; O'Hanlon & Welsch 2000). One motivating factor in their collecting was the belief that the "Melanesian race" was doomed to extinction, but through collecting objects from these "doomed" people aspects of their culture could be preserved (see Rivers 1922).

Through detailed object analysis, and by reconstructing the biography of an object (Kopytoff 1986, see below) – the materials used, their significance, who made the object, its consumers – the role of material culture within that society becomes clearer, and offers further insights into colonial relationships. Determining how objects were collected, what items were traded or purchased freely, what were hidden from view or taken in raids (all factors which helped to shape both collections), is a primary focus of this research. A reassessment of the establishment of the Protectorate through these artefacts will force a reconsideration of the nature of colonialism in the Western Solomons, and reveal indigenous dynamics that hitherto have been largely unexamined. Research on Woodford and Mahaffy's collections will contribute to writing histories that explicate: (1) the contribution of colonial officers to the development of British anthropology; (2) the position of the Solomons within British scientific communities through these collections; (3) the pacification and colonisation of the Solomons; and (4) how local communities responded to and became imbricated in the new colonial and political economy.

For the aims of my project it was of vital importance to study *both* Woodford and Mahaffy and their collections together. For several years they were the only two permanently-based British government representatives in the Solomons. They worked closely together, possibly going on punitive raids together, and as evidence suggests, collected objects together and shared information on objects found. They possibly exchanged/gifted objects to each other, thus offering a layered and rich dynamic that needs to be explored, analysed and unpacked. Through their work in the Solomons both Woodford and Mahaffy engaged with indigenous and European people, people who became entangled in their collecting processes. By examining these encounters between



Map 2: The New Georgia Islands.

Map produced by Joanne Lai

people, and between people and things, we can determine not only how the collections were created and shaped but also how the Solomons as a nation was formed during this dynamic period.

It is important to note, however, that our discussion of the “Solomon Islands” as a homogenous group is a European construction. Although many of the islands within what today constitutes the country the Solomon Islands are culturally linked, several islands have no social or cultural ties. The grouping together of the Solomons as a “nation” took place at various stages in the early colonial period. As a social construct, the islands were added to and modified following the establishment of the BSIP in 1893. At the time of the BSIP’s declaration in 1893 the islands of Choiseul, Santa Isabel, the Shortland Islands and Ontong Java were under German control, but following the Anglo-German agreement of 1899 these islands came under the British jurisdiction. Although culturally and socially linked to the Solomon Islands, Bougainville and Buka today fall under the jurisdiction of Papua New Guinea (see Map 1). This externally-imposed grouping together of islands has united places inhabited by Melanesians and those inhabited by Polynesians as the “Solomon Islands” nation. There are several Polynesian outliers within the Solomons, including Rennell, Bellona, Ontong Java, Sikaiana and Tikopia. The Santa Cruz Islands have a mix of Melanesian and Polynesian populations.¹ It should be noted, of course, that the grouping of various island groups into “Polynesia”, “Melanesia” and “Micronesia” are equally European constructs. This tripartite classification of the South Seas was proposed by the French explorer Jules Dumont D’Urville, and came into regular use in the 1830s. However, as sociably accepted terms these are used throughout the thesis.

Within this thesis the terms “Solomon Islands” and “the Solomons” are used interchangeably to refer to those islands which compose the current independent state, plus their culturally-related neighbours Bougainville and Buka to the north. Similarly, the Western Solomons, Western Province or the New Georgia group are frequently referred to throughout the thesis. These terms encompass the islands of New Georgia, Rendova, Kolombangara, Vangunu, Gatokae, Tetepare, Parara, Gizo, Ranongga and Vella Lavella (see Map 2).

¹ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the settlement of these islands.

Research resources: collections, archives and photographs

Utilising the Woodford and Mahaffy collections, along with writings by each man, colonial archives, private papers and photographs my research seeks to coax objects to reveal the complexities of past interactions, thereby elucidating their micro-histories, particularly the muted indigenous narratives within them. This documentary material has been researched in Europe at The British Museum (London), The National Museum of Ireland (Dublin), The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Cambridge), The National Archives (London), The Royal Geographical Society (London), The Wellcome Institute Library (London), and in the Pacific at The University of Auckland, The Australian Museum archives (Sydney), The Mitchell Library (Sydney), Museum Victoria (Melbourne), The State Library of Victoria (Melbourne), The National Archives of Fiji (Suva) and The Solomon Islands National Archives (Honiara). Further unpublished private papers and photographs belonging to Woodford, which are in the ownership of his family, were also consulted in Australia.

This archival research has offered important insights into the aims and objectives of British colonial rule, as well as giving an overview of the movements of both men around the Solomons and the wider Pacific. Their reports and letters also offer indications of their personal views on the nature of their work, the colonial transformation of the Solomons, and on the indigenous population, thus enabling me to better negotiate with indigenous narratives and histories. Included in the sources listed above are also private papers, letters and diaries of both men. Woodford's photographic collection also forms a corpus of images that offer a particular and nuanced view of societies that were falling under greater European influence. These documents, together with the objects in their collections, raise questions about how they perceived their roles in the Solomons, and about the wider aims of colonial expansion and pacification. For example, in many of their colonial reports which detail punitive raids against villages for perceived crimes against each other and Europeans, there are also many reports of the punishments of Europeans for crimes against indigenous people, usually associated with coconut plantation work. Such contradictory actions are difficult to negotiate and reconcile, and I believe that the combination of collections and archives in research will afford insights into the extent of indigenous and colonial encounters and appropriations. Frequently objects and archives become separated geographically, but by examining the relationships between objects and

archives, and by elucidating the micro-histories and indigenous colonial perspectives within these collections, the complexities of cross-cultural interactions will be revealed.

The time when Woodford and Mahaffy were collecting was a period of extensive social change within the Solomons, and while written sources tell a great deal about the perspectives and experiences of Europeans active in the region during this time, those of indigenous people are frequently silent. By thinking through the objects in play during this time, in essence treating them as contact zones (see below), including why and how they were used, and to what extent objects provide another way of looking at indigenous colonial relations, I believe it is possible to reconstruct some of these object biographies and reveal the nexus of changing contexts and meanings that they participated in and helped create. The themes I consider in my research include understanding the relationship between the development of anthropology as a science; the pacification and colonisation of the Solomon Islands; and how these changes affected the local colonial and political economy.

Throughout these discussions of transformations and resistance, entanglements and exchange, silences and contact zones, objects from both collections will remain the focus of this work. They will be used to highlight various points in the discussion, and will be examined to establish what they can tell us about indigenous experiences at the time. The archival material provides the political and economic background in which objects in these collections were acquired and highlight the cross-cultural interactions involved. Yet it is by looking at and through the objects themselves that these relationships become manifest. The processes of manufacture, the introduction and use of iron and later steel blades, and the incorporation of European trade goods and motifs into objects, are all indicative of social change and mutual appropriation, and stand as a physical reminder of colonial and indigenous relations.

The model canoe

One object, or group of objects, that materialises the themes discussed above will be given here as a preliminary example. It currently rests on a shelving bay in the National Museum of Ireland's ethnography store. It is a model of a fully decorated Western Solomon Islands war canoe, complete with a miniaturised crew of warriors and copies of the weapons they would have employed on a headhunting raid. When I first saw this intriguing object lying in a container prior to its removal to a new storeroom, I was struck not only by its elegance

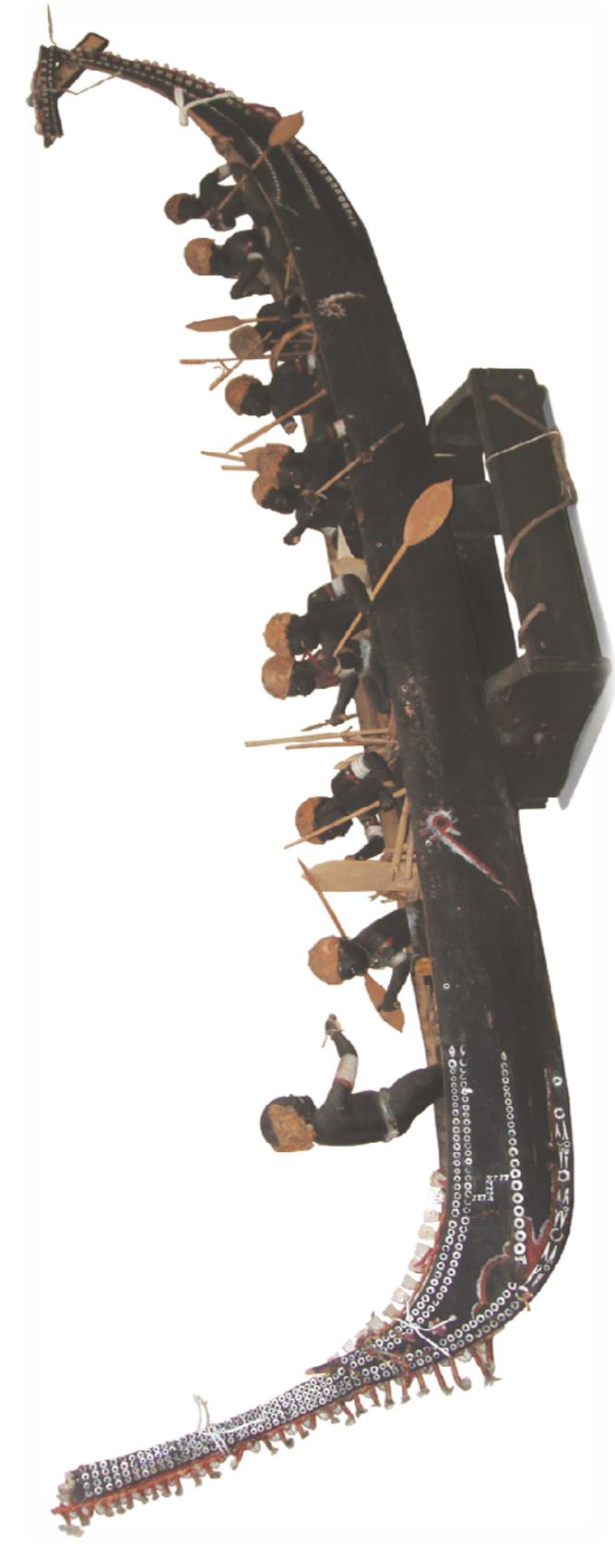


Plate 1: The model Solomon Island war canoe (*tomoko*) made for Mahaffy in 1902 by Anjo, an artist from the Roviana Lagoon. The *tomoko* is occupied by a crew of eleven which have paddles and weapons. Length: 207 cm. (NMI AE:1923.226)



Plate 2: Detail of the bow of the model *tomoko*, made by Ango. (NMI AE:1923.226)



Plate 3: Detail of the stern of the model *tomoko*, made by Ango. (NMI AE:1923.226)



Plate 4: Detail of the figure of Belangana, a chief from Simbo, who is shown directing the paddlers.

(NMI AE:1923.226)

Plate 5: Photograph of Belangana, a chief from Simbo. There is evidence to suggest that towards the end of his life Belangana converted to Christianity. A photograph in Luxton's history of the Methodist Mission clearly shows Belangana with the image heading "An old chief of Simbo. "From enemy to Friend", ready to lay aside the weapons of warfare that the teaching of Christ might bring peace and goodwill to his people.'

(Luxton 1955: facing page 37)





Plate 6: Detail of the interior of of the *tomoko*, showing a crew member with a bailer.

(NMI AE:1923.226)

Plate 7: Detail of one the crew from the model *tomoko*.

(NMI AE:1923.226)





Plate 8: A selection of some of the miniature weapons, shields and paddles from the model *tomoko*.
(NMI AE:1923.226)



Plate 9: The miniature *nguzunguzu* which Ango carved to accompany the model *tomoko*.
(NMI AE:1923.226)

and extensive detail, but was also filled with many questions. What did it represent and why was such elaborate detail bestowed upon it? Who made it, and why? Who collected it? As the following discussion will show the model canoe (NMI registration number AE:1923.226) also raises many other issues.

It is one of 530 objects from the Pacific collected by Arthur Mahaffy between 1897 and 1914 (Plates 1 to 4, 6 to 9). AE:1923.226 comprises a model of a fully decorated Solomons war canoe, or *tomoko*, and it bears the painted markings that would have been present on a war canoe engaged in a headhunting raid. Included is a detachable canoe prow figurehead, alternatively called *toto isu* in Marovo or *nguzunguzu* in Roviana, both locations on New Georgia Island in the Western Province. It is occupied by a model crew of eleven men, each of whom occupy a specific position within the canoe, with miniatures of the paddles, axes and shields that a real Solomons war party would have taken on a raid. Measuring 2.07 meters long by 19.5 centimetres wide, the model was crafted as a replica of a *tomoko* using small, long planks of a lightweight yellow wood fitted together and painted black.² Tiny pieces of shell inlay have been set into parinarium nut putty along its bow and stern, each of which has a cord of red fibre with feathers, tiny cowrie shells, and more pieces of cut shell attached. As mentioned previously, painted designs – in red, white, and blue – are represented on the canoe hull. The decorative elements of war canoes have been described by several authors (see Hocart 1935; Waite 1990, 1999, 2000a; Kupiainen 2000) but few have given much attention to these painted motifs.³ Woodford observed that the white arm with extended fingers temporarily painted onto the side of a canoe indicated whether heads had been taken on a raid: if it pointed forward it indicated that male heads were taken, if aft then the heads were female (1909a:513). Both markings are represented on this model.

This range of decorative elements, including prow and stern carvings, and painted motifs, imbued the canoe and, by extension, its occupants with supernatural protection during voyages (Kupiainen 2000:52). The interior of the canoe has seating areas for the crew and spaces which hold weapons and shields. The crew, made from a similar wood to the hull, are shown in local dress composed of a barkcloth loincloth. In an accurate representation of the objects that formed part of the material universe for Solomon Islanders, all the figures have shell arm rings rendered on their arms, while some have

² On war canoes the joints where the planks met were initially stitched together and the joints were then filled with parinarium nut paste, which dried a black colour, rendering the canoe waterproof (Somerville 1897:370; Hocart 1935),

³ See Haddon and Hornell, Vol. II (1975[1937]:81-120) for technical description of Solomon Island canoes.

shell or wood ear-rings and red necklaces. All have yellow fibre hair, a depiction of either the actual hair colour of many Solomon Islanders caused by a regressive gene, or of the practice of bleaching hair with lime. Each crew member has an assigned position within the canoe, and duty – some paddle while others bail. Yet while the poses of the crew all differ, their faces and expressions are the same; all except the figure standing at the front of the canoe, the one who directs the paddlers. According to Mahaffy, this is a portrait of a chief called Belangana from Simbo Island, to the northwest of New Georgia (Plate 5). He is shown directing his steersman, seated at the rear of the canoe, on the line to take as the canoe approaches the beach so as to avoid rocks present in the passage.

This detailed information is drawn from an introductory text and two catalogues written by Mahaffy, which cover 60% of his collection. The objects detailed in his “Catalogue Raisonné” were collected between 1897 and 1903, while a second catalogue lists a “Supplementary list of objects brought home in 1914”. In the “Catalogue Raisonné”, Mahaffy states that the model canoe was made for him in 1902 by an artist from the Roviana Lagoon area of New Georgia named Ango. His full entry for the canoe reads:

Model of a head-hunting canoe or “Tomoko” carved for me by Ango of Rubiana in 1902. This is the only model of the kind in existence and is surely a very wonderful piece of work when it is considered that the artist is a “mere savage” who has never left his home nor seen any work by European craftsmen. Every detail is exact; the inlaying may be compared with that shown in the photograph of my large tomoko, and will be found to agree quite accurately with it. The moment which he has chosen to represent is that in which the canoe is coming up to the beach from the sea, the old man standing up is an excellent portrait of Belangana, chief of Simbo, who is pointing with his arm to the steersman who sits at the extreme stern of the canoe to show him the line to take in order to avoid the rocks in the passage leading to the beach, the attitudes are all studied from nature and the portrait of the chief is so good that it was at once recognised by all his friends who saw it in my house at Gizo. (Mahaffy n.p.)

Mahaffy’s understanding of Ango as a ‘mere savage’ and his belief that Ango had never ‘seen any work by European craftsmen’ is indicative of frequent misconceptions by Europeans of the level to which the indigenous population was immersed within a colonial economy. These misconceptions and misunderstandings – by both Europeans and

Indigenous people alike – will be unpacked throughout this thesis. The model canoe raises issues and questions that are of central concern to this thesis:

- The contact and interaction between people, and between people and things
- Movement across space and regions
- Biographies (Kopytoff 1986) – both of people and of objects
- The silences residing within these histories and collections

It is, importantly, a model. It is a physical representation of the very thing that Woodford and Mahaffy were trying to suppress in the Solomons – headhunting. It also points to patronage, political alliances, the portability and mutability of objects, and the notion of trophy objects. It can be used to highlight historical, cultural, material, and personal intersections. It will be referred to again later in the thesis.

Theoretical orientation

Using examples from each collection, such as the model of the war canoe in the Mahaffy collection referred to above, and ceramic-plate *kapkap* ornaments from the Woodford collection, I tie together several anthropological and archaeological perspectives. Developing Pratt's deployment of the concept of museums as contact zones, that is, spaces of colonial encounters in which 'peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations' (Pratt 1992:6-7), Clifford argued for seeing museums and their collections as places of consultation and research (1997:192). Taking this further, Peers and Brown (2003:4-8) argue further for the utility of seeing artefacts as 'contact zones', that is, as sources of knowledge and as catalysts for developing new relationships within communities. My research develops this concept by treating objects, documents and photographs as artefacts, whose emergent qualities bring different narratives into a cross-cultural and temporal dialogue. In-depth engagement with artefacts in a museum setting, including analysing the formal qualities of objects, such as materials utilised, the object's use and wear, evidence of repair, together with research on associated texts or photographs can illuminate submerged past relationships. Considering this, research for this thesis has proceeded with the understanding of a museum and its store room as a field-site. My understanding of the potentiality of a museum as a field-site develops from Anita Herle's work (2002). When undertaking the 1998 exhibition, 'Torres Strait Islanders: An Exhibition to Mark the Centenary of the 1898 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Strait', interactions between MAA staff and

Torres Strait Islanders led to Herle seeing the museum as a field-site, ‘a place for cross-cultural encounter and creative dialogue’ (2002:246). In that contemporary setting indigenous people were able to re-engage with objects made by their ancestors and inform museum staff of hitherto unknown object names or histories which they were then able to document. For Woodford and Mahaffy, the Pacific and more specifically the Solomons were their field-sites for object collection. For my research their encounters in the Solomons, as manifest through their collections, became my field-site. It was the museum and its store room, archives and their photographic and/or documentary contents that became my primary source of information, my contact zones, and they remained at the heart of my research.

As noted earlier, one of the principal aims of this thesis is to try to gain a fuller insight into colonial relations in the Solomon Islands as manifest through the collections of Woodford and Mahaffy. Considering this, objects and their material and immaterial qualities occupy a central place in all discussions within this thesis. The materiality of objects combines both the tangible and intangible properties which constitute an object and, as such, an object’s materiality is closely linked with its social biography (Miller 1987, 2005; Wright 2004). The social biography of an object can be understood to include its intended purpose, creation, use and eventual collection (Kopytoff 1986). As such, discussions in the thesis in relation to objects consider the network of relationships between objects, between people, and between people and objects (see Herle 2002; Dobres & Robb 2005; Gosden 2005; Ingold 2007). In essence this is the agency of things. Alfred Gell’s (1998) writing has led us to an understanding of art objects as social agents with the ability to act upon and influence the people who view them. This argument is particularly salient in this research. Gell understood art and art objects, ‘as a system of action, intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it’ (1998:6). Although discussions of agency are not reiterated throughout the thesis, the inherent properties of agency, in the understanding that objects *do* things, they are not simply mere “inanimate objects” is a principal understanding (cf. Gell 1998). As Hoskins (2006:75) put it, objects physically embody the intentionality of their creators, and as such have the ability to mediate and exert social agency (also see Bell and Geismar 2009:16). One example utilised by Gell to demonstrate the potential and ability of objects to *do* things, to act upon and influence individuals, are canoe prow-boards from the Trobriand Islands of the Massim region, Papua New Guinea, which are used on canoes involved in the Kula exchange network (1998:68-72; 1992). For Gell, through particular technical processes,

including design, carving, and the intentionality of the carver, these canoe prow-boards emit a magical efficacy to captivate and dazzle trading partners. The result of this is the latter agreeing to trade Kula shells to the canoe prow owner at a value lesser than their worth (Gell 1992). Agency is found not only within the object and its potential to influence people; it is also located within collections. Within this understanding of objects as social agents it should be noted that there were varying degrees of agency present in the collection process. This is particularly true of objects which were created for Woodford or Mahaffy by local indigenous craftspeople, or in objects which were withheld by their indigenous owners from circulation or trade with Europeans. As is demonstrated throughout the thesis Woodford and Mahaffy's frequently targeted such objects during punitive raids for collection. Another idea utilised by Gell of the distributed person or object is also applicable to this research (1998:103-4, 221-58). If we understand the potential of an object to act as a social agent, then an object's ability to influence people in various situations and at various stages in its existence becomes clear. As social agents, objects can be understood as distributed persons, containing the personhood of both the objects creator/maker and, in its present museum setting, that of its collector. Considered throughout the history of an object's existence, from the moment of creation through to its use and eventual collection and its continuing social life within a contemporary museum setting, this distribution of personhood of an object becomes entwined with its biography. The biography of an object is inscribed upon it at every different stage of this existence, as equally the biography of the collector becomes entwined with the object at the moment of collection. The motivating factor in an objects creation/manufacture may vary from the factor(s) behind its eventual collection and, with this understanding, objects do not simply cease to exercise agency or to act as social agents once collected. This role is continued today within the museum, as discussed above.

The search for evidence of indigenous agency as manifest in museum collections, archives, texts and photographs is also a central concern for the thesis. My research draws upon work undertaken by authors such as Stoler (2009), who has shown the extent of information that can be extrapolated from archival sources, and Welsch (2000) and Gosden and Knowles (2001), for example, whose work has combined photographic and textual research alongside object analysis. Their research has demonstrated the potentialities of museum collections, archives, texts and photographs as sources for and repositories of indigenous agency. As is demonstrated throughout the thesis, indigenous agency can indeed be found within these various sources. Frequently it is not obvious on first glimpse

of an object, but through examining the object and any associated textual or photographic documentation indigenous agency can indeed be discovered. Of course, there are limitations to what information can be unearthed on an object, but within each object there is great potential to illuminate the story of that object, its creator, its collector, and its historical and contemporary significance.

Recently, several anthropologists and ethno-historians have revisited the ethnographic collections formed during colonial expansion into the Pacific, more specifically Melanesia, and highlighted their significance to the development of anthropology as a discipline (Clifford 1988; Thomas 1991, 1994; Herle and Rouse 1998; O'Hanlon & Welsch 2000; Gosden & Knowles 2001; Owen 2006). Taking examples of museum collectors, missionaries, and government agents who undertook ethnographic collecting in Melanesia in the early colonial period, O'Hanlon & Welsch in their edited volume (2000) and Gosden & Knowles (2001) succinctly examine the factors which motivated individuals such as Beatrice Blackwood, Felix Speiser, Sir William MacGregor, and Rev. George Brown to collect objects while always keeping the focus on the collections themselves. Ethnographic collections had long been overlooked in anthropological studies as inert and disparate repositories of objects. These writings, however, demonstrate the potentialities of collections-based research and the narratives which reside within collections, narratives which are accessible through object and document research (also see Phillips & Steiner 1999). The analysis of Woodford and Mahaffy as officials in Britain's colonial expansion in the Pacific and the object collections they assembled fits into this growing body of research and furthers our understanding of collections and collectors and of amateurs and professionals.

The thesis also considers the differences between both collectors and collections. For instance, Woodford donated or sold objects periodically to the British Museum and other institutions during his time in the Pacific and also when he retired. Mahaffy, on the other hand, retained the majority of the objects he collected. This amounts to a varied process of collection formation across time and space, variations which are evident in the collections.

In adopting these theoretical approaches in the analysis of objects and collections, my research engages with wider ethno-historical debates, including the theatricality of encounters between Europeans and Pacific Islanders, individual performances resulting from such encounters, and how these shaped and informed social practice in the making of history (see Denning 1992, 1996; Douglas 1998; Sahlins 1985).

Theatricality of encounters

History is always in a state of “becoming”, that is, it is constantly made present to us through its formation and telling (Denning 1996). But within the theatre of encounters in which history is “made” there exist many silences. These silences – which are present in texts, archives and collections – enter history production at ‘the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narratives*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance)’ (Trouillot 1995:26, original emphasis). As Denning (1996: 43) noted ‘relics of what happened in the past are cultural artifacts of the moments that produce them, but they also become cultural artifacts of all the moments that give them permanence.’ In ethno-historical terms, therefore, object research allows us to know the past through the histories made of it, in essence to make a present out of the past, as in turn we make a past out of the present.

Drawing on the innovative work of anthropological historians such as Sahlins (1985), Denning (1992, 1996) and Douglas (1998), my research engages with wider ethno-historical debates, including the theatricality of encounters between Europeans and Islanders, individual performances resulting from such encounters, and how these shaped and informed social practice in the making of history. Metaphorically speaking, Douglas (1998:18) has suggested we can ‘read against the grain’ of textual sources to elucidate prejudices, distortions, ambivalences and silences – namely the silences of the indigenous people represented in them. Museums and archival material are not inert and disassociated repositories of objects and information. As Stoler has demonstrated, they are in fact rich resources of source material, narratives and information for both the historical and contemporary researchers (2009).

Colonialism and collecting in the Solomon Islands

By re-evaluating historical museum collections my research provides a context for understanding colonial indigenous interactions and how and why objects were selected by Europeans for their collections in Melanesia (Küchler 1997; Gosden and Knowles 2001). One further issue that will be developed throughout this research is an attempt to understand the perspectives of indigenous people, how they mediated these relationships, and how their perceptions of material culture altered. Melanesian conceptions of how objects functioned as the instantiations of cosmological beliefs and as media through

which networks of relationships and exchange were negotiated helped shape these collections in terms of what objects were available to Europeans for trade and what were deliberately held back. By determining the extent to which pacification and colonisation altered these beliefs and relations in a historical context (see Rodman and Cooper 1979), their significance for contemporary audiences will become clear. This research will give historic material culture a contemporary relevance for descendant groups whose ancestors created and used them, thus allowing for new levels of engagement with their cultural heritage outside of their present museum setting, while providing a context in which objects were created, used, and later collected.

The artefacts within these collections are truly ‘entangled objects’ (Thomas 1991) when one considers how they are enmeshed in the aims of colonial rule, the life histories of the men who collected them, and the indigenous people who created and used them (Hoskins 1998). However, Melanesian conceptions of the person, and the intersection of people and material objects were largely obscured in the making of these collections. Marilyn Strathern states that within Melanesia ‘objects are created not in contradistinction to persons but out of persons’, and as such people and the objects they used or created are all constituent parts of the same set of social relations (1990:171). Extracting the nested biographies and agency within such objects and collections (Gell 1998) will allow for a closer engagement with indigenous and European conceptions of materiality. Utilising objects, documents and photographs, my work pulls together historical Melanesian ideas of objects and self, and examines the extent of mutual appropriation of technologies and ideas, and how such transformations are evident within collections. I will thus build upon and contribute to the growing body of work that argues for a more nuanced view of the relationships between people and objects (Miller 2005; Henare *et al.* 2006; Edwards *et al.* 2006).

This discussion will also consider how Solomon Islanders understood objects in a different way to Europeans. Objects could be used in everyday contexts but at the same time they were understood to be manifestations of ancestral efficacy. For example, Aswani and Sheppard, discussing the pre-European contact development of shell-ring valuables called *poata* in the Western Solomons, outlined how these could be ‘presented in marital exchanges, used as commodities in barter, or employed to embody ancestral efficacy’, the last of which was of great importance in legitimizing political power (2003:s53). Within the Solomons, objects could move between ‘spheres of exchange as “gifts”, “commodities”, or “inalienable possessions” depending on the social, economic, and

political milieu in which they were exchanged and/or transferred' (Aswani and Sheppard 2003:s53). Following the introduction of European trade goods these understandings of objects shifted. By incorporating and appropriating European commodities into their material culture, such as decorating metal axes and gun handles with pearl shell, in essence making them "local", different sets of social and material relations were created. These will be discussed and analysed throughout this thesis.

Social transformation in the Solomon Islands

The turbulent period under discussion has attracted a variety of researchers (e.g. Bennett 1987; Rodman and Cooper 1979; Aswani 2000; Aswani and Sheppard 2003; Zelenietz 1979; Boutilier 1979; Burt 2002), and it is not my intention to replicate prior research or findings. Instead this thesis offers a different view or understanding of the establishment of the BSIP and its consequences for both colonial and indigenous agents through the objects collected by Woodford and Mahaffy. A reassessment of these collections offers new insights into this period. Of great importance to this project is developing an understanding of the nature and scale of social change, and of colonial organised violence which transformed the Solomons during this period. My work builds upon the archaeological and ethno-historical work carried out in the Western Solomons by Aswani, Sheppard, Walter, Thomas, and Hviding (see bibliography) which has helped rethink the extent of predatory headhunting and exchange relations in the Solomons prior to and during colonial rule, thus giving new insight into transformations in Islander society. These works have established a strong baseline for the nature of society and social structure during the nineteenth century, but there remains a gap in understanding how the material culture of the period can relate indigenous experiences and narrative, something which museum collections and archival research, I believe, can help reveal. Waite (see bibliography) and Kupiainen (2000) have documented Solomons artistic practices, particularly in relation to wood carving traditions. While my work dovetails with these authors' work, it considers wider artistic practices within the corpus of Solomons material culture.

These sections have outlined the primary theoretical focus of the thesis. What now follows is a brief overview of published sources on the Solomons, followed by an outline of the methodology employed in order to address the thesis's research questions.

Published sources on the Solomon Islands

Since Europeans first encountered the Solomon Islands, the people and their islands have succeeded in capturing the imagination and curiosity of visitors to the archipelago. The earliest text written on the Solomons came from de Mendaña following his 1568 expedition to those islands.⁴ His account of cannibalism on Santa Isabel resounded with a Western fascination with headhunting and cannibalism and set a precedent for many years to come on the texts which were later written about the islands. Subsequent authors frequently struggled to reconcile the beauty of the islands with the perceived savagery of their inhabitants. The group was not again visited by Europeans for almost two hundred years (Jack-Hinton 1969), but following the resumption of European activity in the Solomons in the mid- to late-eighteenth century, whaling and trading vessels began to visit the Solomons in the nineteenth century and new chroniclers of the Solomons and its people emerged: the trader. The nature and extent of social and material change that was taking place in the Solomons during the nineteenth century is reflected in many of their writings. Particularly insightful is the account by Andrew Cheyne of his 1844 visit to the Western Solomons. His chronicle highlighted the fact that, by the time of his visit, indigenous people had become well acquainted with iron. Indeed, Cheyne struggled to engage in trade with indigenous people on Simbo due to his lack of iron axes to trade (what he referred to as tomahawks) (Shineberg 1971:305-306).⁵

British naval presence increased in the Western Pacific from the middle of the nineteenth century to investigate various crimes. In the Solomons, for instance, vessels such as H.M.S. *Herald* were sent in 1854 to investigate the murder of Benjamin Boyd, an American whaler. Several people who travelled on naval ships such as Brenchley (1873), Guppy (1887a, 1887b) and Somerville (1893), published accounts of their visits to the Solomons. Brenchley, on board H.M.S. *Curaçoa*, formed one of the earliest ethnographic collections of Solomon Islands objects (Waite 1987:7). Voyages such as Brenchley's did not allow for prolonged stays in one place. However, later that century, increased naval surveying and charting in the Solomons allowed men such as Guppy and Somerville, among others, to document ethnological aspects of the Indigenous people they encountered and their material culture over a period of several weeks or months. This initial ethnographic research in the Solomons was supplemented by the papers and the book Woodford published following his residencies in the Solomons between 1886 and 1888.

⁴ The journal of this voyage was later edited and published by Amherst and Thomson (1901).

⁵ Bennett (1987:21-102) gives an overview of contacts with Europeans during the nineteenth century.

These texts, supported by those from resident missionaries, such as Codrington (1885, 1891), Penny (1887), Fox (1924, 1975) and Ivens (1927, 1930) throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's, provide important insights which helped to increase understandings of the varied cultures which constitute the Solomon Islands.

It is perhaps surprising to note the number of "tourist" accounts written on the Solomons during the mid to late nineteenth century, especially when we consider the fearful reputation their inhabitants had acquired (see Adams 1890). Perhaps this fear also created curiosity. Capitalising on the increased demand for travel to Melanesia, Burns Philp & Company Ltd was the first company to offer tourist holiday cruises to the Melanesian islands. A regular tourist route from Sydney to Papua New Guinea was established from 1884, and by 1899 the Solomons had been added as part of the itinerary (Douglas 1997:57). This steamer service coupled with the colonial opening up of the Solomons throughout the early twentieth century resulted in a flurry of accounts from resident traders and adventurers such as Chewings (1900), Elkington (1907), Williamson (1914), Collinson (1926), Dickinson (1927) and Mytinger (1942) who could move more freely around the Protectorate.

Although entertaining and valuable for many incidental details and narratives, their writings and those of independent visitors to the BSIP including Festetics de Tolna (1903, 1904) and Burnett (1911) did not greatly enhance specifically anthropological understandings of the Solomons. This fell to trained anthropologists such as Hocart (1922, 1925, 1931, 1937), Rivers (1922), Wheeler (1926), Parkinson (1999[1907]), Blackwood (1935) and Hogbin (1939) to produce the first ethnographies of the Solomons. Their foundation work was built upon during the twentieth century by anthropologists such as Firth (especially for the Polynesian outlier Tikopia) (1936, 1959), Oliver (1949, 1955), Davenport (1981, 2005) and Monberg (1962, 1991). With the advent of the independent nation of the Solomon Islands in 1978 attention was given to understanding the impacts of colonial rule and its consequences on Solomon Islanders. Works, including those by McKinnon (1975), Jackson (1978), Zelenietz (1979), Rodman and Cooper (1979), Bennett (1987) and Burt (2002) helped to contextualise the varied and violent history of colonial rule and pacification. More recently archaeological research undertaken by Aswani (2000), Aswani and Sheppard (2003), Walter and Sheppard (2000, 2006), Nagaoka (1999) and Thomas, T. (2003) have helped redefine our understandings of the emergence and significance of headhunting practices in the Western Solomons, while works by Hviding (1996, 1998), Hviding and Bayliss-Smith (2000) and Aswani (1998) have shown the

importance and role of marine tenure as a core management system within the Western Solomons. In terms of material culture analysis, the majority of stylistic research has been undertaken by Waite between 1979 and 2008. Writings by Starzecka and Cranston (1974) and their exhibition at the British Museum, Kupiainen (2000), Davenport (2005) and Richards and Roga (2004, 2005) have furthered our understandings of role and importance of art and artefacts in the Solomons, in both historical and contemporary Solomons' material culture studies.

Methodology

As noted previously, research for this thesis combines various object types – ethnographic artefacts, texts and photographs. However, as a collection-based study, analysis of the objects Woodford and Mahaffy collected formed the core of this thesis. Between 2007 and 2010 several visits were made to The British Museum's Orsman Road store to research the Woodford collection. Similarly, several research trips were undertaken to the Mahaffy collection and its documentation at The National Museum of Ireland (Decorative Arts and History Museum), Dublin. My work on these collections included photographing the objects, measuring them, making notes of the materials used and their provenance and acquisition details. Museum registers and associated archive papers for these collections were also consulted.

In total 408 of the 483 Woodford objects held by the BM were documented in person, but time constraints resulted in 75 objects remaining to be documented. On each visit to the store, objects were made available to me by Jill Hasell in order for me to photograph and document them. While at the BM I consulted the object register for additional information, and also consulted the correspondence between Woodford and the museum. This correspondence yielded important acquisition and provenance information on particular objects.

At the NMI, objects were occasionally laid out for me to research, but frequently I was obliged to take objects out myself in order to document them. This was not such a significant problem as I had previously worked as a Documentation Assistant on the NMI ethnographic collections and was aware of the layout of the store and the location information for the objects. However, it did result in losing a certain amount of time which could have been spent documenting the objects. Also, as the collections at that institution are still awaiting complete documentation and organisation, I was unable to locate many

objects. Of the 519 Mahaffy objects held by the NMI, 435 were documented in person but 84 are presently missing or of no known location within the museum. In the documentation archive for the ethnographic collection I located two texts written by Mahaffy to accompany his collection, the “Catalogue Raisonné”, and a “Supplementary List of objects brought home in 1914” (NMI 21/A&I/1923). It was not until a later visit to the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge that Rachel Hand informed me of the existence of the introductory section for these catalogues, entitled “Collection of Arms and other objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903 by Arthur Mahaffy”, a copy of which was held in the MAA object documentation archive (MAA[A] OA1/1/3). I was permitted to make a copy of this introductory text and so had a complete copy of his text and catalogues to work from.⁶

Research trips were also undertaken, at various times, to The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, and The World Museum Liverpool in order to document the objects collected by Woodford held in those institutions. The two objects collected by Woodford which form part of The Royal Geographical Society collections were not documented in person, but the archive of Woodford’s correspondence with the society formed a central aspect of my research. Indeed, archival research was of equal importance as that undertaken on ethnographic objects. Archival research on Colonial Office records, held by the National Archives, London, offered an important insight into the aims and objectives of British colonial rule, as well as giving an overview of the movements of both men around the Solomons, and the wider Pacific. Their reports and letters also offer an indication of their personal views on the nature of their work, the colonial transformation of the Solomons, and on the indigenous population, thus enabling me to better negotiate with the indigenous narratives and histories. Similar archival research was undertaken on documents pertaining to Woodford held by The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, The Natural History Museum, London and The Wellcome Institute.

Between 19th August and 21st December 2008 research was undertaken at several institutions in the Pacific. This included research at the State Library of New South Wales (the Mitchell Library), the Australian Museum (Sydney), the State Library of Victoria and Museum Victoria (Melbourne), The University of Auckland, and Auckland Museum

⁶ Copies of all three texts are now held by the NMI, Dublin, and the MAA, Cambridge.

(Auckland), The Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington) and The National Museum and National Archives, Honiara.

At the Mitchell Library the microfilmed diaries of Rev Henry Welchman were examined. A member of the Melanesian Mission, Welchman resided in the Solomons prior to the establishment of the BSIP until his death in 1908. In his diaries he frequently mentioned both Woodford and Mahaffy, in both professional and personal terms. They provide a helpful insight into the character of both men, but interestingly also allow for a contrast of ecclesiastical and colonial government approaches to the indigenous population's needs. At the Australian Museum I examined 9 objects presented by Woodford in 1904 from Ontong Java, Malaita and Ulawa in the Solomons. Mahaffy also donated a Marshall Islands navigating chart in 1896, although this object is now listed as either missing or de-accessioned. The Australian Museum library also holds correspondence from Woodford and Mahaffy. A letter from Mahaffy details how the Marshall Islands chart was used. As with the British Museum Natural History department, Woodford entered into correspondence with the curator for the natural history division of Australian Museum, sending him specimens and information on the flora and fauna of the Solomon Islands. These letters provided insights on the continuation of Woodford's natural history collecting after his correspondence with the BM Natural History department had ceased.

At Museum Victoria, Melbourne, I was able to view a Solomon Islands war canoe (*tomoko*) which Mahaffy had donated to the museum in 1902 and which now forms part of the museum's permanent display. I also examined a selection of objects from the collection of Graham Officer, an employee of Museum Victoria who was sent to the Solomons in 1901 to make a collection of ethnographic objects and natural history specimens for the museum. Once there, Officer relied heavily upon information and assistance given to him by Woodford initially, and later by Mahaffy, with whom Officer lived for several months in Gizo. The collection (some 600 objects) primarily comes from the Western Solomons and Guadalcanal. Associated with this I examined Officer's diaries from this trip, held by the State Library of Victoria. These diaries, along with his collection, provide a valuable insight into Woodford and Mahaffy's work in the Solomons, and how they facilitated collectors in the group. Mahaffy took Officer to various locations to purchase objects, but also took him on punitive expeditions during which objects were taken, and canoes, houses and gardens destroyed. While looking through the museum's Solomons collections I noticed that many objects were associated with Mahaffy. These

were not collected by him but were given provenance details by him. From looking through the Western Pacific High Commission records I discovered that Mahaffy visited Melbourne in December 1909 to January 1910, during which time he may have visited the museum and provided them with information.

One of the most significant avenues of research for this thesis was an examination of Woodford's private papers and unpublished photographs which are held by his granddaughter, Joan Presswell. In September 2008, I was granted permission by Joan, who lives in New South Wales, to carry out 2 days of research on this material. Some of the diaries and papers contained in several trunks have previously been microfilmed by the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PMB), and had been examined prior to this on microfilm. Joan also owns several objects from the Solomons collected by Woodford, as well as some of the photographic equipment used by him in the field. This archive included a photograph album from Woodford's first trips to the Solomon Islands which had not been copied by the PMB as well as other private photographs and documents. I was allowed to make digital photograph copies of this album and documents. Following my visit Joan and her husband, Keith, very kindly emailed me digital scans of several of the photographs.

At the University of Auckland research was undertaken on the records of the Western Pacific High Commission, held on microfilm by the University of Auckland Library. While there is some duplication with the Colonial Office records held at the UK National Archives in Kew, there were many new reports and documents previously unseen. Some relating to punitive raids and land transactions were very insightful. A selection of objects from the Auckland Museum's Solomon Islands collection, particularly those from the James Edge-Partington collection, was examined. This large collection contains objects which were collected by Edge-Partington's son, Thomas, a District Officer in the Western and Central Solomons under Woodford. Although the museum does not contain any objects collected by either Woodford or Mahaffy, examining the Edge-Partington collection, which was made during a similar period as the Woodford and Mahaffy collections, helped to contextualise the objects which they collected.

At The Turnbull Library, Wellington, I examined papers from Woodford, Lord Lever (the owner of Levers Pacific Plantations Ltd.), Arthur Maurice Hocart and W.H.R. Rivers, two anthropologists who visited the Western Solomons in 1908. The Lever papers provide some details on the relationship between Lever and Woodford, while the Hocart papers provided very valuable anthropological notes from the Western Solomons on subjects including mythology, kinship, chieftainship, and white people. The Rivers' papers

contained numerous drawings by local informants on various topics. From the library's photographic collections, photographs by Hocart and Thomas Cusack-Smith were examined: the Cusack-Smith photographs revealed an image of Mahaffy taken in Samoa in 1896.

Between November and December 2008 I spent three weeks in the Solomons Islands. Two weeks were spent in Honiara, researching objects at The National Museum and texts at the National Archives. The final week was spent at Gizo and Munda in the Western Solomons, where I was able to visit several shrines and see the places which Mahaffy inhabited during his time as a District Officer. There was not adequate time within my stay to visit Tulagi, the island where Woodford resided. However, I was able to interview several residents with questions pertaining to Woodford and Mahaffy, the objects they collected and the nature of their work and its effect on the indigenous people. My stay in the Solomons helped me gain a better understanding of the nature of Woodford and Mahaffy's lives in the Solomons, in terms of the places they lived and contemporary Solomon Islanders' perceptions of them. Finally, in the Pacific, records relating to Woodford's first appointment in the Colonial Office, including letters of introduction, were examined at the Fijian National Archives in Suva.

Information obtained from each institution allowed further insights into the nature of encounters and exchanges between Europeans and Solomon Islanders during the formative years of the BSIP, and complemented and enriched the research already completed in the UK and Ireland. Certain sources, such as the Officer collection, along with his diaries from his expedition in the Solomons, are of particular interest for the information on collecting practices, object sales and exchanges, on the work of both men in the group, and for the links it offers between each collection. The records of the Western Pacific High Commission provided the necessary second part to the records held in London, and as such are an essential source for the colonial economic and political background in which objects from both collections were acquired. These cross-cultural interactions are further highlighted in many of the photographic collections viewed, offering insights into how Europeans viewed the indigenous population, and what objects they used.

The findings from museums visits and object documentation on the Woodford and Mahaffy collections have been compiled in two Access databases, one for each collection. These databases are presented on a data DVD in Appendix I, located at the back of this thesis. As an important resource and research tool, these databases contain all the

information it was possible to acquire on these objects within the limited time of the research period. Considering the numerical size of both collections, it was not possible to discuss every object within the thesis. As such, these databases provide information on the collections as a whole that was not possible to include in the main text. Using their original museum object numbers, the objects are listed by institution. For example, the Mahaffy collection database lists the NMI objects first followed by those in The Pitt Rivers Museum and then the one object in Museum Victoria. There is also an entry for a Marshall Islands navigation chart which he donated to The Australian Museum, although this object is presently unaccounted for within that institution. The Woodford database initially lists the objects in The British Museum followed by those held in The Pitt Rivers Museum, the World Museum, Liverpool, The Australian Museum and finally the Royal Geographical Society. Upon opening the database the objects are presented in a listing which provides basic information on them at a glance, including object number, name, description, provenance, institution and an image. Located to the left of each object entry in this listing is a “details” link. By clicking on this link an individual file for that object opens, giving greater detail on the object, including measurements and the option to view more images of the object, should they have been included. A “search” button also enables the user to search by object name, provenance, materials, etc. A full user guide for the databases is provided in Appendix I.

Outline of the thesis

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part I consists of four chapters which consider the varied histories and biographies, of both people and collections, with which this thesis is concerned. Chapter Two charts a history of the Solomon Islands. This discussion briefly charts their initial population by humans through to the first arrival of Europeans in the archipelago and the imposition of colonial rule. This section introduces Woodford and Mahaffy and the nature of their work in the BSIP.

Chapters Three, Four and Five consider the biographies with which this thesis is concerned: the Collections, Woodford and Mahaffy. In order to situate Woodford and Mahaffy, and their collections, within the social transformations and histories of the Solomons during the time-frame this thesis examines, these in-depth biographies of each man are necessary. By examining their experience in the Pacific prior to their official appointments as government agents in the Solomons, Woodford as a naturalist and

explorer, and Mahaffy as a District Officer in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Kiribati and Tuvalu), I will chart how their previous work and interests, together with their understandings (or misunderstandings) of the indigenous population, shaped the cultural and social transformation of the region. Both acted as agents in a colonial system that had an economy of violence as the basis of national order (Lattas 1996:144). This was a system that combined pacification and the imposition of a capitalist regime onto both the indigenous and European residents of the group, and it was through their direct actions and manoeuvrings in these islands and at the Western Pacific High Commission that the BSIP took shape. Drawing upon colonial records, personal writings and objects from their collections, I attempt to build up a narrative of the various lives represented in this thesis. In-depth biographies of both Woodford and Mahaffy, from their formative years through their respective careers in the Colonial Office, help situate them as players in the events that shaped the Solomons during this period. These two chapters will also represent the imbalances in the material and information available on Woodford (quite a significant amount) and that available on Mahaffy (very little).

The biographies represented here are not like conventional biographical narratives where people tell stories about their lives and the objects they used. Hoskins wrote of her research among the Kodi that she was unable to collect object histories and the life histories of people separately, noting that ‘people and the things they valued were so complexly intertwined they could not be disentangled’ (1998:2). This thesis develops this notion of entanglement, believing that all objects, and by extension all collections, cannot be disentangled from the agency of the people who both created and used them and those who collected them. Considering these object biographies will highlight how Solomon Islanders viewed and understood objects as parts of their personhood, and how they linked people to each other through exchange networks, and to ancestral efficacy. As Kopytoff observed, the eventual biography of a thing, or an object, is ‘one of events in a given sphere’, that is, it is part of a ‘clearly structured system of exchange values and exchange spheres’ (1986:89). As such, the biography of an object is inextricably intertwined with its materiality (Miller 2005).

Assumptions of what constitutes personhood, therefore, need not to only be based on textual information. As neither the people nor objects in this thesis can speak directly of their histories and experiences, I will use a combination of “artefacts” to elucidate understanding and meaning, and to gain an insight into colonial (both European and Indigenous) social change at the time, and what the collections can tell us about the actors

involved – both people and objects – either through direct evidence from the objects themselves or by their absences from the collections. In this regard my research is similar to that carried out by historical archaeologists. They attempt to balance different sets of material – texts and oral histories, alongside objects – to reconstruct how social and material relations, and notions of personhood, were created through objects and place (see Stahl 2001). It is important to note that the interpretations of events, actions and lives offered and conclusions reached are all mine.

Part II of this thesis provides greater detail on the varied aspects of collection formation which are present in both collections. These chapters examine *how* and *why* both men collected, and examine particular circumstances which led to object acquisition. As such, these chapters examine encounters between people, between people and things, and the form these encounters took. One of the principal aims of Part II is to examine the extent of indigenous agency in the collecting process.

Chapter 6 considers patronage as part of both men's collecting experience in the Solomons. It shows how engaging in exchange transactions proved to be a mutually beneficial encounter for both these men and the indigenous people they dealt with. Of particular note in this chapter is Mahaffy's relationship with a Roviana Lagoon-based artist named Ango. Ango's work and connections with other collectors and anthropologists particularly highlights the connections between objects, people and collections.

Chapter 7 provides a contrast to the previous chapter. The discussion here focuses on violence as another part of both men's collecting experience in the Solomons. It shows how punitive raids upon Solomon Islanders became opportunities for both men to take objects they wanted, objects which frequently Solomon Islanders had withheld from sale or trade. Included in the discussion is how objects taken during raids could be transformed into souvenirs, mementos of particular raids. Also included in Chapters 6 and 7 are discussions of both men's assistance to other collectors in the BSIP, in particular, Graham Officer of Museum Victoria in 1901.

Collecting ethnographic objects was not the only form of collection formation in which both men engaged. Equally as important as the tangible, material items collected (objects, insects) was the immaterial or intangible information and knowledge both men accumulated. Chapter 8 examines their writings and photographs as part of the collecting process, and what these recordings tell us of their perceptions of the people they encountered.

In conclusion, Chapter 9 revisits the overall aims of this thesis raised in Chapter 1 and shows how the discussions throughout the previous chapters have offered a more nuanced understanding of colonial and indigenous encounters within the BSIP. This chapter also highlights the importance of this research for contemporary Solomons Islander understandings of their colonial history, and how the material discussed offers potential for future research projects.

Finally, four Appendices are included with this thesis. Appendix I, referred to above, presents both the Woodford and Mahaffy collections on a data DVD. Appendix II presents the objects from both collections in various categories, providing information on object types and object numbers. This appendix is connected with the discussions of Chapter 3. Appendix III provides short biographical information on selected individuals mentioned in the thesis, and the final appendix, IV, provides a notable extract from Woodford's 1890 book *A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters: being an account of three visits to the Solomon Islands in the years 1886, 1887 and 1888* recounting the rituals which accompanied the consecration of a Solomon Islands *paele* (canoe house). Europeans were not usually witness to such ceremonies and accounts of them are rare in the literary record, making this an important textual source.

PART I

*HISTORIES, BIOGRAPHIES,
AND COLLECTIONS*

Chapter 2

A History of the Solomon Islands

The archipelago of the Solomon Islands, which extends from Bougainville to San Cristobal, encompasses a total land area of 31,080 square kilometres (Kirch 2000:131). The group consists of six main islands – Choiseul, New Georgia, Santa Isabel, Guadalcanal, Malaita and San Cristobal, and numerous smaller islands such as Ontong Java, Rennell, Bellona and the Santa Cruz Islands. The earliest settlement dates for the Solomons archipelago comes from a site on Buka, where a Pleistocene settlement was dated to 29,000 years ago (Kirch 2000:68). In the Solomons, the earliest recorded date for human occupation comes from sites on Guadalcanal of 6000 BP (Roe 1992), although it is probable that humans settled the region earlier to that (Walter and Sheppard 2006:147).⁷ The dispersal of Lapita peoples through Melanesia and on into the Pacific, between 1600 BC and 500 BC, has been linked with the spread of Austronesian languages throughout the Pacific (Bellwood *et al.* 1995:12), and in the Solomons both Austronesian and non-Austronesian language speakers are found often in close proximity to each other. However, Walter and Sheppard have pointed out that dates for early Lapita settlement in the Solomons have not been found in the archaeological record outside of the Santa Cruz/Reef Islands (2006:67). Later Lapita settlement did take place in the group, and dates from after 2700 BP have been discovered in the Western Solomons.

Environmentally, the Solomon Islands are a mix of small, low-lying atolls with sparse vegetation (such as Ontong Java and Tikopia) and large, densely forested mountainous islands (such as New Georgia, Malaita). The majority of the islands are inhabited by Melanesians but many of the outer islands are Polynesian outlier, settled by Lapita-bearers from Western Polynesian islands, such as Samoa (Kirch 2000:144). As such, within the Solomons each island holds a variety of distinct societies and material culture.

⁷ Walter and Sheppard have highlighted the fact that, when compared to Polynesian archaeology, firm dates for early human habitation of Island Melanesia are relatively scarce (2006:139).

The European arrival in the Solomon Islands

The first European visitors to the Solomon Islands arrived in 1568 when an expedition funded by the Spanish Government and commanded by Alvaro de Mendaña de Neyra briefly visited and named several islands, such as Guadalcanal, Florida (now Nggela), and San Cristobal (now Makira) (Hogbin 1939). It was following the expeditions' return to Spain that the name the "Solomon Islands" was bestowed upon this group of islands. An obsession with gold that had been fuelled by recent Spanish expeditions in South America meant that gold was the commodity most desired by these adventurers. The promise of untold wealth and riches to be discovered on expeditions to even more remote places led to the misrecognition as gold of iron pyrites mounted on the heads of clubs from Malaita. This encouraged the notion that these islands were the Isles of Solomon, where Solomon collected gold to decorate the temple at Jerusalem (Amherst & Thomson 1901; Hogbin, 1939).

Early written accounts from visitors to the Solomons indicate that cannibalism, and possibly headhunting, was well established by the mid sixteenth century. The voyage of de Mendaña, as described by Amherst and Thompson (1901), states that crescent shaped canoes met the Spanish fleet off the coast of Santa Isabel in 1568 and that there on a later occasion while building a brigantine they were approached by a group of seven war canoes, the occupants of which offered them the arm and hand of a boy together with some taro roots (1901:21). The chronicle states that the Spaniards refused this gift yet they seemingly took possession of the body part, burying it in sight of the visitors. De Mendaña noted that the islanders hung down their heads and were ashamed, but it is doubtful they were "ashamed" by any sense of wrongdoing in a European sense. It is probable that this gift was offered as a sacrifice or as a means of sharing the spiritual efficacy and success achieved during a headhunting raid. Its refusal by the Europeans was possibly viewed by the islanders as a rejection of the offering and of the ancestral efficacy and spiritual protection such an offering bestowed.⁸ Woodford (1909a:510) conjectured that the practice of taking human heads and capturing slaves had probably been carried out for many centuries before de Mendaña's visit.

⁸ The account continues that the occupants of the canoes then travelled to an island close by where they lit a large fire upon which, the Spaniards assumed, they cooked the human flesh taken during the raid.

Whalers, Traders, Labour Recruiters, and Missionaries

Despite attempts by de Mendaña and numerous other European mariners to return to the Solomons they eluded sailors for about 200 years. It was not until the mid to late-eighteenth century that European activity resumed in the Solomons with the arrival of whaling vessels and vessels engaged in the trade route to China. The islands, in particular the New Georgia group, were a convenient stop-off point for re-stocking ships with fresh water and supplies, so much that the island of Rendova, located off New Georgia Island, is believed to have derived its name from the word “rendezvous”, suggesting a sexual nature to the form these encounters took (Hogbin 1939:10; Somerville 1897:359). During the initial contacts, and later more frequent encounters, trade and exchange took place between sailors and local islanders. As McKinnon (1975:290) noted ‘early European visitors exchanged iron for fresh food and trinkets’ and ‘later traders in search of whales and turtle shell carried supplies of tomahawks, for which demand was keen’. Iron – in the form of nails, hoop iron, or axe-heads – quickly became revered for its strength and durability (Bennett 1987:23). Initially traders seeking sandalwood, turtle shell, or bêche-de-mer, could acquire large amounts of these goods in exchange for a small amount of iron. From the 1870s onwards labour recruiters for plantations in Fiji and Queensland frequented the Solomons, offering three year contracts of work in exchange for a variety of European goods. These goods were generally paid directly to a local chief who then, in turn, paid the man who was to be engaged although the chief generally retained most of the trade goods for himself (Bennett 1987:86-87). However, the practice of “blackbirding”, or kidnapping indigenous people to work on plantations also occurred, and it was a direct result of such kidnapping practices that led to attacks on and murders of ships crews (see Jackson 1978 and Bennett 1987 for discussions of the labour trade in the Solomons).

The nineteenth century was a period of immense social change within the Solomons as the arrival of these “ghost-like” men in their large island-like ships and superior technology challenged local cosmological views and beliefs (Bennett 1987:22-23). A direct result of these interactions was that some coastal communities acquired greater access to trade and European goods, while inland (bush) communities did not, lacking as they did direct access to the sea and to traders and their goods. Such encounters and exchanges between Europeans and Solomon Islanders also introduced illnesses such as tuberculosis, venereal disease and dysentery into the group (Bennett 1987:38-39; Bayliss-Smith 2006). These diseases, together with a gradual escalation in headhunting raids

during the mid nineteenth-century, resulted in both population decline and the movement of indigenous groups away from coastal areas. This period of sporadic contact between traders and the indigenous population was replaced in 1893 with the establishment of The British Solomon Islands Protectorate. With this came the imposition of British colonial rule in the form of Woodford and Mahaffy, which together with the establishment of copra plantations further affected local social and cultural arrangements, and material culture.

Traders and economic investors were not the only ‘developers’ attracted to the Solomons. During the mid-1800s missionaries arrived in the Solomons. The first to establish a base in the Solomons were members of the Marist Mission at Makira Harbour, San Cristobal in December 1845. However, on account of the murder of their Bishop in 1846 during a visit to Astrolabe Bay, Santa Isabel, and the deaths of several priests in the following months they abandoned the Solomons. It was fifty years before the Marists tried again. The Melanesian Mission had somewhat more success. They had been in periodic contact with coastal communities in the Solomons from the 1850s and in the 1860s Bishop Patteson twice visited the Solomons.

Later, following the opening up of the region with the establishment of the BSIP and the pacification campaign, many Christian missions, including the Marist Mission (1899 in Makira Harbour), the Methodist Mission (1902 in Roviana), the South Sea Evangelical Mission (1906) and the Seventh-Day Adventists (1914 in Viru Harbour, New Georgia) arrived in the Solomons, each choosing a different location. In his history of the Melanesian Mission in the Solomon Islands, Hilliard drew particular attention to the close links between the Anglican Melanesian Mission and the administrators of the Solomons (1974:97). They chose an island close to Tulagi, Woodford’s base, in the Florida Group as their main base. Many of the church men came from the same social class, faith, and even school as Woodford. A Bishop within that mission, Cecil Wilson, was an old school friend of Woodford’s from Tonbridge, and Woodford entertained him at Tulagi (Hilliard 1974:101). Woodford addressed meetings of the Melanesian Mission at Tonbridge in 1905 and 1916 (Hilliard 1974:109). Such close associations between the administration and the church influenced decisions made in relation to the management of the Solomons.

The British Solomon Islands Protectorate

Following the Western Pacific Order in Council in 1877, an act which was intended to safeguard British interests in the Pacific, the Solomon Islands fell under the loose

jurisdiction of the British High Commissioner based in Suva, Fiji. Coupling the reputation for savagery and violence which the Solomon Islands had gained during the nineteenth century, together with the fact that the British Government never wanted responsibility for the region in the first place, the transformation of the Solomons into a British Protectorate and the pacification of its inhabitants was never going to be an easy or straightforward task from a British point of view. Having declared the region a British Protectorate in 1893, on the understanding that the islands were to be entirely financially self-supporting, in order to safeguard its economic interests in the Pacific in particular the highly valued Australian colonies, from French and German interference, it took another three years to appoint a Resident Commission to the Solomons. With the arrival of Woodford as Resident Commissioner in 1896 and Mahaffy as District Officer in 1898 the process of social and cultural transformation of the Solomons intensified. However, due to the distance of the Solomon Islands from the seat of British Colonial power at Suva, there was poor communication between the two centres, and the Solomons became sidelined in favour of economic development in other protectorates (Bennett 1987:149). This situation was not helped by the fact that both men worked in relative isolation from other Europeans during their initial years in the Solomons. From 1896 to 1898 Woodford was the only white colonial officer in the BSIP, and from 1898 to 1904 there was only Woodford and Mahaffy.⁹ Although supported by several indigenous police and the occasional visiting British naval ship, ultimately they were on their own in terms of government. The practicalities of dealing with such a large geographical area with such limited resources were difficult to overcome. While the circumstances which led to the appointment of Woodford and Mahaffy are discussed in their respective biographical chapters, the following section considers indigenous Western Solomons society in the early colonial period and the economic and social changes forced upon them as a result of Woodford and Mahaffy's policies. For most indigenous people the establishment of the BSIP did not interfere with their daily lives. However, it was a different case in the Western Solomons. On account of various factors, discussed below, their way of life and cosmological beliefs and practices were directly targeted by the colonial administration.

⁹ Briefly, from 1904 the following District Officers were appointed under Woodford: T. Edge-Partington (arrived in 1904), R Broadhurst-Hill (1909), N Heffernan (1910), J Barley (1912) and C Francis (1914). The sixth District Officer, A Oliphant (1906), did cause a scandal in 1906 when he held the post of Acting Resident Commissioner during Woodford's absence. During this period Oliphant abandoned his post in the BSIP without leave and travelled to Australia. He was dismissed shortly afterwards.

Western Solomon Islands society in the early colonial period

In order to situate the impact of Woodford and Mahaffy's campaign in the eradication of headhunting and the transformation of the Solomon Islands into a profitable economic asset for the Crown it is important to briefly overview Western Solomons society in the early colonial period. This will bring to the fore the full impact of their pacification on the society and its affect on material and immaterial elements of cosmological belief and material culture. This section details Solomon Islands society in the early colonial period, the modes of life followed by people, the structural organisation of their societies and their cosmological beliefs. It examines in greater detail the motivations behind headhunting in the Western Solomons, and the scale to which it was undertaken following the establishment of the BSIP. Associated with this is a discussion of the material and immaterial manifestations of headhunting, including the treatment of the dead (both ancestors and enemies), the display of heads or their removal from public view, and the indigenous political systems that controlled and orchestrated headhunting raids.

Within Western Solomons society social relations were made and embodied in and through objects, including patronage of objects and trophy collecting, but also through political alliances. Critical within these sets of relationships were the objects and buildings which formed part of spiritual and cosmological beliefs (immaterial), and objects which were utilised in order to mediate and gain access to spiritual (ancestral efficacy) and material wealth (shell valuables and human skulls). These material and immaterial elements are so intertwined in the objects associated with headhunting in the Western Solomons that one cannot be discussed without referencing the other (cf. Bell & Geismar 2009). It frequently fell to visitors, such as Hocart, Somerville and others, to record the significance of the immaterial aspects of headhunting, such as the incantations spoken during canoe manufacture and consecration (Hocart 1935). Even today, in the display of objects associated with headhunting, rarely are the important immaterial elements noted, perhaps referencing only the European perception of the brutality of acts of headhunting.

Pre-Colonial and colonial New Georgian society was concentrated in settlements in which *butubutu*, or related groups or lineages, lived within a defined area of land called *puava* (Jackson 1978; Hviding 1996; Kupiainen 2000:32).¹⁰ The specialists that made up this society were hereditary or elected leaders (*bangara*), priests (*chiama*), and leading warriors (*varane*) who could also act as hired assassins for chiefs outside of their *butubutu*

¹⁰ The indigenous names provided here are taken from Hviding's analysis of pre-colonial Marovo society (1996).



Plate 10: *Hope* shrine with a variety of shell ornament offerings and wooden sculptures. Taken by AM Hocart, 1908. (ATL PAColl-1914-158)

whenever heads were required, or to carry out revenge killings for a *bangara* (Hviding 1996:87).¹¹ These three groups¹² were the controlling core of New Georgian society, but there were also numerous craft specialists responsible for canoe construction, house construction, woodcarving, and shell money production (Kupiainen 2000:35). Yet integral to, and of great importance to society were captives (known as *pinausu*), who were generally taken during raids on neighbouring islands (McDougall 2000).¹³ Some acted as servants, as ritual prostitutes, or as sacrificial victims should a head have been required.¹⁴

¹¹ Hiring a *varane* from outside the kin group to undertake an internal killing would save that group from possible retaliation by the victim's spirit (Hviding 1996:87). Payment from one chief to another for the loan of a warrior could take the form of a shell ring (Hocart 1931:304). Political alliances and kin linkages made refusing the loan of a *varane* difficult for a *bangara*.

¹² Hviding (1996:88) states that this 'triad of male leaders is a variation of a form not uncommon in the Solomons and sharing many attributes with the "troika" described by Keesing (1985).'

¹³ McDougall noted that on Ranongga it was the taking of captives, and not heads, that was the primary or motivating factor during raids (2000:99).

¹⁴ Most captives were not killed. They were either adopted by families or, in many female cases, married by their captors (Woodford 1890a:154). See McDougall (2000) for analysis of the role of *pinausu* on Ranongga and their importance in social reproduction within that society.

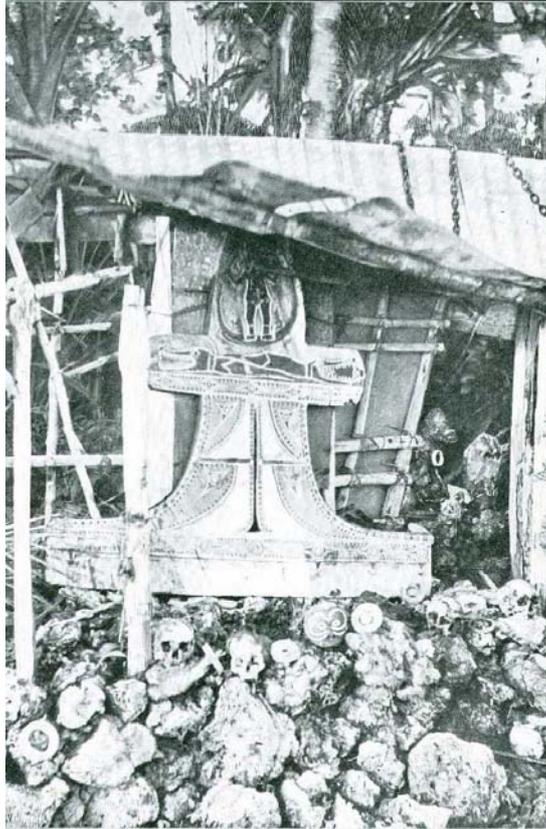


Plate 11: A wooden sculptural monument built to hold the “trophy” of Ingava, Roviana Lagoon.
(Festetics de Tolna 1903:331)

Many male captives were put to work manufacturing shell valuables in Roviana, which Hocart (MSS) noted was the main manufacturing centre for shell valuables, which were then traded or exchanged throughout the islands (Plate 12).¹⁵ In many instances *chiama* were captives who took on priestly duties within their community. This could be an extension of the desire to capture an enemy’s *mana* through heads, or through accessing that group’s spiritual efficacy (see below) (Hviding 1996:88), or perhaps the capturing community’s fear of dealing with the dangerous ancestral efficacy/power which priestly duties would entail (McDougall 2000:102-3; also see Hocart 1931).¹⁶ This situation has strong parallels with Polynesian concepts of the stranger-king, where the ruler was born

¹⁵ The Roviana districts of Kalikoqu, Saikilie, and Buni, and Marovo Island in the Marovo Lagoon were the most important centres for shell valuable production in New Georgia (Somerville 1897:364; Hviding 1996:93; Aswani & Sheppard 2003:s62).

¹⁶ See Woodford (1890a:150-152) for an account of Wange, the *chiama* of Ingava, and the methods employed by him in order to cure Ingava from bewitchment.

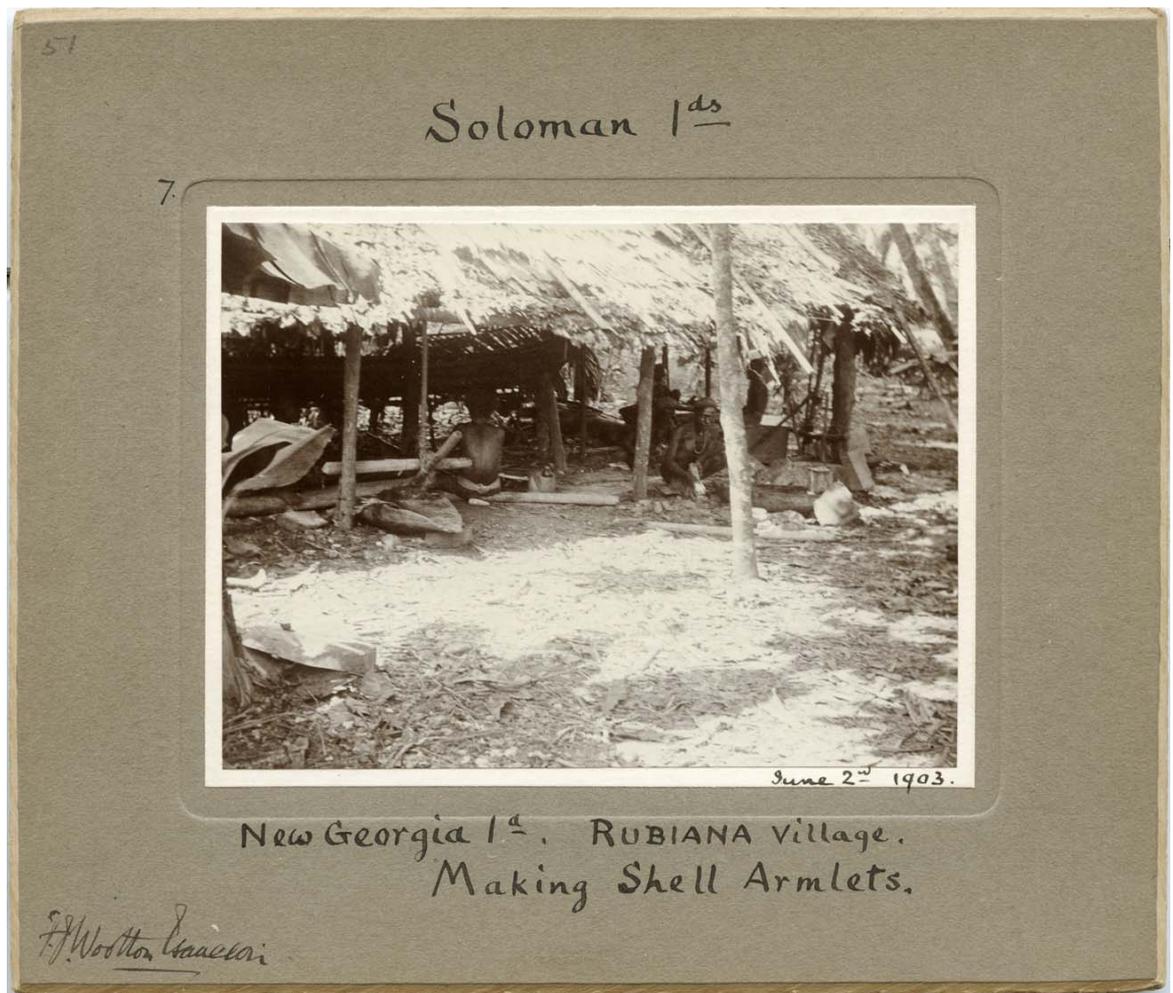


Plate 12: Photograph showing people engaged in shell armet manufacturing, Roviana Lagoon. Taken by Frederick Wootton-Isaacson, 1903. (MAA P.70201.ACH2)

outside the community and brought a new and different form of ancestral efficacy with him (Sahlins 1985).

As previously noted, Solomon Islands societies were involved within a developing pre-colonial economy and trade in European goods prior to the establishment of the BSIP. While trade in Western goods characterised the interactions between Solomon Islanders and traders, and later government agents, the trade and exchange of indigenously made commodities continued between indigenous groups. The sea routes travelled between islands to acquire heads and/or captives were the same routes used by Solomon Islanders to trade between centres of manufacturing, for example between Roviana (shell valuables)

and New Georgia and Guadalcanal (wicker shields).¹⁷ Although not visible on the geographic landscape these sea paths formed a vital link between communities and played an important role in the dissemination of material culture across the region. Although trade was predominantly carried out by *gopu*, specialised trading vessels that lacked the shell inlay embellishments and raised prows of *tomoko* (Aswani & Sheppard 2003:s57), the policy introduced by Woodford of destroying all *tomoko* and the burning of other canoes during punitive raids had a significant and disruptive impact on interisland trade. While the larger and more valuable *tomoko* were hidden from colonial eyes in anticipation of an attack, time may not have allowed for the removal of smaller trading canoes. Yet the destruction of these smaller canoes had as equal a negative impact on society as the destruction of *tomoko*: their removal severely disrupted interisland trade networks.

At the heart of Western Solomons village life, both physically and spiritually, was the canoe house (*paele*) (Waite 2000:116-121). These were equally as sacred as the *tomoko* they housed, and women and children were banned from entering them. As with *tomoko*, *paele* were rendered sacred through a series of consecration rituals (see Appendix IV for an account of a consecration ceremony for a new *paele*, as recounted to Woodford). The size and wealth of a village dictated the number of canoe houses present – for example Ingava had three canoe houses, each containing several *tomoko* at the time of Woodford's 1886 visit. These houses also contained ceremonial food troughs, and displayed on the interior rafters were the heads of sacrificial victims, required for the inauguration of a new *tomoko* or canoe house. Woodford also photographed these materials in the interior of a canoe house in Nusa Roviana (see Chapter 4). In effect *paele* served the dual purpose of acting as a seat of power for a chief and his elite men, and also as a display of the wealth and ancestral efficacy for a chief and his people.

While *paele* were houses or containers for the power and efficacy of a living chief and his men of rank, ancestral skull shrines (*hope*) were the resting places for deceased chiefs and people of rank (Plate 10).¹⁸ In essence, shrines were among the vehicles through which a chief acquired his power and ancestral efficacy, and the ancestral remains they contained transformed the deceased into an efficacious spirit through the addition of shell valuables, either attached to the skull or placed in proximity to it within the shrine in order

¹⁷ On more local levels trade continued between coastal and inland groups: for example trading fish for taro or other commodities. See Blackwood (1935:442-444) for a listing of commodities and goods traded for.

¹⁸ The shrines of males contained shell valuables and articles associated with warfare, while female shrines also contained shell valuables but lacked items associated with warfare: it is thought they may have once contained barkcloth and other items associated with female agency (Walter et al. 2004:150).

to create a good *tomate* (ancestral spirit): ‘the effect of lashing rings to the skull was to give the new *tomate* an efficacious ‘skin’ comprising new eyes and ears with which to take in the world’ and which through offerings could intervene for and assist descendants (Thomas 2003:322). Shell valuables acted as signifiers of wealth and status, and were used in political and warfare spheres, where they acted as signifiers of political alliances and also as bride wealth. The importance and role of shell valuables within Western Solomons cosmology are perhaps best described by Walter & Sheppard (2000), who highlighted their connection to other physical things which through their creation and use were enmeshed in Western Solomons spiritual and cosmological understanding of the world:

Shell valuables are enmeshed in the same webs of symbolism that surround shrines, wharves, canoe houses, and other architectural forms. And their power and meaning are often most potent by their association with these structures. What is more, these artifacts are an integral part of the contemporary landscape, and are today reorganized and manipulated by the people of Nusa Roviana (Walter and Sheppard 2000:310).

Within all these material forms the immaterial cosmological understanding of Western Solomons Islanders were embodied. Whereas skull displays acted as quantifiable evidence of the prowess of a warrior, shrines were sacred places where carved sculptural representations of deities and/or ancestors were placed, often under covered structures, with offerings of shell charms and rings, and skulls (Plate 11).¹⁹ Occasionally they also took the form of small house-like structures, often raised above the ground on wooden stakes and located close to the village in which the skulls of revered chiefs were placed together with shell valuables and other objects which the deceased may have placed value upon (Walter & Sheppard 2000:302). Spirits of ancestors, known as *tomate*, were believed to reside in shrines or in the bush and sea, making these sites potent and dangerous. Through offerings, incantations and rituals they could be controlled and encouraged to work on behalf of the living.

A completed *tomoko* was the instantiation of the cosmological beliefs held by Western Solomon Islanders, but was also a visual representation of the wealth and power of a ruling chief. Each was a work of art (Waite 1990:46) and one that ‘articulated

¹⁹ Nagaoka has divided shrines into four broad categories: (1.) ancestral/skull shrines; (2.) shrines with production associations; (3.) shrines which had associations with particular spirits or ancestral gods; and (4.) shrines used in acts of purification and cleansing (1999:61; Walter & Sheppard 2000:301).

communal identity – each was differently detailed and finished’ (Kupiainen 2000:49). Canoes and their associated objects were rendered sacred through a series of rituals carried out by the village priest, and by the ceremony used to launch either a new canoe or canoe house, signifying the importance of their role in male initiation, headhunting, and trade.²⁰ Writing on the manufacture of war canoes on Simbo in 1908, the anthropologist AM Hocart (1931:308) noted that each war canoe was given its own proper name.²¹ In a further discussion of fishing canoes from Simbo, manufactured using the same plank construction and with similar high bows and prows, Hocart noted that incantations were spoken at various stages of the manufacture; incantations which were just as important as the other rituals that accompany canoe manufacture (1935:98-99). A large *tomoko*, which could take over a year to build and decorate, was capable of carrying between 30 and 50 warriors (Haddon & Hornell 1975:105). As the vehicle through which people attempted to communicate with and gain access to ancestral efficacy, it formed part of the wider interconnected regional cosmological, political, and ritual belief economy.²² The model *tomoko* created for Mahaffy serves as an index for all these elements embodied within one object. The destruction of a *tomoko* therefore was a serious blow not just to a chief’s power and wealth: it was a loss for the entire community – again in material and spiritual terms. As will be discussed below, Woodford recognised this fact and through his programme to suppress headhunting he struck at the very heart of Western Solomons cosmology and culture.

The material culture of headhunting

In the account of his 1844 visit to the Solomons the trader Andrew Cheyne described seeing heads of both men and women, of all ages, displayed inside the canoe house of a chief on Simbo, many of which bore the marks of tomahawk wounds: it later transpired

²⁰ Interestingly both protective and destructive agents/spirits were represented as part of a complete *tomoko*. One such malevolent sea spirit present as part of a *tomoko* was the *kesoko*, a water fiend which attempted to make the winds and waves overthrow a *tomoko* on voyages: having done so the *kesoko* would then devour the crew (Somerville 1897:371). Carved representations of *kesoko* were placed at the tip of the canoe prow. It was the function of the canoe prow figurehead, located on the prow just above the waterline, to ward off the *kesoko*. They ensured safe voyages as their large unblinking eyes and prominent ears kept constant watch for danger (Kupiainen 2000:61).

²¹ Hocart also commented that in Simbo a war canoe was not the exclusive possession of a chief, but could be made and used by either chiefs or men who possessed the knowledge of canoe manufacture (1931:308). It is unclear if a similar situation existed in New Georgia.

²² The names given to war canoes appear to reference sea birds, crocodiles etc. Hocart does not provide fuller analysis of these names but animals played very important totemic and metaphorical roles within Solomon Islands material culture (cf. Waite 1989).



Plate 13: Illustration of a headhunting war canoe and warriors. (Waite 1983:36)

that a recent headhunting expedition had returned to Simbo with 93 heads (Shineberg 1971:303-4). Following his 1893-94 visit to the Western Solomons Somerville (1897:398) stated that headhunting was undertaken solely to acquire heads, while Woodford (1890a:153) described it as a ‘perfect passion’ among islanders.²³ Both noted the frequency of headhunting raids and the great distances travelled, often several hundred miles, to acquire heads.²⁴ Such early accounts failed to understand the motivations behind the act of headhunting, and what was believed to be gained or achieved through it. Aswani and Sheppard believe that many authors have overemphasised the impact of European contact on indigenous ‘exchange and political hierarchies, in particular its stimulation of an intensification of headhunting and the power of coastal chiefdoms’ (2003:s53).

²³ Somerville was part of a surveying mission to the Solomon Islands on-board H.M.S. *Penguin*. Some of the charts of individual islands made during this mission were later used to assist Woodford and plantation companies in establishing land purchased or waste land (Woodford to im Thurn, 14th September 1907, WPHC 8/III/38).

²⁴ Headhunting raids launched from the Western Solomons targeted the coasts of Ysabel and Choiseul, the Russell Islands, parts of Guadalcanal, even reaching Malaita on occasions (Woodford 1909a:510, Haddon & Hornell 1975:105). Raids were usually undertaken between November and April as this season was marked by long periods of calm weather, and as crop planting had been completed men had “free time”. This was also turtle hunting season: Hocart noted that turtle hunting was often used as a cover for headhunting raids (Hocart 1931:303). This was also the season when British war ships had left the Solomons, and so perhaps there was less fear of being caught (Woodford to O’Brien, 27th Aug 1898, CO 225/55).

Examining the archaeological record Aswani, Sheppard and others have looked at evidence for a continuing tradition of headhunting practices, but it is important to note that the introduction of metal tools made it easier for better equipped chiefs (coastal chiefs who traded with Europeans) to launch more frequent and more successful raids during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One should also take into consideration that headhunting formed part of the broader category of warfare. Headhunting was undertaken for ceremonial or revenge purposes, other forms of warfare included internal group disruptions or clashes between bush and coastal communities, primarily in retaliation for murder, adultery or rape by one group on another (Hocart 1931:302).

The origins of headhunting in the Western Solomons can be traced back to the mid sixteenth/ early seventeenth centuries when inland New Georgia Island populations began to resettle in coastal areas where they ‘fused’ (Aswani 2000:43) with the existing coastal populations (Aswani & Sheppard 2003). Following this coastal resettlement a stratified society developed where powerful chiefly lineages emerged that claimed descent from *mateana*, “divine beings”, and thereafter genealogical association to *mateana* ancestors became a prerequisite for the attainment of chiefly power (Aswani 2000:44). Following the establishment of these coastal political systems with their new ideological beliefs, objects such as shell valuables called *bakiha*²⁵ and human skulls, both the skulls of ancestors and enemies, each treated in different ways, came to be seen as symbols of power. Aswani notes that the ‘belief in venerating one’s ancestor skulls and objectifying those of one’s enemies into quantified political symbols through their physical accumulation was engendered, or probably gained prominence, shortly preceding or following coastal resettlement’ (2000:44).

As a cyclical occurrence that had religious, social, and economic significance, headhunting helped consolidate the power of ruling chiefs. As one of the means through which people attempted to communicate with and access ancestral and spiritual efficacy it formed part of a wider interconnected cosmological, political and ritual belief economy of the Western Solomons at the time, one that included heads, slaves, war canoes, carved objects, skull shrines, and shell valuables. Within this system the immaterial elements of headhunting (ancestral efficacy, *mana*, and spirits) were equally as important as the material elements (heads, slaves, objects). The exchange network associated with the

²⁵ *Bakiha* are shell rings made from fossilised giant clam shell (*Tridacna gigas*).

distribution of these materials within the New Georgia region has been likened to the system used during *kula* exchanges (Thomas 1991:45; Hviding 1996:93; Thomas 2003).

The head was believed to be the seat of *mana* (believed to be a “soul substance” to acquire prosperity) in many cultures and was therefore considered a sacred thing, as was any sculptural representation of it. However, authors such as Aswani (2000), Needham (1976), Dureau (2000) and Keesing (1984) have questioned the belief that the head was taken purely as it was believed to be a source of *mana*. They have focused on another interpretation of *mana*, one that considers *mana* to be ‘an abstract state or quality’ in which ‘things that are *mana* are efficacious, potent, successful, true, fulfilled, realized: they “work”’ (Keesing 1984:138). Aswani, rejecting the claim that heads were taken purely because they were believed to be repositories of *mana*, stated that:

severed enemy heads are here construed as a medium to authenticate a chief’s and his groups’s efficacious state and its ancestral endowment. Captured human skulls and those of captives destined to be sacrificed were a tangible way of counting and storing for display a group’s success in war – a fruition that symbolically confirmed the precursory transaction of efficacy from the ancestors and deities to the living (Aswani 2000:40).

Several authors consider that headhunting raids greatly increased within the New Georgia region following the introduction of European metal tools (Bennett 1987, McKinnon 1975). Yet evidence suggests that headhunting was already in a state of decline following the establishment of the BSIP due to (1.) a drastic population decline due to smallpox epidemics, (2.) head-hunting’s interference with the production of copra for trade and, as a consequence, reduced access to trade goods, (3.) the introduction of Christianity and (4.) full-time colonial administration to the region (Jackson 1978; Zelenietz 1979:104; Scarr 1967:173). However, the effectiveness of Mahaffy’s and Woodford’s campaign, discussed below, should not be underestimated. Headhunting formed an integral part of the networks of exchange through which communities constructed their sociality and negotiated their connections to ancestral power (Aswani & Sheppard 2003), and its abolition opened the way for export production and Christian conversion. Its abolition fundamentally altered the basic core of Solomon Islanders’ cosmological understandings, their material culture: the basic principles upon which their society was constructed.

Physical and cultural transformations in the Solomon Islands

Once Woodford returned to the BSIP as Resident Commissioner in 1896 he had two immediate concerns to address. One was to make the new Protectorate financially self-supporting – the British Government had only agreed to take on the Solomons as a Protectorate on the proviso that the group would be entirely self-supporting (Ripon minute, 24th December 1892, CO225/39; Scarr 1967:256). This, Woodford believed, he could achieve through taxes on resident traders and visiting vessels, but primarily through attracting large plantation companies to establish concessions within the group.²⁶ However, in order to achieve this he would have to address the issue of headhunting. Without the suppression of the latter the former would not materialise.

As discussed previously, headhunting activities were mainly confined to the Western Province but occasionally could extend as far as the Russell Islands and Guadalcanal, but this was not the only area in the group that had a “bad reputation” among Europeans – Malaitans were considered as fearful as Roviana Lagoon people. However, headhunting raiding parties were considerably more visible on the geographical landscape and on the sea routes between islands than the internal fighting that went on between bush and coastal groups on Malaita. The issue then emerges of why the Western Province was targeted by Woodford and the administration for punitive action. Bennett notes that ‘pacification was enforced where European interests were threatened, either directly or indirectly’, and that immediately following the establishment of the BSIP the land most readily available and suitable for plantations was in the New Georgia region and northern Guadalcanal (1987:106-7). While Guadalcanal did not present any problems in terms of the local population, it was a different case for the Western Solomons. This was the home of the vilified headhunters, and in order to secure land would have to be subdued. Therefore, in the economic interests of the group, this region was in special need of rapid pacification (also see Boutilier 1983).

Although initially still reliant on visiting naval vessels to carry out such raids, Woodford set to work immediately targeting and destroying offending villages, often

²⁶ The first poll taxes recommended by Woodford and enforced by the High Commission were annual taxes on all adult non-native males (not being ordained religious ministers) of £5; a £10 tax on every on-shore trading station; and a £1 tax on every trading vessel at per net registered ton (Woodford, General Report on the BSIP 1896, CO 225.50). It was not until the 1920s that the indigenous population paid a ‘head tax’ (Bennett 1987:197).

recruiting local traders to participate in raids and act as guides and informants.²⁷ In similar actions to those of the Royal Navy, Woodford also frequently took chiefs and others hostage in order to secure the surrender of murderers, and tackled the issue of arms trading by traders and recruitment vessels (Woodford to Berkeley, 21st June 1897, CO 225/52).²⁸ One such incident occurred not long after his arrival as Resident Commissioner. In July 1896 Woodford travelled to islands in the Western Solomons to investigate various accounts of headhunting and murder (CO 225/50). One of the cases investigated resulted in his attempting to find the heads of a boat crew who had been murdered in the Manning Straits, to the west of Ysabel. Woodford did manage to find several of the heads, and those he found he threw from the boat in which he was travelling into the sea. This act must have greatly confused any indigenous onlookers as on the one hand Woodford condemned and punished them for having taken the heads, yet as soon as he took them from the shrines in which they were kept and, upon returning to his own boat, he then threw the heads into the sea. In Solomons cosmology both land and sea were inhabited by various spirits, some good and some bad, so Woodford's throwing the heads into the sea could have been understood as him presenting an offering to sea spirits, much like Solomon Islanders would have done themselves.

Yet Woodford recognised that this form of punitive action had failed under the Royal Navy, and he felt he would doubtlessly experience similar failure if he continued with this method. Although he was now resident in the Solomons he was based at Tulagi in Nggela (Central Solomons) and as such was unable to respond quickly to headhunting parties or murders committed in the west. Using the experience and knowledge he had gained during his previous residencies in the Solomons, Woodford devised a strategy to strike at the very heart of headhunting practices. In April 1897 he wrote to the High Commissioner outlining his plans for addressing the headhunting question. His intention was to destroy *tomoko* at every opportunity presented, including completed canoes or those being constructed while also continuing the established practice of burning canoe houses and destroying the gardens of villages believed to be guilty of headhunting or murder. As the vehicle in which headhunting raids were undertaken, Woodford recognised the

²⁷ Utilising traders and their boats served a dual purpose. They had knowledge of the people and places they lived in, and they owned and had continuous access to their own boats.

²⁸ The taking of hostages as a means of "persuading" the local population to assist in murder enquiries was a tactic that had previously been employed by the Royal Navy during its punitive action in the Solomons. For example, Davis had taken several "guides" on-board the *Royalist* during her 1891 visit to the Solomons. Effectively these people were captives who were returned to their homes once enquiries or punishments had been completed, a tactic used by the Royal Navy since the time of Captain Cook.

physical but also spiritual significance of war canoes for the indigenous population. Of his proposed action, which was approved by the recently appointed High Commissioner George O'Brien, Woodford rather naively and without comprehension of the devastating effect such action would have on indigenous society, wrote 'such action would I believe meet with the approval of a section of the natives themselves' (Woodford to HC, 30th April 1897, CO 225/52). While he understood the impact the destruction of *tomoko* would have on headhunting he failed to understand the impact their removal from use would have on the trade networks between islands.

A Planters Paradise? Economic development and the selling of a birthright

The Solomons had, for the most part, been pacified by the time Mahaffy was appointed Colonial Secretary in Fiji from 1904, but some headhunting attacks and murders continued throughout the remainder of Woodford's term as Resident Commissioner and beyond. However, their successful work in enforcing colonial rule on the indigenous population resulted in several plantation companies – principally Levers' Pacific Plantations and Burns, Philp & Co. Ltd – acquiring and developing large tracts of land for commercial development from the late 1890s on. In order to attract such developers Woodford had devised a concept to acquire land to sell or lease to developers: "waste land". In a report to Thurston dated 4th July 1896 Woodford wrote:

I would with due submission suggest that, if possible, Your Excellency should assume ownership of all unoccupied lands in the absence of native ownership. A system of long leaseholds of conditional purchases might then be inaugurated which would be a source of revenue and I believe there would be no lack of applicants who would be glad immediately to occupy and cultivate (CO 225/50).

Such a move by Woodford and the Colonial Office allowed the colonial government to "legally" open up the Solomons for economic development. Woodford in particular has come under severe criticism for his orchestrating role in land alienation. Anxious to secure revenue, the government (advised by Woodford) introduced the "Waste Lands Regulation" in 1900 under which 'certificates of occupation may be granted by the High Commissioner for any land which is not owned, cultivated, or occupied by any native or non-native person' (Woodford, Annual report April 1900 to March 1901, CO 225/61). Woodford's recommendations and actions in this matter, and his failure to investigate the ownership

and occupancy status of thousands of acres of what the administration deemed “waste lands” resulted in the confiscation and sale of these lands to plantations without any payment to their true owners (cf. Bennett 1987:149). Bennett comments that Woodford also willingly resorted to illegal and secret manoeuvres to assist Burns Philp & Co to secure land (1987:149).²⁹

Aswani & Sheppard described the land and sea owned by chiefs in the Western Solomons as true inalienable possessions, but possessions which could be ‘transferred or lent to other to meet the political exigencies of Roviana elites’ (2003:s61). This situation changed once the British took possession of the Solomons. All land was now part of the Protectorate, to be dealt out and sold to investors as they saw fit. Indigenous claims to the land and the sea did not matter where revenue generation was concerned. As a direct result of this, land seasonally occupied or cultivated by Solomon Islanders, who owned but did not directly occupy it, was claimed by the government who subsequently sold or leased it to plantation companies. Customary land holding rights, which were passed on through descent groups, varied across the Solomons. For example, in the Marovo Lagoon area of New Georgia Island, *butubutu* – ruling local chiefly groups encompassing different lineages, sub-lineages and extended family – formed the core of social organisation (Hviding 1996:136; Kupiainen 2000:32). These *butubutu* controlled and regulated the *puava*, the territorial holding or estate which encompassed gardens, fishing rights, and tree felling (Kupiainen 2000:32). However, not all gardens belonging to a *puava* were in continual use, and some were at considerable distances from the communities which owned them. This could have given the appearance that such lands were in fact not in use or un-owned when in fact they were. Land alienation thus severely damaged the customary management that had existed before the establishment of the Protectorate.

In 1903 Woodford had personally accompanied representatives of The Pacific Islands Company Ltd. throughout the Solomons to assist them in selecting land for plantation development, even making the government yacht *Lahloo* available to them.³⁰ Leases granted to plantation companies, which brought in much needed revenue for the Protectorate, were normally issued for 99 years, but later, in order to secure Levers as a

²⁹ Established in 1883, Burns Philp & Company Ltd were the first company to offer tourism trips to Papua New Guinea from 1884, and to Lord Howe and Norfolk Island by 1914. They also worked as shippers and wholesale merchants, and in the early 1900s offered a regular steamer service between Sydney and the Solomons (Buckley & Klugman 1981; Bennett 1987).

³⁰ The lands acquired by The Pacific Islands Company Ltd were later purchased by Levers Pacific Plantations Ltd.

“millionaire tenant” Woodford granted them 999 year leases (Bennett 1987:129).³¹ Woodford had maintained correspondence with William Lever (later Lord Leverhulme), following their initial meeting in 1905, throughout his employment as Resident Commissioner and following his retirement from the Colonial Office and return to England (ATL: Lord Leverhulme papers, MS-Coll-20-1646-4517). The two men appeared to be on quite cordial terms with each other, with Woodford and his wife dining on at least two occasions with Lord Leverhulme and his wife at their Hampstead home in 1909 and 1914 (ibid.).³² Indeed, there is the possibility that Woodford’s association or friendship with Lever may have swayed or influenced his actions on land dealings in the Solomons. Woodford had been extremely frustrated with the failure of the Pacific Islands Company to develop the tracts of land they had acquired in the Solomons, and as such was keen to secure the developmental and economic potential that a company like Levers could bring (Bennett 1897:129). As such he actively supported the extension of land concessions to Levers from 99 years to 999 years. Indeed, following his retirement from the Colonial Office, Woodford offered to consult privately with Lever on land dealings in the Solomons in order that Levers could secure occupation licences there (Woodford to Lever, 27th May 1915, MS-Coll-20-1646-4517). While still acting as Resident Commissioner he allowed large-scale developers, such as Levers, to purchase vast tracts of land or entire islands for minimal amounts. For example, in 1905 Woodford oversaw the sale to Levers of lands totalling 4,350 acres at Viru Harbour (New Georgia Island) which were purchased from the indigenous owners for a whale boat and three boxes of tobacco, and at Rendova Island (off New Georgia Island) 5,000 acres were purchased for £50 (Woodford to im Thurn, 5th April 1905, WPHC 8/III). Under British law these land sales were final. Considering the reciprocal nature of exchange in the Western Solomons, and that lands or goods traded once could be re-traded/exchanged again in the future, the indigenous people who engaged in these sales most likely did not fully comprehend that through selling their land they were selling their birthright and that of their future generations.

Frank Burnett, a visitor and collector in the Solomons in 1909, scathing of both the administration and the various missions in the Western Solomons, noted a case involving the government confiscation of “waste lands” on Kolombangara that were in fact owned and used for copra production by the local chiefdom, the sale of which would have

³¹ The government vessel *Lahloo* was also made available to Levers’ representatives in order to secure land and labour.

³² Mahaffy also dined with Lever and the Woodfords during the 1914 dinner.

seriously damaged their ability to sell and trade with European traders (1911:136-7).³³ As this was all government sanctioned, it left the indigenous owners with little recourse to appeal. One case that did prove to be in the indigenous owners' favour occurred in 1905 when Dr. Henry Welchman, a member of the Melanesian Mission resident at Bughotu on Santa Isabel, wrote to Mahaffy at Suva complaining of the sale of land on that island as waste land. He wrote:

I have known for years the owners of the coast line, and protested to Mr. Woodford, and to Lord Stanmore, years ago. It is true that the people do not live on the coast, and I do not encourage them to leave their mountain homes, which are the most healthy place for them to live in: but they use the land. By the chart it is evident that some hundreds of bush people are cut off from the sea, and I shall be chary of believing that they will be allowed free access, after the Vagena incident...

The land is theirs by indefeasible right of inheritance, and it must be remembered that the natives cannot live on three acres and a cow.

(Welchman to Mahaffy, 26th August 1905, WPHC 8/III/38)

Mahaffy forwarded this letter to High Commissioner Everard im Thurn, who in turn communicated on this subject with London in terms of granting indigenous people access rights to the sea. Eventually, in June 1907 Woodford wrote to the HC stating that the lands in question, some 9,000 acres, was withdrawn as waste land and returned to its rightful owners, but noted that Levers were being invited to select another section of land of equal size in a locality they desired but subject to it being proven as "waste lands" (Woodford to im Thurn, 18th June 1907, WPHC 8/III/38).

Apart from the land issue other criticisms of Woodford's actions, or lack of them, as Resident Commissioner included his and the Colonial Office's failure to establish hospitals or medical centres, or appoint medical officers in the group (Bennett 1987:113; Burnett 1911:132-133). A hospital had been established at Tulagi, the home of the BSIP, by 1901, but the medical needs of other areas in the Solomons were neglected (Plate 14). It frequently fell to missionaries to provide medical assistance to Solomon Islander and Westerner alike. Rev. Goldie of the Methodist Mission, based in Roviana, and Rev. Welchman of the Melanesian Mission provided medical care for the Western Solomons at

³³ Frank Burnett visited the Solomons during 1909, a particularly tumultuous year for the BSIP. Burnett resided with Norman Wheatley in Roviana during his time in the Western Solomons, and from his book it is most likely that Wheatley, a resident trader with several land holdings in the Western Province, had a strong influence on the opinions Burnett formed on government agents and missionaries, both of whom he openly attacked in his 1911 book.



Plate 14: The hospital constructed at Tulagi, photographed in the early twentieth century. The ends of the building were decorated with a covering of woven split bamboo. (Woodford papers)

the expense of their individual missions. In fact, when Mahaffy fell ill with malaria in 1899 he stayed with Welchman to recover (ML: Welchman diaries, M805). While traders and plantation owners would have had some personal medical supplies, the only treatments available in the group came from the Methodist Mission, who since their establishment in the New Georgia region in 1902 used medical aid to attract the native population to their mission (Bennett 1987:113). Little action was taken by the CO to manage or control devastating diseases such as dysentery and influenza which swept periodically through the group decimating the indigenous population (Bennett 1987:113; Bayliss-Smith 2006). Instead the colonial administration frequently relied on the medical capabilities of various missionaries resident in the BSIP. These in turn provided what assistance they could, although the inaction of the colonial government in providing more substantial medical aid was a glaring administrative failure. For example, in February 1898 Woodford and Mahaffy brought an ill boy, stated as coming from Sibbo (Simbo?) to Bughotu for Welchman to treat. He had asked them not to leave the boy with him due to lack of space, but Woodford left him regardless. As a result of bringing this boy to Bughotu an outbreak of dysentery which claimed several lives took place, and for which Welchman held Woodford responsible (Welchman diaries, M805). Woodford in turn blamed the carelessness of locals with regard to the cleanliness of the water they drank and their

disinclination to seek correct medical aid (Woodford, BSIP Annual Report 1898-1899, CO 225/57).

Far greater attention was paid to developing the Solomons' economic potential and attracting investors to the group, yet these newcomers to the Protectorate also brought problems. There were many cases of abuses by plantation managers and overseers (mostly Australians) against Solomon Islands labourers (cf. Bennett 1987), cases which Woodford as Resident Commissioner and Mahaffy as Assistant to the High Commissioner investigated.³⁴ In contrast to the land dealings, punitive raids and the general lack of medical facilities provided, Woodford and Mahaffy throughout their professional careers did seek to defend the rights of Solomon Islanders against the plantation companies enticed into the region and against white traders. Bennett argues that Woodford generally ignored the abuses which occurred on plantations (1987:153), an argument which does have grounding. In truth it fell to Mahaffy, in particular, in his position as Assistant to the High Commissioner, to make recommendations to the High Commissioner for greater regulation of the labour trade and better treatment of labourers on account of what he witnessed during official visits to the Solomons in 1908 (Mahaffy report to the High Commissioner, 21st December 1908, CO 225/85/10285; CO 225/85/24061; Bennett 1987:157). Although Mahaffy's recommendations on labour regulations were welcomed by the High Commission, such investigations by Mahaffy and Woodford frequently brought them into confrontation with the Colonial Office and Suva. In considering Woodford and Mahaffy's working relationship and mutual agreement on many points, High Commissioner im Thurn noted of Mahaffy in 1909, 'It is with fear and trembling that I let him go to the Solomon Islands – as long as Woodford is there' (im Thurn to Lucas, 20th December 1909, CO 225/87).

The materiality of the maltreatment of labourers is often missing, or simply nonexistent in the material culture record. Yet within the Mahaffy collection there is a single object, one which highlights the plight of labourers and within which a multitude of narratives and histories concerning the labour trade is embodied (Plate 15 and 16). It is quite an innocuous, small, and at first glance uninteresting looking semicircular block of wood, but it is one that reveals a multitude of narratives and different levels of understanding, in terms of indigenous agency, yet one that also offers an insight into

³⁴ One such case was the murder by Alfred Hermes, an overseer at a Levers plantation on Rendova, of a Malaitan labourer in 1909 (CO225/85/7282; Bennett 1987:154).



Plate 15: Wooden tally stick from the Solomon Islands. The notches around the edge represent each lunar month that labourers worked on a plantation. The tally was used as an exhibition in a court case.

(NMI AE:1923.340)



Plate 16: Another view of the tally stick. (NMI AE:1923.340)

Mahaffy's interests and duties, both as a government official and as a collector. AE:1923.340 is a tally stick which was kept by native labourers on a plantation in the Solomon Islands and forms part of the collection Mahaffy brought back to Europe in 1914. It was used as an exhibit in a case in which the labourers maintained that they had been kept over their contract time. The labourers had made a notch along one edge of the object for each lunar month they worked, which they counted by new moons. However, the contract they had with the plantation was for calendar months, a misunderstanding which led to the court case. In terms of gauging the importance of this object to its owners, there is a single perforation through which a cord may have been strung in order for the tally stick to be worn around the neck. Doing so would ensure the tally stick's safe keeping: perhaps the care of the tally stick and the addition of notches every new moon was the responsibility of one man. What is clear is that this seemingly insignificant object was of great importance in indigenous people asserting their working rights with white people. Writing and recording calendars and events was not something which only white people undertook. Here a piece of wood was transformed to record indigenous work and its timescale, and it was an object whose significance indigenous people could understand and utilise in their defence.

It is unclear if Mahaffy was the magistrate who oversaw the case, but considering its presence in his collection it is probable that he was. In the catalogue entry for the tally stick he notes that 'to explain to natives the reason of the difference between lunar and calendar months taxed the court beyond the ability of the presiding magistrate'. While the outcome of the court case is unclear, within this one object we have a representation of the unequal relations that existed between indigenous labourers and Protectorate-sanctioned plantation owners. It is also an example of how the indigenous labourers offered forms of resistance to them. This is an object which highlights the importance of looking beyond the boundaries of the physicality of an object or collection of objects. Without the text that accompanies this object, for all we know it could be just a small, odd-looking piece of wood lying in a museum store room.

The aftermath of pacification

Woodford was determined, driven, and passionate about the Solomons and his vision of and belief in its potential, yet this vision may have blinded him to the damage his actions and policies inflicted upon indigenous social and cultural systems. It is difficult to

reconcile Woodford and Mahaffy's actions in defending the indigenous population against injustices by white plantation personnel, while at the same time undertaking vicious and highly destructive raids against them, and actively selling their birthright – their land. People could rebuild homes, replant their gardens, reconstruct *tomoko*, but the land taken from them was gone for good. As Christianity gradually became the dominant religion and people moved away from old beliefs and practices, much of the material culture associated with headhunting was re-contextualised into state emblems or tourist art. But the issues of land alienated during Woodford's time as RC continue even today as people attempt to reclaim their hereditary rights to tracts of land.

In terms of furthering the economic and social development of the Solomons Woodford successfully convinced the Colonial Office to allow for the establishment of a Post Office at Tulagi in mid 1907. The money generated from stamp sales, for example, would add to the yearly revenue for the group. Woodford designed these stamps himself, perversely, using an image of a Solomons war canoe (Plate 17 and 18). Even in the early twentieth century it appears that the image of a *tomoko* was used as an emblem of the Solomons.³⁵ Ultimately, Woodford succeeded in attracting capital investment through plantation companies, and succeeded in making the Solomons self-supporting. This was achieved, however, at the expense of the indigenous population who discovered that the price of British protection was the alienation of their land for development, and employment on plantations where frequently the conditions and owners could be unfavourable. Contradictorily, although Woodford was the architect of the plantation development of the region and land alienation, he did not advocate the exploitation of indigenous workers. While both he and Mahaffy harboured very Victorian ideals of racial paternalism towards the indigenous population, they also displayed humanitarian concerns for the population in advocating their fair treatment in employment situations and by plantation owners (Bennett 1987:157). Yet at the same time suspected villages and individuals could be subject to punitive raids by these men for headhunting outrages or murder. Like Hubert Murray, Lieutenant-Governor in Papua for thirty-two years from 1908, it seems that they understood their duties and roles in the Solomons as 'policing the violent excesses of power of white entrepreneurs, missionaries and government officers' (Lattas 1996:144), while at the same time justifying their own punitive raids. Unlike

³⁵ Later in the twentieth century, the images of *tomoko* and canoe prow figureheads were utilised as emblems of national identity for the Solomons (Kupiainen 2000:53).



Plate 17: 1907 British Solomon Islands Protectorate stamp, designed by Woodford.

<http://www.ro-klinger.de/Tulagi/largecanoes.htm>

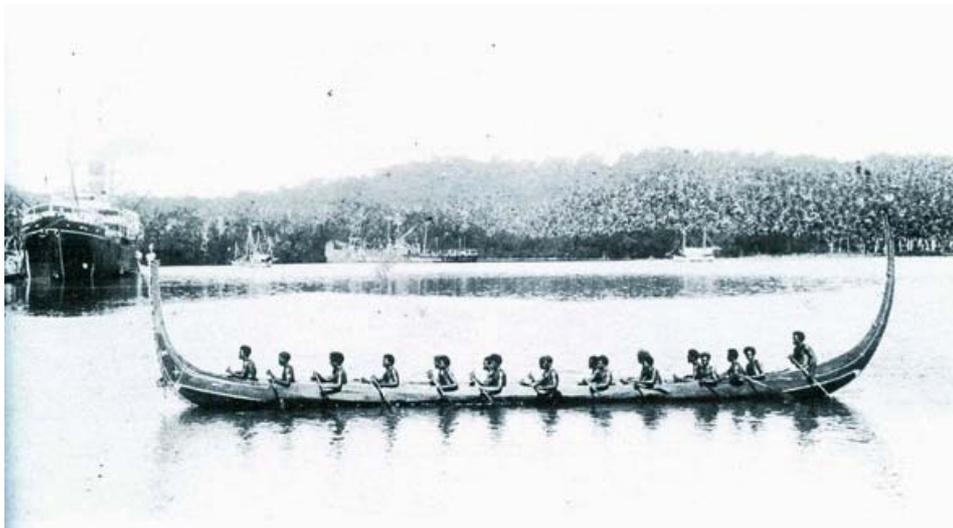


Plate 18: Photograph of a *tomoko* that may have been the source of the 1907 stamp design.

(Vanderwal 2001:109).

Woodford and Mahaffy, however, Murray considered resorting to violence and punitive raids ‘as a failure in rational administration; it represented a breakdown in the capacity to know the details of other people’s lives and to manage them through knowledge’ (Lattas 1996:145).

When one considers the time Woodford had previously spent in the Solomons, living among local communities, he should have gained some knowledge or understanding of customary land ownership. He should also have recognised that uninhabited lands did not necessarily mean un-owned lands. In this matter he was indeed blameworthy for his wanton disregard of the indigenous population and his role in the destruction of local ownership of land schemes. While not defending Woodford’s actions regarding the issue of land alienation, it should be remembered that his primary duty in the Solomons was to make it self-supporting. The lack of financial support offered by the British government to support the group made the necessity of securing a stable, dependable source of revenue for the group a priority. Perhaps, therefore, the need to generate revenue placed the needs of the indigenous population secondary to establishing a dependable and regular income for the group, which, he may have believed, would ultimately benefit the entire Protectorate and its inhabitants.

The Solomons in the twentieth century

The social and economic policies which Woodford had established during his tenure as Resident Commissioner continued following his and Mahaffy’s departure from the Pacific in 1914 and 1915. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s plantation developments and interests in the Protectorate expanded at the expense of indigenous land owners. Further copra plantations developed alongside rubber plantations and cash-cropping: this period also saw the arrival of logging companies into the Solomons (see Bennett 1987 for in-depth analysis of twentieth-century economic developments in the Solomons). Following the outbreak of World War II and the 1942 invasion of the Solomons by Japanese forces, most European settlers abandoned the Protectorate. It was many years before they returned.

In 1949 the district administration in Honiara, officially established in 1944 as the country’s capital city, organised an “Arts and Crafts Centre and Shop” ‘with the intention of acquiring artifacts from the different provinces’ (Kupiainen 2000:137).³⁶ Following the

³⁶ Kupiainen (2000:138) stated that in the 1920s, while still Resident Commissioner, Woodford had attempted to establish a museum in Tulagi for the display of Solomon Islands arts and crafts, and that he had

departure of American troops at the end of World War II the “curio shops” established in Honiara to sell “tourist art” suffered a major lack of business. However, with the establishment of the above arts and crafts centre, and with the opening of the Honiara Museum in 1952 (which became the Solomon Islands National Museum in 1969), greater emphasis was given to art and craft development throughout the Solomons. These arts and crafts were sold initially in Honiara but, with the development of global tourism, smaller towns could also sell locally produced pieces (Kupiainen 2000:138).

When the Solomon Islands gained independence in 1978 the arbitrary grouping together of these ethnically and culturally diverse islands that had been created by the colonial government was continued in the new independent island nation. The cultural, economic, and governmental focus of the Solomon administration was, and continues to be, based in the capital Honiara, Guadalcanal, and on the more economically developed Malaita. The result of this was that islands and groups located away from the heart of economic activity and development became marginalised. Tensions between different island groups resulted in several spates of war or clashes, particularly in the late 1990s and into the 2000s, indicating that having a geographically “united Solomon Islands” does not necessarily result in having a “united people” (see Moore 2004).

Following rapidly on the heels of the establishment of the protectorate and pacification, and the effect these had on traditional beliefs and ways of life, came a relatively quick conversion to Christianity throughout the Solomons.³⁷ Time which had previously been dedicated to headhunting and warfare, production of articles associated with them, trading networks and shell money production, and various pre-Christian and ancestral rituals was now spent on ‘religiously guided programs’ by the missions (Kupiainen 2000:72). While ‘many found solace and a rationale for the introduced order in the new religion, Christianity, and hoped to discover in it the key to the white man’s knowledge and power’ (Bennett 1987:124), many people also retained some level of indigenous spiritual belief. Hviding (1996:122) notes that within contemporary Marovo Christianity ‘kastom-oriented teachings ... which stress ancestor worship, communalism,

his own collection on display in the government residency until his departure from the BSIP in 1927. However, Kupiainen does not provide any documentation to back up this statement. It is most probable, considering the numbers he collected, that Woodford did have objects on display at his residency on Tulagi, but to date I have found no evidence to support a claim that he officially displayed objects in his residency. Woodford had departed the Solomons by 1915, so it is possible that Kupiainen confused Woodford with one of his successors, CM Workman (Resident Commissioner from 1917-1921) or RR Kane (Resident Commissioner from 1921-1929).

³⁷ Missionaries had been active in the Solomon Islands for many years before this, but Christianity really took hold from the 1910s on.

and reciprocity’ and the pre-Christian concepts of *mana* and ‘*tinamanae* (empowerment, blessing)’ are firmly incorporated within religious thought and teaching.

The scale of social and economic transformation which took place throughout the twentieth century ultimately was reflected in material culture, especially items related to the now redundant headhunting. *Tomoko* construction had been banned by the colonial government and these vessels and their associated objects were no longer needed or manufactured for a ritual context.³⁸ However, many missionaries encouraged the continued building and use of war canoes, with figureheads, as a means of transport, for use in races or festive occasions, and as a method of retaining some traditional crafts (Hviding 1996:178).³⁹ The agency of canoes and their figureheads had altered, from one that embodied the cosmological beliefs upon which their ritual and political life was based to something quite different. The sacredness once imbued within them was all but gone. Not only did they fall into relative disuse, but so many war canoes and figureheads were either destroyed or collected by Westerners during the early colonial period that, not only were they symbolically removed from their material culture, they were physically removed too. By 1948 Russell stated that the war canoe had ‘all but disappeared from Marovo’ (1948:313).

Kupiainen (2000:1) stated that contemporary carving in the Solomon Islands is all about ‘aspects of tradition represented in wood carving’, and while this is true, the reasons for carving – all objects and not just canoe prow figureheads – has altered. Today in the Solomons, especially in villages that do not receive the same level of attention or funding from the government that towns or larger tourist resorts do, traditional crafts such as wood carving are encouraged as a means of subsidising the relatively low income cash-crop economy. The subdivision of specialised labour which marked the creation of canoe figureheads in the past no longer exists. Today, carvers inlay the shell decoration themselves and now use different types of wood for the figureheads. Traditionally lightweight local woods were chosen to carve figureheads, as the use of a heavy wood may have caused the figurehead to fall off during sea voyages (Plate 20).

³⁸ One instance of the colonial approval of *tomoko* construction is discussed in Chapter 8.

³⁹ Thomas (1991: 47) notes that ‘the Methodists encouraged the construction of “mission war canoes” used in races on sports days and perhaps attempted to appropriate some of the ritual significance and potency of the older canoes’.

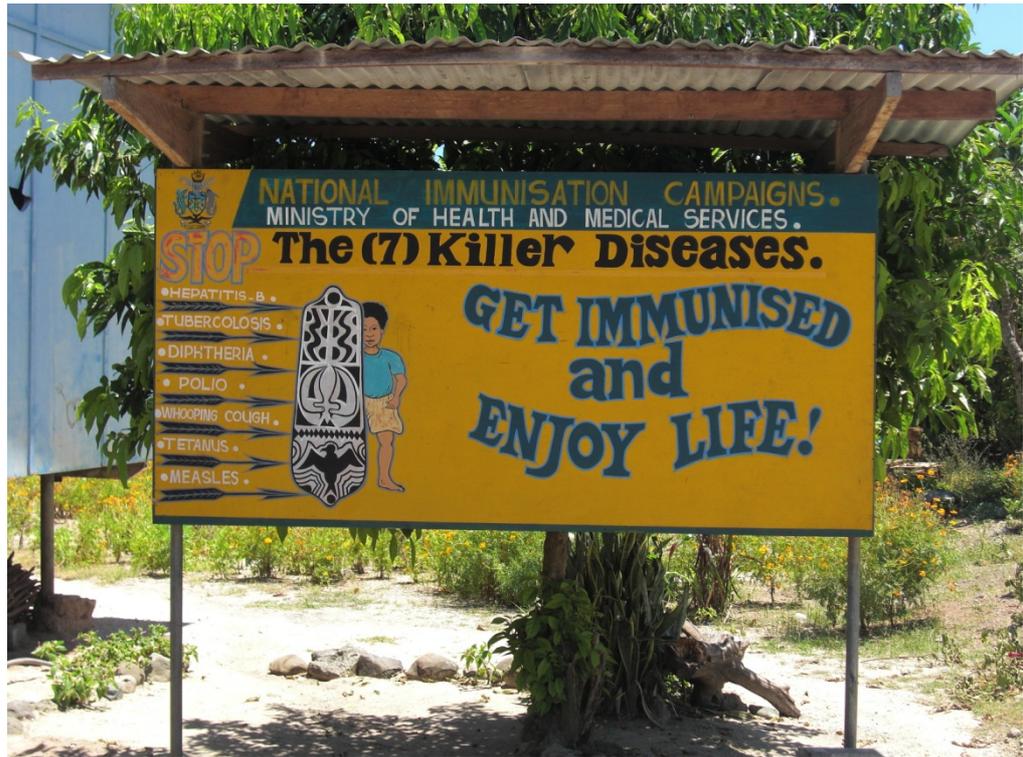


Plate 19: A sign outside the medical centre at Gizo which uses the image of a Solomon Islands shield as an emblem of protection. Photographed by A. O'Brien, November 2008.



Plate 20: Carving of a canoe prow figurehead making a telephone call. Minana Handicrafts shop, Honiara, 1993. (Kupiainen 2000: CD-Rom)



Plate 21: The Solomon Islands National Museum and Cultural Centre. Photographed by A. O'Brien, December 2008.



Plate 22: Two of the eight house types from the provinces of the Solomon Islands, which are on permanent display behind the main museum building, Solomon Islands National Museum and Cultural Centre. Photographed by A. O'Brien, December 2008.

The contemporary Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands today are still coming to terms with the legacy of its colonial past and with the implications of the land alienation policy introduced by Woodford in the 1890s (see Schneider 1998, McDougall 2005, Moore 2004). However, although colonial people understood Solomons society as static, timeless, stone-age, the truth is that the Solomon Islands have never been a static society. They have constantly changed and adapted to new people, technologies and ideas and made them their own while retaining the fundamental elements that make them the “Solomon Islands” (Plate 19, 21 to 24).

The Pacific Arts festival will be held in Honiara in 2012. This presents some interesting challenges for Solomon Islanders in terms of managing such a large-scale event but also of attracting visitors in the wake of the recent social problems which have taken place in Honiara. Personally, I am intrigued at how this event will be organised and handled by the Government. When I was in Honiara in 2008 I was informed by a secretary in the Ministry of Education (who deals with research permits for non-nationals) that they neither wanted nor needed white people coming in to the Solomons to study their art, their history. They were capable of undertaking such research themselves and neither needed nor wanted assistance from outsiders to do so. How they chose to present their art, their culture and themselves to an audience who will be there to judge all these factors remains to be seen.



Plate 23: A meeting area outside the main museum building. The main wooden beam has been painted with human figures. Solomon Islands National Museum and Cultural Centre. Photographed by A. O'Brien, December 2008.



Plate 24: A wooden post from a canoe house, Western Solomon Islands. This object (BM Q2000.Oc.4) was found un-numbered in the British Museum but may be associated with two similar canoe posts Woodford donated to the museum in 1927 (BM Oc1927,-.73-74).

Chapter 3

The Woodford and Mahaffy collections

Collecting and collections are part of our dynamic relationship with the material world (Pearce 1995:4).

Introduction

Ethnographic objects from both collections form the core around which the discussions and arguments within this thesis are based, yet the numerical size of both collections do not allow for discussion of every individual object. However, it is important to acknowledge the scope, diversity and range of the Woodford and Mahaffy collections. This chapter offers a contextualisation of both collections, providing data on object numbers, object types, acquisition details (where known), and provenance details. This is followed with information on the institutional acquisitions of objects from both men, examining how and when objects came to museums or private collectors.

It was noted in the thesis introduction that ethnographic objects, photographs, and documents are equally considered as artefacts throughout the text. While this remains the case, the discussions of the ethnographic collections have been kept separate from analysis of Woodford and Mahaffy's text and photograph collections, discussed throughout the text and in detail in Chapter 8. This is not intended to create a divide between the material sources as objects, images and documents are continually referred to in relation to each other. Rather, discussing them separately allows for clearer analysis of the material involved.

Collection categories

Using the analysis of the Lewis, Speiser, Todd, and Blackwood collections presented by Gosden and Knowles (2001) as a template, the objects in the Woodford and Mahaffy collections have been broken down into similar but locally relevant categories, with

several categories added. In total fourteen categories have been applied to contextualise these collections: warfare; hunting/fishing; axes/adzes; craft production; food production/eating; containers; ornament/clothing; valuables; ritual objects; transportation; tourist art; music; dance; and miscellaneous.⁴⁰ This object listing is presented in Appendix II: Object Categories. This functional grouping of object types into categories allows us, at a glance, to see the types and numbers of objects collected by both men. Together with the documentation that accompanies both collections, this also allows for collecting patterns to emerge in terms of which types of objects were favoured by them, what types are under-represented, and which types are absent. For example, easily transportable objects such as axe/adze heads are numerous in both collections, as are fish hooks, shell valuables and certain types of ornament. Twenty-one spears are found in the Mahaffy collection whereas Woodford only collected six. These collecting differences are discussed throughout the thesis.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that these categories at once situate the objects within Western frames of thought or analysis, more specifically personal to my own considerations of object groupings. Such categories or groupings create sets of objects or relationships which indigenous makers or users might not have used or considered. From an indigenous perspective, many of these categories would have overlapped, for instance warfare with hunting/fishing, and most of them with valuables and ritual objects. Nevertheless, in a study of this kind, anchored primarily in museum collections, some system of organisation needs to be imposed on the material in order to allow description and analysis. Accordingly, while recognising that indigenous categories will be much more fluid and interconnected, the present groupings will be used. The categories presented list each collection in its entirety, not just objects which originate from the Solomons. This is not such an issue with Woodford's collection as 94% originate from the Solomons. However, in Mahaffy's collection 64.5% come from the Solomons, while 26.5% are non-Solomons and 9% are of unknown provenance. Mahaffy wrote an introductory text and catalogue to accompany his collection entitled "Collection of Arms and Other Objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903" which contains the "Catalogue Raisonné" and a "Supplementary List of objects brought home in 1914", yet the

⁴⁰ The collection and object analysis within this thesis has also been informed by the work undertaken on connecting collections to collectors in the Pitt Rivers Museum (Gosden and Larson 2007), and the analysis of the objects and object types collected by A.B. Lewis on behalf of the Field Museum in Melanesia (Welsch 1998a). The discussion of collectors in O'Hanlon and Welsch (2000) also has strongly impacted on this analysis.

catalogue lists objects collected from all over the Pacific. As such, Mahaffy may have viewed his collection as primarily a Solomons one yet the other geographic areas represented within it make it more than that.

Therefore to remove non-Solomons objects from the overall collection listing would be to place a division within each collection. Indeed, as noted above, the listing presented here is of my own construction. I have gathered together information on objects collected by each man but either kept by him, sold or donated to an institution, or gifted to an acquaintance, and have placed them all under the banner “Woodford collection” or “Mahaffy collection”. Perhaps neither man considered all the objects sold or gifted as part of their overall collection, but in retracing and reconstructing their movements as collectors it is important to consider all objects as part of their collections.

The Woodford collection

The Woodford collection comprises 546 objects held by The British Museum, London; The World Museum, Liverpool; The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford; The Australian Museum, Sydney; the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; and The Royal Geographical Society (see Table 1). Collected from the early 1880s until 1914, this total represents the number of objects currently known to have been acquired by Woodford. It is plausible that within the institutions listed here, or indeed in other institutions, there are objects collected by Woodford which he either gifted or sold to private individuals whose collections eventually made their way into museums, but his association with them has been lost. The extent of his zoological and botanical collection, now in the Natural History Museum and The Australian Museum (discussed in the following chapter) is unclear, although Woodford himself estimated that he had collected well over 20,000 specimens during the course of his three expeditions to the Solomons between 1886 and 1888 (Woodford 1890a:74-75).⁴¹

Geographic range of the Woodford collection

Throughout his professional career, initially as an amateur naturalist and later as a colonial official, Woodford was tied geographically to the Solomon Islands, and this fact is reflected in his collection. Unlike Mahaffy who travelled widely throughout the Pacific in

⁴¹ Enquiries were made at the NHM with the intention of learning the numerical extent of Woodford’s natural history specimens, but as the specimens are divided into type, species, and sub-species no complete listing has ever been made within the museum.

<i>Table 1: The distribution of the 546 ethnographic objects known to have been collected by Woodford between the early 1880s and 1914</i>	
<i>Institution</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
The British Museum	483
The World Museum, Liverpool	30
The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford	12
The Australian Museum, Sydney	12
Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Cambridge	7
The Royal Geographical Society	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>546</i>

his various appointments with the Colonial Office, the majority of Woodford’s career was based in the Solomons. As such it is unsurprising that objects from the Solomons dominate his collection. In total 516 of the 546 objects that constitute his collection have their provenance in the Solomons, leaving only 29 objects from the remainder of the Pacific, and one object which has been ascribed to South Africa (see Table 2). This amounts to 94.5% of Woodford’s overall collection originating from the Solomons, with only 5.5% from other areas.

Of the non-Solomons objects within the collection several can be traced to Woodford’s initial work in the Pacific as a naturalist and to his first colonial appointments. Woodford resided in Fiji from 1882 until mid-1884, initially as a naturalist and later in the employment of the British Colonial administration in Suva, which was also the port of call for his later expeditions to the Solomons. It can be presumed that Woodford began collecting objects during his residence in Fiji, although no records of actual purchases have been identified in his diaries from this period (Plate 25). During this initial period in the Pacific Woodford was more interested in collecting natural history specimens, and did not collect objects in any great numbers. The six objects from Tuvalu, the first recorded ethnographic purchases Woodford made were collected during his 1884 voyage to Kiribati and Tuvalu (then the Gilbert and Ellice Islands), and are discussed in the following chapter. Ten objects from Fiji collected by him are currently in the British Museum and



Plate 25: A ceramic vessel from Fiji, sold to The British Museum in 1929.

(BM Oc1929,0713.106)

the World Museum Liverpool (BM Oc1906,0720.13; Oc1909,-.91; Oc1909,-.92; Oc1929,0713.7; Oc1929,0713.102; Oc1929,0713.103; Oc1929,0713.106; Oc1929,0713.108; Oc1929,0713.109; Oc1929,0713.110; WML 54.111.47). However, three Fijian whale's teeth objects, BM Oc1909,-.91, Oc1909,-.92 (two *tika* or dart heads) and BM Oc1929,0713.7 (a presentation valuable) were collected by Woodford in the Solomons and have been ascribed a Solomons provenance (Plate 26). Objects such as these serve as tangible markers of the indentured labour trade where Solomon Islanders working on Fijian plantations returned home with items of value or prestige such as whales teeth, which were also highly valued in the Solomons. The single Samoan object in his collection (BM Oc1929,0713.105) most likely dates to his brief 1895 appointment as Acting Consul and Deputy Commissioner, based in Apia.

Solomon Islands objects

Western Solomons objects are well represented in Woodford's collection, with 133 objects: New Georgia (seventy-two objects); Shortland Islands (twenty-three objects); Vella Lavella (ten objects); Choiseul (eight objects); and thirty-nine of unidentified Western Solomons provenance. These attributions come from the British Museum catalogue and were based on information on the objects given by Woodford. As Resident

<i>Table 2: Geographic range of the Woodford collection</i>	
<i>Provenance</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
Solomon Islands	516
New Guinea (no provenance)	9
Fiji	8
Tuvalu [Ellice Islands]	6
Mortlock Island, New Guinea	2
Samoa	1
New Britain	1
Admiralty Islands	1
Vanuatu [New Hebrides]	1
South Africa (BM curatorial comment states this may be Solomons)	1
Total	546

Commissioner for the BSIP Woodford was obliged to travel around the Protectorate visiting various islands, and as such his collection reflects this geographic movement throughout the Solomons much more than the Mahaffy collection (see Chart 1 and Table 4). These visits, though frequently fleeting, provided him with opportunities to collect objects and also to make ethnological notes on the people he encountered. For example, between May and June 1900 Woodford visited Santa Isabel, Choiseul, The Shortland Islands and Ontong Java to declare British Protection over those islands (CO 225/59), and in 1906 he again visited Ontong Java, Sikaiana and Rennell Island – all Polynesian outliers within the Solomon Islands.⁴² These Polynesian outliers had been little visited by Europeans during this period, so Woodford took the opportunity to collect objects and to produce several papers on the people and customs of Ontong Java (1901, 1906, 1909b), Sikaiana (1906, 1912), Rennell (1907, 1910), and all Polynesian outliers (1916). In total, 145 objects within his collection come from these Polynesian outliers. Interestingly, it is

⁴² Woodford also visited Ontong Java and the Tasman group in 1902 in order to undertake an official inspection of those islands, during which voyage he was accompanied by the Reverend George Brown (Brown 1978:525).

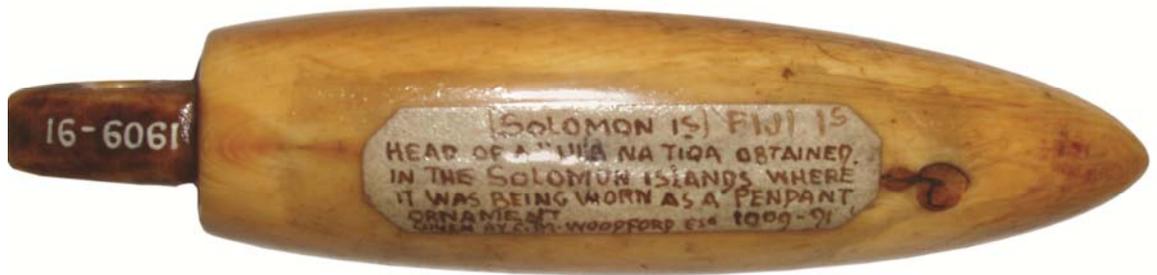


Plate 26: Three *tiqa* dart heads, collected by Woodford in the Solomons. They range in length from 9.4 to 12.9 cm long. (Top: BM Oc1909,-.91. Middle: Oc1909,-.92. Bottom AM E.12339)

from Rennell Island that the single largest collection from an individual island in Woodford's collection comes (ninety-four objects). In total ninety-three of these objects from Rennell were sold by Woodford to the BM between 1908 (seventy-three objects), 1915 (four objects) and 1927 (sixteen objects) (see Appendix I and II for details on the object types collected by Woodford).

However, Woodford also relied on others to help him collect from such remote locations. For instance Dr. Northcote Deck, a missionary with the South Sea Evangelical Mission obtained a stone-headed mace from Rennell for Woodford, a description of which he then published in *Man* (1910). Woodford described the mace as 18¼ inches long, a length which matches a Rennell mace sold by the Woodford family to Harry Beasley in 1929 and which was donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum by Irene Beasley in 1954 (1954.8.134) (Plate 27).⁴³

Institutional acquisitions of the Woodford collection

The British Museum

It was with the British Museum that Woodford formed his closest ethnographic collecting relationship, and this important relationship is discussed throughout the thesis. The first of the objects collected by him arrived in the museum in January 1888. In April of that year Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826-1897), a Keeper in the museum, presented forty objects collected by Woodford to the Christy Collection, of which all but one came from the Solomons (BM Oc,+3890-3926) (Plate 28 and 29).⁴⁴ In 1892 Woodford began dealing directly with the BM for in that year he donated eight objects to the museum, two from Guadalcanal and six from Nukufetau, Tuvalu, thus beginning a collecting relationship that was to last for the remainder of his life. However, it is from Woodford's period as Resident Commissioner to the BSIP, from 1896 to 1915, that the majority of his collection was sent to London, where it was either sold or donated to the museum. During this period Woodford began frequent correspondence with Charles H. Read (1857-1919), the successor to Franks as Keeper at the museum.

⁴³ Another Rennell mace was sold by Woodford to the BM in 1915 which measures 39½ cm/ 15½ inches long (Oc1915,-46).

⁴⁴ Henry Christy was a private collector who donated his extensive collections to the British Museum in 1863. A fund of five thousand pounds was further bequest to the museum following his death in 1865 which enabled the curator A.W. Franks, a trustee of the Christy Collection, to purchase around twenty thousand objects for the museum: objects purchased with this fund are designated 'Christy Fund' (see King 1997:137-140).

Between 1900 and 1905 Woodford donated forty-three objects to the BM, one of which he singled out as a donation from his wife (BM Oc1905,-.277 – a weaving loom from Sikaiana), and again in 1909 he donated a further sixty-seven objects. In 1906 Mr. C. Southgate, Woodford's solicitor, sold a further ten Solomon Islands objects to the BM for £10, and again in 1908 Woodford's sister, Mary J. Woodford, sold ninety-two objects for £25 (BM Oc1908,0624.1-71). While it is clear that these objects had been collected by Woodford it is unclear whether money from these sales went directly to Charles, or if the objects had in fact been gifted to his solicitor, or his sister. A further forty-four objects were sold by Woodford to the museum in 1915, prior to his final donations in 1919 (one object) and 1927 (forty-four objects) before his death in October that year.

Following Woodford's death in 1927 the British Museum acquired several different collections of objects which Woodford had collected. One hundred and eighteen objects, mostly from the Solomons, were purchased for £100 in 1929 from Arthur G. Madan, a curator at Harry Beasley's museum (BM Oc1929,0713.1-116). It is unclear whether Madan sold these objects on behalf of Beasley or independently. In 1944 Mrs. Irene Beasley donated ten Solomons objects to the BM which had been purchased by Beasley in 1929 from the dealer and private collector, William Oldman.⁴⁵ The Beasleys are known to have purchased some objects directly from the Woodford family in July 1929, including an adze for which they paid less than £1, and a large Santa Cruz breastplate, called a *tema*, for which they paid a little more (Waterfield & King 2006:86). No direct correspondence between Woodford and either the Beasleys or Oldman has been located in his papers, yet evidently the sale of objects he collected was undertaken through private transactions or by auction, for example at Stevens Auction Rooms.

A further five Solomons objects collected prior to 1890 were donated in 1947 by Mr M. Woodford (BM Oc1947,13.1-5);⁴⁶ and in 1954 the Wellcome Institute donated a length of bead currency, made of shells, coconut and string, collected by Woodford during his first trips to the Solomons (BM Oc1954,06.408; WL[A]) (Plate 30).⁴⁷ (See Table 3 for a breakdown of the institutional acquisitions of objects collected by Woodford).

⁴⁵ BM Oc1944,02.552-553; Oc1944,02.1348-1350; Oc1944,02.1366; Oc1944,02.1377; Oc1944,02.1380; Oc1944,02.1794.

⁴⁶ No details other than Mr M. Woodford were recorded with this donation. This person's precise relationship to Woodford is unclear.

⁴⁷ A notebook in the Wellcome Institute archives, accessioned in 1919, states that five objects (a string of beads made of shell discs and small seeds, a stone adze, a lime box, a shell armlet, and a spoon) were presented by Woodford to Sir George Newman (1870-1948) in February 1891. No provenance details for these objects were provided in the notebook. In 1954 the Wellcome Institute donated the length of bead

Table 3: Institutional acquisitions of objects collected by Woodford

<i>Year</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Acquisition</i>	<i>Vendor/Donor</i>	<i>Amount Paid</i>	<i>No. of Objects</i>
1888	BM	Donation	Sir A.W. Franks	-	40
1892	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	8
1896	AM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	3
1900	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	7
1901	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	2
1902	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	22
1903	AM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	6
1903	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	1
1904	AM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	3
1905	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	11
1905	BM	Donation	Mrs. Florrie Woodford	-	1
1906	BM	Purchase	C. Southgate	£10	10
1908	BM	Purchase	Miss M.J. Woodford	£25	92
1909	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	67
1913	RGS	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	2
1915	BM	Purchase	Charles M Woodford	£95	44
1917	MAA	Donation	William Ridgeway	-	1
1919	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	1
1921	PRM	Purchase	Charles M Woodford	£4-10s-0d	1
1927	BM	Donation	Charles M Woodford	-	44
1929	BM	Purchase	A.G. Madan	£100	118
1941	PRM	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	1
1944	BM	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	9
1947	BM	Donation	Mr. M.M. Woodford	-	5
1948	MAA	Donation	Lady Violet Beaumont	-	5
1954	BM	Donation	Wellcome Institute	-	1
1954	PRM	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	9
1954	MAA	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	1
1954	WML	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	30
1955	PRM	Donation	Mrs. Irene Beasley	-	1
Total				£230	546

currency to the BM, but not other objects in the Woodford BM collection appear to have come from the Wellcome Institute. It is unclear whether the other objects listed in the notebook were sold, kept in private ownership, or became an unaccredited part of the BM collection or another museum collection. (Wellcome Library Special Collections WA/HMM/CM/COL/105).



Plate 27: A star-headed club from Rennell Island, donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum by Irene Beasley in 1954. (PRM 1954.8.134)



Plate 28: Pendant ornament of turtle-shell with two pairs of frigate-bird heads on a string of glass beads. Collected by Woodford during his first visits to the Solomon Islands. (BM Oc ,+.3890)



Plate 29: Ear pendants from Malaita. Collected by Woodford between 1886 and 1888. See Burt (2009) for description of these ornaments.

(BM Oc,+3895)

The Australian Museum

Following Woodford's return to the Solomons in 1896 he also donated objects to the Australian Museum, although not in the same numbers, nor over so long a period as with the BM. In total twelve objects from the Solomons were donated between 1896 and 1904. In 1896 he presented Malaitan shell currency (AM E.05919) and shell currency blanks together with an example of the shell used (AM E.05920) (Plate 31). In 1903 he donated six objects from Ontong Java: two large wood and coconut fibre fish-hooks (AM E.12216-17); three shell adze heads (AM E.12218-20); and an unusual small wooden box with a lid used for keeping articles dry during voyages (AM E.12221) (Plate 32). This object is similar to one from the Mahaffy NMI collection (AE:1923.65). However the lid is missing from that example (Plate 33). A note attached to E.12221 states that in 1988 a small bone implement was discovered inside the wooden box but no institutional number had been assigned to it. Microscopic analysis detected traces of 'blood and other stuff' on the implement, yet it was not believed that the object had an association with tattooing (AM Woodford object file). The implement was sent to Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at The Australian National University in Canberra in 1988 for further analysis, yet it appears to never have been returned to Sydney.

Finally, in 1904 Woodford donated three further objects (AM[A] W11/1904). The first was a small whale ivory item from Ontong Java (E.12339), which is very similar to two whale ivory objects he donated to the BM in 1909 (BM Oc1909,-.91-92). These were originally *tiqa* dart heads, but had been brought from Fiji to the Solomons as pendants. The dart heads (*tiqa*) were used in competitive dart throwing in Fiji, where the heads were fitted onto a reed or cane shaft, thrown on a prepared course and the distance measured (Clunie 1986). When not in use the dart heads were kept on a cord and could be worn as ornaments. The other objects are a Makira (Ulawa) canoe and paddle (E.12824-25), sent by Woodford to R. Etheridge, a curator at the museum, on 28th September 1904 (AM[A] W63/1904). As will be discussed in the following chapter, Woodford developed a special collecting relationship with the Australian Museum and Etheridge in relation to his natural history collecting.

The Pitt Rivers Museum

The British Museum and The Australian Museum were not the only museums to acquire objects directly from Woodford. In December 1921 Woodford sold an iron-pyrite headed club from Malaita to the Pitt Rivers Museum for £4-10s-0d (PRM 1921.84.1). Mrs. Irene Beasley donated ten objects in February 1941 and August 1954 which had been purchased from the Woodford family by Harry Beasley on July 19th 1929. Again in 1955 she made a final donation of a shell ornament which was purchased at Glendinings Auction Rooms on September 2nd 1937.⁴⁸

The World Museum, Liverpool

The World Museum Liverpool also acquired thirty objects collected by Woodford.⁴⁹ These were donated to the museum by Irene Beasley in 1954, and appear to have been purchased by Harry Beasley over a period of time. Four shell valuables (54.112.257; 54.112.260; 54.112.262-3) were purchased from William Oldman in 1915, and five adze heads (54.112.426; 54.112.399; 54.112.429; 54.112.431; 54.112.433) were purchased from

⁴⁸ PRM 1941.2.48; 1954.8.50; 1954.8.90; 1954.8.124; 1954.8.129; 1954.8.131; 1954.8.134; 1954.9.235; 1954.9.247; 1954.9.248; 1955.10.9.

⁴⁹ Twenty-four objects are from the Solomon Islands, four are from New Guinea, and there is one each from Fiji and New Britain. (LWM 54.112.257; 54.112.260; 54.112.262-263; 54.112.426; 54.112.399; 54.112.429; 54.112.431; 54.112.433; 54.112.245-246; 54.112.373; 54.112.328; 54.112.322; 54.112.330; 54.112.454; 54.112.451; 54.112.468; 54.112.467; 54.112.463; 54.109.64; 54.109.66; 54.109.69; 54.110.56; 54.111.47; 54.109.281A; 54.112.259; 54.112.261-261).



Plate 30: Solomon Island shell currency, collected by Woodford. Donated by the Wellcome Institute to the British Museum in 1954. (BM Oc1954,06.408)



Plate 31: Malaitan shell currency and shell currency blanks, together with an example of the shell used. Presented by Woodford to the Australian Museum in 1896. (AM E.05919 and E.05920)



Plate 32: A small wooden canoe box with lid, used for keeping articles dry during voyages, Ontong Java.
(AM E.12221)



Plate 33: Ontong Java canoe box. Similar to the example collected by Woodford, but minus the lid.
(NMI AE:1923.65)

Table 4: Distribution of Solomon Islands objects from the Woodford Collection

<i>Island/ Region</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
Rennell	94
New Georgia Island	72
Malaita	46
Ontong Java	25
Guadalcanal	25
Shortland Islands	23
Bougainville	15
Sikaiana	15
Bellona	11
Santa Cruz	12
Makira	10
Vella Lavella	10
Choiseul	8
Nggela	7
Santa Isabel	6
Russell Island	4
Savo	2
Central Solomons	1
Ulawa or Santa Ana/Catalina	1
Solomon Islands (no provenance)	90
Western Solomons (no provenance)	39
Total	516

Edward Gerrard in 1916.⁵⁰ No acquisition details are available for the remaining twenty objects, but considering their acquisition date (1929) it must be assumed they were sold directly to Beasley from the Woodford family following Charles' death in 1927 (see Carreau 2009 for analysis of Harry Beasley's collection).

⁵⁰ Edward Gerrard and Sons were a firm of taxidermists who also made anatomical models. They were also dealers in ethnographic objects which they sold objects to many institutions including the BM. (http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioId=39609).

The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge

Woodford did not establish a collecting relationship with the MAA during his lifetime. However several objects collected by him have found their way into that museum. In 1927 William Ridgeway, a Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge University donated a whale's tooth, collected by Woodford in the Solomons, to the museum as part of the Ridgeway bequest (MAA 1927.156). A note on the accession card states that the object was purchased from William Oldman in August 1917. In 1954 Mrs. Irene Beasley donated a Malaitan fish-hook to MAA (MAA 1954.316.b). It is likely that other objects collected by Woodford are in MAA but have yet to be identified.

In 1948 Lady Violet Beaumont donated fifteen Solomon Islands objects to the museum (MAA 1948.2625-2634). These had been the property of her brother, F.J. Wootton-Isaacson who visited the Solomons in 1903 (Waite (2008:83) names him as a collector for the BM). From these objects I have identified five which were collected by Woodford and sent by him to Wootton-Isaacson. These are a bow from Bougainville (MAA 1948.2625), a food bowl from Makira (MAA 1948.2626) and a model *tomoko* with two paddles from Roviana (MAA 1948.2628a-c). It is possible that some other objects within this collection were collected by Woodford, but no direct association has yet been established. Wootton-Isaacson would doubtless have collected objects whilst visiting the Solomons, and eight photographs taken by him during the 1903 visit are held in the MAA photographic archive.⁵¹ The connection between Woodford and these particular objects comes from a letter Woodford wrote to Wootton-Isaacson date 11th August 1926.⁵² The letter opens:

My Dear Wootton Isaacson,

Glad you like the bow. The plaiting is distinctly artistic. I have two others so you need not fear that I am denuding my collection.⁵³

Evidently, where the opportunity arose, Woodford had collected objects in duplicate, but importantly he also notes that he had his own collection of objects which were in fact

⁵¹ MAA photographic collection (P.70199.ACH2 , P.70200.ACH2 , P.70201.ACH2 , P.70202.ACH2 , P.70203.ACH2 , P.70204.ACH2 , P.70205.ACH2 , P.70206.ACH2).

⁵² This letter is in MAA attached to the object index card for the model canoe (1948.2628a-c). It does not appear to have been given an institutional archive number.

⁵³ Woodford's writing appears to have been misread by MAA museum staff when transcribing an extract from his letter to Wootton-Isaacson in order to include his letter on part of the text panel to accompany this object. The panel states that Woodford wrote to his brother in 1926: the transcriber had mistaken the word "Wootton" for "Brother".

displayed at his home (see Chapter 4 for further discussion). Woodford continued in the letter to identify the bow as originating from the south east end of Bougainville, but which was brought for sale to Shortland Island, or Alu, which is indicative of the trade networks which existed in that area. He further mentioned the food bowl, which he had forgotten he had sent Wootton-Isaacson, as coming from Ugi or San Cristobal (Makira) (Plate 36). No mention of Woodford's association is mentioned on this object's index card, yet a broken label discovered stuck inside the object, now on display in the MAA, states it was "Sent by Chas. M. Woodford in 1904" (Plate 37).⁵⁴ Another important object was discussed by Woodford in the 1926 letter: a scale model of a *tomoko*, or war canoe, which was made at Roviana MAA 1948.2628a-c) (Plate 34 and 35).⁵⁵ In his 1909 article on the canoes of the Solomon Islands Woodford commented that this model, which measures about twenty-four feet long, took 18 months to complete and that it was a faithful representation of a large captured war canoe used by the District Officer in Gizo (Woodford 1909a:511). This therefore is a to-scale miniature representation of the *tomoko* captured by Woodford at Nusarua, near Oneavesi Island, Roviana Lagoon, used by Mahaffy while resident in Gizo on punitive raids against local communities, and later sold to a museum in Germany.⁵⁶ This object will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

In the 1926 letter Woodford also mentioned a stone mortar from Gatokae, in the New Georgia group, which was also sent to Wootton-Isaacson, yet this object did not form part of the Beaumont donation. In a 1906 letter to Read at the BM in which he discussed a separate stone mortar from Gatokae that he sold to them in 1906 (BM Oc1906,0720.1) Woodford mentioned that he sent a similar one to Wootton-Isaacson when he posted the model canoe (BM[A] Woodford to Read, 22nd March 1906). Of the BM example, he stated that it cost him eight shillings from the trader (unnamed) from whom he purchased it, and:

[t]hey are used for pounding food and that they are preferred to the ordinary wooden mortars because the operation of pounding in a stone bowl makes less noise and is not so likely to attract the attention of hungry neighbours.

⁵⁴ It is possible that Wootton-Isaacson labelled the objects in his collection personally, and these were not removed at the time of MAA's acquisition.

⁵⁵ The name or names of the maker[s] of the model *tomoko* were not recorded by Woodford.

⁵⁶ It is presently unclear which German museum the *tomoko* was sold to.

The Royal Geographical Society

In 1913 Woodford sent a letter to John Scott Keltie, then secretary for the RGS, providing an account of a visit he had undertaken in 1912 to Vanikoro Island, part of the Santa Cruz Islands (RGS/CB8/Woodford). Although there on official business Woodford had made time to enquire of the locals about the disappearance of the ships of La Perouse which were wrecked on that island in 1788 and the remains of which were discovered by Captain Peter Dillon in 1827 and Dumont D'Urville the following year. Woodford obtained a piece of lead, a bullet, and a piece of sheet copper with the inscription "B^O" on it. Although Woodford noted that the copper sheet was most likely not part of the La Perouse wreck he sent these three items to Scott Keltie in a separate package, but noted in his letter to him that if the RGS were not interested in keeping them then the institution should throw them away. The copper sheet and bullet now form part of the RGS collection (Artefact F 7), but the piece of lead which Woodford also sent was not accessioned.



Plate 34: The scale model of a *tomoko* which was made at Roviana for Frederick Wootton-Isaacson and sent to him by Woodford. Woodford stated that this model was a faithful representation of the *tomoko* captured by him at during a raid on Nusarua, in the Roviana Lagoon in 1900, and used by Mahaffy.
(MAA 1948.2628a-c)



Plate 35: Detail of the model *tomoko*.
(MAA 1948.2628a-c)



Plate 36: A food bowl from Makira, sent to Frederick Wootton-Isaacson from Woodford after 1903. This object is now on display at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge.
(MAA 1948.2626)

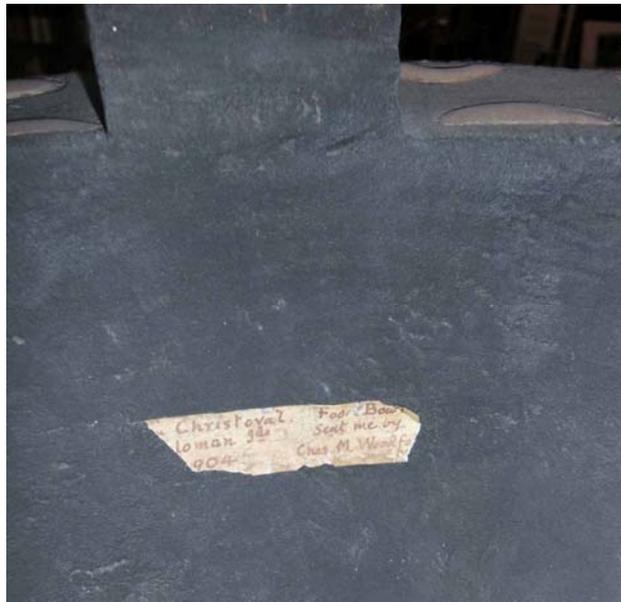


Plate 37: Detail of the label found on the inside of the food bowl which indicated that this object had in fact been collected by Woodford and sent to Wootton-Isaacson. (MAA 1948.2626)

Chart 1: Percentage of Solomon Island objects in the Woodford Collection

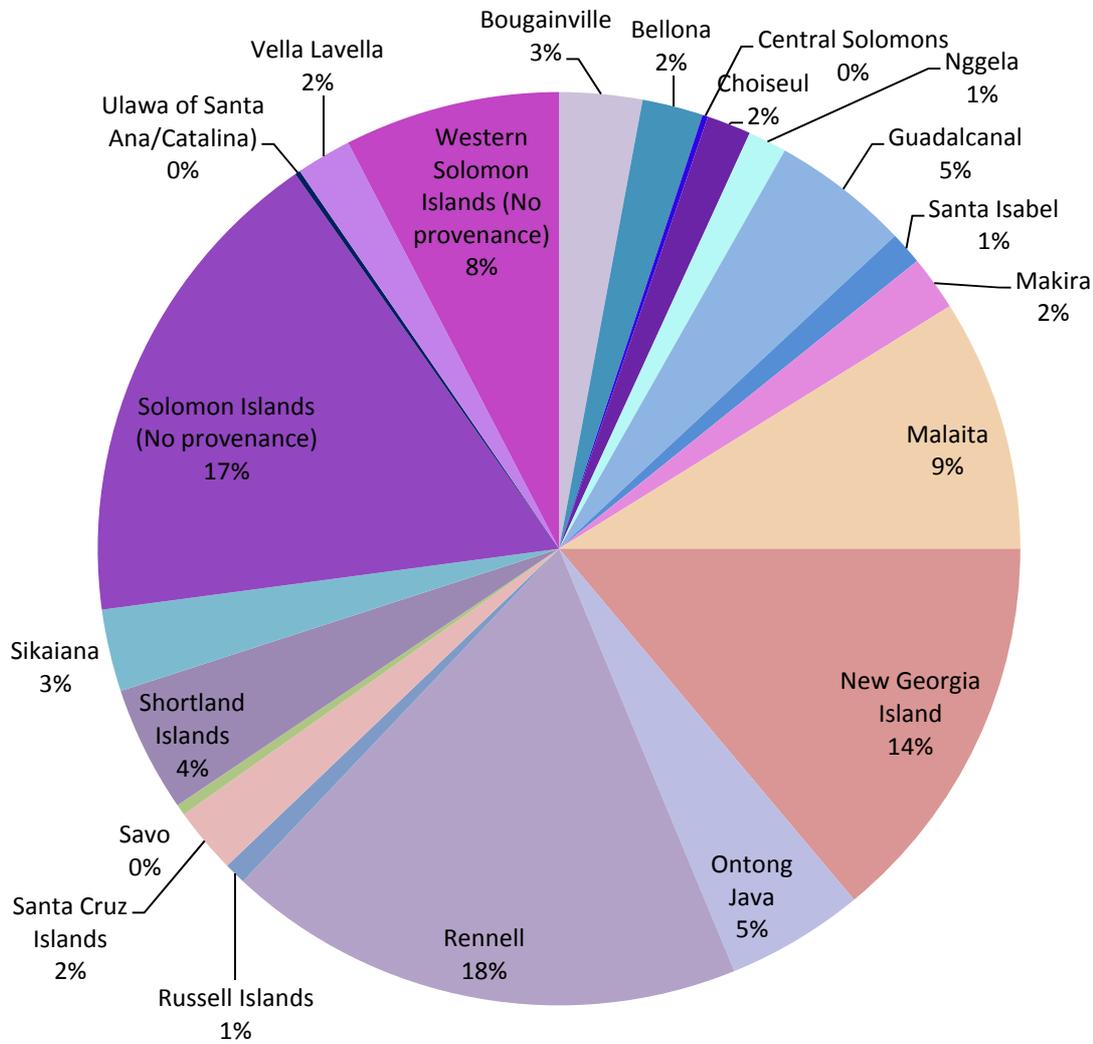
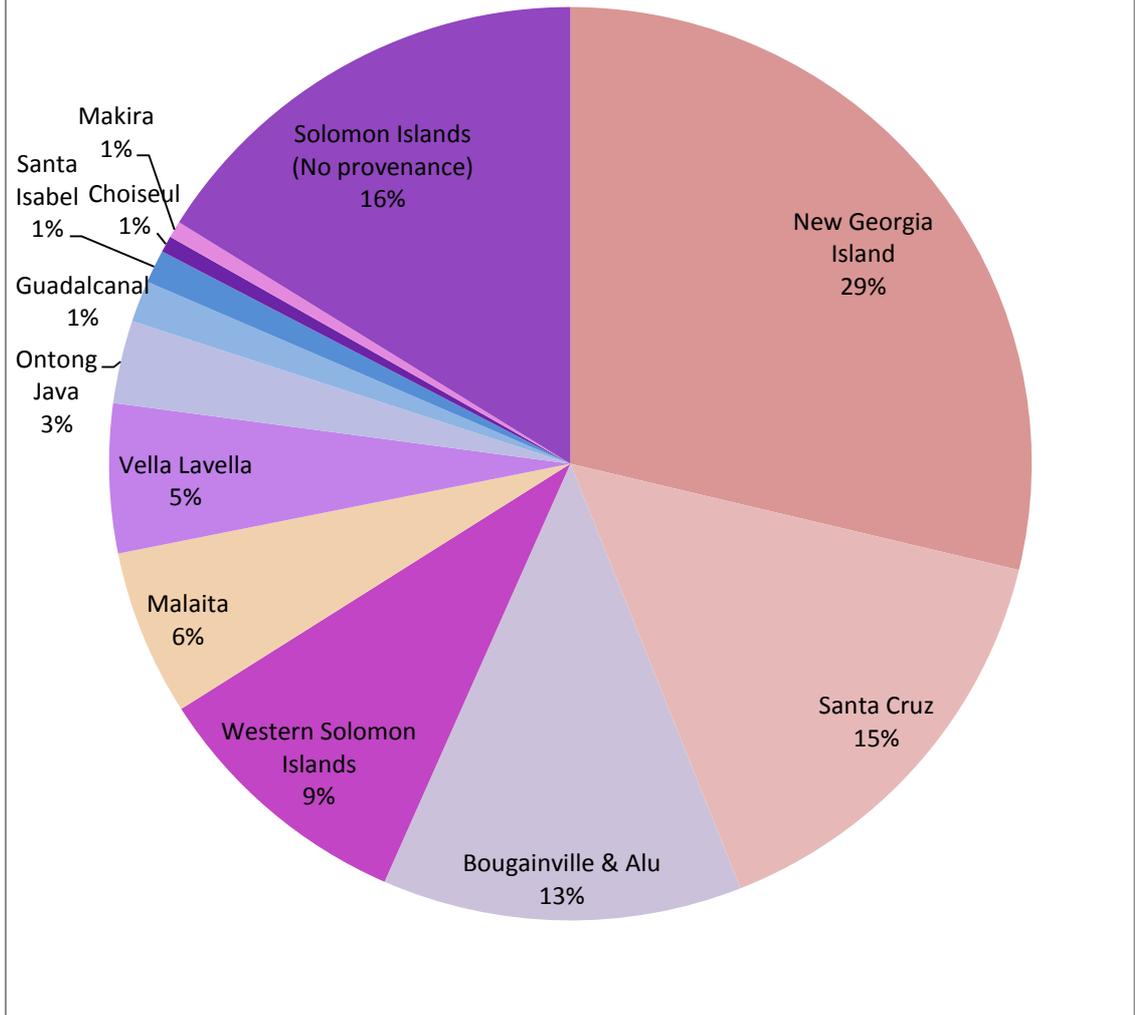


Chart 2: Percentage of Solomon Island objects in the Mahaffy Collection



The Mahaffy collection

Collected between 1896 and 1914 the Mahaffy collection comprises 530 objects, brought back to Europe at various times between 1903 and 1914.⁵⁷ Like Woodford, Mahaffy began collecting objects as soon as he arrived in the Pacific. This initial collecting is examined in Chapter Six. Although he only published two academic papers, Mahaffy appears to have been eager to situate himself within the wider academic developments of this period. By associating his name with the Solomon Islands (1902) and Banaba (Ocean Island) (1910b) and by forming collections of objects – either for sale or donation – he was, again like Woodford, establishing an academic link within anthropological circles. Connected with this, Mahaffy also wrote three texts to accompany his collection. These undated texts, held by both the MAA and the NMI, are entitled a “Collection of Arms and other objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903 by Arthur Mahaffy” which contains the “Catalogue Raisonné” and a “Supplementary List of objects brought home in 1914” (MAA[A] OA1/1/3; NMI[A] 21/A&I/1923). Along with his two publications on the Solomons and Banaba, these texts, particularly those associated with his collection, provide critical information on Mahaffy’s views, the people he worked with, and also about the objects he collected. They are a useful tool in offering an insight into his personalised perspective on the indigenous societies and cultures he encountered during his time in the Pacific. But they also contain the possibilities of teasing out aspects of indigenous people’s lives (cf. Douglas 1998; Stoler 2009). It is possible that Mahaffy intended publishing the introductory text to his collection on the Solomons at some stage. 60% of the overall collection is detailed in the two catalogues, within which seventy-three objects (14%) have acquisition details. It is possible that Mahaffy intended to document the remaining objects at a later stage. Within his collection and its associated catalogues can be seen his interest in the ordinary, everyday objects used by the indigenous people he encountered, as well as items with more ritual associations. Using the information contained within these catalogues, the collection can be broken down into objects that were looted, traded, purchased, commissioned or obtained by gift (see Table 6).

⁵⁷ One object, a *tomoko*, was donated to Museum Victoria in 1901 and remains in the Pacific region.

Table 5: The distribution of the 530 ethnographic objects known to have been collected by Mahaffy between 1895 and 1914

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
The National Museum of Ireland	519
The Pitt Rivers Museum	10
Museum Victoria	1
Total	530

Geographic range of the Mahaffy collection

Unlike Woodford, who spent the majority of his working life in the Solomons, Mahaffy’s various appointments with the Western Pacific High Commission resulted in his travelling to many different parts of the Western Pacific, a fact that is represented in his collection. He was only resident in the Solomons between 1898 and 1904, after which he took up an appointment initially as Government Secretary in Fiji, and from 1908 as Assistant to the High Commissioner. Within these roles he frequently re-visited the Solomons, this time as Woodford’s superior. He also acted as Temporary Resident Commissioner for both the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Tuvalu & Kiribati) and the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) on several occasions. As such, Mahaffy’s collection is representative of this movement around the Pacific – 341 objects (64.5%) of the total collection is from the Solomons, 140 objects (26.5%) comes from other areas in the Western Pacific, mostly those under British control, and 49 objects (9%) are of unknown provenance. Table 7 details the geographical range of his collection.

However, Mahaffy did not travel in person to every location from which objects in his collection came. Within his collection are nine Admiralty Islands objects, including two aprons (AE:1923.83-84), a shell necklace (AE:1923.85), a water bottle (AE:1923.86), two obsidian spear heads (AE:1923.87-88), a grass bag (AE:1923.101), a hunger belt (AE:1923.103), and a second grass bag (AE:1923.392) (Plates 38 to 40). All but the last are documented in the “Catalogue Raisonné”, and were therefore collected by 1903, at which stage Mahaffy returned to Europe with the objects he had collected since his arrival in the Pacific. In the catalogue he states that he had never travelled to the Admiralty



Plate 38: Admiralty Islands Apron. One of two aprons presented to Mahaffy by William Hamilton, a pear shell concessioner in the Solomons. (NMI AE:1923.83)



Plate 39: Shell and glass trade bead necklace, Admiralty Islands. (NMI AE:1923.85)



Plate 40: Admiralty Islands obsidian-headed spear. (NMI AE:1923.88)

Islands, but had been given the two aprons by William Hamilton, a pearl-shell concessioner who had resided in that area (Mahaffy n.p.).⁵⁸ Mahaffy does not provide any further information on how he acquired the remaining Admiralty Island objects, but it must be assumed that he either traded for or purchased them from other traders or travellers.

He was also aware of other colonial officials collecting objects of ethnographic interest. Woodford was collecting on behalf of the British Museum, and also privately for his own collection, and Mahaffy stated that he saw the collection of Sir William MacGregor at Port Moresby (Mahaffy n.p.; Quinnell 2000).⁵⁹ Again, as this comment is included in the “*Catalogue Raisonné*” Mahaffy would have visited Port Moresby prior to 1904. The catalogue entry that contains this note is for three bamboo arrows from Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen, then part of German New Guinea (AE:1923.89-90&371).⁶⁰

Unsurprisingly, as Mahaffy was based in the Western Solomons, it is from that region that the majority of his Solomon Islands collection comes. Of the 341 Solomons objects in his collection, 149 come from the Western Province: the New Georgia region (ninety-eight objects); Vella Lavella (eighteen objects); Choiseul (two objects); and Western Solomons but unknown provenance (thirty-two objects). Objects from Santa Cruz make up the next largest region represented (fifty-two objects), followed by Bougainville and Alu (forty-three objects), Malaita (twenty objects), Ontong Java (ten objects),

⁵⁸ See Appendix III and Bennett (1987: 132-3).

⁵⁹ See Welsch (2007) for a history of the museum at Port Moresby.

⁶⁰ Mahaffy noted that MacGregor had a bamboo knife in his collection which had been made with the intention of cutting his head off with (Mahaffy n.p.). For a biography of MacGregor, see Joyce (1971).

Table 6: Acquisition details provided for the 310 objects in the two Mahaffy catalogues

<i>Method</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
Unknown	237
Gift	31
Loot	10
Purchase	4
Commissioned/ Purchased	10
“Found”	8
Total	310

Guadalcanal (five objects), Santa Isabel (four objects), Makira (two objects), and fifty-five objects of unknown Solomons provenance (see Table 8 and Chart 2).

Within the Santa Cruz objects of Mahaffy’s collection is an example of a loom, upon which a partly woven apron mat is attached (NMI AE:1923.100) (Plate 41). The Santa Cruz Islands are partly Polynesian outliers, yet the presence of the loom and weaving highlights a cultural link with Micronesia (Kaufmann 1997:559). Like Woodford, Mahaffy displayed an interest in collecting tools and implements used in the manufacture of indigenous objects. Yet for this particular object Mahaffy commented in his catalogue that he was unable to collect the shuttle used in the weaving process, noting that ‘nothing would induce a Cruzian to part with his shuttle which is most “tabu” of [sic] holy’ (Mahaffy n.p.). In this case what might seem a more insignificant artefact when compared to the loom or a finished cloth, the shuttle was in fact the object which was most precious (cf. Weiner 1985, 1992). Weaving is only carried out in a limited number of places in Melanesian and Santa Cruz is one of them where it had been the work of men, making this loom special and important in Santa Cruzian’s understandings of contact with Europeans and their collecting (Woodford 1916:33; Koch 1971:99; Davenport 2005:20-21).⁶¹

⁶¹ Davenport has discussed the use of this woven fabric to dress not only men during ceremonial dance and which was also occasionally used to dress *dukna* wooden sculptural figures (2005).

Table 7: Geographic range of the Mahaffy collection

<i>Provenance</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
Solomon Islands	341
Kiribati & Tuvalu (Gilbert & Ellice Islands)	53
Vanuatu (New Hebrides)	28
Samoa	17
Fiji	14
Admiralty Islands	9
New Guinea, inc. New Ireland & New Britain	5
Marshall Islands	5
Tokelau	3
Tasman Atoll	3
Banaba	2
Australia	1
Provenance unknown	49
Total	530

Institutional acquisitions of the Mahaffy collection

The Australian Museum

The first institution with which Mahaffy appears to have become associated as a collector was the Australian Museum in Sydney. In 1896 he presented a Marshall Islands navigation chart along with a letter to the museum describing the purpose of the chart and how it was used (AM[A] M22/1896; Mahaffy n.p). Unfortunately, this object (E.05512) is presently missing from the museum’s collection. He stated that the chart was made between 1894 and 1895 in the Marshall Islands for Mr RL Stevenson, the author and traveller who resided in Samoa, but it was not completed until after his death in 1894. Mahaffy did not state how he came to possess it, but the entwining of the chart’s biography with that of the famous Stevenson made this a unique object – an association which would have increased the economic and cultural value of the object (cf. Hooper 2003).

In 1901 Mahaffy offered the museum a *tomoko* for their collection provided the museum would pay the carriage costs to Sydney. As will be noted in chapter 5, during his punitive work in the Solomons Mahaffy accumulated quite a collection of *tomoko*, which he retained at his station at Gizo.⁶² These *tomoko* were items which Mahaffy seized from local groups, they were neither gifts nor sales to him. In essence these served as signifiers of collecting as a form of iconoclasm: the *tomoko* had been removed from their makers and the people who used them, in effect destroying them to their original owners. This destruction was furthered through Mahaffy giving them away. This idea of collection as a form of iconoclasm has parallels with the case of *Malanggan* sculpture collection in New Ireland.⁶³ In that case, from the late nineteenth century onwards New Irelanders gave, or predominantly sold, *Malanggan* carvings to resident traders or visiting collectors. While some carvings had been used in a ritual context, others had been deliberately made for sale to Europeans (Küchler 1992, 2002). Whereas in that case the destruction of the artefact was critical to its purpose and agency, and was actively pursued by the indigenous owners, in the Solomons *tomoko* were actively sought out by the colonial administration for destruction. In essence offering *tomoko* to museums was a practical way of disposing of such large objects. However, there is no record in the museum's collections database for any *tomoko* having come from Mahaffy.

Museum Victoria, Melbourne

Mahaffy did manage to donate one *tomoko* in 1901 (Plates 42 and 43). He donated a large Roviana *tomoko* to Museum Victoria in Melbourne when Graham Officer, who was in the region collecting on behalf of the museum, stayed with him at Gizo (MV X 8042). Officer himself commented that while he was at Gizo Mahaffy's own *tomoko* was being 'done up' by some local people who were skilled in such work (Officer MS Papers). Mahaffy's assistance to Officer is discussed later in the thesis, but it is interesting to note here that Mahaffy himself did not collect any *tomoko* for his own collection. The cost of packing up an object of this scale and the price of the carriage back to Europe would have made this an expensive exercise. There would also have been significant storage issues for an object

⁶² It is argued in chapter 5 how these *tomoko*, which Mahaffy kept on the beach at Gizo, served as symbols of the disempowerment of the local big men from whom they had been taken. It is further considered how such a collection of objects served as potential signifiers of both Mahaffy and Woodford themselves taking on the persona of a big man.

⁶³ See Hooper (2008) for a discussion of collecting as iconoclasm.



Plate 41: A partly woven apron mat attached to a loom, Santa Cruz Islands. (NMI AE:1923.100)

<i>Table 8: Numerical Distribution of Solomon Islands objects from the Mahaffy Collection</i>	
<i>Island/ Region</i>	<i>Number of Objects</i>
New Georgia	98
Santa Cruz	52
Bougainville & Alu	43
Malaita	20
Vella Lavella	18
Ontong Java	10
Guadalcanal	5
Santa Isabel	4
Choiseul	2
Makira	2
Solomon Islands (no provenance)	55
Western Solomons (no provenance)	32
Total	341

of this size once back in England or Ireland, but an institution such as the Museum in Melbourne was in a position to pay the costs in acquiring such an object.

Importantly, in Museum Victoria there are several Solomons objects for which Mahaffy provided the museum with provenance details. These objects did not come from him, but he appears to have visited the museum sometime after 1900 to look at their collections, during which visit he identified the origins of certain objects.⁶⁴ The exact date he was in the museum is unclear from the object register details: Mahaffy's wife was born in Melbourne so presumably they visited her family there, and in December 1909 visited Melbourne on behalf of the WPHC to attend a Radio-Telegraphic Conference (CO 225/91). What is important is that Mahaffy, through his work in the Solomons and his assistance to Graham Officer in his collecting, was considered by museum staff as an expert on the Solomons and was in a position to identify the provenance of certain objects for them.

The Pitt Rivers Museum

On 1st November 1921, eight objects collected by Mahaffy were purchased by the Pitt Rivers Museum at Stevens Auction Rooms, London. These objects include a slit drum and two strikers from Fiji (PRM 1921.87.3.1-3); a model canoe from either Samoa or Kiribati (PRM 1927.87.1); a model outrigger canoe from Kiribati (PRM 1927.87.2); a Fijian headrest (PRM 1927.87.4); and two wooden figures from New Georgia (PRM 1927.87.5-6) (Plates 44 and 45). No information is provided in the PRM catalogue on who sold these objects, which the museum purchased using petty cash for eighteen shillings.⁶⁵ On 2nd December 1948 two further objects collected by Mahaffy were purchased by the PRM at Blenheim during a sale of the personal effects of Viscount Harcourt. These are a pandanus-leaf mat skirt from Samoa (PRM 1948.12.1B), and a Samoan mat (PRM 1948.12.2B).⁶⁶ Mahaffy had presented these two objects to Mrs. Harcourt, then living at 39 Bryanston Street in London on 21st October 1914. A letter from Mahaffy to her which accompanies these mats provides biographical details for the objects and their original owners, and how Mahaffy came by them:

⁶⁴ The latest accessioned objects were from 1900.

⁶⁵ A copy of the Stevens catalogue for this sale has not been located.

⁶⁶ Both mats are presently held within picture frames in the PRM store and it was not possible to remove them for closer examination. For a photograph of 1948.12.1B see Hooper (2006:258).

Dear Mrs Harcourt,

I leave two mats for you. A short note as to what they are may perhaps interest you.

1 [1948.12.1B]. The cleaner and newer one comes from the Atua [sic] district of Samoa (Upon [Upolu] Island) and was given to me by a chief named Salanoa - the nephew of Mataafe sometime "King" of Samoa whose doings and fate have filled many white, blue and yellow books, and whose insurrection was the theme of Stevenson's book "A footnote to History". Mats such as this were, and are, the most valuable form of native property among the Samoan natives, - they form part of the dowry of all ladies of high degree and are rarely, if ever, sold by the natives - who value them more than anything they have. They are hand-made of course, and without looms, from the leaf of a particular kind of pandanus. They are carefully kept and I have seen some over 100 years old - the old and very fine mats have names - and they all take a long time in the making seldom less than six months and often a year. No. 2 [1948.12.2B]. comes from Tonga though it was almost certainly made in Samoa. It is over 50 years old and has as you will see, been patched in several places. It was given to me by Fatafehi the father of the present King of Tonga and the last of the line of Sacred Kings or Tin [Tui] Tonga. There used to exist in that group a system of temporal and spiritual Kings side by side. The spiritual King was much the greater man and was descended directly from the ancestral Gods, through about 30 generations of man - the temporal King was elected. Tongans almost certainly got the habit of wearing these mats from Samoa which they invaded and conquered about 150 years ago. Tongans always like these mats to appear old and tattered and would never wear a new one. Only the highest chiefs can wear them and on occasions of ceremony. This mat was part of Fatafehi's dower and he died 2 years ago aged 74 and was married quite young and the mat may well have been old when he got it. They are no "spolia" from Samoa such as a German flag, or the Governor's seal, but such as they are they have an interest and I am happy that you should have them. Please forgive this discursive note but I thought you would like to have some explanations with the mats themselves.

I am always most Truly yours Arthur Mahaffy.

[PRM online object database records. Mistranscription of names/corrections in square brackets]



Plate 42: The *tomoko* presented to Museum Victoria in 1901 by Mahaffy (MV X 8042). This *tomoko* is now part of the permanent display at the museum.

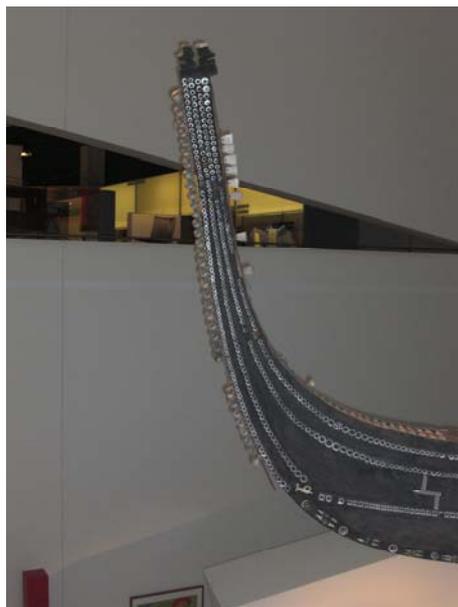


Plate 43: Detail of the bow of MV X 8042.



Plate 44: Slit Drum with two strikers, Fiji. Purchased by The Pitt Rivers Museum in November 1912.
(PRM 1921.87.3.1-3)



Plate 45: A model canoe most likely from Samoa. Purchased by The Pitt Rivers Museum in November 1912. (PRM 1921.87.1)

The fact that Mahaffy provided a historical and social context for these mats in his letter highlights his interest in recording the significance such objects had in their original manufacture and use contexts.

Much like Tongan mats, *kie hingoa*, Samoan mats had their own biographies or personal histories, biographies which became entwined with the biography of their owner (cf. Kaeppler 1999; Schoeffel 1999). Samoan mats, known as *'ie toga* are, historically and today, are extremely valuable heirloom objects which though understood as inalienable possessions, still could be gifted or circulated with the understanding that gift exchange was not necessarily reciprocal; rather these objects circulated with the expectation that when they turned up again they would travel along a slightly alternative route (Kaeppler 1999:168; also see Weiner 1992). The fact that both mats were presented to Mahaffy by men of high rank within Samoan society perhaps serves as an indicator of either his position in society as a member of the Colonial Office, or perhaps they serve as a reflection of the level of personal esteem in which he was held by the individuals who gifted them.

The National Museum of Ireland

Apart from the one recorded instance of his gifting objects (see above), Mahaffy appears to have retained the majority of the objects he collected.⁶⁷ In 1922, a few years after Mahaffy's death, his sister Rachel Mahaffy entered into correspondence with both the National Museum in Ireland and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology to sell her deceased brother's collection.⁶⁸ Rachel had housed the collection in the family home in Howth, Co. Dublin, prior to lending it temporarily to the National Museum in Dublin city in the early 1920s. She now wished to sell it due to space considerations (MAA[A] OA1/1/5). Another factor that prompted the sale of the collection was the financial assistance the sale would provide for Arthur's children. His widow Enid, described by Rachel as a difficult person who was quite incapable of handling money sensibly, was now totally reliant upon a Colonial Office pension for the care and upbringing of her children, and funds for the sale would supplement this (CO 152/405/6).

⁶⁷ There are three Solomon Islands objects in the Ulster Museum which were donated in 1924 and 1933 by WJ Mahaffy. There is a possibility that the donor was William James Mahaffy, Arthur's uncle. However, as there is no additional information in the museums registers to state that WJ was indeed William Mahaffy and no direct link between these objects and Arthur Mahaffy has been established, these objects have not been included in the overall study.

⁶⁸ Correspondence referring to the sale of the Mahaffy collection is held in the archives of both these institutions: NMI[A] 21/A&I/1923 and MAA[A] OA1/1/16 Box 190; OA1/1/3; OA1/1/4; OA1/1/5 Box 85.

William Ridgeway, an acquaintance of Rachel who knew the collection, advised her to have typescript copies made of Mahaffy's catalogues, but to keep the original copies safe (MAA[A] OA1/1/5 Box 85).⁶⁹ Once these documents were complete she forwarded copies to him, commenting that she would consider it a great kindness if he would send them to anyone he thought might be interested in purchasing the collection, noting that she was anxious to have the collection kept together as it retained greater interest whole (MMA[A] OA1/1/16). She also enquired if he thought it would be worthwhile advertising in one of the scientific papers. In the same letter, she mentioned that Mr. Armstrong from the National Museum in Dublin, to whom she had also spoken about the collection, was going to have someone look over the collection and so she would also send copies of the catalogues to him. During the period Rachel was attempting to sell the collection Ireland was ravaged with civil war. With reference to the political situation she commented that 'I feel it is pretty hopeless to think of their staying in this unhappy country where nothing but politics seem to count in public affairs' (*Ibid.*).

In May 1922 Ridgeway and von Hügel corresponded about the collection, its value, and possible purchasers for it (MAA[A] OA1/1/5 Box 85). Ridgeway wanted an estimated value for the collection from von Hügel, who had noted that the Solomon Island collection in their museum was already too large to accommodate Mahaffy's collection. Ridgeway claimed he could probably get Currelly from Toronto Museum to purchase the collection if he sent a typed copy of the catalogue to him. However, in February 1923 following a letter by Rachel to the National Museum stating that she was anxious her brother's collection should remain in Ireland as she knew this would have been his wish, J Buckley, then Acting Director of the museum wrote confirming that he would recommend the purchase of the collection in its entirety (NMI[A] 21/A&I/1923). On 16th March 1923 Buckley again wrote to her confirming that the collection would be purchased for £170, the amount she asked for, even though the museum privately valued the collection at £389 (*Ibid.*).⁷⁰

Epilogue: Reflection on the collections

The range and diversity of both collections make them fine examples of the material culture of the Solomon Islands during the early years of British colonial rule and indicators

⁶⁹ To date the original manuscripts have not been located.

⁷⁰ Interestingly, in the same letter Rachel mentioned that some objects had been sent to the museum by mistake, such as an Egyptian kurbash [Kalabash] and she wished these to be returned to her as she felt they disrupted the integrity of the overall collection.

of the changes that were taking place within indigenous society (see Appendix II). As noted in the literature review, in-depth typological analysis of Solomons material culture has been undertaken by ethnographers previously, particularly by Waite in numerous books and catalogues (see bibliography). The numerical volume of both collections and space considerations within this thesis make similar analysis of these collections not feasible. Also, it is not my intention to produce a catalogue of these collections. Instead, objects from all categories are continuously referred to throughout the thesis, and particular objects are highlighted for in-depth discussion. Doing so helps to contextualise the histories and biographies discussed, and to show the level of entanglement between people, objects, and histories. Within this section some brief consideration of some of the types of objects in both collections will highlight the importance of these collections, aspects of the objects' materiality, and how these objects can be read to offer insights into Solomons culture and colonial/indigenous relations following the establishment of the BSIP.

Objects as markers

Let us consider the hunting and fishing objects which are numerous in both collections. While this grouping could be considered a purely functional group of objects, part of the daily life of the fishermen in the Solomons, there is another aspect to these objects. Take for example a selection of fishing lures from this category – objects which are frequently not dwelt upon in Solomons material culture analysis (Plates 46 to 50). Within both collections are small bamboo scoops, varying in length between twenty-one and twenty-seven centimetres long decorated with incised decoration and frequently with a piece of pearl-shell secured into the base using parinarium nut putty (Mahaffy: NMI AE:1923.175-177; Woodford: BM Oc1902,0603.14 and PRM 1954.8.50). In his catalogue Mahaffy named these as *pio-pio*, a lure used throughout the Solomons which was dragged by fishermen through the water to attract bonito fish (Mahaffy n.p.). On the outside of the bamboo are incised representative drawings of bonito fish and frigate birds – two of the most frequently represented and emblematic animals in Solomon Islands art (cf. Waite 1989). Other fish, possibly tuna are also frequently represented, while the frigate birds are often shown holding a fish in their beak. Perhaps the carved fish represented those the fisherman wished to catch, with the frigate birds showing him the way to the schools of fish, much like the hunting scenes depicted in cave drawings, although in this case these



Plate 46: Three *pio-pio* bamboo lures, used to attract bonito fish. The lengths of bamboo have been incised with various fish and bird motifs and the ends of several have a piece of pearl shell inlaid.

(NMI AE:1923.175-177)



Plate 47: Detail of the pearl shell inlay of AE:1923.175.



Plate 48: *Pio-pio* bamboo lure from the Woodford British Museum collection. (Oc1902,0603.14)



Plate 49: *Pio-pio* bamboo lure from the Woodford Pitt Rivers Museum collection. (PRM 1955.8.50)



Plate 50:
Detail of PRM
1955.8.50.

were small portable items which accompanied the fisherman on his catch (cf. Morphy *et al.*, 1989). Within these objects, which at first may seem simple or crude, is embodied the importance and significance these animals had for Solomon Islanders in spiritual terms as totems, as emblems of societal belief, and in the case of the bonito as a source of food. Frigate birds, also known as man-of-war birds are renowned for their hunting abilities throughout the Pacific. Bonito fish were central to male initiation in the Eastern Solomons (Davenport 1981, Waite 1989), while in the Western Solomons, though not associated with initiation, bonito fishing had strong parallels with the other ritual activity of headhunting and had shrines dedicated to success in catching bonito (Hocart 1931, 1935, 1937; Waite 1989). Hviding has commented on how groups with totemic links to sharks and/or crocodiles, either spiritual or protective, are forbidden to kill, harm, or eat such creatures, while more specifically people from the Langalanga Lagoon on Malaita refuse to eat *Tridacna* clams because such a clam was the protector and nurturer of their totemic ancestral shark (1998:263). Therefore, these “simple” lures contain within them a wealth of significance and show common totemic links between the various regions and people of the Solomons.

Through the incising of various animal motifs on the outside of the bamboo, through the addition of pearl-shell, and perhaps words which were spoken during the object’s manufacture or use which have not been recorded, this simple device was transformed into a potent tool. Such objects materialised various set of domains – the sea, land, animals, birds, fish, people, and ancestors – turning them into objects which served as efficacious tools for the fisherman who used them (Hocart 1931; Hviding 1998; Bell & Geismar 2009). It may be that neither Woodford nor Mahaffy paid much attention to such imagery and the object’s significance, yet through object analysis alongside textual and archival research the importance and significance of objects like these are elevated above the realm of simple functional objects.

Conclusion

These examples briefly indicate the potentiality for collections-based research, and the history, narratives, and significance that can be elucidated through object examination alongside associated documentation (both private letters and published works) and utilising any indigenous information available. These objects highlight the extent of networks of relations within the Pacific and the UK and Ireland which were established

around objects, both personal and professional. They also indicate how objects worked as active agents in the colonial scene. Both men used their positions within the BSIP to purchase, trade for, commission, or take the objects they wished, and these transactions and exchanges ultimately shaped each collection. The following two chapters examine each man's biography, providing detail on their work in the Pacific and interest in the people they encountered, and their motivations for collecting. They also examine the contradiction of both men's advocating the fair treatment of indigenous labourers while showing willingness to take extreme measures to coerce indigenous populations into compliance with colonial rule. In effect, aspects of both men's actions and work within the Solomons, such as punitive raids and the looting that followed them, and their prominent positions within Solomons society, may have been understood by locals as white men taking on the persona of big-men and headhunters – a hypothesis that is elaborated throughout this study.

Chapter 4

The Professional Amateur: natural history and colonialism in the career of Charles Morris Woodford (1852-1927)

It would be ungenerous, as it would be unjust, not to ascribe the attainment of so satisfactory a condition of affairs to the untiring efforts and personal devotion of the present Resident Commissioner. Mr. Woodford presided at the birth of the Protectorate; he nursed it through the vicissitudes of a somewhat sickly childhood; he now has his reward in seeing the result of his labour in what may be called the healthy and prosperous adolescence of the Protectorate, to which he has devoted twelve years of the hardest work with the minimum of assistance; years passed in an unhealthy climate with hardly any cultivated society, and suffering, as I must say, from the feelings, not always without justification, that his labours were neither fully appreciated nor thoroughly understood. (Arthur Mahaffy, General Report on the British Solomon Islands, 21st December 1908, CO 225/85)

Introduction

As one of the key actors in the colonial transformation of the Solomons, Charles Morris Woodford has been the subject of several authors' attention (Plate 51). Of the accounts written about him most have focused on his work as a colonial official (Scarr 1967; Coates 1970; Berry 1974; Lever 1974; Heath 1978; Jackson 1978; Bennett 1987; Golden 1993). Only one author, Tennent (1993) has considered Woodford's work as a naturalist and collector. Tennent examined Woodford's zoological collecting on behalf of the Natural History museum and considered his contributions to natural sciences, including the discovery of several genera and



Plate 51: Charles Morris Woodford photographed in London, 1895. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

numerous species of insects, animals and plants, many of which now bear his name (1993:426). To date, his collecting practices as an amateur ethnologist have not been examined. This biography ties Woodford's early career as a naturalist and explorer together with his later appointment as Resident Commissioner in the Solomons, and examines his work as a collector, government agent and amateur ethnographer. By piecing together biographical elements from Woodford's life this chapter highlights how throughout his career (both as a naturalist and government agent) he attempted to position himself in the developing scientific field of anthropology, while also gaining a reputation as a naturalist for his flora and fauna collecting. It also examines how employment in the colonial service as an administrator enabled him to further his initial career ambitions as a naturalist and granted him sustained access to indigenous peoples, their objects, and the natural bounty of their islands. In offering a critique of Woodford's work in the Solomons, this chapter also considers contemporary

issues that affected his duties as Resident Commissioner, and explores some of the professional relationships he established, including his relationship with Mahaffy.

The decision by the British Government to appoint a Resident Commissioner was, in part, due to the determination, passion and political manoeuvrings of Woodford. During the nineteenth century the inhabitants of the Solomons had gained a reputation among Europeans for savagery and violence, and as the group had no obvious political or economic benefits neither the British, French, nor German governments were eager to accept responsibility for the region. Despite this, following the annexation of Fiji by the British in 1874, and the Western Pacific Order in Council in 1877, the Solomons fell under the loose jurisdiction of the British High Commissioner based in Suva.⁷¹ However, in order to safeguard their economic interests in the Pacific, in particular the highly valued Australian colonies, from French and German interference, the British declared the Solomons a Protectorate in 1893. But this protection had a price. It was issued on the understanding that the group was to be entirely financially self-supporting (Ripon minute, 24th December 1892, CO 225/39; Scarr 1967:256). The ramifications of this proviso will be discussed later in this chapter.

The declaration of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIP) prompted Woodford to offer himself as a candidate for the position of Resident Commissioner (Woodford to Meade, 8th August 1893, CO 225/44). Although he had to wait several years before he was appointed to this post, Woodford never lost the enthusiasm he had developed for the Solomons during his first visits to the group between 1886 and 1889. In the private correspondence and official reports that Woodford sent to the Colonial Office, he painted a picture of the Solomons as a place of great economic potential and a planter's paradise (Scarr 1967:262-3), but the transformation of the Solomons into a British Protectorate and the pacification of its inhabitants were never going to be straightforward tasks. However, as a result of various factors, including a lack of support from the Colonial Office, the realisation of his vision of and for the Solomons proved to be rather more elusive and took many years to come to fruition.

As a whole the objects Woodford collected throughout his career in the Pacific, both as a naturalist and colonial official, can be considered not just extensions of his person,

⁷¹ This order brought British citizens resident in the Western Pacific under the governance and regulation of the Western Pacific High Commission.

experiences and tastes. Objects helped shape the way people saw themselves. Either as valuable or heirloom objects, or ordinary domestic objects, each speaks of networks of connection and exchange (Hoskins 1998). In terms of his natural history specimen collecting Woodford named new species he discovered, using his own name. A small selection of flora and fauna collected and documented by him include birds (*Macrocorax woodfordi*), bats (*Pteropus woodfordi*), butterflies and moths (*Papilio woodfordi*; *Jamides woodfordi*), plants (*Saccolabium woodfordi*), and reptiles and amphibians (*Lepidodactylus woodfordi*) (see Tennent 1999). His collections – both ethnographic and natural history – also reflect local responses to his collecting desires, in terms of the access granted to him to local knowledge of natural history, and of negotiations over the purchase or trade of objects.

Initially considering Woodford's education and formal training, this chapter follows the development of his interests in the zoology, his initial career ambitions in this field and the network of contacts within this field that he created.

Early life

The eldest son of Henry Pack Woodford, a successful middle-class trade merchant in wines and spirits, Charles Morris Woodford was born on the 30th October 1852 in Gravesend, Kent. From the age of twelve he was sent to the exclusive Tonbridge School in Kent as a boarder. It was here, in schooling quite representative of Victorian values, that the young Woodford received a structured and classical schooling, while also developing a strong constitution and an interest in the natural world.⁷² Dr. Welldon, the headmaster, encouraged an interest in the natural world in boys who were most likely to undertake careers in the colonies or India, believing this would be a useful skill for them (Heath 1978:194). In the young Charles he found a willing and dedicated student in the pursuit of collecting natural history specimens, a study that Welldon rewarded in exempting Woodford from fagging.⁷³ Woodford had a natural ability that earned him several school prizes (Heath 1978:194). However, any initial ambitions Woodford may have had of pursuing a career as a naturalist and/or explorer were suspended

⁷² Heath (1978:194) notes that students had quite a regimented routine in school, rising at 6am, drinking beer for breakfast, and receiving a strong schooling in classics and mathematics, while also being encouraged to undertake prayer and a primitive form of rugby in which, by all accounts, there were very few rules.

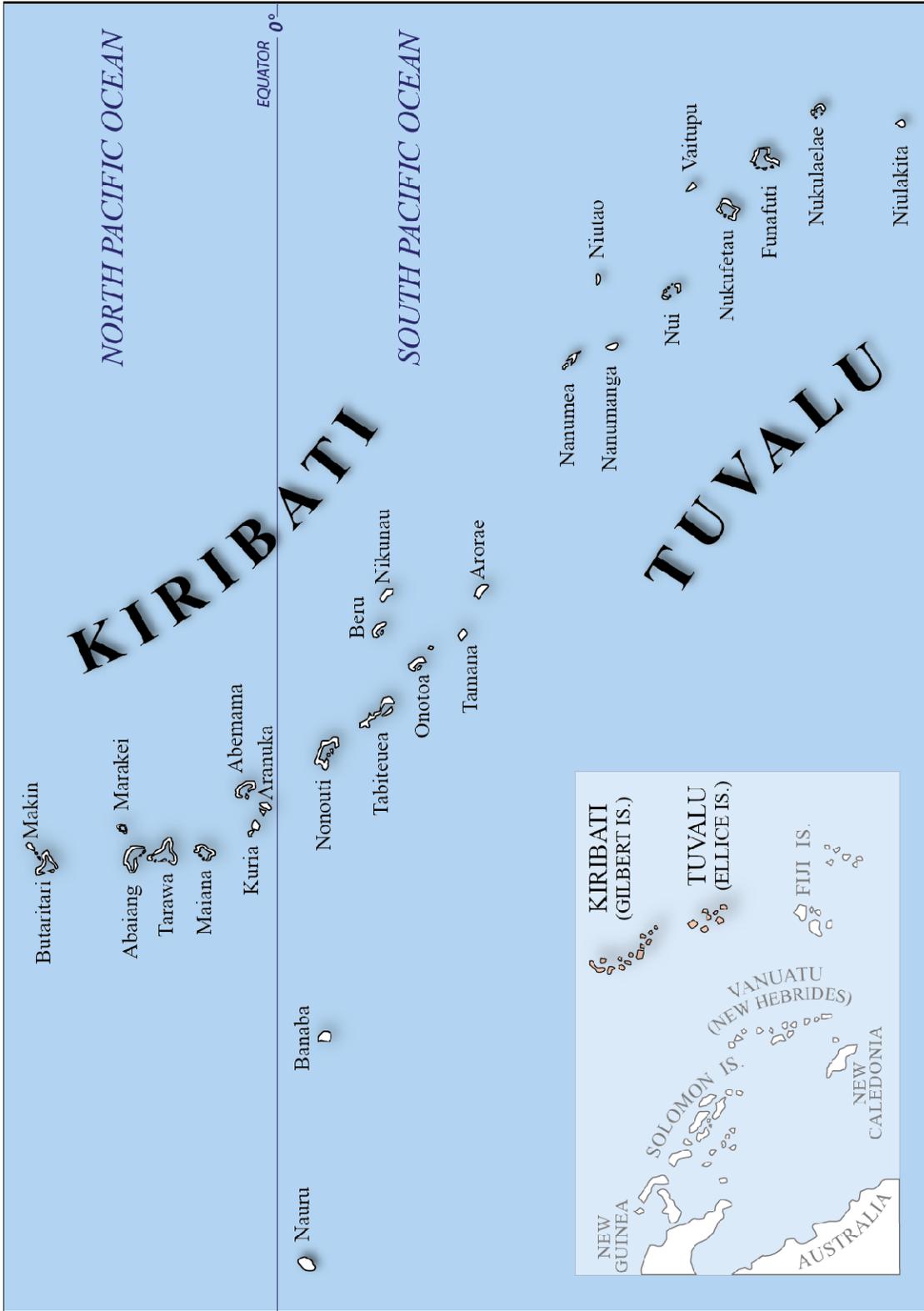
⁷³ Fagging was the practice whereby younger public school students were required to carry out menial tasks for older students.

once his school days were over. While born into a wealthy middle-to-upper class family certainly afforded Woodford the benefits of a privileged schooling and advantages in life, there were also significant disadvantages. He was the eldest son, and as the family business required an heir to run it he was obliged to forego a university education, and more importantly to put aside his ambitions to be naturalist or explorer in the colonies, when he entered his father's wine trade in 1871. Duty bound, he spent the next ten years in the business.

This did not prove to be a very happy or fulfilling period in Woodford's life. Rather, according to Heath (1978:194), his dissatisfaction in his job and his father's increasing authority over him gradually became too much, until at the age of 29 he could take no more and resigned. Perhaps he left because he felt any possible opportunity for adventure or a career as a naturalist was quickly slipping away from him. Regardless, he quickly seized upon his new found freedom, and perhaps in an attempt to experience new places and things, using what savings he had accumulated over the previous ten years he left England and set sail for the Pacific in 1881.

The Amateur Naturalist (1882-1884)

Woodford arrived in Fiji, the seat of British colonial power in the Western Pacific, in early 1882. Since its annexation in 1874 Fiji had become a popular destination for explorers and curio hunters (Thomas 1991:125-184), and Woodford, presumably based in Suva, initiated his career as a naturalist and began collecting butterflies and insects throughout the region. While he was temporarily in a favourable financial position that enabled him to devote all his time to gathering specimens, he most likely had ambitions to sell some of his collection back in England, and thus to make this a business for himself. However, this idyllic state was not to last for long. After almost a year his funds ran out and he was forced to seek employment as a junior clerk in the Fijian government office. Again the role of subordinate does not appear to have suited Woodford, and his work did not leave a favourable impression upon his employer's minds. John Bates Thurston, then Colonial Secretary and later High Commissioner, commenting almost ten years later on Woodford's period spent as a junior clerk noted:



Map produced by Joanne Lai

Map 3: Kiribati and Tuvalu.

For a short time Mr. Woodford held the post of a Junior Clerk in the service of the Fiji Government, and I cannot say that either to myself, or the officers under whom he directly served he appeared of even average value as a public servant (Thurston to CO, 30th March 1894, CO 225/45).

Unsurprisingly, this was not a position Woodford held for long. After an unsatisfactory year in this role he seized the opportunity in 1884 of applying for a position as Government Agent on board the labour ketch *Patience*, which had the duty of returning labourers to Tokelau and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Kiribati and Tuvalu) (Heath 1978:195).⁷⁴ Not only would this voyage, which lasted from March until June 1884, take him away from the bureaucracy and rigidity of government administration, it would afford him his first opportunity of visiting islands not yet under formal European control. What Woodford experienced and witnessed during that voyage, in terms of lawlessness and violence, involving both indigenous people and Europeans, disturbed him greatly (Woodford 1895). He was also critical of the missionary work carried out in that region by the London Missionary Society, whom he believed could be more effective than they were, stating that they claimed:

they cannot afford to keep white missionaries here, but I think more rigid inspection and more definite instructions to the native teachers would conduce to the benefit of the people. The power of the Missionaries here is as absolute as that of any chief in the old days (Woodford Diary, 28th April 1884, Woodford Papers).

Woodford wrote to Thurston, then Assistant High Commissioner, detailing what he had seen, and recommending a closer supervision of the affairs of the group (Heath 1978:195).

Woodford used the opportunity of visiting these places to add to his collection of natural history specimens, and it is also from this voyage that we have the first recorded instance of him purchasing objects. Six fish hooks from Nukufetau in Tuvalu that he collected during this trip were donated to the British Museum in 1892 (BM Oc,+5557-5562) (Plates 52

⁷⁴ In a letter in 1893 to RH Meade, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Woodford states that he served for almost a year in the Government service in Fiji in the Treasury Department, at that time directed by Sir William MacGregor as Receiver General, before resigning some time in 1884 (CO 225/44).

to 55).⁷⁵ In his diary entry for March 19th, the day the *Patience* reached Nukufetau, Woodford described the men, their dress and the various types of fish-hooks they used. In the same entry he noted: ‘I bought a fishing line made of sinnet with a hook made apparently from an old nail with a thread attached for tying on the bait. Very ingeniously made’ – a description that matches the register details for BM Oc,+5557 (Plate 52). Evidently then, Woodford did not approach his ethnographic collecting with rigid collecting ideals, but was intrigued with objects that were not entirely “authentic”, in that they incorporated both indigenous and European elements. This early selection criterion continued throughout Woodford’s collecting career, where both “traditional” and newly-created objects were collected.

In his diary Woodford recorded many other objects that he purchased during this voyage, such as mats, baskets and neck ornaments, including one made of human teeth (from Taputewa), and a sword with sharks teeth set into it (a *rere* or *betia*), which was purchased at Nukunau. Some of these objects were gifts to him from the King of Apamama in Kiribati, but the current location of these is not known. More than ten years after his visit, by which stage the region had been declared a British Protectorate in 1892, Woodford published an account of the Gilbert Islands in *The Geographical Journal* (1895). Perhaps following the observational advice offered by *Notes and Queries*, by the time he wrote this paper Woodford’s interests had extended beyond zoology, and as such he offered some observations on the physiognomy of the native people, their probable origins, lifestyles and material culture. In it he discussed the history of the “discovery” of the various islands by Europeans and their geography while also providing analysis of the flora and fauna, noting the many species he had seen and collected while there.⁷⁶ He believed that the establishment of the Protectorate would mark the end of the Peruvian slave trade from the islands, and that indentured labour for plantation work in Fiji would be stopped, believing that the population were unsuited to such work (Woodford 1895:342):

⁷⁵ Four of the fish hooks consist of a shank of iron with cord or sinnet binding (BM Oc,+5557-5560), one has a pearl shell shank with an iron point attached by sinnet with a feather attached (BM Oc,+5561), and one has a pearl shell shank with a turtle shell point and bound to a length of twine with feathers attached (BM Oc,+5562). This 1892 donation also included two objects from the Solomons, a set of panpipes (Oc,+5555) and a musical instrument (Oc,+5556), both from Guadalcanal.

⁷⁶ Woodford comments that he ‘invariably advocate[s] the use of native names where possible.’ (1895:340).



Plate 52: Nukufetau fish hook, purchased by Woodford on 19th March 1884. Hook consists of a shank of iron with cord or sinnet binding. (BM Oc,+5557)



Plate 53: Nukufetau fish hook. A pearl shell shank with an iron point attached by sinnet with feathers.

(BM Oc,+5561)



Plate 54: Nukufetau fish hook consisting of a shank of iron with cord or sinnet binding.

(BM Oc,+5560)



Plate 55: Nukufetau fish hook pearl shell shank with a turtle shell point and bound to a length of twine with feathers attached.

(BM Oc,+5562)

Now that they are under British protection, civil wars will be rigorously suppressed, and I consider that, under the combined direction of the Government and the missions, the islands should have a bright and prosperous future (1895:342).

While no significant comments on their culture were offered, he did note the apparent depopulation of the islands through the labour trade, firearms and inter-tribal fighting, all of which Woodford read as indicators that the Gilbert Islanders were a dying race, an understanding which was widely held concerning many island peoples within Melanesian (Woodford 1890a:187-188).

Upon his return to Fiji following the completion of his work onboard the *Patience*, Woodford, believing there was little prospect of advancement in the colonial service, returned to England (Woodford to Meade, 8 August 1890, CO 225/44). But perhaps what he really wanted to pursue was the ideal of becoming a professional naturalist and explorer. During the periods back in England between collecting expeditions, Woodford arranged the sale of his most recent zoological collections. His butterfly collections from Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu were well received by the Natural History department of The British Museum, Sir Walter Rothschild's Tring Museum and other private collectors.⁷⁷ Scientists praised the care and attention that had been given to recording the location and date of capture of specimens written upon each envelope (Butler 1884:343; Tennent 1999:420).⁷⁸ In essence Woodford treated his collecting areas as a laboratory, albeit a temporary and 'minimalist' one (Latour 1999:32). Through direct observation and engagement with his subjects he ordered his collections by type and species, so that scientists back in London would immediately be able to identify and classify the specimens. In doing so perhaps Woodford recognised the value that such collection information had for the scientific community, and possibly this attracted a higher monetary value to his collection. The praise and encouragement from the scientific community must have encouraged him, because not long after his return home he began planning a return to the Pacific, namely to the little-explored Solomon Islands. The latter half

⁷⁷ At this time the Natural History Museum had not yet been established. Instead natural history formed a department at the British Museum.

⁷⁸ As an indication of the volume of specimens collected by Woodford, following the completion of his first two expeditions to the Solomons in 1887 he calculated that he had collected nearly 17,000 specimens, which included 'three new genera and eight new species of mammals, fifteen new species of birds, six new species of reptiles, and over a hundred new species of Lepidoptera' (Woodford 1888: 369).

of the nineteenth-century was an era of discovery – of both new lands and peoples – and colonial expansion in the name of the British Empire, and this was something in which Woodford clearly wished to participate (Owen 2006; Raffles 2002a).

Victorian Order in the Natural World

Although Woodford had initially determined to extend his professional interests and career prospects through his scientific collecting, in terms of education and in the eyes of the established scientific community he was still an amateur. He had received a privileged primary and secondary education, but had not the opportunity to attend university to gain the qualifications that would have readily admitted him into scientific circles. Since the early nineteenth century, institutions and individuals, with an aim to advancing the social merit of natural knowledge, had presented science, including natural sciences, ‘as a cooperative pursuit embracing all classes and talents’ (Yeo 2001:264). Contributions were encouraged, particularly from individuals such as sailors or army personnel whose work took them to the far flung corners of the world.

Throughout the nineteenth century the scientific study of the natural world (zoology, geology, botany, etc.) also encompassed more ethnological interests, such as the study of “primitive” peoples and their material culture (see Yeo 2001). As such, scientific study was formulated through man-made constructs of the natural world. The emergence of anthropology as a scientific field of research during the nineteenth century was a gradual process in which new ideas about the study of man emerged; ideas which moved ethnological studies away from the natural world (Urry 1993). This was a time in which anthropology was separating from the broad, all-encompassing study of natural sciences, a process characterised by Herle and Rouse as a science in search of self-definition (1998:1). One of the key factors which helped define anthropological research and interests was the publication of sets of questionnaires which invited travellers to distant lands (explorers, government, military, or navy personnel) to answer sets of questions about the locations they visited, including sections on geography, zoology, indigenous people, etc.⁷⁹ The first questionnaires, published in 1839

⁷⁹ The publication of sets of questionnaires for travellers can be traced back to the sixteenth century (Urry 1993:18).

by the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), formed the basis for *Notes and Queries*, which became the basic rule book for ethnological investigation in distant lands. The first formal publication of *Notes and Queries* came in 1874, and comprised a compendium of short articles and topically organised lists of questions that had been compiled by numerous leading anthropologists, including E.B. Tylor and A.C. Haddon (Waite 2000b:281; Petch 2007; Urry 1993).

In a publication that had parallels with *Notes and Queries*, the British Admiralty published a *Manual of Scientific Inquiry* in 1849, which encouraged naval personnel to record their observations in various fields, such as zoology, astronomy, meteorology, magnetism and mineralogy (Yeo 2001:266). Such publications were ultimately part of the popularisation of science, or science for all (Yeo 2001:75), which took place during this period, publications which assisted in the process of empire unification and British Imperial identity construction. Using both *Notes and Queries* and a *Manual of Scientific Inquiry*, both amateurs and members of the army or navy were encouraged to contribute their observations on the places they had visited (Yeo 2001:266). Although such contributions were welcomed as a scheme of social improvement which involved popular education for all (Yeo 2001:266), these people were still understood to be amateurs. Any person who lacked formal education in the sciences but who wished to establish themselves within the scientific field quickly discovered that an established scientific hierarchy had already ‘sanctioned a clear and subordinate role for the self-educated enthusiast’ (Raffles 2002a:119). Some self-taught scientists and explorers, such as Henry Walter Bates (1825-1892) and Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), through their long-term expeditions, travels, and discoveries in Amazonia (Bates and Wallace) and the Malay Archipelago (Wallace), did have a major impact on British imperial science, and firmly established themselves at its core. Although their natural history collecting and cataloguing was dominated by bird and insect specimens, other more ethnological objects, such as human hair, were also collected (Raffles 2002a:116).⁸⁰ Their work, and that of Darwin and others, influenced and inspired Woodford, and perhaps reassured him about his lack of formal qualifications.

⁸⁰ Twelve objects collected by Wallace were donated by his daughter to the British Museum in 1935 (As1935,1014.1-12). Of these twelve, nine are of West Papuan provenance.

There are many parallels between Woodford and Wallace. Both were self-taught naturalists, and Woodford must have taken inspiration and encouragement from Wallace's work and the level of recognition he attained. In particular, Wallace's account of his expedition to the Malay Archipelago (1869) appears to have been of considerable influence on Woodford. As will be noted below, Woodford, following Wallace, planned an expedition to the Malay Archipelago and New Guinea in 1894. This proposed expedition did not occur, but it does highlight the connections, not just between these two men, but also between wider scientific communities. Indeed, following the completion of Woodford's initial expeditions to the Solomons he corresponded with Wallace in response to a call for information pertaining to lizards which Wallace had published in his book 'Darwinism' (1889), a book which Woodford stated he was reading at that time (NHM[A] WP/6/12). The most interesting aspect of this letter came after Woodford had thanked Wallace for the favourable review of his 1890 book which Wallace had published in the journal *Nature* (1890:582-3):

I am I fear more of a collector than a naturalist but still I have visited & lived in localities unvisited before by men of science, and I venture to hope that the result of my labours may have been not without interest to you and such as you.

(Woodford to Wallace, 3rd January 1893)

Perhaps Woodford's description as being a collector rather than a naturalist was an attempt at modesty, or perhaps it expressed a genuine sentiment that ethnographic collecting had become his primary academic interest.

In the Isles of Solomon (1886-1888)

One question that does need to be addressed is why Woodford chose the Solomon Islands. This was a little-known region that had, since its "rediscovery" by whalers and traders around the 1830s, gained a reputation for treachery and its people as ferocious and insatiable headhunters. It had already received the attention of another naturalist, Lieut. H.B. Guppy, a naval surgeon on board the surveying ship H.M.S. *Lark*, between 1881 and 1884, who later

published an account of the Solomons (1887).⁸¹ However, Guppy's notes of the islands were taken from the safety of a navy vessel, and although members of the Melanesian Mission had established a mission in the Florida Islands of the Solomons from 1877 (Coates 1970:220-1) no scientist or naturalist had chosen to live alone among any of the indigenous groups to examine their flora and fauna, or people. Woodford was still young, in good physical shape, keen for adventure, now independent and determined to make a success of his career as a naturalist. This was uncharted territory, well removed from the hunting grounds of other naturalists and currently not under formal European administrative influence. From his point of view it was sure to produce species hitherto unknown to science, thereby adding to the existing zoological knowledge and offering Woodford an opportunity to "make his name". But, as he was to discover, these were not "pristine" islands. Although not under formal European control at that time, these were islands in which trade in European goods abounded, and many local people were well acquainted with white people, such as traders who resided in the group and labour recruiters, in particular for the Queensland plantations (Bennett 1987:86-87). Another question that emerges is why Woodford engaged in collecting ethnographic objects alongside his natural history specimen collecting. Prevailing beliefs that the Melanesian population was doomed to extinction, for example through the introduction of European diseases, endemic warfare and cannibalism, encouraged travellers and explorers like Woodford to salvage what objects they could from such cultures before they disappeared forever (Woodford 1890:187-188, Rivers *et al.* 1922).

Around 1885, in relation to his planned expedition to the Solomons, Woodford established connections with the British Museum (Natural History) (BMNH), namely with the Keeper of Zoology Dr. Günther, with whom he corresponded regularly.⁸² He intended to finance the expedition himself, with the expectation of recovering his costs by selling his collections, to both the BMNH and private collectors, once he returned.⁸³ Having met with

⁸¹ Guppy was later awarded the Linnean Medal in 1917 from the Linnean Society of London, an award bestowed annually upon either a botanist or zoologist for their contribution to science (<http://www.linnean.org/index.php?id=54>). He also formed a collection of objects from the Solomons, now held by the British Museum.

⁸² The archive of this correspondence is held by the Natural History Museum.

⁸³ During these expeditions Woodford also had instruments which had been lent to him by the Royal Geographical Society, such as an aneroid barometer (Woodford diary, 11 February 1887; RGS, The Anniversary Meeting, 28 May 1888).

Guppy prior to his departure, and doubtless gaining some useful information from him, Woodford left England bound for Fiji on 20th 1885 October furnished by Günther with collecting cases and a letter of introduction to Acting High Commissioner Thurston (NHM[A]: DF200/28/385-6). However, his voyage was not as straightforward as he had hoped. His ship was quarantined because of cholera in Brisbane for five weeks, resulting in a delayed arrival in Fiji and his subsequent missing the boat which would have taken him to the Solomons. Despite this series of delays Woodford used his free time in both Brisbane and Fiji to collect specimens, mainly moths, and after a two month wait he was finally ready to set sail for the Solomons (NHM[A]: DF200/29/432). On the 15th April 1886 he left Fiji on board the labour schooner *Christine*, calling first at Pentecost, Malekula and Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu where, due to the nature of labour-trade recruiting, he was unable to go ashore frequently, but did manage to collect some insects along the beaches (NHM[A]: DF200/29/433).⁸⁴ The next port of call for the *Christine* was the Solomons, where the ship stopped firstly at Santa Ana.⁸⁵ At all the locations where the ship anchored Woodford appears to have had a few hours, four days in the case of Guadalcanal, to collect specimens, but he never strayed too far from the shoreline. In a letter to Günther recounting his first voyage around the Solomons he comments of Malaita:

The natives of Malayta are very savage & treacherous and I used to go ashore with net in one hand and a gun in the other & a revolver at my belt and with two boys with loaded rifles to keep guard (NHM[A]: DF200/30/453).

This limited form of collecting would have offered Woodford a different perspective from his Fijian collecting experiences. As Latour has shown, the liminal spaces between areas, in his case between forest and savannah, here between the beach and forest, offered the possibilities of encounters between humans and nature, but also of encounters between people (1999; also see Denning 1980, 2004). This form of collecting, in essence running and grabbing, did not

⁸⁴ When recruiting for contract labourers to work on plantations in Fiji, Queensland, and other locations, recruiting ships would call at various islands in Vanuatu and the Solomons to take on new recruits and also to return employees whose contracts had expired.

⁸⁵ Woodford notes that the islands of Santa Ana, Ugi, San Cristoval (Makira) and Ulawa were called at, as well as parts of Malaita and Guadalcanal (NHM[A]: DF200/29/433; Woodford 1888).

Table 9: The locations visited by Woodford between 1881 and 1889:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
1881	Departed England for Fiji (late 1881)
1882 - 1884	Fiji
1884	Kiribati (March – June)
Mid 1884 – 1885	England
20 th Oct 1885	Departed England for Fiji
17 th Feb 1886	Arrived in Fiji
15 th Apr 1886	Left Fiji for Solomon Islands
20 th Apr – 6 th May 1886	Vanuatu
11 th May 1886	Santa Ana, Eastern Solomons
13 th May 1886	San Cristobal, Eastern Solomons
14 th May 1886	Ugi, Eastern Solomons
17 th May – June 1886	Malaita (various locations)
6 th June 1886	Aloa, Guadalcanal
23 rd June – 7 th Aug 1886	Alu, Shortland Islands
Until 17 th August 1886	Fauro, Shortland Islands
24 th Sept – 9 th Oct 1886	Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia
23 rd Oct 1886	Guadalcanal
10 th Nov 1886	Arrived back in Sydney
24 th Jan 1887	Left Australia
27 th Feb 1887	Roviana Lagoon (for 2 weeks)
30 th March – 25 th Sept 1887	Aola, Guadalcanal (6 months)
Sept 1887	Sydney
22 nd Dec 1887	Departed for England
Jan 1888	Arrival back in England
8 th June 1888	Departed London
23 rd Jul – 6 th Aug 1888	Arrival in Sydney
16 th Aug – 4 th Sept 1888	Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia
16 th Sept – Nov 1888	Nggela (Gavutu)
Nov 1888	Aola, Guadalcanal (for 1 month)
Jan 1889	Arrived back in Sydney

give Woodford the opportunity of engaging fully with either the places he visited or the people he encountered.

On several occasions, in his diary from this voyage, Woodford noted that he could not induce people to sell things to him, particularly shell valuables. Not long after his arrival in the Solomons group, while still onboard the *Christine*, he recorded that an Ulawa chief who boarded the ship at Santa Ana was given passage to his home island in exchange for a pig. Woodford commented that ‘he was wearing a most enviable pair of shell armlets and a large piece of pearlshell at his neck in the form of a crescent. I asked him if he would part with them. He said he had been to Santa Anna [Ana] on purpose to buy the armlets and had given a

boy for each. For the crescent he had given eight hundred cocoanuts to the white trader at Ugi' (Woodford Diary, 12th May 1886).

Perhaps the tales of murder and treachery which he had heard about Malaitans and the Solomons in general somewhat pre-empted his forming his own opinion of the local population. Heath considers that the views expressed by Woodford prior to having spent time among indigenous people 'were largely borrowed and unfavourable, reflecting many of the prejudices of the 'beach' at Fiji' (1978:197), referring to people who, having resided in the Pacific for some time, told tales of the savagery of the indigenous populations. Woodford's caution about what were to him unknown peoples, with bad reputations, fitted within the "savage" paradigm prevalent among most Westerners at the time. However, with time, having lived among indigenous people and gained some insight into their lives and beliefs, his opinions would soften.

Immediately upon arriving in the Shortland Islands, on Monday 21st June and while still based on the ship, Woodford purchased a fine comb with a small carved figure on top (Oc,+3894) (Plate 57). The *Christine* landed him at Alu in the Shortland Islands on 23rd June 1886 (Plate 56). In contrast to his mobile and transitory collecting on Malaita, Woodford was to remain here, the sole European on the island, for six weeks, thus providing him the opportunity to engage more fully with both people and place. Woodford had settled on Alu as the location for his first residence in the Solomons as he believed it would be a favourable place for collecting (Woodford 1890a:17) (Plate 58). As in many cultures the folklore and myths of Mono, Alu and Fauro Island revealed connections that tied the people, place and flora and fauna of those islands together (Wheeler 1926).⁸⁶ While Woodford was not aware of the possible implications his collecting may have had for the people of Alu, he was obviously content to be in such a rich environment for flora and fauna, he was also quite anxious about his isolation:

The next morning the *Christine* sailed away and left me; nor will I conceal the fact that I had some slight feelings of regret as I saw the last link connecting me with

⁸⁶ Wheeler commented that despite the linguistic value of folk-tales they also embodied 'elements of the general culture and ides; and not only those of the present, but they carry, fossil-like, traces of earlier stages, or overlaid elements from past history' (Wheeler 1926:x).



Plate 56: Photograph taken by Woodford of the labour vessel *Christine* leaving him at Alu. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell).



Plate 57: A small hair comb purchased by Woodford in the Shortland Islands, 21st June 1886. (BM Oc,+3894).

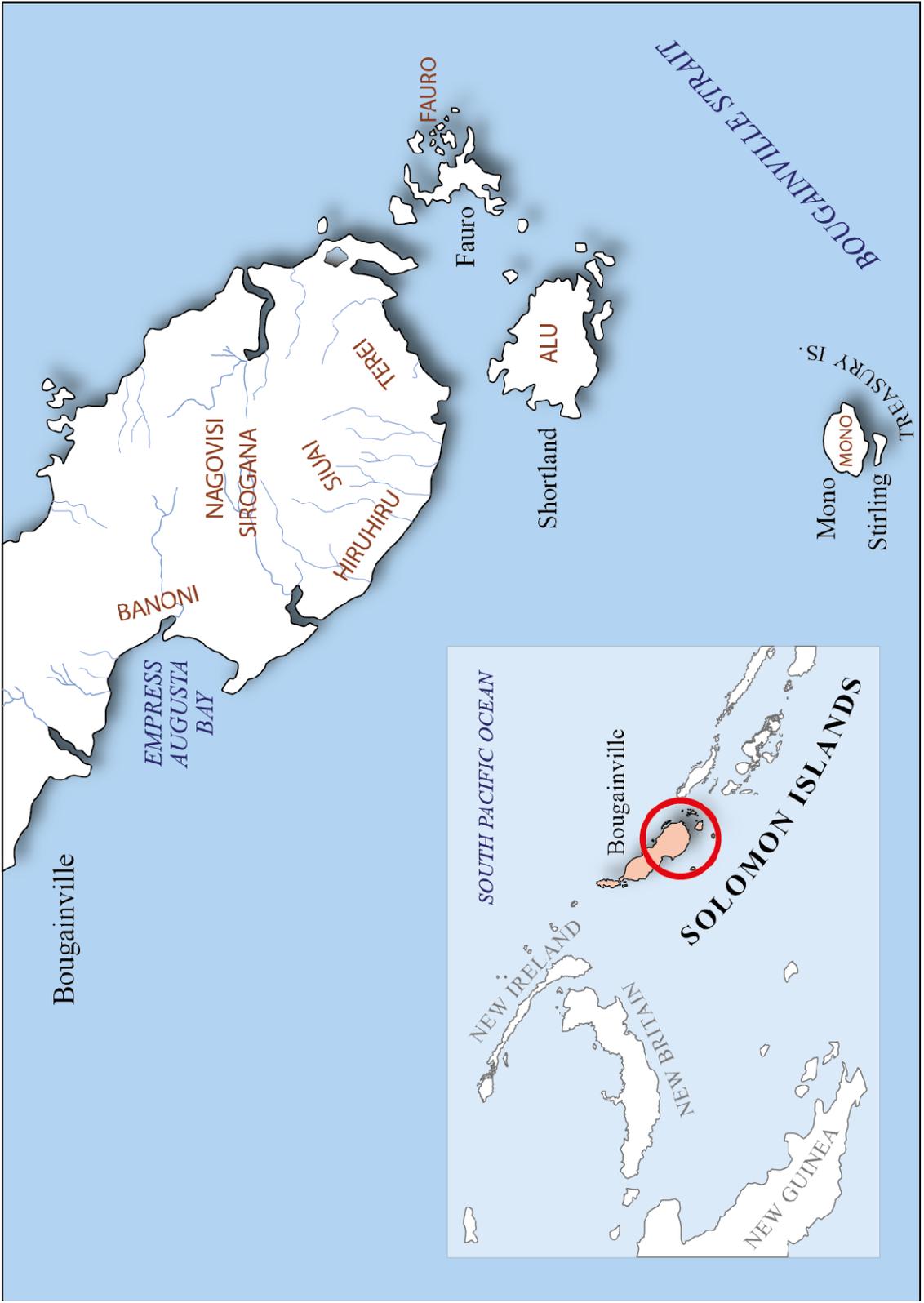
civilization disappear below the horizon, leaving me for the first time alone – one among hundreds of savages (Woodford 1890a:18).

Other factors also influenced Woodford's selection of Alu. It had been recommended to Woodford for his 1886 stay by Lieut. H.B. Guppy. Woodford's natural history collecting here had many parallels with Guppy, who similarly made collections of natural history specimens and with whom Woodford had corresponded and met prior to leaving England (NHM[A]:DF200/28/385). Moreover, Woodford seems to have retraced Guppy's steps more closely than just accepting his recommendations on Alu as a base. Although Guppy did not reside in Alu during his time in the Shortlands, he spent frequent periods ashore collecting, during which he relied heavily upon the chief Gorai and his men as guides for his explorations around the islands (Guppy 1887a:6). Woodford visited the same islands as Guppy to collect specimens (Alu, Shortland, Fauro), and used the same guides, particularly a man named Simpson (Woodford Diary, 9 July 1886). Also, Guppy had planned but not undertaken an expedition to the interior of Guadalcanal (1887a:iii). Woodford planned a similar expedition to Mount Lammas on Guadalcanal, which was equally unsuccessful, although he did undertake several successful expeditions to the interior of Guadalcanal (Woodford 1890a).⁸⁷

The influence of the powerful chief Gorai was another factor that induced Woodford to select Alu as his residence.⁸⁸ Much like Ingava in Roviana, Gorai had learned how to successfully engage with and present himself as a friend to visiting naval personnel and traders, and his wealth and influence extended far beyond the boundaries of Alu (see Guppy 1887:21-22; Bennett 1987). It appears that Woodford primarily conversed with locals in Fijian (relying on locals who had spent time in the labour trade). But Guppy noted that Gorai spoke some broken English, so this may also have been used (1887:21). Under his protection, and following negotiations, Gorai allocated Woodford a home upon which he placed a taboo, preventing anyone from entering or stealing (Woodford 1890a:18). Noting that Gorai met with him fully dressed in a red flannel shirt, trousers and a sun helmet, Woodford agreed to pay

⁸⁷ Following the publication of Woodford's 1890 article on the Solomon Islands it appears that Guppy and he fell out, principally over Guppy's belief that Woodford failed to acknowledge his prior work in identifying the locations in the Solomons that de Mendaña visited during his 1568 voyage (RGS/CB7/Guppy).

⁸⁸ Gorai did not reside at Alu itself, but on a neighbouring island (Woodford diary, 23 June 1886). For a discussion of traditional trade and kin relations in the region see Oliver (1955).



Map produced by Joanne Lai

Map 4: The Shortland Islands.

him ‘one axe, four knives, three bead necklaces, three fathoms of cloth, twenty sticks of tobacco, and a flannel shirt’ for the house (Woodford 1888:358). Interestingly, Gorai himself refused to accept the payment directly, instead directing Woodford to give it to a man Gorai referred to as ‘The Governor of Alu’ (Woodford diary, 25 June 1886). Evidently then Gorai, and by extension Alu, were well immersed in the colonial economy. Thomas (1994:16) notes that colonial representations and encounters both proceeded and succeeded the period of actual possession and rule, and as the Solomons had been a sustained port of call for traders and whalers prior to the establishment of the BSIP, indigenous groups were well aware of the Western goods, such as axes, beads and, importantly, guns. Bennett (1987) has discussed how, following the commencement of the labour trade from the 1870s onwards, a wealth division occurred between coastal and bush communities in the Solomons group. Coastal chiefs whose villages were on the labour trade recruiting route were able to obtain large quantities of trade goods from European recruiters for men they put forward as labourers (Bennett 1987:86). However, through trade networks these chiefs were able to obtain recruits from inland villages and neighbouring islands, but in doing so offered significantly less trade goods than the value they themselves were paid, keeping the surplus for themselves (Bennett 1987:86-87). Like many similar cultures, Alu placed a high value and prestige upon goods that could be obtained through trade, and enjoyed displaying them as a sign of wealth and influence. Indeed, during his stay at Alu gifts constantly flowed between Woodford and Gorai. For example, while Woodford gave Gorai sugar and tobacco, Gorai gave him items such as a lime gourd (presumably BM Oc,+3908a&b) (Plate 59), a water bottle made of coconut covered in clay and decorated with white beads (BM Oc,+3909) (Plate 60), and what Woodford describes as ‘a piece of bead work made of trade beads’ (BM Oc,+3905), which are all now in the British Museum (Woodford Diary, 27 June 1886) (Plate 61). Parkinson names this last object a *kiá*, a rare and very expensive chest ornament of which he noted the late chief Koroï (Gorai) owned several, and which he believed were introduced to the northern Solomons via trade from the south (Parkinson 1999[1907]:214-215). Composed primarily of glass trade beads, this was a highly valued object that speaks of the wealth and prestige of its owner.

It can also be assumed that Gorai allowed Woodford to stay not only for the trade goods he gave him, but also because he was able to attract European visitors to his islands,



Plate 58: Woodford photographed in the Solomon Islands, 1887. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell).

obtaining valuable trade goods from them. Being able to ensure their protection was an indicator of his power and prowess as a chief. These then were not the pristine, untouched islands that Woodford may have expected to experience, but he appears not to have understood these islands were anything other than that. While it is probable that Woodford did not fully understand the implications of the taboo on himself and his possessions, he did value the safety it assured him. But he also had more practical concerns to worry about – he had unfortunately forgotten his spirits for preserving specimens and was forced to make his own by distilling bananas in some kettles (NHM[A]: DF200/29/433).⁸⁹ He remained on Alu for six

⁸⁹ Perhaps this instance reminds us of Woodford's status as an amateur.



Plate 59: A lime gourd presented by Gorai to Woodford, 27th June 1886.

(BM Oc,+3908a&b)



Plate 60: A water bottle made of coconut covered in clay and decorated with white beads. Presented to Woodford by Gorai on the same occasion, 27th June 1886.

(BM Oc,+3909)



Plate 61: A *kiá*, a rare and expensive chest ornament made from trade beads and shell, which was given to Woodford by Gorai, 27th June 1886. (BM Oc,+3905)

weeks, until August 7th, having visited several of the surrounding islands in the company of Alu islanders (Woodford 1888:359). Oliver (1955) commented on the ‘lively trade’ and exchange that existed between Alu, Mono and Southern Bougainville prior to the 1880s (1955:295). That these connections between the islands continued after the arrival of European traders was reflected in the Alu islanders using their networks of social relationships with neighbouring groups and islands to grant Woodford access to lands and specimens. Following his stay on Alu Woodford moved to the neighbouring island of Fauro to continue his collecting. While in Alu and Fauro Woodford seemed disinterested in attending or trying to understand the local dance and other ceremonies he witnessed while he resided there. However, he did record some local rituals, such as an invocation and offering of tobacco and sago to *Nitou*, a deity who protected a canoe and its occupants in dangerous seas. Included in the ritual was the placing of a small branch of a tree on top of a newly cut sago tree. *Nitou* would prevent the future production of sago unless this was carried out (Woodford Diary, 14th July 1886). Although his initial aim was to spend six months in the Solomons (NHM[A]:DF200/29/433) he developed a fever, presumably malaria, while on Fauro, and found himself unable to work as efficiently as he had hoped.

Thinking that a change of island would cure him on 17th September Woodford took passage onboard the trading vessel *Ripple*, owned by the trader Thomas Woodhouse, for Roviana in New Georgia. During his stay he visited the main island of New Georgia several times on board the *Lizzie*, another trading schooner. Calling at several trading outposts, Woodford heard stories of slavery, headhunting and cannibalism, and at many places actually saw trophy heads and skulls complete with tomahawk marks displayed within canoe houses and in shrines. He also noted that ‘during the fortnight that I spent in the lagoon I heard of no less than thirty-one heads being brought home’ (Woodford 1888:361).

In September 1886, during a visit to Sisietia, Ingava’s home village in the Roviana Lagoon, Woodford purchased a small carved coconut, which locals used to hold iron pyrites for staining their teeth (BM Oc,+3902) (Woodford Diary, 26th September 1887) (Plate 62). During the same visit Woodford had his first opportunity to visit Ingava’s three canoe houses



Plate 62: A small carved coconut which held iron pyrites, used by local people to stain their teeth black, Roviana Lagoon. (BM Oc,+3902)

and to examine his canoes. He described a display of twenty-three human heads, in varying states of decay, placed in the interior rafters of the canoe houses following their construction, opposite which were several turtle skulls (Woodford Diary, 26 September 1886). In his diaries Woodford recorded the number of heads he saw displayed inside canoe houses in the Roviana Lagoon (23 in total), and noted recent headhunting raids. During this stay however, Woodford did not have an opportunity to photograph the interior of a canoe house. On the island of Nusa Roviana, finding most of the men away on a headhunting expedition, Woodford took an interior shot of a canoe house displaying trophy skulls. Chris Wright has commented that this image may be the only known photograph of skulls actually taken on a headhunting raid (Wright 2006:74) (Plate 66). This image is important as it shows the physicality of these objects, and the power of their presence within their intended setting – the canoe house. Following these visits Woodford wrote to John Bates Thurston, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, reporting what he witnessed and the extent of headhunting in the region.⁹⁰ It

⁹⁰ Interestingly, in his letter Woodford singled out Malaitans, not New Georgians, as in his view the most bloodthirsty in the group. This opinion was probably formed due to the fact that more white people (traders, ships crews, etc.) were killed around Malaita than in the Western Province. Headhunting raids in the West were

was on account of what he saw during these visits that following his appointment as Resident Commissioner in 1896 he determined to stop headhunting activities once and for all (Woodford 1909a). On a subsequent visit Ingava permitted Woodford to photograph the canoe houses and his large *tomoko* which he had taken out of the canoe house specially (Woodford Diary, 2 October 1886) (Plates 63 to 65). However, Woodford noted in his diary this was a decision Ingava later regretted. He appears to have feared that once people (he did not specify whom) in Sydney saw his *tomoko* they would want it and come to take it away (Woodford Diary, 3 October 1886). One possible reason why Ingava allowed Woodford to photograph his property, shrines and people, and why Woodford appears to have had free access to visit and photograph whatever he liked around New Georgia, was that local people believed he was a missionary (Woodford Diary, 25 September & 3 October 1886), and local people therefore treated him differently. Woodford believed this was on account of the hat he wore, a large Indian helmet, and also because he was not involved in trading of any sort – an activity in which most white men resident in or visiting the area were engaged.

Interestingly, during this 1886 visit to New Georgia, in an act which pre-empted his and Mahaffy's looting during punitive raids (see Chapter 7) Woodford actually stole an object from a shrine. While photographing a shrine at Oneavesi in the Roviana lagoon, Woodford stole a whale's tooth, which had been placed as an offering on the shrine (Plates 67 to 69). Of this transgression, perhaps noting his compulsive desire to collect whatever he wanted, Woodford commented in his diary entry 'I am ashamed to say I pocketed [it] while no one was looking' (Woodford Diary, 28 September 1886). The other shrine photographed by Woodford, on the same day as the previous example, is unusual for its size and architectural structure (Plate 70). Whereas Woodford used occasions when local men were away to photograph what he wanted (skulls, shrines), other visitors were forbidden to do so by local people. One such occasion occurred when Graham Officer visited the Western Province in 1901. In the notes he wrote up following this trip he commented that, due to the opposition of

predominantly undertaken against local populations, though some murders of resident traders or ship's crew did take place. Prevailing notions that Western Solomon Islanders were more savage than Malaitans resulted in the latter being largely ignored during Woodford and Mahaffy's initial punitive programme. A District Officer (Thomas Edge-Partington) was resident on Malaita from 1904. However, the size of the island and its dispersed population meant that pacifying the island proved to be a very difficult task. Indeed, it was only in the 1920s that the island was pacified to British colonial standards.

the native people, he was forbidden from photographing, sketching or even making notes on the spot of shrines he visited on Saikilie, in the Roviana Lagoon, highlighting the sacred nature of these sites (Officer M.S. Sepulture notes). Officer described seeing a wide variety in the form and structure of shrines during his 1902 visit to the Western Solomons, even seeing one on Simbo which had been constructed using galvanised iron, highlighting the appropriation, incorporation and transformation of European materials into sacred sites and things (cf. Thomas 1991).

Although he intended to remain here several months, Woodford was unable to rid himself of his fever so he eventually left Roviana after two weeks on the *Lizzie* and returned to Sydney, arriving on November 10th 1886. Despite the short duration of his stay, what he witnessed and experienced during those two weeks had quite an effect on him, prompting him to write to High Commissioner Thurston upon his return to Sydney to report what he had seen (Woodford 1888:375). This all doubtless influenced the policies and practices he would later adopt as Resident Commissioner in his efforts to put an end to headhunting and cannibalism once and for all.⁹¹

Throughout his collecting, initially in Malaita and the Shortland Islands, and in the subsequent places he visited, Woodford relied heavily upon local people and their knowledge of flora and fauna for collecting, and he encouraged them to bring him natural specimens for which he paid them, usually with tobacco or imitation gold rings.⁹² While he recorded the vernacular names of locations, flora and fauna both in his diaries and in notebooks, he did not record what significance, if any, such animals had to locals (Wheeler 1926). His ability to secure access to this ‘intimate knowledge’ (Raffles 2002b), knowledge possessed by local people which he purchased access to through trade goods, taught him about the islands environments and the bounty of new species or sub-species he discovered. His time living

⁹¹ While headhunting and murder did take place within the Solomons, the extent of cannibalism, as a practice may have been over-sensationalised by European reports. Cannibalism appears to have taken place predominantly during the inauguration ceremonies for a new canoe house (*paele*) or war canoe (*tomoko*) and as such was not a common occurrence.

⁹² Woodford did not clarify in his diary entries if these imitation rings were plain rings or if they had been cast as imitations of indigenous Solomon Island shell rings.



Plate 63: One of Ingavas canoe houses and *tomoko*, Sisieta, Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia. Photographed by Woodford in 1886. (Image courtesy of The British Museum)



Plate 64: Detail of the bow of Ingavas *tomoko*. The neck ornament worn by the warrior is called *mBakiha*. (Image courtesy of The British Museum)



Plate 65: *MBakiha*, sold to The British Museum by Woodford in 1915. (BM Oc1915,-.61)



Plate 66: Interior of a canoe-house with skulls on display. Nusa Roviana, New Georgia.

(Image courtesy of The British Museum)

Plate 67: Shrine at Oneavesi in the Roviana Lagoon, from which Woodford stole a whales tooth.

(Image courtesy of The British Museum)





Plate 68 & 69:

Examples of two whales teeth from the Woodford collection in the British Museum. There are five whale teeth in total in his collection, but it is unclear at present which one came from Oneavesi, New Georgia.

BM Oc1929,0713.5
(above)

BM Oc1929,0713.9
(right)





Plate 70: A shrine on Nusa Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia. Taken by Woodford on 28th September 1886.
(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

among indigenous groups should also have provided him certain insights into the workings of community groups, of hunters, of the ownership of groups of apparently unused lands and their close ties to the natural world. Later, in his position as Resident Commissioner, Woodford should have drawn upon this experience and knowledge of these matters when mediating and arranging land sales to plantation developers, and declaring certain lands as “waste land”.⁹³ Instead he chose to disregard what he had learned. As will be noted below, a lack of financial support from the government necessitated the acquisition of revenue from

⁹³ “Waste lands” were lands that the government considered to be unoccupied and/or unused by indigenous groups, and on this basis authority over them was claimed by the government. Please see Chapter 2 for a discussion on the issue of “waste lands”.

different sources. Plantations proved to be one of the largest financial contributors to the Solomons revenue, so their interests needed to be secured at all costs.

Once back in Sydney he sent back cases containing the specimens he had collected to his brother Henry, but noted in his letter to Günther that the cases were to be opened in the BMNH (NHM[A]: DF200/30/453). As it was always the intention to sell these specimens, Henry made arrangements to have the cases sent directly to the museum and opened in the presence of Günther and customs officials. He later arranged the purchase by the BMNH of a collection of butterflies, and also a collection of moths which were purchased for £15 (NHM[A]: DF200/31/447; DF200/31/449).⁹⁴

Encouraged by his first experiences in the Solomons, and the specimens he had been able to collect, Woodford began to plan his return once he had sufficiently recovered from his bout of malaria. Once again he left Sydney aboard the *Lizzie* on 24th January 1887, arriving in Roviana on 27th February. He remained here for another two weeks, noting that as he had ‘gained the confidence of the two chiefs of Sisieta, named Wange and Ingova’ he went frequently ashore to visit their villages (Woodford 1888:361). It is worth highlighting that, yet again, while resident here he was reliant upon local people and their knowledge for assistance with his natural history specimen and ethnographic collecting. During his two week stay in Roviana, Woodford had the opportunity to photograph a large ceremonial food trough at Sisieta. Thomas Edge-Partington stated that the trough Woodford had documented and photographed in 1887 was made for the ceremony to inaugurate Ingava as chief, an occasion for which Ingava had recently undertaken a headhunting raid to Choiseul where he had taken eight heads, the ones Woodford saw in the *paele* (Edge-Partington 1906:121; Waite 2000a:122). Woodford first saw the food trough on March 5th when it was still being carved ahead of the ceremony. He returned on March 10th with his camera in order to photograph it but found that the trough had been moved inside the large canoe house (*paele*) ahead of the ceremony. Woodford stayed for part of the ceremony, which he described in his diary:

⁹⁴ By 2006 estimates the value of £15 from 1887 was £7,356.90, using an average earning computation (source: <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/#>, accessed 24/02/2008). Of course, such an average does not necessarily reflect the accurate “value” of the specimens Woodford collected.

I had told Ingova and Wange that I was coming so my visit was not unexpected. I found them seated in the canoe house with all the rest of the old and young men of the town. The big trough was in the center of the house with the end representing the crocodile head with a carved human head in the jaw facing toward the seaward entrance. On either side of the trough were seated men with pounding sticks, twenty-two on each side and a man at either end. All there were dressed up with all their ornaments and had their shields, spears, and tomahawks with them. Above were the grinning heads on the rafters, eight of them, besides turtles' heads and the heads of frigate birds. When everything appeared to be ready, an old man in full war rig with spear and shield was seen advancing towards the house followed by some others. He walked up to the entrance and then suddenly started back as if in fear and exclaiming in a loud voice, "Al Basioto" (a crocodile), poised his spear and stood on the defensive. Ingova then advanced from the interior of the house & placing one hand on the crocodile's head, began a speech which lasted about ten minutes. Suddenly, at a given signal, the men at the trough began to pound the food, all of them keeping time and striking sometimes loud and sometimes low at intervals.... the food to be pounded was the nuts that grow so plentifully at Ala and other places in the group and are known by the name of Borubero. The pounding went on for over half an hour or so, the men relieving each other at intervals, as they got tired. When the nuts were sufficiently pounded, the men at the trough left the house and went to another part of the town where, I was told, the taro was being cooked. Ingova sent for some smoked bonito which he offered me. I ate one and drank a greenish coconut... It was too dark in the canoe house to photograph the trough and they of course would not carry it out to-day, so after a little time Ingova asked me if I would go: and as I did not want to offend them I did so. What was to happen next I do not know, possibly a sacrifice. (Woodford Diary, 10th March 1887)

Three days after this ceremony Woodford had the opportunity to photograph the trough. Ingava gave him permission to have the trough taken outside the *paele* where he photographed it (Plate 71).

He then travelled on to Aola on the north coast of Guadalcanal, where he remained from 30th March until 25th September 1887. Again, having negotiated a price he took up residence in a house on the outskirts of the village. Unlike on Alu, where Gorai negotiated quite a sizable quantity of trade goods to allow Woodford to stay for six weeks, in Aola all

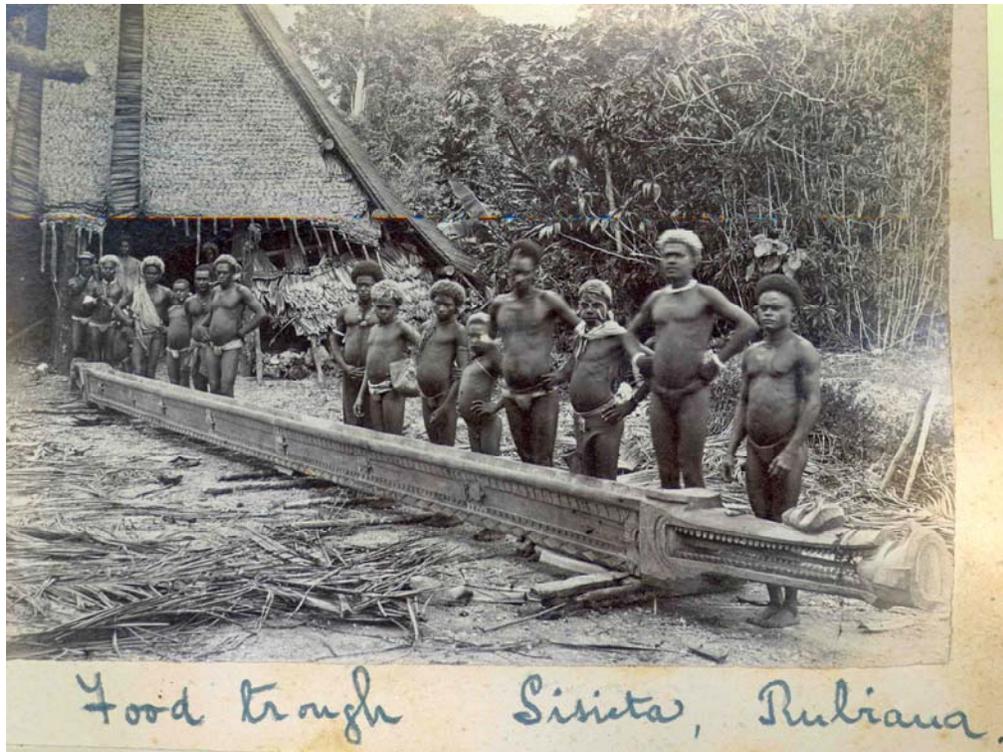


Plate 71: A food trough belonging to Ingava which was photographed by Woodford 13th March 1887.
(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

that he paid for a disused house and having a kitchen built was twenty sticks of tobacco for a six-month stay (Woodford 1888:362). This is indicative of different island group's knowledge of and access to trade items, and also indicates what was valued by individual groups. Although this coastal village was engaged in ongoing warfare with a neighbouring inland village, resulting in frequent raids – presumably instigated on both sides – Woodford commented that his relations with the local villagers were quite friendly:

I may be said, in fact, to have become one of the community. I was absent from my house on one occasion for a week, and on several other occasions for shorter periods; but although nothing was locked up, I never missed the smallest article (Woodford 1888:362).

Ongoing warfare of this kind, between coastal (saltwater) and inland (bush) peoples, was common on most islands in the Solomons (Zelenietz 1979; Aswani 2000; Thomas, Sheppard

& Walter 2001). In the Western Province headhunting raiders frequently targeted inland villages on neighbouring islands for heads and slaves. As coastal groups had better access to visitors and therefore trade goods, they were usually better off in terms of weapons (predominantly axes, but also sometimes guns) (Bennett 1987:86-7). This ongoing conflict in Aola disrupted Woodford's movements around the region by preventing his travelling too far – his guides were unwilling to venture too far inland (Woodford 1888:362-3). However, Tennent notes that the zoological specimens Woodford collected from here, together with his material from Malaita and the Shortlands, over 20,000 specimens altogether, was 'to become the nucleus of what was known about the Solomons fauna for several decades to come' (1999:424; Woodford 1890b:74) (Plate 74). He did undertake one expedition to the interior of Guadalcanal, photographing himself and the men who accompanied him just prior to their departure from Aola, taken on 19th July 1887 (Woodford papers) (Plate 73). During his stay Woodford documented seeing a particular form of spear-head which was carved from human thigh bone, a form unique to Guadalcanal (1890a:125). Interestingly, Woodford did not collect any of these objects himself but two are found in the Mahaffy collection (AE:1923.110-111) (Plate 72).⁹⁵ When the *Lizzie* returned for him in September he returned to Sydney. He only remained there for a short period, before returning to England, arriving on December 22nd 1887.

As he had done on his earlier Pacific trip in 1884, Woodford continued to document the people and places he encountered in the Solomons in his diaries, but he added another dimension to his recording: in 1886 he took a camera with him. He set up temporary dark rooms wherever he was staying and developed the photos on site. The visual record of these visits is located in a photo album kept by his heirs, but several images were used as illustrations in his 1890 book. Through his photography Woodford recorded many aspects of everyday life and activity in Solomons society, such as sago making in Alu, craft production, portraits of local people and images of himself at his home and embarking on expeditions. But he was also able to document some of the more private aspects of Solomons culture, such as shrines and the skulls and carvings that were present on them, and images of women (see chapter 8).

⁹⁵ Mahaffy did not provide any acquisition details in his catalogue for these spear heads.



Plate 72: Two spears from Guadalcanal, collected by Mahaffy. The spear heads have been carved from human thigh bone. (NMI AE:1923.110-111)



Plate 73: Woodford with a group of Aola men, photographed about to depart on an expedition to the interior of Guadalcanal, 19th July 1887. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)



Plate 74: Some of Woodford's zoological collectors with their nets, Alu 1886.

(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell).

Once back in England Woodford busied himself selling his collections, but more importantly for anthropology, he began his first attempts in academia (see Chapter 8 for analysis of Woodford's writings). This included presenting and publishing accounts of his voyages, his collecting and the peoples he encounters for the Royal Geographical Society.⁹⁶ While most of his zoological specimens were bought by the BMNH and Walter Rothschild, Godman and Salvin, the owners of a large private collection, purchased the bulk of his Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) collection (Tennent 1999:425). However, a misunderstanding or confusion in estimating the number of specimens collected by Woodford appears to have resulting in some bad feeling between him and Günther and Salvin (Tennent 1999:425). While precise details of this falling out are not clear, one result was that once Woodford returned to the Solomons for his third trip as a naturalist he did not collect

⁹⁶ *Exploration of the Solomon Islands* was read to the society on 26th March 1888.

specimens to the extent that he had on his previous voyages. While his collecting for the BMNH has lessened he continued to collect for, and sell to, Walter Rothschild and his Tring Museum – a collecting partnership that was to continue throughout Woodford’s later tenure as Resident Commissioner in the Solomons, although Woodford frequently noted in his correspondence with the museum that the demands of his official duties often made it difficult to pursue his natural specimen collecting as much as he would have wished (NHM[A] Tring Museum correspondence: TM1/17/12; TM1/24/16; TM1/40/17; TM1/47/20; TM1/10/23).⁹⁷ For example, in a letter dated 28th October 1896 to Mr. Hartert of the Tring Museum, Woodford commented: ‘I have been too busy with my official duties to have much time for collecting’ (NHM[A] TM1/24/16/218). A further indication of his distancing himself from the BMNH was his later discovery of a new genus of birds, which he named *Woodfordia Superciliosa* North, on Rennell Island in 1906, which he sent to the Australian Museum in Sydney instead of London (Woodford 1916a; Tennent 1999:426) (Plate 75). During this same trip Woodford also discovered a new species of orchid that he named *Saccolabium Woodfordii* Rolfe, which he sent to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (Woodford 1916a:120).⁹⁸ Many of the species and sub-species he collected were new to science, such as the moth (*Jamides woodfordi*) and his collections and contribution to zoological science were frequently referred to in the journal *Nature* throughout this period. As such these species, and by extension the Solomons Islands from which they came, became part of himself and his person.⁹⁹

While not mentioned in his published writings Woodford had, presumably on all his voyages around the Western Pacific, been collecting ethnographic objects. Although the exact number of objects collected during these trips is unclear, thirty-three objects collected by him were donated to the British Museum by the then curator Augustus Wollaston Franks in 1888.¹⁰⁰ Of these objects, all relatively small and portable, most come from Guadalcanal (12),

⁹⁷ Following Rothschild’s death in 1937 the collections of the Tring Museum, originally called The Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, became part of the Natural History Museum.

⁹⁸ Woodford did still send the occasional specimen to the BMNH following this disagreement. Letters of thanks for items sent to them, dated from 1909 on, have been located within Woodford’s private papers (Woodford papers).

⁹⁹ This echoes concepts about the dividuality and partibility of persons and things, and the multiple networks (personal, exchange) that such fragmentation of self creates (Wagner 1991; Appadurai 1986; Strathern 1988, 1996).

¹⁰⁰ Presumably Woodford had either sold or presented these objects to Franks during one of his return trips to England. See Caygill and Cherry (1997) for discussion of Franks’ contributions to the British Museum.



MENPES PRESS, WATFORD

WOODFORDIA SUPERCILIOSA.

Plate 75: *Woodfordia Superciliosa* North discovered by Woodford on Rennell Island in 1906 (Woodford 1916a:pl.III).

while objects from Malaita, New Georgia, Bougainville, the Shortland Islands, Makira, and one from Malekula make up the remainder. From his ethnological collecting during his initial trips to the Solomons it is clear that object size was also a factor. Much of what he collected was dependent upon ease of transport, and as such no large or heavy objects were collected. During his first two expeditions to the Solomon Islands he had a large amount of equipment with him, including weapons, certain tinned foods and everything he needed for preserving specimens such as containers, preserving agents and museum boxes for storing them, as well as his photographic equipment and any papers and books he may have needed.¹⁰¹ Collecting large or bulky objects at this stage would not have been feasible. Although Woodford's primary purpose in the Solomons was the collecting of natural history specimens, it is clear that ethnographic collecting was always undertaken by him as an extension of his interest in 'natural' objects (Stocking 1987). In this regard his early ethnographic collecting fits into the category of concomitant collecting – where the collection was formed as a by-product of other activities, as discussed by O'Hanlon (2000).

Perhaps due to the misunderstanding with the BMNH and Günther and Salvin, or perhaps due to his experiences on his voyage, a shift in Woodford's interests occurred. In his paper 'Further Explorations in the Solomon Islands' (1890b),¹⁰² published following his third trip to the Solomons, Woodford commented that the principal purpose in visiting the islands again was to locate the places visited by the Spanish expedition, under the leadership of Alvaro de Mendaña de Neyra in 1568. Woodford had been provided with a translation of the journal of the chief navigating officer on this expedition by Lord Amherst, with the intention that the places identified by Woodford would feature in the book Amherst intended to publish (Amherst & Thomson 1901; Woodford 1890a:7).

Arriving in the Solomons on August 10th 1888 he again spent two weeks in Roviana. While he noted that he found things little changed there, he did notice some new heads were

¹⁰¹ Woodford's diary entry for 18 March 1887, while based at Aola, lists the items he brought during an anticipated three to four day visit to the village of Rovatu in the coast of Guadalcanal: a change of clothes, four boxes of sardines, a dozen biscuits, tea and a tea billy, candles, a rug and a mackintosh sheet, an insect net, spirits for preserving specimens, instruments for skinning birds, a gun and ammunition, his camera and his compass, and objects to serve as presents or trade including two hatchets, two large and six small knives, 200 sticks of tobacco, twelve pipes, forty-eight matches, twelve finger rings (Woodford Diary, 18 March 1887, Woodford Papers). Although Woodford may have purchased some of these articles from the store of the local trader Lars Nielson, it is most likely he would have to have brought these things with him from Sydney.

¹⁰² This paper was read to the Royal Geographical Society on February 24th 1890.

decorating the rafters inside the canoe houses (Woodford 1890b:393). For the remainder of the expedition he was based in Nggela in the Florida group, staying for three months with the trader Lars Nielson, with whom Woodford formed a strong friendship. Nielson accompanied Woodford on the voyage throughout the region, and assisted him in identifying the places mentioned in the Spanish expedition text. However, while the principal aim of the expedition might have been to identify these locations Woodford used every opportunity to add to his zoological collections (1890b:396).

Following the completion of Woodford's visits to the Solomons in December 1888, a change in his attitude towards the local population is discernable. His early letters and papers, which were full of a definite sense of caution and almost fear of "natives", which result in his going about constantly armed and keeping people at a distance, was later replaced with a feeling of ease and familiarity with the people he lived with and his surroundings. A passage from his book *A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters* (1890a) gives a sense of the freedom that living outside of the normal Victorian social confines afforded Woodford, and his ease in such living conditions:

If my friends could see me now, what would they think of me? A flannel-shirt, none too clean, rolled up over the elbows and open at the throat; round my waist a piece of blue calico reaching to the knees and fastened by an old leather strap; legs and feet bare; on my head a dilapidated Panama hat that I bought some years ago from the King of Apamama (an island in the Gilbert group) for half a pound of gunpowder (Woodford 1890a:107-8).¹⁰³

The opportunity to visit new islands, and to live among communities so very different from the one in which he was raised, and to learn aspects of their lives and beliefs, developed Woodford's interests beyond the zoological. In a similar situation to Baldwin Spencer, a trained zoologist, once resident in Alice Springs to undertake research (1899, 1904, 1912, 1928) proximity to local communities and the opportunities this presented prompted a

¹⁰³ In a review of this book, published on April 24th 1890 in *Nature* magazine, Wallace recommended it as 'full of information as regards the natives, the scenery, and the natural history of these little-known but very interesting islands' (1890:583). Source: <http://www.wku.edu/~smithch/index1.htm>

development of other scientific interests and pursuits, such as ethnographic collecting and anthropological observations (Stocking 1995:89).

On his second stay in Aloa in 1887 he commented that he had been requested on several occasions to take up permanent residence among them, but he attributed this to his being a 'good mark' in terms of trade (Plate 76). He describes the chief of Aloa, Ululu, holding his hand on the evening before his departure saying with tears in his eyes 'Oh, my friend Woorefallo, who will give me pipes and tobacco when you are gone?' but states that:

Still I should be sorry to think that my influence with the natives arose from sordid motives alone, for I believe that, especially during my second visit, a feeling of real confidence and friendship existed between us (Woodford 1890a:46).

Although his attitudes to locals had, for the most part, changed, he never entirely lost his belief in their treachery and cowardice:

If I were asked what was the prevailing characteristic of the natives, I should say cowardice, both in its sense of timidity and in the desire to take every advantage of a defenceless stranger or enemy.

From my somewhat wide and varied experience of them, I am of opinion that the first thought that animates a native person upon the sight of a stranger is, "Will he kill *me*?" Having answered this to his own satisfaction, his next thought is, "Can I kill *him*?" the latter question being considerably influenced by the fear of future retribution to be apprehended from the friends of the stranger, in case he is a native; but in the case of white men this fear of retribution hardly enters as a factor (Woodford 1890a:42).

The lawlessness and perceived savagery of Solomon Islanders thus continued to play on his mind, but from his journeys around the islands he became convinced of their potential for economic development in the form of plantations and as an area for colonial expansion. He firmly believed that the establishment of a British Protectorate over the region was not only a way to stop headhunting and the murders of Europeans, but would also benefit Britain's economic situation in the Pacific. Upon receiving a report, later proven to be erroneous, stating that his friend Nielson and several of his crew had been killed and eaten, he railed

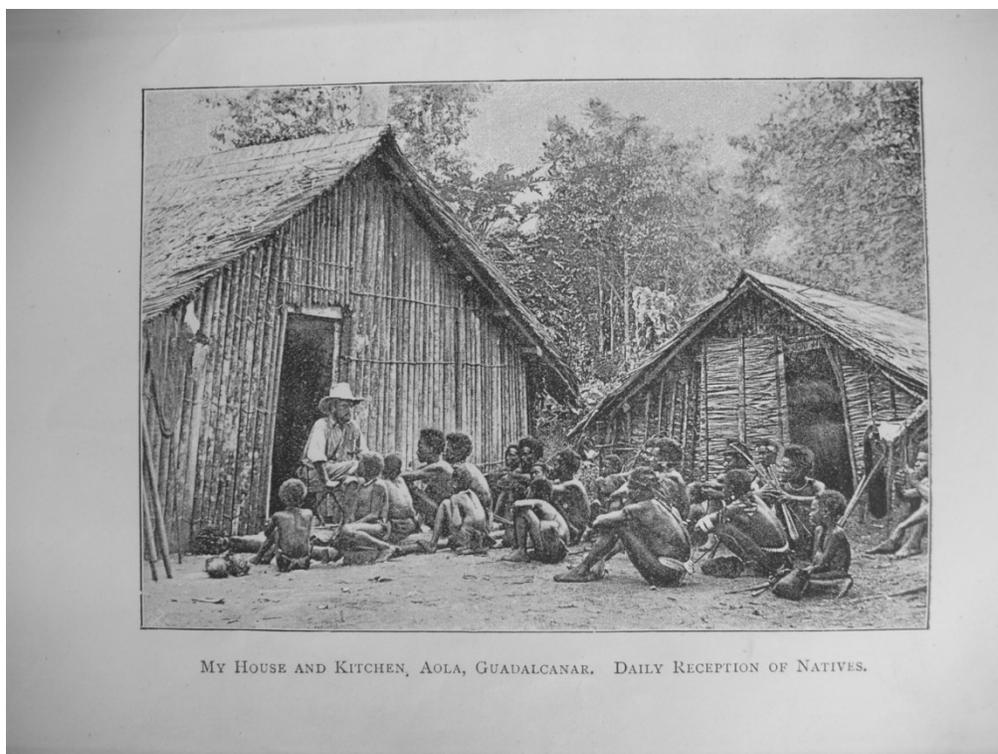


Plate 76: Woodford seated outside of his house, Aola, Guadalcanal. In the afternoons Woodford met with local people to collect zoological specimens and occasionally ethnographic objects which they brought for sale. (Woodford 1890: facing page 116).

against the lack of government action to protect Europeans living in the Solomons, commenting that:

These [murders] will continue so long as England ignores her obligation to extend by annexation that protection to her subjects in the Solomons that she was at length forced against her will to extend to British New Guinea (Woodford 1890a:22).

However, he still believed in the Solomons and their economic potential stating that:

I know of no place where firm and paternal government would sooner produce beneficial results than in the Solomons. The numerous small tribes into which the population is split would render any organised resistance to properly constituted authority quite futile, while I believe that the natives themselves would not be slow to recognise the advantages of increased security to life and property. Here is an object worthy indeed the devotion of one's life (Woodford 1890a:23).

While the Solomon Islands did indeed become the devotion of Woodford's professional career, his return to them in a professional capacity would be a longer and more difficult road than he had anticipated. And when he did eventually return to them as Resident Commissioner he would use his experience and knowledge of the islands and people to adopt and enforce punishments which would strike at the core of Western Solomons social beliefs in order to suppress headhunting.

Not only had his opinion of the Solomons and its inhabitants changed, but his personal circumstance had also altered. On his voyage to Australia in 1888 for his third expedition, he had met Florence Palmer from Bathurst in New South Wales. Palmer was returning to Australia following a visit to England. Although the shipboard romance was followed by Woodford's immediate departure for the Solomons upon arrival in Sydney, they were married as soon as he returned to Sydney in January 1889 (Heath 1978:200). When the couple arrived back in England in August that year Woodford, considering his responsibilities to his new family, took a job on the London stock exchange for several years, but could not settle into a life of domesticity or business (NHM[A]: DF200/45/518; Heath 1978:200). During this period, however, he maintained an active interest in the Solomons and continued to pursue his academic interests in them.¹⁰⁴ Correspondence in the Royal Geographical Society archives shows he busied himself presenting papers in his home town and to the Zoological Society throughout 1890 (RGS/CB7/Woodford).¹⁰⁵

Fledgling Colonial Career (1893-1896)

When the British Government finally declared a protectorate over the Solomon Islands in June 1893 Woodford seized the opportunity to put himself forward as the ideal candidate for the job of Resident Commissioner. Almost immediately after the declaration of the protectorate he placed himself in contact with the Colonial Office, and despite being informed by them that an appointment was unlikely to be made immediately, decided to make a formal application for the post, contacting Sir John Bates Thurston for his support in his application and the

¹⁰⁴ He was awarded the RGS Gill Memorial award for 1890 (Woodford to Chamberlain, 7th February 1897, CO 225/54).

¹⁰⁵ It is interesting to note in his correspondence Woodford appears to have moved house between March and June 1890, naming his new home in Epsom 'Rubiana'.

president of the RGS, Sir Clements Markham, for a recommendation to the Colonial Office (RGS/CB7/Woodford). In his letter of application, dated 8th August 1893, he detailed his previous employment in government service in Fiji, as well as his exploration and scientific work as a naturalist while resident in the Solomons, commenting that: ‘Living as I did entirely alone with the natives I acquired considerable insight into their customs and modes of thought’ (Woodford to Meade, CO 225/44). While he offered an impressive list of referees who would support him, and his academic affiliations and achievements, and perhaps fearing that his age, now 41, might stand against him, he also commented that he had had some military training in his youth, as a Lieutenant in the 1st Kent Artillery volunteers, and that he was still ‘strong and active’. However, the Colonial Office were unwilling to consider his application, believing that it was premature to consider the appointment of a Resident or Deputy Commissioner at that time, and stating in their minute communication that ‘[T]he islands were protected on the understanding that they should cost nothing, & it may be long before any understanding with the chiefs can be arrived at’ (CO 225/44). Undeterred by their response, on 9th September he sent a report on his observations of the Solomons, including trade, exports and imports, climate, natural products, domestic animals and the natives themselves, forwarding also an album of his photographs from his visits. Not only could he provide the Colonial Office with a more in-depth report than they could have hoped to produce themselves, he also gave the value of the items exported from the group to highlight their potential for future development.¹⁰⁶ Although stating that he considered the people of Malaita as physically the finest in the group, due to their unfavourable characteristics he recommended Guadalcanal, which he considered the most fertile in the protectorate, as the island upon which the government should make its first start in the group (Woodford to Ripon, CO 225/44). Woodford had piqued the Colonial Office’s interest with the reports he submitted on the Solomons and their potential for economic development, but he still could not convince them to allocate the funds necessary to establish a Resident Commissioner within the group.

¹⁰⁶ He offered estimated amounts of goods exported annually and their value in Sydney as: Copra, about 1,000 tons per annum, value £7,000; Ivory nuts, about 100 tons p/a, value £400; Turtle-shell, about 2 tons p/a, value £3,000; Pearl-shell, about 5 tons p/a, value £250. Total estimated value for exports from the islands in Sydney was over £10,000 (Woodford to Ripon, CO 225/44).

In January 1894 Woodford again applied for the position of Resident Commissioner. In his letter, dated 11th January, he recommended Marau Sound, on the southeast end of Guadalcanal, as the ideal site for establishing both a transpacific cable and a settlement, stating that he was prepared to 'take up and maintain a residence there either at my own expense or as a Government Establishment' (Woodford to Ripon, CO 225/46). While this could be considered a desperate gesture to try to secure a position within the Solomons, Woodford was determined that his future lay in those islands. Stating that he was in fact contemplating a return to the Solomons he ended his letter saying:

I take a very great interest in this group of islands and have so far identified myself with them that I have come to regard anything connected with them as peculiarly appertaining to myself. (Woodford to Ripon, 11th January 1894, CO 225/46).

Unfortunately however, his efforts were not helped by High Commissioner Thurston's opinion of him. While complimenting his work as a naturalist he was not convinced of Woodford's training or dedication to such a government posting. As Thurston wrote in a report:

For a short time Mr. Woodford held the post of a Junior Clerk in the service of the Fiji Government, and I cannot say that either to myself, or the officers under whom he directly served he appeared of even average value as a public servant. He voluntarily resigned his service in order to proceed to the Solomon Islands and gratify his love of zoological studies. And in this respect, that is to say as a zoological student and collector, I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Woodford. He appears to possess the instincts of the true naturalist, combined with much pluck and patience..... At present I can only venture to express the opinion that Mr. Woodford's object in seeking the appointment for which he has applied is exclusively in the hope that it would tend to facilitate his work as a naturalist, and that that work being completed he would resign his post, and return to England where his wife and family reside. Mr. Woodford further informs me that he intends proceeding to the Solomon Islands in any case, and this information confirms in some measure my fear that in the event of Mr. Woodford being appointed official duty might be subordinate to scientific pursuits (Thurston to CO, 30th March 1894, CO 225/45).

Furthermore, Woodford's case was not helped by a visit Thurston paid to the Solomons in September 1894. Having described the population as extremely suspicious and very blood-thirsty, he stated that:

One of the main objects of my visit was to ascertain whether the native population would be likely to contribute towards the necessary cost of the establishment of a Resident Commissioner. I am of opinion after the most careful enquiry and consideration that at first no assistance can be looked for from this source. The only revenue to be derived would be from trade licences and a few fees of office...That a Deputy Commissioner should be appointed to reside as soon as possible at the South Solomon Islands, but that there is no urgent necessity for such an appointment for some months yet to come and while Her Majesty's Government is considering what establishment it will authorise (Thurston to Ripon, CO 225/45).

This was a double blow to Woodford's case. Not only had he failed to make an impression upon Thurston in his previous employment in Fiji, Thurston also felt no urgent necessity for employing a Resident Commissioner for the Solomons. Although praised for his work as a naturalist and his courageous residence as a single European living among Solomon Islanders, he had failed to convert the High Commissioner and Colonial Office to his cause, both of whom believed, and were convinced further following his statement that he intended returning to the islands, that his sole desire in returning to the Solomons was to further his career as a naturalist. Their reaction may also be suggestive of a lack of regard in government circles for individuals who devoted their time to collecting insects, seeking employment with the Colonial Office only when their economic needs necessitated. Despite the disappointment of rejection from the Colonial Office, Woodford was determined to make a change in his life. In March 1894, following the example of Wallace, he planned an expedition to the Malay Archipelago and New Guinea (RGS/CB7/Woodford; BM[A]). Another influence for this expedition was most likely A C Haddon. He had visited the Torres Strait in 1888 to study marine biology, but during his research his interests changed from zoology to anthropology. He returned to the region in 1898 with the members of the Cambridge Expedition to form ethnographic collections, and to make anthropological observations (Herle and Rouse 1998:3). The purpose of Woodford's expedition was the exploration of the region and the making of

collections of zoological, anthropological and ethnographic material. While Woodford intended himself to fund the expedition costs and the fitting out of a suitable schooner, estimated at a cost of £1,000-£1,200, by inviting 2-3 gentlemen who would be prepared to pay to accompany him, he also wrote to Clements Markham at the Royal Geographical Society and Franks at The British Museum to enquire if their institutions would be willing to offer him a small grant to meet the costs (RGS/CB7/Woodford; BM[A]).

Under the impression that his appointment as Resident Commissioner was imminent, in late 1894 he gave up his business, sold his furniture at a financial loss and moved to Fiji, temporarily leaving his wife and children in England (Woodford to Chamberlain, 7th February 1897, CO 225/54). When he arrived however, he found the situation regarding the Solomons unaltered. No decision had been reached nor finances made available, but Thurston, having assured him that a decision would be reached by April 1895 and that he would recommend Woodford for the job, offered him a temporary position as Acting Consul and Deputy Commissioner to Samoa (Woodford to Chamberlain, 7th February 1897, CO 225/54). He further notes in this letter that when he left England he had secured guarantees from the Royal Geographical Society, Walter Rothschild, and others to the sum of £1,000 to fund his expedition to New Guinea, but that he allowed these to lapse in consequence of the certainty he felt towards his appointment as Resident Commissioner. His position in Samoa, which lasted from January 1st to September 6th 1895, went well beyond the time period within which Thurston had said a decision on the Solomons would be reached. It was, however, not all bad news. Woodford did very well in his role, gaining valuable experience as a magistrate dealing with cases of plantation workers and land claims. In particular, he was commended by both the Colonial Office and Thurston for his involvement in seizing illegal arms and ammunition (CO 225/48).

Having proved his worth and ability as a government agent he found, on his return to Suva, the Solomons situation unaltered – the Colonial Office had again refused to provide any funding to establish a residence in the Solomons. The result of this was that upon his return to Fiji, after a five-month period of unemployment, in March 1896 he was offered a position assisting Thurston's secretary Wilfred Collet. However, at last, thanks to a series of events and misunderstandings, Woodford eventually found his way back to the Solomons, and this time in an official capacity.

The Dream Realised? (1896-1915)

In early 1896 Thurston had again requested finance from the Colonial Office to place a Resident Commissioner in the Solomons, and in March and April, by which time Thurston was in Sydney, a favourable response was expected daily. When the reply eventually arrived in April, yet again a negative, a despatch that was sent to the Colonial Office from Acting High Commissioner Berkeley, which Scarr, due to the language and tone of the letter, believes was drafted by Woodford (1967:262). In the letter Berkeley stated that he regretted that no provision had been made in the estimates for 1896-97 for establishing a British resident in the Solomons, but went on to outline how as the Gilbert and Ellice Islands were now self-supporting, £400 was available to the High Commission with which a Resident's salary could be paid, and with an imperial grant-in-aid of £600 and the fees from traders' licences a residence could be established. With eight native constables the Resident could then proceed to bring the Solomons into order. Stating the duties expected of the Resident Commissioner, Berkeley wrote:

I do not anticipate that the Resident will undertake punitive expeditions against native tribes, as he will not have the force at his disposal. This must continue to be left to Naval Officers.

The attention of the Resident should be addressed to:

- (1) the suppression of the arms traffic;
- (2) the development & supervision of local trade, and the control of the labour traffic;
- (3) the education of the natives

(Berkeley to Chamberlain, 21st April 1896, CO 225/50).

Believing the necessary funds would shortly be made available from the Colonial Office, Berkeley appointed Woodford as Resident Commissioner to the Solomon Islands for a six-month period. Woodford, assured of his new position, had telegraphed his wife to come with the children to Sydney. Once there, en route to the Solomons, he met with Thurston to discuss his duties. However, the Colonial Office once again refused to make any grants available, forcing Berkeley to alter Woodford's appointment. He dismissed the native constables and, using money drawn from the Western Pacific High Commission vote, appointed him as acting Deputy Commissioner. While he would still travel to the Solomons aboard H.M.S. *Pylades*,

Woodford's duties would now be to prepare a report on the extent of trade exported from the group, on land purchases, claims and plantation requests, and the number of European traders resident within the group. Such information would help in determining how much revenue could be raised in trade, employment and land purchase licences in order for the group to become self-supporting. He was also to make enquiries into purchasing land on behalf of the Colonial Office to establish a government station. While he initially favoured Marau Sound on Guadalcanal as the location for the station, an opportunity arose in September to purchase Tulagi Island, part of the Florida Group, for which he paid the native owners £42 in gold (Woodford 1897:23). Although Woodford had overstepped his duties in purchasing the island he did not receive any censure from Thurston, but his action in negotiating for and purchasing the island must have appeared indicative of his independent tendencies.¹⁰⁷

However, once he arrived in the Solomons on June 1st 1896 he immediately set about his prescribed duties, meeting with traders such as Charles Olsen at Santa Ana, Thomas Woodhouse at Ugi, and others. From them he gained an insight into the lives of resident traders in the group, but also he acquired information on various attacks on Europeans. During this trip he actively participated in several punitive raids, under the direction of Captain Adams of H.M.S. *Pylades*, in both the central and Western Solomons, for attacks on traders and ship crews (Woodford to Thurston, 6th June 1896, CO 225/50).

Thurston extended Woodford's contract by one month, and upon his return to Fiji in November 1896 Woodford wrote and submitted a report on his findings. This report, which was published for parliament, painted a glowing picture of the Solomons as a region ripe for development, but one in which immediate action would be required on behalf of the government to prevent companies buying up vast tracts of land (Woodford, Report on the British Solomon Islands, March 1897, CO 225/50). In this regard Woodford recommended the government to claim ownership of all "unclaimed" land to protect the interests of the native population. Prior to this report the Colonial Office, unhappy with the manner in which Woodford had been appointed, were adamant that his contract would not exceed six months

¹⁰⁷ Woodford's first residency on Tulagi consisted of little more than a small native hut while he awaited the arrival of a carpenter and building materials from Sydney.

and no funds would be made available to the protectorate.¹⁰⁸ Frustrated, Woodford wrote to Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on February 7th 1897, citing his treatment by the Colonial Office and asking that if Chamberlain was unable to offer him work in the Solomons he would accept employment in a similar position elsewhere in the Pacific (CO 225/54). However, he had sufficiently impressed them with his energetic approach to work, and his report, to change the Colonial Office's attitude regarding the Solomons. A few weeks later he was to receive the news he had wanted to hear for so long. Having aroused the Colonial Office's humanitarian interests regarding possible large-scale land developments and possible abuses of native interests in the Solomons, a grant-in-aid of £1,200 was secured from the Treasury to establish a residence on Tulagi Island. This, together with the estimated funds from trading and recruiting licences that Woodford would collect locally (about £800), six native policemen and a whaleboat were to form the basis of the Solomons government.¹⁰⁹ Coates notes, however, that while his report did have the desired effect on the Colonial Office Woodford failed to mention that it was in fact he who was privately encouraging investors to the Solomons with promises of large-scale plantation development (1970:229). Scarr (1967:263) estimated that when all the costs were taken from this amount all that would have remained as funds would have amounted to six pence. Woodford's appointment was only sanctioned for one year and no further funds would be made available for the group. The Colonial Office was determined that either the Solomons would become self-supporting, or Australia would take control of the group.

Almost immediately following Woodford's arrival as Resident Commissioner an outbreak of smallpox in the Northern Solomons, an area under German jurisdiction, necessitated the appointment of a second European officer to the group to control the outbreak and the risk it posed to the British protectorate. During this period the northern Solomon Islands of Bougainville, the Shortland Islands, Choiseul, and Santa Isabel were all German possessions, and administered out of German New Guinea. In 1899, following an Anglo-German agreement, the Shortlands, Choiseul and Santa Isabel were brought under British

¹⁰⁸ Thurston, ignoring the Colonial Office's direction to dismiss Woodford once his term as acting Resident Commissioner was completed, employed him in his office until the end of 1896.

¹⁰⁹ Apart from the boat Woodford was also instructed to supply himself with 'sulphur, vaccine, lymph and other articles necessary for preventing infection and carrying out quarantine' (Berkeley to Chamberlain, 23rd February 1897, CO 225/52).

control, while Bougainville remained under German jurisdiction (Bennett 1987:436).¹¹⁰ Arthur Mahaffy was chosen to assist Woodford as soon as he had completed his temporary contract in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands.¹¹¹

It was during this period – from 1899 on – that Woodford once again entered into communication with the British Museum, and also began sending back objects, giving details in some of his letters of punitive actions taken against certain villages, and importantly where he obtained objects, either as loot or by purchase. Now permanently based in the Solomons, and using his connections with the BM and the Australian Museum, he was in a position to acquire objects in greater numbers and larger, more bulky ones. For the British Museum in particular, he frequently filled up large boxes of objects which he sent to London via Burns Philp shipping company or, later, by Levers Pacific Plantations Ltd ships (BM[A]: Woodford correspondence). While Woodford continued to purchase objects, others were acquired in less reputable ways, such as during punitive raids on local communities which were resisting British colonial authority. Punitive raids were not only used to destroy canoes, canoe-houses and gardens, they were also opportunities to make collections of objects that may not have been available otherwise, and they were opportunities both men exploited. This duality in terms of collecting, both purchasing objects on one hand while looting with the other is discussed in Part II of this thesis. Their collections reveal not only their different tastes in objects but also their differing levels of access to objects for collection. One factor in the formation of their collections may have been their respective locations within the Solomons. Whereas Woodford was based on Tulagi, uninhabited but for the government station, Mahaffy was based at Gizo, an island that already had a local population. As a result of the protection from headhunting parties that the latter offered, a sizable indigenous population quickly settled close by. Gizo therefore appeared to offer better opportunities for trade and exchange, or sale and commission of objects, than Tulagi did. Also, the nature of Mahaffy's work meant he engaged in more punitive raids than Woodford, and thus had more access to human remains and the canoe houses where they were stored, and to shrines.

¹¹⁰ Today Bougainville remains part of Papua New Guinea.

¹¹¹ Although his position was sanctioned from March 1897 it would be mid 1898 before Mahaffy, then a temporary District Officer in the Gilbert & Ellice Islands, arrived in the group.

Official clashes: Woodford and the High Commission

During his career in the Colonial Office Woodford experienced numerous difficulties with various High Commissioners, but none more so than the personality clash experienced with Everard im Thurn (High Commissioner from October 1904 to August 1910). For example, during a bout of malarial fever in 1907 im Thurn received some letters from Woodford which he considered highly irregular in both content and tone, and he consulted the Colonial Office about the possible suspension of Woodford from his post. In one letter to im Thurn, Woodford complained that two German traders resident in the Lord Howe Group (Ontong Java) had refused to pay duty on tobacco supplied to them from a Nord Deutsche Lloyd steamer (CO 225/76). He continued in his letter to accuse im Thurn of neglect regarding customs regulation:

As for your neglect in the issue of a Customs Regulation there is no means of enforcing this payment, I would ask how much longer the humiliating spectacle is to be witnessed of German Traders underselling British Traders in a British Protectorate.

Your obedient servant,

Charles M Woodford.

I hesitate to make this fact public but all who have already paid should demand a refund. But if it gets into the Australian press, you may expect a lively time.

(Woodford to im Thurn, 15th March 1907, CO 225/76).

In his reply im Thurn chastised Woodford on numerous points: for his accusation, for writing on notepaper instead of foolscap, and for marking the letter as “private” instead of official. In a subsequent telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies im Thurn expressed his concern over Woodford’s mental health, noting that while the latter had forwarded letters from his doctors in Sydney detailing his physical illness (presumably malaria), he was concerned about Woodford’s mental health and his fitness for duty (im Thurn to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22nd April 1907, CO 225/76). In this telegram, and an associated letter to the Colonial Office, he stated that as he had been anxious over Woodford’s mental state for some time he wished to know whether suspension from his duties might be an option. Despite im Thurn’s concerns, Woodford remained as Resident Commissioner until 1915 when, in his 60s, he submitted his resignation.

However, it is possible that much of the confrontation between them also stemmed from a professional rivalry, as both men held similar academic interests and ambitions in the natural sciences. Im Thurn had spent many years in British Guiana working as a curator (1877-79) and later an administrator (1881-1897), during which time he gained a reputation as an explorer and anthropologist, and also as a botanist, sending plant specimens to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (Tayler 1992:187). While in the Pacific he also collected ethnographic specimens, and being an Oxford graduate he donated about 117 objects, from both the Americas and Pacific, to the Pitt Rivers Museum.¹¹² He also gave 25 objects to the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge.¹¹³ He had presented a paper to the Royal Geographical Society prior to 1910, and he was appointed President of the Royal Anthropological Institute for 1919-20 (Im Thurn 1883, 1893, 1909, 1915, 1934). Perhaps professional rivalry between the two men – both as government agents, naturalists and would be anthropologists – was too great for a meeting of minds.

During his tenure as Resident Commissioner in the Solomon Islands, from 1896 to 1915, Woodford worked under six different High Commissioners, each of whom had differing political and personal agendas and interests.¹¹⁴ Many took little interest in the Solomons and Woodford's work. It was only when Sir Francis May became High Commissioner, from February 1911 to June 1912, that Woodford received any formal recognition for the work and development he had achieved in the Solomon Islands. In a letter to Harcourt, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated December 8th 1911, May was severely critical of the neglect shown by his predecessors to both the development of the Solomons and to Woodford's work (CO 225/98). He began his criticism with Sir George O'Brien (High Commissioner from July 1897 to July 1901):

¹¹² PRM 1884.141.1-2; 1885.9.1; 1885.9.2 .1-6; 1887.3.1; 1889.14.1-5; 1892.17.1-2; 1893.6.1-2; 1893.6.4; 1895.11.1-10; 1895.11.12-18; 1895.11.20-31; 1895.11.32 .2; 1895.11.33-34; 1895.34.11; 1895.11.35.1; 1895.11.35.2; 1895.11.36- 43; 1901.19.1 .1-1.3; 1909.34.1-17; 1909.34.18.1-18.10; 1909.34.19-33; 1920.12.1-12.2; 1923.50.1-9; 1928.45.24-25; 1961.7.26; 1961.7.30; 1961.7.79; 2004.122.1.

¹¹³ CUMAA 1912.200-201; E 1912.432; E 1912.64-69; E 1912.565-570; Z 34920; Z 43320; Z 43631; 1914.431; Z 2647; Z 2649; Z 2550-2551; Z 40051; 1914.432; AR 1914.220.

¹¹⁴ The six High Commissioners for the Western Pacific and their dates of office during Woodford's tenure were Sir John Bates Thurston (February 1888-February 1897); Sir George O'Brien (July 1897-July 1901); Sir Henry Jackson (September 1902-March 1904); Sir Everard Im Thurn (October 1904-August 1910); Sir Francis May (February 1911-June 1912); and Sir Bickham Sweet-Escott (July 1912-June 1918). Acting High Commissioners during this period were Sir Henry Berkeley (February-July 1897); W. Allardyce (July 1901-September 1902); and Sir Charles Major (March-October 1904, August 1910-February 1911) (Scarr 1967).

He never visited the Protectorate, nor can I find that he ever interested himself so far in it as to make suggestions for the general lines on which the administration should be developed. This is much to be regretted, for so able and so experienced an administrator could not have failed to improve the administration of the country. The next High Commissioner was Sir Henry Jackson [High Commissioner from September 1902 to March 1904]. He paid a flying visit to enquire into the interdiction of the emigration to Queensland, during which he spent only forty-eight hours at Tulagi. He visited no other portion of the Protectorate. I cannot find that he gave the local administration the benefit of his ripe experience. The next was Sir Everard im Thurn who visited the Protectorate in 1905 to enquire into the Oliphant-Hazelton case. He visited some of the Government Stations. Unfortunately Mr. Woodford was absent on leave at the time. I do not find any record of Sir Everard having enquired into the administration and assisted the Resident Commissioner with advice as to its development.

On the other hand, I could, I am sorry to say, quote many instances in which useful recommendations by Mr. Woodford have got no further than the office of the High Commissioner in Fiji.

This latter paragraph is an interesting one, as Woodford frequently took to posting his reports in duplicate, one to Fiji and one direct to London, as he was concerned that the information he was sending was too slow in reaching London. Perhaps though, he was also concerned, and seemingly with cause, that his recommendations were not being passed on to the appropriate authorities or even ignored. One such recommendation that he frequently stressed was for the Solomons to become part of the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Australia, or to limit a conflict of interests between the two posts, to have the High Commission separate from the Governorship of Fiji (May to Harcourt, December 8th 1911, CO 225/98). Woodford was always concerned that the Solomons did not rate too highly in the esteem of the Western Pacific High Commission when compared to Fiji or other British Protectorates. While these recommendations were never considered viable they are indicative of the frustration that Woodford felt from the lack of support and interest received from High Commissioners. His requests for a steamer with which to travel around the protectorate and for an increased number of police were consistently refused. It was only in 1909 that he was able to purchase a steamer from the profits generated by investment in the group and taxes, and new District

Officers and police were brought in with the expansion of the protectorate (Major telegram, 12 Jan 1909, CO 225/85). Instead Woodford, and later Mahaffy, had to rely upon the government yacht, the *Lahloo* which was purchased for the BSIP in 1899.¹¹⁵ The area covered by the BSIP which Mahaffy, and Woodford as Resident Commissioner in particular, had to travel was around 1500 miles of sea – no easy task in a yacht. In his annual report for 1900-01 Woodford had lamented the Colonial Office's failure to understand the nature of the weather and winds in the Solomons noted rather glibly:

The Government vessel, which was purchased during the year 1899, by funds placed at the disposal of the Protectorate by the Imperial Government, has continued to perform everything that was to be expected from a sailing vessel in a locality where long periods of calm are interspersed with times of very bad weather. The want of a steamer is much felt and it is hoped that funds for providing a steamer may be forthcoming during the coming year.

(Woodford annual report 1900-01, CO 225/61)

Heath (1978:203) commented that Woodford became very autocratic and demanding of his subordinate officers, ruling them rather than working alongside them, and that he had a very high turnover of officers. While the isolation of the group from Fiji may have resulted in Woodford having a freer reign of control over his officers, and while his expectations may have been high, I have seen no evidence of an unnecessarily high turnover of staff. The territory and population of the group expanded during his period as Resident Commissioner and new government stations were opened in the Shortland Islands and Malaita, which, along with the station in Gizo, resulted in new District Officers being hired. Some proved to be more unsuitable for the work than others, as in the case of Oliphant who abandoned his post as Acting Resident Commissioner while Woodford was on leave in England. Many of the new officers were quite young, such as Oliphant and Thomas Edge-Partington, and were inexperienced in managing the duties expected of them in their stations and coping with the isolation of their posts.

¹¹⁵ During this period naval vessels were used to visit trading and mission stations during an annual cruise around the protectorate, and to reach more isolated places like Santa Cruz to investigate cases such as illegal recruiting and arms/ammunition trading by French vessels.

Retirement (1915-1927)

Eventually, despite his numerous problems with the Western Pacific High Commission, thanks to the recommendations of High Commissioner May, Woodford's long service and work in the Solomons was officially recognised in 1912, resulting in him becoming a companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. In a letter to Read at the British Museum on 24th August to congratulate him on his knighthood, Woodford commented: 'My own name also appeared in the same list as the recipient of a minor distinction. It has come too late in life to be much good to me, but it is gratifying nevertheless' (BM[A]). Woodford remained in his post for several more years, but eventually age and his frustration with his position made his job untenable.

In July 1914 Woodford had returned to England to visit his family, but not long after his return to the Pacific, aged 62 and three years shy of retirement, he issued his resignation of his post as Resident Commissioner in 1915. In a letter dated 13th January 1915 to William Lever, sent from Suva, Woodford stated that he had resigned but that people in the colonial office had asked him to reconsider (ATL:MS-Coll-20-1646-4517). However, they could offer him no assurance that the Solomons would be made a crown colony in the near future and so Woodford felt that he could not continue to work under the control of the High Commissioner in remote Fiji. This, coupled with the fact that the Indian government had refused to allow the importation of Indian indentured labour to the Solomons, meant he could not continue. He stated that he was up against a brick wall and felt he could do no more for the Protectorate. Although he was under the age of retirement the Colonial Office gave him the pension he would have received had he continued in the post until the age of 65, at which time his retirement would have been compulsory. Retirement would offer him opportunities to spend more time with his family, who had visited him in the Solomons on several occasions, but not for very long periods, and to write and publish more articles, and perhaps a book. And so, in 1915 Woodford returned to England. He was never to return to the Solomons. Almost immediately upon submitting his resignation in 1915 Woodford sold a further 44 objects, predominantly from the Western Solomons, to the British Museum, for which he was paid £95 (Oc1915,-.21 to Oc1915,-.64). Although Woodford would have secured a government pension in his retirement, perhaps concern for his family's long-term finances prompted him to sell so



Plate 77: A souvenir coconut which was posted to Woodford from Tulagi (sender unknown). Woodfords family still retain some objects collected by him, including this coconut.

many objects so quickly. However, Woodford also retained a significant number of the objects he had collected during his time in the Solomons (Plate 77). An inventory of house contents drawn up by Woodford for insurance purposes dated 1923, which is still retained by his family, includes many ethnographic objects that were put on display in his house in Steyning, West Sussex (Plate 78). Two displays of objects are of particular note: (1.) the entrance hall and (2.) a show case in the dining room all displayed significant numbers of ethnographic objects. The placement of these objects within the house is important, as they were immediately visible to visitors. There are resonances with the display of objects Lady Gordon

Dining Room. cont.

		Forward			
	Old sand picture. Soap.		138	10 .	
	Convex mirror in gilt frame. Modern.		4	" .	
	1/2 doz framed photo.		2	10 .	
	Blue pottery vase			10 .	
	Sang de boeuf vase.			5 .	
	Striking Carriage clock in case.			7 6	
	Brass hand bell.	3	"	"	
	Two carpet covered foot stools.		12	6	
	Small table cov. for serving table.		7	6	
	Slip cover for dining table.		5	"	
	Glass flower vase.		7	6	
Cabinet. Contents of Show Case	Three filigree tortoiseshell & claw ornaments.	4	10	"	
	Four malaita combs, one phosphate sh.		12	6	
	Twelve pearl shell fish hooks.		12	"	
	A New Georgia pierced comb ornament of shell.		7	6	
	Two shell dishes with figate bird motif.		5	"	
	Three Gilbert Is. shell neck ornaments		3	"	
	Two bamboo Jew's harp.		2	"	
	Eight ornamented ear sticks, malaita.		8	"	
	one ear pendant. ornamented with teeth.		2	6	
	Two N. Georgia "bakiha".		10	"	
	Two Marovo ear ornaments.		5	"	
		Forward		158	17 .

Plate 78: A page from an inventory of house contents, drawn up by Woodford, which lists ethnographic objects which were put on display in his house in a display cabinet (Woodford Papers).

arranged at the government residency at Nasova, which Thomas notes were ordered into artefacts types but which were also displayed for the sake of the artistry and aesthetic appeal of the objects (Thomas 1991:172-174).

The arrangement of Woodford's ethnographic collection in such a fashion at once highlighted his connection and association with the Solomons, his position as an authority on the region, his contribution to the process of empire formation, and his success as a collector of objects. Of course, there were most probably aesthetic considerations in the display of such objects: as Thomas notes in cases of such display 'appreciation entailed appropriation' (1991:174). As we will see, Mahaffy also engaged in a similar practice at his government station in the Western Solomons.

Towards the end of his life Woodford suffered poor health, in particular an increasing deafness due to the malaria medicine he had taken during the course of his career. His ill health eventually took its toll, and in October 1927 he died at his Sussex home. He was survived by his wife and his eldest son. His youngest son Harold Vivian, a soldier, was killed during World War I.

Conclusion

Im Thurn, in a letter to Elgin, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, described Woodford's attitude to the Solomons as follows: '... the almost excessive sanguineness and independence of spirit which characterises and colours Mr. Woodford's obstinate fight for the one place in the world in which he believes, the British Solomon Islands' (March 31st 1906, CO 225/72). Woodford was doubtless a very independent person who had a slight aversion to authority figures, as witnessed by his abandoning his early career in his father's business and his conflict with various High Commissioners. Throughout his career as Resident Commissioner he maintained a single-mindedness and determination to ensure the realisation of his dream of the Solomons as a region for commercial development and investment. Of course, the methods employed by him and his officers in shaping the BSIP, from pacification to land alienation, and the impact such actions had on the lives and cultural institutions of Solomon Islanders can be criticised, and rightly so. There is a definite contradiction in his actions relating to the local population at times. He complained about the restriction of access routes to local peoples fishing areas when new fisheries regulations were introduced in 1904 (CO

225/67), yet at the same time encouraged and granted plantation companies the rights to huge tracts of land for commercial development with 99 year leases, frequently dispossessing the rightful owners of their lands (Burnett 1911:136-137). Although he succeeded in making the Solomons self-supporting quite quickly, he struggled to pacify the region with an undermanned police force, being obliged to recruit traders and friendly locals to assist in raids. The lack of interest in the group shown by various High Commissioners left Woodford with a sense of under appreciation for his work and achievements in the BSIP.

While no catalogue for his ethnographic collections was written by him, his letters to British Museum curators, the Natural History Museum and the Royal Geographical Society all provide a sense of his interests as an explorer and ethnographer, and a vague indication of where and when objects were collected. He collected objects not just with a scientific interest. In a continuation of his work as a naturalist he collected objects to donate and sell to The British Museum and to private collectors, thereby providing extra financial support for himself and his family, all the while maintaining activity within the academic field by publishing and presenting papers on objects from his explorations of “his” Solomon Islands (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of Woodford’s academic and private papers). Woodford possessed, as Coates commented on him ‘such steadfastness of determination that it enabled one man to stand pitted against the entire British Government, and win’ (1970:226). He deserves recognition not just for his work as Resident Commissioner in Solomon Islands, but also for his work as a field collector and ethnologist.

The following chapter examines the biography and career of Arthur William Mahaffy, from his first posting in the Pacific as a District Officer in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, to his arrival in the Solomons. The chapter considers his role in the pacification of the Solomons, and how throughout his career he used his official position to acquire objects for collection. It also explores how his ascent through the ranks of the Western Pacific High Commission, from District Officer, to Colonial Secretary, to Assistant High Commissioner, thus surpassing Woodford. As such, this chapter considers whether this shift in dynamic affected Woodford and Mahaffy’s professional and personal relationship. Mahaffy’s aims and ambitions in collecting objects forms a central discussion in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

A Tattooed Headhunter from Ireland: the collection and career of Arthur William Mahaffy (1869-1919)

It is with fear and trembling that I let him go to the Solomon Islands – as long as Woodford is there... His influence, undoubtedly considerable, on the natives here is distinctly disturbing to any one responsible for native administration; and his effect upon the European residents, official and unofficial, is hardly less disturbing. (im Thurn to Lucas, 20th December 1909, CO 225/87).

Introduction

Of perhaps equal importance as Woodford in the initial shaping of the BSIP was Arthur William Mahaffy (1869-1919) (Plate 79). However, Mahaffy's biography is not as tied to the Solomons as that of Woodford. Initially a member of the army, Mahaffy joined the Colonial Office as a District Officer for Kiribati and Tuvalu in 1896, before arriving in the Solomons in 1898. Employed in the Solomons for almost seven years as the first District Officer in the BSIP, he was responsible for enforcing the punitive measures directed by Woodford in the suppression of headhunting in the Western Solomons, which in part, paved the way for the social and economic transformation of the Protectorate.

Whereas Woodford's publications, diaries, papers and other archive material help provide a sense of the man and his intentions, unfortunately no such extensive documentary evidence exists for Mahaffy. The majority of information on his work in the Pacific comes from colonial archive records (CO 152; CO 225; WPHC 3 & 4), which though impersonal in their functionary purpose, do provide a sense of the beliefs Mahaffy held about the people he worked for (both European and Indigenous), his role, and the work he carried out. To date no personal letters or diaries belonging to Mahaffy have been



Plate 79: Arthur Mahaffy photographed circa 1905 (Allen 1907:195)

located, and his family are unaware of any such documents having existed.¹¹⁶ Luckily, however, Mahaffy wrote three texts to accompany his collection of objects. These undated texts, held by both The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge and the National Museum of Ireland, are entitled a “Collection of Arms and other objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903 by Arthur Mahaffy”, the “Catalogue Raisonné”, and a “Supplementary List of objects brought home in 1914” (MAA[A] OA1/1/3; NMI[A] 21/A&I/1923). These, along with two publications entitled ‘The Solomon Islands’, published in *The Empire Review* in 1902 and ‘Ocean Island’, published in *Blackwood’s Magazine* in 1909, provide critical information on Mahaffy’s views, the people he worked with, and also about the objects he collected.

Unlike Woodford, who has been the subject of several authors’ work, those who have mentioned Mahaffy in their writings usually do so in passing, discussing information

¹¹⁶ Mention was made of a family photograph album, yet this item remains unaccounted for within his descendants’ family.

from his colonial reports or his work in association with Woodford (Bennett 1987; Berry 1974; Boutilier 1975, 1979; Burnett 1911; Burt 2002; Jackson 1978; Zelenietz 1979). This could be on account of Woodford being considered the more important of the two in terms of the shaping of the BSIP, but it would be an error to overlook the impact of Mahaffy on the region, both while he resided there as a District Officer, and later in his capacity as Assistant to the High Commissioner. Golden (1993) included a brief biography of Mahaffy in his 1993 compendium of early European settlers in the Solomons. Scarr (1967), in his history of the Western Pacific High Commission, did discuss aspects of Mahaffy's Colonial Office work, but not the subtleties of the encounters and actions that create a biography. The biography presented here considers Mahaffy's engagement with and entanglement to the people and places he encountered, and the objects he collected. His biography, as with Woodford's, is ultimately bound up with these sets of encounters, and with the materiality of the objects within his collection. To date no-one has studied his collection of ethnographic objects, held primarily by the National Museum of Ireland (NMI), but objects collected by Mahaffy are also to be found in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (PRM). By combining a study of the texts available on and by Mahaffy, along with analysis of his collection, it is possible to build up a fuller picture and understanding of the man.

It should be noted that the lack of information available pertaining to Mahaffy's character makes it difficult to firmly judge his personality. Upon being introduced to him following his arrival in the Solomons, the Reverend Henry Welchman, a Melanesian Missionary resident at Bugotu on Santa Isabel, described Mahaffy as 'a man of 'superior' manners, but seemed to wish to be pleasant', whereas Woodford, whom Welchman did not appear to get on with, was 'as polite & uncivil as usual' (ML:M805). Mahaffy seemed to be a proud and determined man. He and Woodford appeared to respect each other and agreed in their opinions about indigenous people and their proper treatment by Europeans. Like Woodford, Mahaffy frequently clashed with his superior at the High Commission in Fiji, Everard im Thurn, a relationship which is discussed below. Mahaffy's obituary noted his wit and charm, and described him as well travelled and well regarded (*The Times*, 30th Oct 1919), yet the same man was considered by his nephew to be the 'black sheep' of the family (H. Usherwood, pers.com.).¹¹⁷ This biography chapter explores some of the

¹¹⁷ Henrietta Usherwood (nee. Mahaffy) is Mahaffy's grandniece. Usherwood made the comment that her father, Rupert Mahaffy (b.1923), nephew to Arthur, believed he was a "black sheep" within the family. As

contradictory aspects of Mahaffy's life and career, along with his collecting. Mapping out Mahaffy's biography, including details of encounters, transactions and engagements with indigenous peoples, assists in our understandings of colonial agents and Solomons Islanders during the early colonial period.

Early life

Mahaffy was born on 22nd October 1869 in Howth, Co. Dublin, the eldest son of John Pentland and Francis Leticia Mahaffy.¹¹⁸ At the time of Arthur's birth John Pentland Mahaffy was a Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, and was appointed Provost of the college in 1914 until his death in 1919. A tutor and friend of Oscar Wilde, John was a renowned classical scholar, but was also famous for his wit and charm as much as his writings (*The Times*, 1st May 1919). Mahaffy was educated at Marlborough School and then at Magdalen College, Oxford from 1889 to 1891. He then entered Trinity College, Dublin where he obtained a B.A. (1891) and an M.A. (1904).¹¹⁹ Besides his studies he was an ardent oarsman (stroke and steer), rowing for the Trinity College Boat Club during and after his university education in several Henley Royal Regatta meetings, where he and his team enjoyed great success (*The Times*, 7th July 1892; 11th May 1903). Upon completion of his studies Mahaffy spent several years in the army, as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers.¹²⁰ Whereas zoology and botany provided Woodford with a means to pursue a career away from his family's business and a chance to travel, the army provided Mahaffy with the opportunity for social advancement and travel. It is plausible that his service in the army opened up social connections that paved the way for employment in the Colonial Office. Incidentally, the military skills Mahaffy acquired in the army proved to be a valuable asset in his future employment, particularly in the pacification of the Solomon Islands.

Rupert was born after Arthur's death we must assume this sentiment was passed to him from other family members, possibly his father. Service in the army was undertaken by most men within the Mahaffy family, so possibly it was Arthur's choice of working in the remote and apparently savage Solomon Islands which encouraged this concept of his "otherness" within the family.

¹¹⁸ Arthur had one brother, Robert Pentland (1871-1943) and two sisters, Elizabeth (1867-1926) and Rachel Mary (1874-1944) (Burkes Irish Family Records 1976:772).

¹¹⁹ It is possible, considering his Father's post, that Mahaffy transferred from Magdalen to Trinity to complete his B.A. His M.A. was most likely awarded in absentia.

¹²⁰ During his army service Mahaffy was based at the Curragh in Co. Kildare. Army lists suggest that he was not posted outside of Ireland during his time with the Royal Munster Fusiliers.



Plate 80: Arthur Mahaffy (centre) photographed in Samoa, 1896 (ATL: PA1-o-545-8).

Initial Colonial Career: Kiribati and Tuvalu (1896-1898)

Following the completion of his army service, Mahaffy travelled to the Pacific in 1896. A photograph found in an album belonging to Thomas Cusack-Smith, British Consul in Samoa from the late 1880s until 1898, places Mahaffy in Samoa in 1886, during which time he hosted a “picnic party” (ATL:PA1-o-545-8) (Plate 80). As this date seems too early for Mahaffy’s arrival in the Pacific it may be that the date Mahaffy was photographed in Samoa was actually 1896. He had sent a letter of application to Thurston, then High Commissioner at the Western Pacific High Commission, for employment in the colonial service, and he was originally considered for the post of additional European Officer in the newly established BSIP (CO 225/50). In a letter Thurston wrote that:

in Woodford I have a good man, & should like to associate Mahaffy with him on probation. He is willing to go & he certainly has some splendid points about him (CO 225/50).¹²¹

However, as this position was awaiting funds from the Treasury, Mahaffy was temporarily employed as a Government Agent and District Officer for the Gilbert & Ellice Islands Protectorate (Kiribati and Tuvalu respectively), which had been declared a British Protectorate in 1892.¹²² As part of Mahaffy's duties he was required to reside on the islands of Nonouti, Tabiteuea and Abemama, spending about three months on each island in order to instruct the native councils on the rules of British governance, as the distance between islands in the region meant that the Resident Commissioner or Government Agents did not frequently visit them (CO 225/50).

It was during this period that Mahaffy began collecting objects and items of interest on his travels around the protectorate. One of the earliest objects Mahaffy commissioned was a shell knife from Nonouti which was made for him by an old man who was too poor to pay his annual tax of 2 shillings (AE:1923.38) (Plate 81). Mahaffy discharged the debt on condition that the man made him a copy of a knife like the old man had used in his youth, and which appears to have fallen out of use with the advent of European trade goods. He commented that he had

never seen another example of this kind of knife, they must all have been discarded when the Europeans began to come regularly to the Gilberts about 50 or 60 years ago. It is used for cutting the end of the spathe or fruit-bearing shoot of the coconut tree (Mahaffy n.p.).

Evidently, from his arrival in the Pacific, objects were used by Mahaffy as a means of negotiating or dealing with local people. As with Woodford's collecting of stone axe and adze heads while at Aola (see Chapter 8), it appears that Mahaffy actively sought out objects which were considered to be traditional or pre-contact. However, unlike Woodford, who temporarily lived among local groups without actually engaging with the people or their culture on any meaningful level, Mahaffy's interest in indigenous culture extended beyond the collection of objects and their materiality alone. In a move that at once

¹²¹ The addressee and date of this letter are not included in this file.

¹²² A request had been made in July 1895 to appoint a second European officer in the Gilbert and Ellice Island Protectorate (CO 225/47).

differentiates Mahaffy from Woodford, both in terms of character and outlook, while in Kiribati Mahaffy was 'liberally tattooed' using an old set of tattooing implements made from human bone (Mahaffy n.p.) (Plates 82 and 83). Te Toite, the artist who tattooed him, then presented the set to Mahaffy. Although Mahaffy included this set in his "Catalogue Raisonné", comments written on the original National Museum of Ireland inventory of his collection indicate that this tattooing set was not purchased by the museum along with the rest of his collection in 1923. In the "Catalogue Raisonné" Mahaffy described the implements and tattooing procedure:

They are fitted during the operation into small sticks, like this and having been dipped into a solution made from the charcoal of burnt taro and coconut moistened with the milk of a very young coconut, are beaten into the skin with the striker. The skin is held tightly distended by the hands of the assistant tattooer, whose duty it is to wipe off the blood and pigment with the brush. The pattern is first drawn upon the skin with a cleverly made pen formed from a stick of grass, made by bending three equal joints on the stalk and tying them round the main stem with a fine piece of fibre. The drawing is mostly done by eye... Two hours at a time was the most I could stand, if I wished to be able to walk about the next day. I was only tattooed upon alternative days. The old tattooing in the Gilberts varied island to island, and had no doubt tribal meanings, each piece was known by a different name and women had quite a different pattern from men (Mahaffy n.p.).

Considering the statement that he could only endure two hours tattooing per day implied that the tattooing Mahaffy received was indeed extensive. Kiribati tattooing has been described as almost identical to that from the Marshall Islands, where tattooing was the privilege of chiefs and noble families, and was considered both a valued form of family inheritance and the most noble form of decoration a body could receive (Kubary 1887). Others have described the patterns of Kiribati tattooing as 'purely spontaneous with no relation at all to Marshallese patterns or distinctions of rank or status and with no religious associations' (Finsch 1894; Hage, Harary & Milicic 1996:345). Koch states that Kiribati tattoo designs, mainly in diagonal stripes, could cover the upper part of the body down to the toes, and had a 'definite, if limited social significance, in that it could help the individual to attain greater recognition within the community' (1986:165).



Plate 81: A shell knife from Nonouti, Kiribati (NMI AE:1923.38). This knife was made for Mahaffy by an old man who was too poor to pay his annual tax of 2 shillings (shell blade: 13.5 cm long).

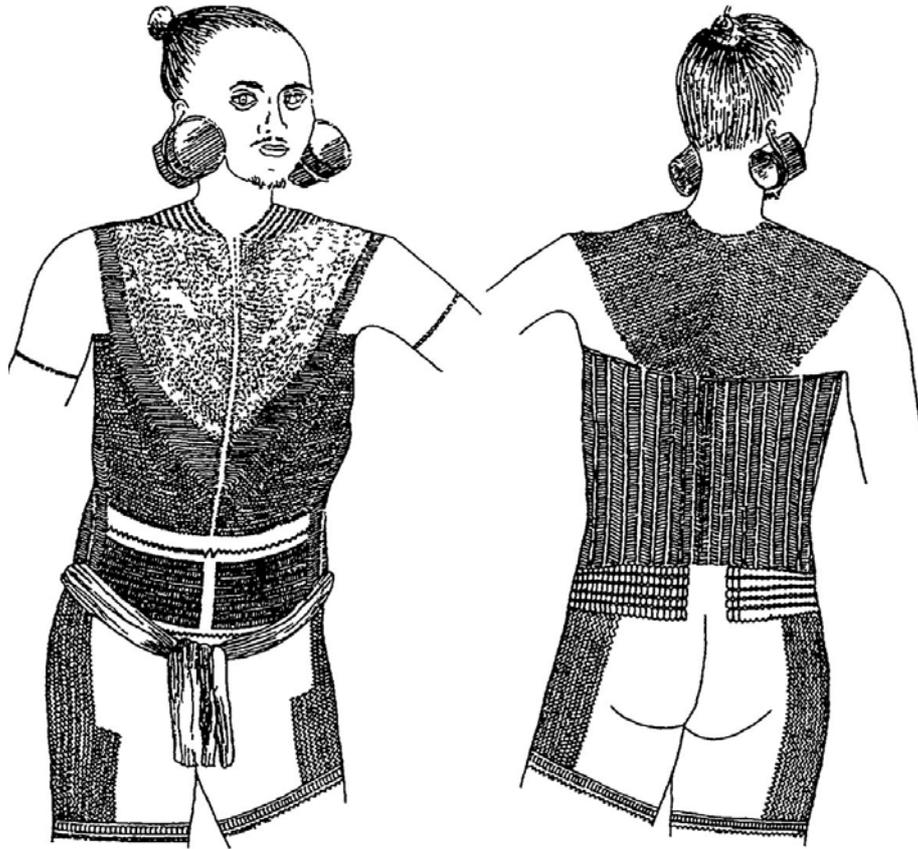


Plate 82: Illustration showing the patterns and extent of male tattooing in the Marshall Islands (Hage *et al.*:1996:340). The tattoo's Mahaffy received in Kiribati would have followed similar motifs but it is unclear the extent of his tattooing.

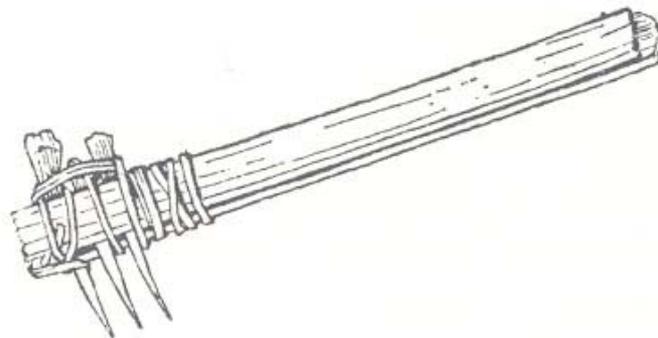


Plate 83: Illustration of a tattooing tool from Kiribati (Koch 1986:166). It would have been with a similar instrument that Mahaffy was tattooed.

From the time of Cook's voyages onwards it was a common occurrence for sailors and beachcombers in the Pacific to be tattooed (see Douglas 2005; White 2005). While initially engaged in through curiosity, the tattooing of Europeans quickly became seen as an expression and signifier of individual personalities, a person's membership to a particular group, and their class and status – what has been termed the habitus (Mauss 1979 [1935]; Bourdieu 1977; Gell 1998). White (2005:77-78) noted that for Europeans resident in tattooing cultures it was often vital to undergo tattooing in order to gain acceptance and standing within that culture. As a member of a middle-upper class family and a colonial official Mahaffy's voluntary tattooing is unusual, but perhaps considering his army background, he was more familiar with the process and social significance of tattooing (Thomas 2005:26-27). Although he did not mention where his tattoos were placed, it must be assumed that they would not have been visible through his clothing. Considering his role and position within the colonial administration, having tattoos on visible display would not have been socially or morally acceptable, especially as tattooing was subjected to both mission and colonial suppression (see Thomas 2005; Cole 2005). Mahaffy's engagement with it is unusual and speaks of his willingness to transgress social norms.

While it is unclear in what context his tattooing took place, Mahaffy evidently asked to be tattooed. Perhaps he engaged in it through curiosity, or for greater acceptance within the Kiribati community that tattoos gave him. But through this process his skin at once became a contact zone between European and Kiribati culture, one that was read differently by European and Kiribati people. In many ways the transformation of Mahaffy's skin through the tattooing process could be considered a European appropriation of an indigenous item (the tattoo) or also an indigenous appropriation of a European surface (his skin) – in essence turning his skin, and therefore himself, into a cross-cultural interface of their material culture.¹²³

During Mahaffy's employment in Kiribati he participated in the execution of a convicted murderer at Nonouti (CO 225/52). Upon arriving at Nonouti on April 21st 1897 Mahaffy found that the prisoner, who had murdered a girl in 1896, was not imprisoned but living freely in the village. Mahaffy stated of the prisoner that 'owing to a series of incantations or charms wrought upon him he was considered by the natives to have

¹²³ It was during this period in the Pacific that Mahaffy first sent objects he collected to a museum, in this case the Australian Museum in Sydney (see Chapter 3).

acquired absolute immunity from the penalty of the law' (Mahaffy to Telfer Campbell, 23rd April 1897, CO 225/52). In order that an example should be set, Mahaffy ordered the local magistrate to take him to the man, and upon finding him seated near a fire surrounded by his friends, Mahaffy arrested him and held him overnight on the ship on which he had travelled to the island. The following day, as preparations were made for the execution, Mahaffy allowed the man's friends to visit him two at a time to say their farewells, and the resident Catholic Priest was permitted to administer the last rights as the man was a recent convert. In his report to Telfer Campbell, the Resident Commissioner for the Protectorate, Mahaffy described the execution, stated that as he found it

impossible to obtain anyone to assist me except the chief of police, it became my most unpleasant duty myself to assist in the execution, as I was afraid to trust to a single shot. The flag having been halfmasted his sentence and confession were read aloud to the people and at 12 o'clock exactly I gave the word to fire. The chief of police was armed with a snider and the heavy bullet passing almost directly through the region of the heart making an immense wound must have caused instant death. The rifle with which I was armed missed fire. I satisfied myself that the man was dead and returned immediately to my house. The natives seeing some convulsive movements of his limbs and imagining he was not dead afterwards fired (or compelled the captain of police to fire) two more shots at him, a barbarity to which I was of course no party, as I was not a spectator... This is the first execution ever carried out on this island and I am assured by both natives and white residents that it will produce a salutary effect upon these most troublesome people (Mahaffy to Telfer Campbell, 23rd April 1897, CO 225/52).

While in his report Mahaffy lamented that the execution could not have taken place in a more thorough manner, his description of the 'barbarity' of the actions of locals firing at the deceased's body does seem quite contradictory when compared to his own actions. Although the man had been sentenced to death, Mahaffy, it appears, acted on his own volition in ordering his immediate execution, an action which received no censure from the Resident Commissioner or Colonial Office. Through his actions, one must assume that to the indigenous population Mahaffy gave the impression that he was more powerful than any local charms or incantations which had been placed upon the condemned man. Mahaffy's readiness to undertake such actions against individuals and local populations,

apparently without personal conflict, was taken to another level with his work in the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands (1898-1904)

Although sanction came through in March 1897 for Mahaffy's position as additional European Officer in the BSIP, he was required to see out the remainder of his contract in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate, which terminated in November 1897. While the exact date of Mahaffy's arrival in the Solomons is unclear, he arrived at Tulagi via Sydney in February 1898 to take up the post of Commissioner's Assistant (CO 225/55), bringing an Tuvalu Islander as a servant along with him (Welchman Diary, ML:M805). His subsequent appointment titles while in the Solomons were Resident Magistrate in 1899 (CO 225/57), and Deputy Commissioner from 1900 to 1904 (CO 225/59). A smallpox epidemic in the Northern Solomons in 1898 had cemented the need for a second European Officer in the region. Once the threat posed by this epidemic had been brought under control, Woodford was in a position to direct his attention to another "threat", one that threatened the economic development of the Protectorate. Now that he had assistance Woodford would be able to tackle the headhunting practices of the Western Province, and begin his own campaign to attract plantation companies into the region.

During his first year in the Protectorate Mahaffy was based at Tulagi with Woodford, where both men spent a good deal of time visiting the various islands of the Protectorate (Woodford, Annual Report 1898-1899, CO 225/57). In June 1898 Mahaffy travelled on H.M.S *Mohawk*, a man-of-war, to Mbilua in Vella Lavella, Western Solomons, where the captain had the duty of undertaking a punitive raid against a chief named Sito, who in November 1897 had attacked a resident trader, Jean Pratt, and his crew on board his trading vessel *Eclipse*. Although Mahaffy did not have an orchestrating part in this raid, he was present during the burning of Sito's houses, canoe house and canoes. This incident was just one in a series of connected incidents involving Sito, colonial officials, and resident traders, which continued into the early 1900s. The Sito case is important as it serves as an example of the connections between people, events and things, of grievances and misunderstandings between Europeans and Indigenous people, and as an example of colonial officials using punitive raids as opportunities for collecting objects.

Following the initial attack by the *Mohawk* on Sito's village, Mahaffy spent the remainder of the trip, which lasted until August, travelling around the region on Pratt's

trading schooner compiling information on the extent of headhunting raids and murders in the Western Solomons, relying mainly on information obtained from resident traders in the West. In his report to Woodford, Mahaffy listed the number of heads recently taken in the West as 151, naming Simbo, Vella Lavella and New Georgia Island as the worst offenders (CO 225/55). He recommended that it was only by ‘strong, continuous, and consistent, repressive measures’ that any impact could be made upon headhunting practices, and as he believed the natives were ‘the most arrant cowards’ a small force would be able to suppress it (Mahaffy to Woodford, 1st August 1898, CO 225/55).

As a result of Mahaffy’s, and Woodford’s, earlier reports on the scale of headhunting in the West, and the latter’s belief that by destroying every *tomoko* on sight, either complete or in the process of manufacture, that headhunting would become a thing of the past, Woodford was given instructions to establish a second Government Station in the Western Province (Woodford, Annual Report 1899-1900, CO 225/59). Having selected the island of Gizo as the site for the station, particularly on account of its good harbour, Woodford and some “native” police travelled there to clear a site before a carpenter arrived from Sydney to construct a residence and jail, two houses made of local material as police quarters, and a boat and canoe house, also of local material.¹²⁴ The station was taken over by Mahaffy on 21st December 1899 (Woodford to O’Brien, 14th January 1900, WPHC 4/56/00).

During his mid-1898 visit to the Western Province Mahaffy had received instructions from Woodford to recruit locals for the police force, and he had recruited five men from Mono Island in the Shortland Group. Once established at Gizo, Mahaffy used his army skills and experience to train these men, together with others recruited from Malaita, Savo and Santa Isabel, to act as constabulary. In his annual reports for 1899-1900 and 1900-1901 Woodford praised Mahaffy’s work in preparing these men for their employment in punitive raids, noting that their presence in the region had already made a profound impact on headhunting activities (Woodford, annual report 1899-1900, CO 225/59). He noted of the local force:

¹²⁴ The site at Gizo harbour had been selected for the new station by Woodford and Captain Freeman of H.M.S. *Mohawk* during a previous visit to the Western Province (Woodford, Annual Report 1899-1900, CO 225/59).

The Police recruited at the end of 1898 and beginning of 1900, for service at the west end of the Protectorate, with the view of checking and suppressing the head-hunting raids engaged in by the natives of New Georgia and adjacent islands, have, under the training of Mr. Mahaffy, developed into a most valuable force. With the raw material placed in his hands Mr. Mahaffy has indeed worked wonders. The establishment of the Gizo Station, and the ever present force of police, have had a most deterrent effect upon the head-hunting instincts of the natives in the neighbourhood. (Woodford, annual report 1900-1901, CO 225/61)

Having a European Officer and police force in the West provided rapid retaliation for headhunting raids or murders, and almost immediately upon settling in Gizo Mahaffy and his canoe-borne police were put to work in the task of stopping the headhunting raids of the Western province.

On 19th January 1900 Woodford with his Tulagi police and Mahaffy with his Gizo police undertook a punitive raid on the two neighbouring islands of Kolokongo and Nusarua in the Roviana Lagoon (near Oneavisi Island), in retaliation for a headhunting attack made upon Vulavu village in the Bogotu district of Santa Isabel the previous August. A Bogotu chief named Boijofe had identified several men from Kolokongo and Nusarua as the perpetrators of the attack, including Vaiboro and Mea, men from Nusarua (Woodford to O'Brien, 21st January 1900, CO 225/59). Woodford reported that at dawn the village at Nusarua was rushed by the two colonial officers and police, and that Mea was killed: the remaining villagers escaped (Woodford to O'Brien, 21st January 1900, CO 225/59; Woodford, Annual Report 1899-1900, CO 225/59).¹²⁵ The police were then allowed to take what they wanted from the village. It is interesting that Woodford mentioned this activity in his reports to the High Commissioner and annual report, without him or his men receiving censure from the Colonial Office for such actions. Evidently looting was not a hidden or taboo action for colonial official and their employees.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Woodford used punitive raids as a means of acquiring objects, particularly those which might not have been made available for purchase or trade, a trait that Mahaffy also possessed. In the "Catalogue Raisonné" Mahaffy identified four objects as being part of the loot taken during the raid on Nusarua in 1900. These objects, now part of the National Museum of Ireland collection, are as

¹²⁵ Woodford further mentioned that some 'wild firing' took place from the police force, but that this was quickly brought into check.



Plate 84: A shell ring valuable (*bakiha*). Taken as loot by Mahaffy during a raid on the island of Nusarua in the Roviana Lagoon, 19th January 1900.

(NMI AE:1923.157)



Plate 85: Detail of AE:1923.156 showing Mahaffy's initial and the date he acquired the object.



Plate 86: This shell valuable was also taken by Mahaffy during the Nusarua raid in January 1901.
(NMI AE:1923.157)



Plate 87: Whale tooth called Ratovo. Taken as part of the Nusarua loot.

(NMI AE:1923.321)



Plate 88: Whale tooth, taken as part of the loot from Nusarua, Roviana Lagoon.

(NMI AE:1923.232)

follows: AE:1923.156 – a *bakiha*; AE:1923.157 – a *bareke*; and AE:1923.231-232 – two whale’s teeth ornaments (Plates 84 to 88). On one object, the *bakeha* shell valuable (AE:1923.156) Mahaffy inscribed his initial “A”, the name “Nusarua” and “19.1.1900”. In doing so he transformed and personalised his newly acquired object into a memento of the raid – his first punitive raid in the Solomon Islands and inscribed an element of his own biographical detail onto it.¹²⁶

For three of the objects, AE:1923.156-157&231, Mahaffy only provided minimal information. However, for AE:1923.232, he recorded that this tooth was believed to come from a snake-like monster called *ratovo*, who inhabited the interior of New Georgia Island but who also lived on Rendova Island and Simbo (Mahaffy n.p). In the entry for this object he continued:

They say that these monsters never leave the bush save when they come down to the beach to die, and that their teeth are sometimes found on lonely beaches of New Georgia, and although it may appear at the first blush an absurdity to attach any

¹²⁶ In his letter to Read at the British Museum dated 4th March 1900, Woodford stated that he undertook a punitive raid against natives in the Roviana Lagoon on 21st of January 1900. It is possible that the objects he cited as collected by him during this raid, including the two ceramic plate *dale* or *kapkap* ornaments, were in fact collected during the raid of January 19th. I can find no reference to a second punitive raid which took place on 21st January 1900.

credence to such a tale, it becomes much less ridiculous when one remembers that there are certainly more than one million acres of land in this island untrampled by the foot of man since the beginning, in these trackless wastes of tropical mountain and forest there may conceivably linger forms of life, the relics of a much older period of the world's history, and somewhere in the wastes of the virgin forest may be the survivors of a race of saurians of which we know nothing. (Mahaffy n.p.)

Although the tooth is clearly that of a sperm whale Mahaffy did not seem to recognise it as such, commenting that it may be possible that these animals still existed, citing the discovery of new and surprising animals in Africa as a warning against complacency.¹²⁷ He further noted that this tooth was regarded by the village he took it from with the greatest reverence. In a separate entry for two ceremonial whales teeth from Fiji in this collection (AE:1923.91-92) Mahaffy noted that:

In the Solomons these teeth are enormously valued and any natives who have seen this particular pair have been very much excited over them. In the villages I have raided the first thing my police look for are these teeth, and the loss of them to a community is one of the heaviest punishments that can be inflicted upon it (Mahaffy n.p.).

As with Woodford's campaign to destroy every *tomoko*, Mahaffy knew that by targeting and removing specific objects he could disrupt the cosmological beliefs of local people, while also undermining the power of the chief over his people.

Before progressing further it is important to note here that of the indigenous police force who undertook this punitive action, many were new recruits, and several from Vulavu, Santa Isabel were actual witnesses to the Kolokongo raid (Woodford to O'Brien, 21st January 1900, CO 225/59; Woodford, Annual Report 1899-1900, CO 225/59). Evidently not recognising that the police may have acted in retaliation for this and previous attacks, and failing to grasp the consequences of this, Woodford stated that:

It seems fitting that retribution should have fallen upon these people at the hands of natives of Ysabel, who compose a large proportion of the police force. For more than three hundred years, that is to say from the time of our first knowledge of the Solomons, and probably long before that, the natives of the New Georgia Group and

¹²⁷ It is plausible that there may have been a mix up in the NMI between 1923.231 which is clearly the tooth of a sperm whale, and 1923.232 which is a more unusual looking tooth.

adjacent islands have harried the coasts of Ysabel. The action described above is believed to have produced a most profound impression and will not have to be repeated. (Woodford, Annual Report 1899-1900, CO 225/59).

During the Nusarua raid the village's canoes were destroyed. The force then moved to the island of Kolokongo, where the large *tomoko*, also used in the Vulavu raid and still blood-stained from the heads taken at Vulavu, was seized. This *tomoko* was taken back to Gizo where Mahaffy used it for transportation and also to undertake future punitive raids. In his 1909 paper on Solomon Islands canoes, Woodford incorrectly stated that this *tomoko* was the last one in which heads were taken (Woodford 1909:511) (Plate 89). Headhunting raids, though less frequent, did continue sporadically throughout the early twentieth century.

Following the establishment of the BSIP, budgetary limitations only allowed for the purchase of one yacht, the *Lahloo*, in which Woodford primarily, but also Mahaffy, could travel around the group. Otherwise, the men were forced to rely on visiting navy ships or on the resident traders during their trading and copra collection voyages around the region. The frequent periods of calm and windless weather in the Solomons meant that the *Lahloo* proved to be quite ineffective when trying to reach a destination quickly. As Woodford's frequent pleas to the Colonial Office for funds to purchase a steamer were continually rejected, Mahaffy and his police were obliged to use local canoes captured during punitive raids as their means of transportation around the Western Province. In this way, *tomoko* took on another dimension in Mahaffy's work in the Western Province. Their use served a practical purpose as it offered Mahaffy and his police force a rapid means of transportation around the Western Province. Mahaffy provided a description of the war canoe taken from Kolokongo (Plates 90 and 91):

A very fine "tomoko" in constant use at Gizo measures 48ft.6inches over all, is 4ft.6inches in extreme beams, 3ft.6inches in depth. The bow end is 12ft. 6 inches in height and the stern 15ft 6in. She has a full crew of 24 men is steered by the sternmost paddle and can during a "burst" go about ten knots an hour, and for a long journey say forty miles can be depended to cover 6 knots an hour quite regularly. Natives seem to be able to go on paddling indefinitely, and I have been in this very canoe when we made a passage of nine hours without an "easy" (Mahaffy n.p.).



Plate 89: Mahaffy in his *tomoko* with crew. This is most likely the *tomoko* taken by him and Woodford during the raid on Nusarua in 1900. Also photographed in the canoe is another white male (unidentified) and a small white dog, possibly Mahaffy's dog named Jack.
(NMI AE:NN121a)

Those *tomoko* spared from destruction were kept by Mahaffy at his station on Gizo. He seems to have built up quite a collection of canoes during his time as District Officer in Gizo, as in his catalogue he commented that 'the canoes used in the murderous expeditions of these natives and afterwards confiscated by me, filled my canoe house, and were even now lying on my beach' (Mahaffy n.p.).¹²⁸ He also donated a large *tomoko*, confiscated in the Roviana Lagoon, to Museum Victoria in Melbourne in 1901 when Graham Officer, who was in the region collecting on behalf of the museum, stayed with him at Gizo (MV X8042). Officer himself commented that while he was at Gizo Mahaffy's own *tomoko* was being 'done up' by some local people who were skilled in such work and that Mahaffy had offered to have them undertake work or repairs on the *tomoko* he had given to Officer (Officer MS Papers). The context of this "doing up" of Mahaffy's *tomoko* is unclear. Perhaps it was aesthetic concerns but quite possibly these were simply repairs to the hull of the *tomoko*. While Mahaffy's assistance to Officer in forming his collection will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, it is worth noting here that in his diaries from

¹²⁸ This comment suggests that Mahaffy wrote this catalogue while still resident in Gizo.

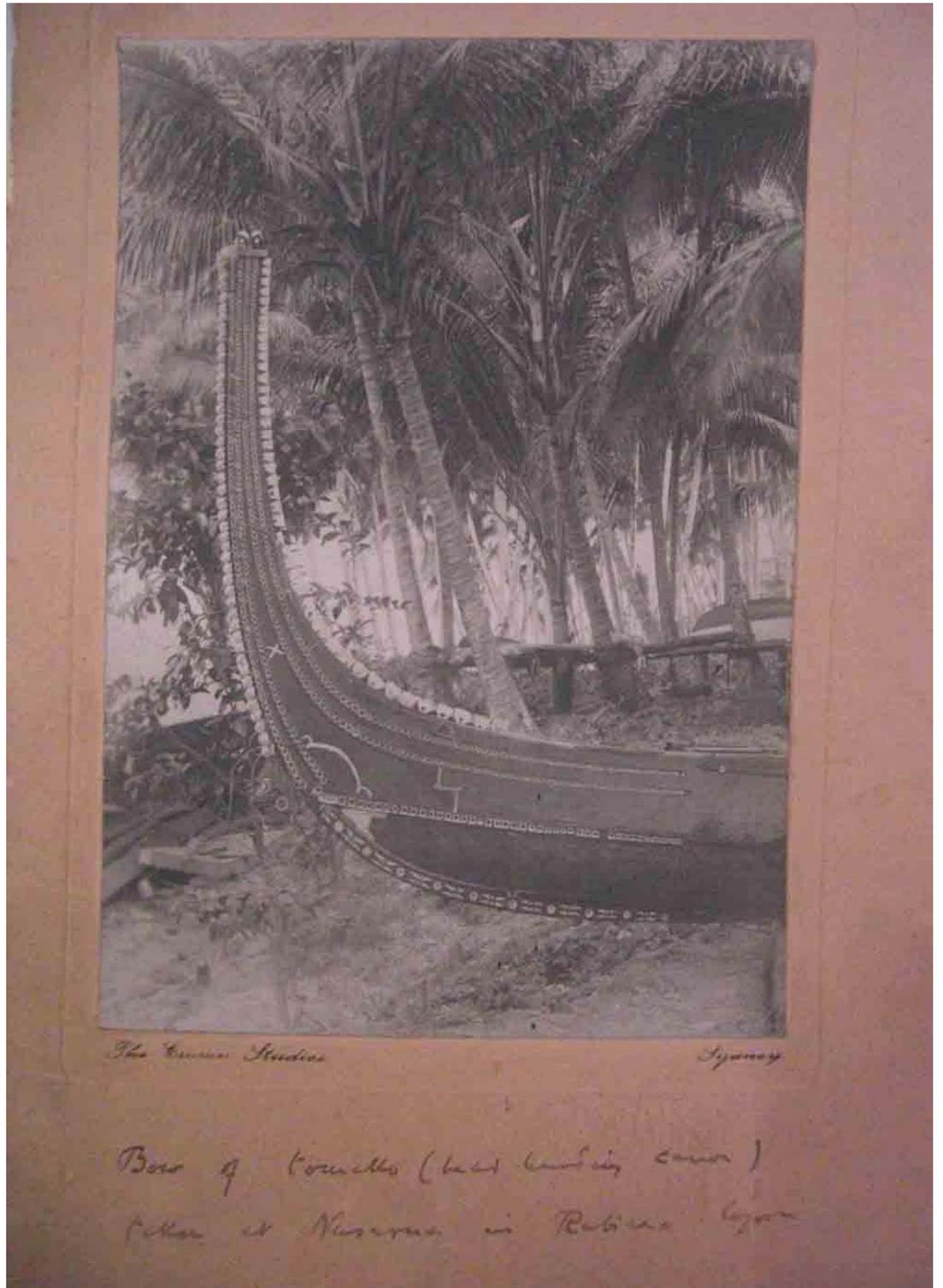


Plate 90: Detail of the bow of the *tomoko* taken from Nusarua in 1900. (NMI AE:NN121b)

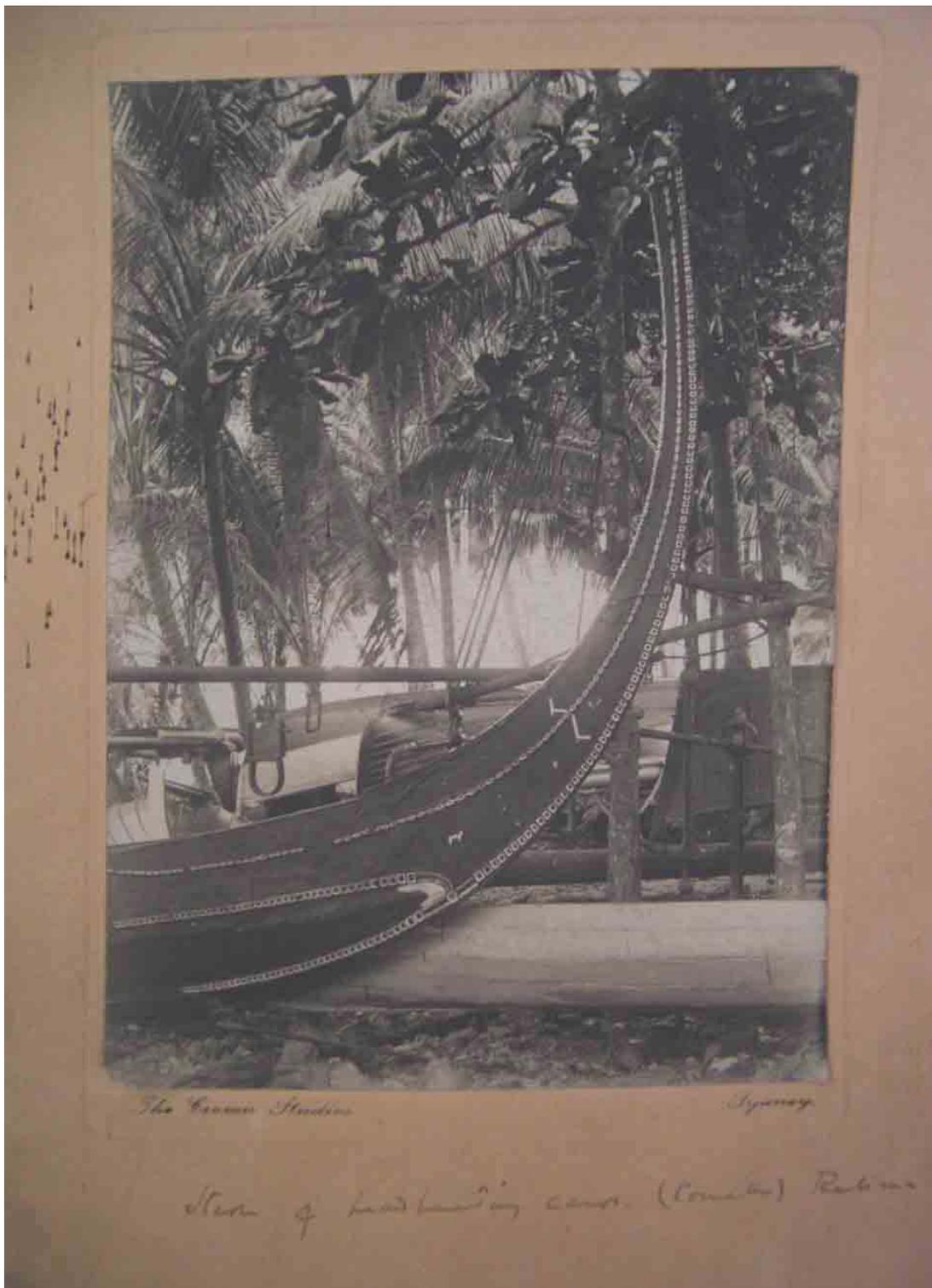


Plate 91: Detail of the stern of the *tomoko* taken from Nusarua in 1900. (NMI AE:NN121c)

the trip Officer commented that Mahaffy had ‘a fine collection of native gear’ on display at his house at Gizo, together with the many canoes he had seized (Officer MS Papers). In the eyes of local people Woodford and Mahaffy must have taken on the personas of powerful chiefs through their accumulation and display of indigenous artefacts like canoes, skulls and shell valuables etc. This, together with their roles in pacifying the region, in effect led to them acquiring *mana* or efficacy, becoming powerful ‘chiefs’ themselves. Perhaps there are parallels in Woodford and Mahaffy’s personas with that of Arthur Gordon in Fiji. Thomas has pointed out that Gordon ‘identified himself as the paramount chief, and the high Fijian chiefs seem to have acquiesced and actively supported this identification’ (Thomas 1991:172). The Fijian chiefs understood Gordon as the representative and embodiment of the “big chief”, Queen Victoria. Perhaps Solomon Island chiefs considered these men in a similar way.

The nature of Mahaffy’s work required him to travel frequently to different areas to investigate various offences against colonial law (Burt 2002:198-200), as well as to collect taxes from trading stations and labour recruiting vessels (Mahaffy 1902:193; Scarr 1967:263). In 1902 he toured Malaita on H.M.S. *Sparrow* investigating several offences, and he must have used such opportunities to acquire, through trade or purchase, many items which interested him. Malaitan objects, of which there are fourteen in his collection, include a wooden club from the east coast (AE:1923.128), two hair combs (AE:1923.184&185 – latter now missing), a necklace of porpoise teeth and trade glass beads from the Sio Harbour (AE:1923.215), and the skull of an ancestor from the Kwaio area of Malaita (AE:1923.214) (Plates 92 to 95). In his catalogue Mahaffy compared this form of preserving the head of an ancestor with that practised in Kiribati (Mahaffy n.p.).

On 2nd April 1902 Mahaffy wrote to Woodford requesting six months leave from his post, stating that he had been almost six years in the employment of the WPHC with only three months leave during that period, taken between December 1901 and March 1902 when he visited Sydney. During his employment he had never had an opportunity of returning home to England. In his letter he noted the isolation and remoteness of his station at Gizo, and ‘the want of human society’ that he felt (WPHC 4/50/99). Woodford’s annual report for 1901-1902 noted that a settlement of about 75 native people had formed close to the Gizo government station, because of the security the location offered from headhunting parties from Vella Lavella (CO 225/63). Evidently the presence of these people, and a



Plate 92: Detail of a Malaitan club collected by Mahaffy. Length: 115cm. (NMI AE:1923.128)



Plate 93: A Malaitan hair comb. (NMI AE:1923.184)



Plate 94: A necklace of porpoise teeth and trade glass beads from the Sio Harbour, Malaita.
(NMI AE:1923.215)



Plate 95: The skull of an ancestor from the Kwaio area of Malaita, contained within a finely plaited grass bag. It was not possible for me to examine the skull itself as removing it from the bag may have proved injurious to the object. (NMI AE:1923.214)

police force numbering over twenty men did not offer Mahaffy the type of company (European) he craved. When forwarding Mahaffy's leave request on to High Commissioner O'Brien, Woodford mentioned that he understood privately it was Mahaffy's intention to marry (WPHC 4/50/99). A six-month period of leave was granted and in February 1903 Mahaffy sailed for Sydney and on to Europe. Following a request for extended leave it appears it was May 1904 before he returned to the Solomons. When returning home on leave Mahaffy also brought the first part of his collection home, that documented in the introductory text "Collection of Arms and other objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903 by Arthur Mahaffy" and the "Catalogue Raisonné". Mahaffy stated that it was his intention of returning to England, but he most likely returned to Ireland too, and this collection of 256 objects appears to have been stored at his family home in Howth, Co. Dublin, from that time (Ridgeway to von Hügel, 3rd May 1922, MAA[A] OA1/1/5).

A feast for kings (November 1902)

Prior to taking his leave from Gizo and the BSIP, Mahaffy contributed an article to the magazine *Empire Review* (1902:190-196). In this paper he provided a description of the Solomons, the people and their languages and history, and the practice of headhunting, in sum describing a society he believed was just emerging from the stone-age (1902:194). He described his primary role at Gizo was putting an end to headhunting raids, which he stated had almost been suppressed completely, though he also took the opportunity of lamenting the lack of a steamer for the BSIP which would have facilitated the speedier apprehension of suspected headhunters (1902:193). He stated that his other main duty was the collection of taxes from resident traders in the region. The traders, he noted, exported copra, pearl-shell and tortoise-shell which they had purchased from the local populous for tobacco, calico, knives, axes, beads, files and lamps (Mahaffy 1902:195). This was indeed an economy in which European goods were sought by locals and subsequently appropriated and converted into prestige items and markers of political and chiefly status.

Just prior to his departure on leave Mahaffy held a feast at his Gizo station, in November 1902, in honour of the coronation of King Edward VII (Mahaffy n.p.). He stated that he chose the date of the November full moon for the brightness of the nights, but also as November was when the best weather was generally experienced in the Solomons. To this party he invited all the principal chiefs of New Georgia Island, Simbo,

Ronongo, Roviana, Rendova, Vella Lavella and Kolombangra, all of whom accepted his invitation. Included in the invited chiefs was Belangana of Simbo, the chief depicted in the model war canoe. Interestingly, Mahaffy had previously arrested Belangana during his 1898 voyage on the *Mohawk* on headhunting and kidnapping charges, for which he served two years in jail.

Having sent out invitations four months in advance he spent the subsequent months sourcing the food for the party, and preparing cooking and accommodation huts and dancing arenas to accommodate the 1000 guests he anticipated attending. Recognising that Western Solomons ceremonies and feasts had certain traditional criteria to be followed, he was obliged to build a house for the preparation and cooking of food outside of which a dancing enclosure had to be laid out where the food was to be distributed and some of the more important chiefs accommodated. Mahaffy put his 25-man police force to work on the construction, which they completed using all local materials. The ends of the house were decorated and finished in a variety of styles, including a dyed and interlaced section of bamboo similar to that used on Savo and Santa Isabel houses at one end. The opposite end was finished with a covering of scalloped sago palm similar to that used on ‘tabu houses’ from Vella Lavella, and a carved frieze that had a representation of ‘a native fight in which one party were successfully taking the heads off the other’ (Mahaffy n.p.). Unfortunately no images of this house have yet been located. The irony of constructing such a house was not lost on Mahaffy, though perhaps he did not fully understand the significance to the local population of his construction activities. He commented:

[w]hile this house was in the process of building the natives who came to Gizo on visits were extremely reluctant to land, as it seems to be the cheerful native custom to kill strangers who may be foolish enough to arrive on the beach of a great village where a great house of this kind is about to be completed! (Mahaffy n.p.).

In effect through constructing such a building, Mahaffy again took on the persona of a local powerful chief. He used local canoes for transportation, took/captured prestige objects from the villages he attacked in punitive raids, and now, in effect, had his men construct what could have been understood locally his own “ritual” house and area. In hosting this feast he was showing his efficacy in marshalling trade relations and creating obligations through his largess. Following the completion of the house and dancing enclosure, Mahaffy set sail in the *Lahloo* around the New Georgia group to purchase the

remaining food required, principally pigs and puddings made of taro and nut wrapped up in packages, called *bomboro* (Plate 96). Some *bomboro* were also prepared in the cooking huts set up at Gizo, and one of these Mahaffy kept as a memento of the party (AE:1923.439). When the day of the feast arrived, which ran for three full days, instead of the 1,000 guests he anticipated, he actually had 1,892 people to feed, but luckily enough had enough food and space for everyone. He described the arrival of his guests as follows:

It was a most picturesque sight to see the great canoes all decorated with streamers and each with its full complement of men, coming up the harbour at full speed, in line abreast, while those of the natives who had already arrived met them on the beach with shouts of mock defiance, and drawn up in line each crouching behind his shield and with his spear poised, to so great an extent does the “preoccupation” of war enter even into their pleasure. (Mahaffy n.p.).

His uncertainty at holding such a gathering, considering his role within their society as a colonial officer can be observed within the following passage:

I was not at all sure that they would come in any great numbers for since my arrival at Gizo some two years before, it had been my duty in more than one instance to make war upon them and to inflict the most exemplary punishment on them in consequence of their failing to recognise that with my arrival the era of head-hunting as a form of amusement must come to an end. There were villages in every one of the islands from which I expected guests which had been raided and destroyed by me as a result of their misconduct, to call it by no stronger name. The canoes used in the murderous expeditions of these natives and afterwards confiscated by me, filled my canoe house, and were even now lying on my beach. (Mahaffy n.p.)

Mahaffy stated that his primary intention in hosting the party was:

to see that more friendly relations should be established [between islanders], and so I went from group to group explaining to each that their neighbours were not to be avoided, but that this feast was given in order to make them acquainted [adding that] it was a curious service to perform to people who had lived all their lives within a few miles of each other, but who in many cases were complete strangers (Mahaffy n.p.).

While it is clear that he did not fully understand the social complexities of the indigenous society he was dealing with, the level of care and attention he put into hosting this party suggests someone who held a certain level of regard, however paternalistic, for his neighbours. For Mahaffy, his comprehension of how best to assist these people, socially and economically, was through the civilising effect of the British Empire, alongside the firm hand of punitive raids.

Mahaffy commented that one of the most critical operations during the feast was the equal distribution of food to each village represented at the party, the task of which he assigned to Ingava, the dominant ruling chief of the Roviana Lagoon. Mahaffy had in fact previously attended a “party” held by Ingava at his Sisieta home in the Roviana Lagoon. No information was provided by Mahaffy as to the reason why Ingava held this event, but most likely it differed greatly from the one witnessed by Woodford in 1887. Ingava was recognised by both Woodford and Mahaffy as the most powerful and influential chief of the Western Solomons. In assigning the food distribution task to him Mahaffy may inadvertently given the impression to the various chiefly polities present that Ingava was in fact the person in charge and the actual host of the party. Alternatively, Ingava’s act of distributing the food may have been understood by indigenous people as Ingava working for Mahaffy and, as such, enhancing Mahaffy’s status considering Ingava’s high status in the Western Solomons.



Plate 96: A *bomboro*, described by Mahaffy in his catalogue as a relic of his party at Gizo.
(NMI AE:1923.439)

Unlike the music and dancing from Kiribati and Tuvalu which Mahaffy had enjoyed during his time there, he found that of the Western Solomons rather monotonous and repetitive. But despite this he provided an extensive description of a dance or ceremony undertaken by various groups at the initiation of the festivities:

Before, however, the regular dancing began, there took place a most curious and wonderfully picturesque ceremony. Half the guests, those from Rubiana and the neighbourhood, went off in to the bush beyond the great house, and there having put on their native finery, were marshalled by their chiefs into an immense single file at the head of which were the old men and chiefs, the leader of them all Ingava, decked in splendid ornaments and armed like all the rest with spear and shield. Meanwhile the remainder of the guests were making their preparation around the house, and when they were all ready and dressed to their satisfaction in the finery they had brought to Gizo in many a curious native package they also took post inside the dancing enclosure in four parallel lines, each headed by a chief, Belangana of Simbo, Laiete of Uvee, and two others, one from Ronongo, and one from Vella Lavella. When both parties were marshalled, and on a signal given by Ingava, the Rubiana natives began to advance towards the dancing enclosure in the most utter silence, creeping step by step, stealthily crouching behind the shelter of their shields after each forward movement. So wonderfully silent an advance of five hundred men, explained much of the success of their raids and the surprises that form so large a part of their warfare. When the Rubiana party came close to the outer edge of the dancing place, they all stopped for a moment still crouching low and still in the most utter silence, then the home party advanced two steps to meet them and as they went all their spears came up together ready to throw, then Belangana spoke to Ingava and told him that if he came thus in silence and by stealth, he must mean war, and bade him begone, and Ingava answered back that he and his men were not come to fight, but in peace, then Belangana, as if in doubt gave back a pace, and all his men fell back with him and Ingava and his men came forward a step, but still all the spears were poised and still, each man crouched behind his shield. Thus little by little the Rubiana men came into the circle, and when the last of them was inside the whole eight hundred stood up and raised their spears on end and the streamers blew out in the wind and fluttered, and the men who were nearest to the outside of the circle threw their spears away, and unslung their flutes from behind their backs, and blew into them stooping down to the ground as they began and after the first notes standing up and taking a step to the right, faced inwards, and then stooping down

again, blowing all the time went thus round the edge of the ring, and thus the dance began. (Mahaffy n.p.)

While this was evidently part of dance ceremonies from the Western Solomons, perhaps there was also a form of social hierarchy taking place with Ingava's men advancing on those of Belangana. One of the more important sources of information for this thesis is the work of Ango, the artist patronised by Mahaffy. Yet Ango also acted in different capacities for other Europeans. While he is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6, Ango created a series of drawings for the anthropologists Hocart and Rivers when they visited the Western Solomons in 1908. It is likely that several drawings found within their archive papers,

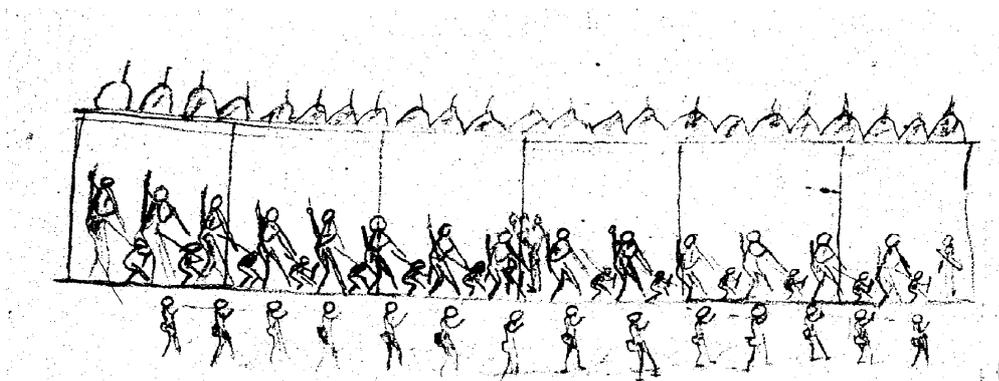


Plate 97: Two drawings by Ango of Roviana which appear to show dances very similar to those described by Mahaffy for his 1902 party at Gizo (Rivers MS Papers) (Images courtesy of Peter Sheppard)

consulted on microfilm at the Turnbull Library, are by Ango and appear to depict a dancing scene very similar to that described by Mahaffy. Ultimately the party at Gizo and the people who attended did leave a favourable impression on Mahaffy as he commented that when the party was completed

it was with a feeling of something very like regret that I bade them good-bye on the beach, and saw the last of their canoes disappear behind the green islands of Nusatupe and Kolo Kale. (Mahaffy n.p.).

Fiji (1904-1914)

During his period of leave from the Solomons, between February 1903 and May 1904, Mahaffy married Enid Boyd, the daughter of a Captain Boyd from Melbourne. Following his return to the Pacific, perhaps now more aware of his responsibilities as a newlywed husband and of the dangers his duties in the Western Solomons presented, in mid 1904 Mahaffy was offered and accepted the position of Colonial Secretary to the High Commissioner in Fiji (CO 225/67&68).¹²⁹ In September that year he departed the BSIP to take up this post. It is probable that his wife resided in either Australia or Fiji prior to his departure for Fiji.

With Mahaffy's departure from the Solomons, Woodford lost an effective and successful assistant (Golden 1993:237), and one who would be difficult to replace. Heath (1978/9:203) states that Woodford had an embarrassingly high turnover of subordinate officers, many of whom suffered from frustration and low morale, during his time as Resident Commissioner in the BSIP. This conclusion seems unjust, because following Mahaffy only six officers were appointed in various roles in the BSIP under Woodford, many of whom served in multiple postings in the BSIP (see Bennett 1897, Appendix 7 for a listing of Resident Commissioners and District Officers in the BSIP prior to World War II).

For several years Mahaffy settled into the office-based environment of Suva, but this was not a position or situation that warranted a great level of personal initiative or individuality, such as his role in Gizo had offered. As a young and active ex-army man this must have been a difficult role to acclimatise to. The situation was not helped by the fact

¹²⁹ I have not been able to determine whether Mahaffy applied for this position, or if it was offered directly to him.

that Mahaffy appears to have suffered a similar personality clash with the present High Commissioner, Everard im Thurn, as Woodford. A particular personality characteristic which Mahaffy possessed that im Thurn may not have liked was his friendship and association with Woodford, a man with whom im Thurn seemed to have spent a good deal of their working relationship together in disagreement and confrontation (Scarr 1967:282-88). Mahaffy was an intellectual man, well educated and well read, who had risen through the ranks of the colonial administration rather quickly. Scarr described im Thurn as an intelligent, well read, and vigorous man with a good opinion of himself, but who apparently preferred to surround himself with people of little or no influence, rather than with those capable of meeting him on an equal footing (1967:287). He further highlighted im Thurn's judgement and use of power as frequently questionable (Scarr 1967:287). Having studied the various reports submitted to im Thurn by Woodford and Mahaffy, and his subsequent dismissal of the recommendations made in them, Scarr's conclusions about im Thurn seem to be justified.

In 1908, much to im Thurn's displeasure, Mahaffy was promoted to the role of Assistant to the High Commissioner.¹³⁰ The former stated that Mahaffy, who was back in Ireland when his new appointment came through (CO 225/84), would have been better appointed as High Commissioner to the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) and the BSIP where he could be based in Sydney or elsewhere. By keeping him in Fiji in the role of Assistant to the High Commissioner he would be required to supervise the work of the High Commissioners staff, who were 'personally antagonistic to him' (im Thurn to Crewe, 25th May 1908, CO 225/81).¹³¹

As an example of the strained working relationship with im Thurn, Mahaffy requested that his new position be titled "Assistant High Commissioner" and not "Assistant to the High Commissioner", the former implying a superior position. Nothing came of this request however, with Mahaffy signing himself as the former, while in colonial officer papers he was referred to as the latter. Shortly following his new

¹³⁰ There seems to have been some miscommunication between the Colonial Office and im Thurn regarding the latter's opinion of Mahaffy. Im Thurn had written privately to Lucas at the Colonial Office that he considered Mahaffy totally unsuited to the post of Colonial Secretary in terms of training, and thought he would be better suited to a role of Assistant to the High Commissioner, a role that would result in frequent visits to the various Protectorates and away from Fiji. However, once Mahaffy was appointed to the new position, im Thurn claimed he had never recommended him for such as role (CO 225/81).

¹³¹ I have not seen any evidence of antagonism towards Mahaffy by fellow Colonial Officers.

appointment, Mahaffy proposed to im Thurn certain duties he could perform as Assistant in order to better assist the High Commissioner, which included:

- to visit every group each year that fell under the jurisdiction of the HC, and to use these visits to settle in situ various minor administration issues
- that papers should be submitted first of all to the Assistant who would then pass on relevant ones to the HC, including despatches from the Secretary of State
- to prepare all despatches to the various officers of the Western Pacific
- to deal, with the Colonial Secretary, on financial matters affecting the expenditure of the various Protectorates
- that the Assistant would be entitled to address the Resident Commissioners “By Command” or under direction for all minor matters
- to meet with people who wish to see the HC, and to then inform the HC of their business. The Assistant would also be empowered to answer their requests so long as they are consistent with the views held by the HC. (Mahaffy to im Thurn, 6th August 1908, WPHC 3/II:C10/1913)

Mahaffy further suggested that the Assistant could reside at Sydney, though he noted the possible delays in communication between there and Fiji that could arise. Considering the loss in power and control over the daily running affairs of the WPHC, it is unsurprising that im Thurn chose to ignore most of the suggestions Mahaffy had proposed. However, one aspect that im Thurn did accept, and in some part exploit, was Mahaffy’s willingness to travel to various parts of the Western Pacific. Within the role of Assistant to the High Commissioner Mahaffy seems, however much unwittingly, to have taken on a similar role to the one that he played for Woodford in the Solomons – that of trouble-shooter or fixer. Im Thurn frequently appointed him to act as temporary Resident Commissioner whenever a resident was unavailable or on leave, such as to Kiribati and Tuvalu, and again on several occasions to Vanuatu (Plates 98 to 100). Although he was happy to spend time away on visits of inspection, Mahaffy was unhappy with the temporary Resident Commissioner placements, due in part to the significant amount of time they took him away from his wife and his first born son, John Pentland Tanoa who was born in 1906. Unhappy following his appointment as Acting Resident Commissioner to Kiribati and Tuvalu in 1909, Mahaffy wrote to im Thurn expressing that he had understood his duty to be mainly that of an Inspecting Officer, not a Resident Commissioner, and that he hoped this appointment would not act as a precedent for appointing him as Acting Resident Commissioner in

various groups in the Western Pacific while various Commissioners were on leave (WPHC 4/31/08).

During his time as Assistant to the High Commissioner Mahaffy frequently returned to the Solomons to investigate various incidents, including the murder of the family of the trader Joseph Binskin and cases of the abuse of plantation workers (particularly by Levers Pacific Plantations Co. workers) in 1908. In order to undertake duties, such as approving land sales and powers of sentencing required of him by the High Commissioner while in the Solomons, in 1908 the latter further appointed Mahaffy to act as a Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific and to be Assistant High Commissioner within the confines of the BSIP (CO 225/82). This elevation in Mahaffy's power and situation does not appear to have affected his working relationship with Woodford. In fact, in a report written by Mahaffy on his 1908 visit to the BSIP, he was critical of im Thurn's inflexibility in attitude towards recommendations made by Woodford and his apparent inability to understand the nature of both the people and climate of the Solomon Islands as opposed to the more civilised Fiji. In effect Mahaffy agreed with problems previously expressed by Woodford to the Colonial Office (CO 225/85; Scarr 1967:288). Apart from stating the fact that Levers were in danger of becoming a monopoly within the BSIP, he further highlighted the multiple abuses by Levers planters, mostly Australians who had arrived in the BSIP in recent times, including the shooting dead of one worker by an estate manager, a case which both Mahaffy and Woodford investigated during this visit. His report stated:

It is a remarkable fact that the agents whom they employ locally are most curiously ill adapted for the kind of life they are expected to lead. With a few exceptions they are city bred, and the loneliness of the life in the Islands and the lack of the kind of society to which they have been accustomed make them very discontented and not infrequently leads to their becoming intemperate in their habits. They are for the most part unable to deal with native labour, and this is not surprising when it is remembered that they have every opportunity for manifesting their dislike for "niggers" upon the somewhat isolated plantations in the firm. Desertions are not infrequent among native labour and I fear in some cases they may be accounted for by a lack of consideration, and in some cases by actual cruelty. It is not denied that floggings take place upon the estates, and to put such a power into the hands of

ignorant and prejudiced persons constitutes a real danger. (Mahaffy to HC, 21st December 1908, CO 225/85; WPHC 4/830/08)

On account of this report and Mahaffy's recommendations for the introduction and enforcement of tighter labour regulations and the establishment of a BSIP police force, in 1910 Woodford introduced a new set of labour regulations which set out the minimum age of recruitment, the hours to be worked and specific details of employment and repatriation (WPHC 4/1605/12; Bennett 1987:157). Mahaffy evidently believed that he could use his position with the High Commission to benefit indigenous people whom the British were there to "protect", particularly from abuses of power against them and their land. However, his 'pro-native' attitude, as described by im Thurn (CO 225/87), did not endear him further to the latter, or possibly to the Resident Commissioners or business men he singled out in his reports for criticism. This proved to be the case when Mahaffy was sent to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate and to Vanuatu, in both instances acting as temporary Resident Commissioner or to investigate the Protectorate.

In January 1909 Mahaffy travelled to the Gilbert & Ellice Islands Protectorate to take up the position of Acting Resident Commissioner and to investigate affairs there. Much had changed since his first posting there as a District Officer in 1896. Phosphate had been discovered in huge quantities on Ocean Island (hereafter Banaba Island) around the turn of the century. The Pacific Phosphate Company (an amalgamation of the Pacific Islands Company and Jaluit Gesellschaft of Hamburg) quickly secured sole mining rights from the Colonial Office (Mahaffy 1910b:571; Scarr 1967:270-281).

Yet, while the company rapidly gained vast profits from its mining operations, the Banaba Islanders themselves were being poorly treated by company representatives and had their land stripped of all its vegetation in order to mine the phosphate before their land was returned to them in a useless state (Scarr 1967:271-278). In his 1909 report on his tour of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Mahaffy noted that many islands were suffering depopulation due to the introduction of European diseases and absence of men involved in the labour trade, in particular those employed for Banaba (Mahaffy 1910a). Despite his concerns for the native populations and the recommendations he made in his report, it fell to his successor to the post of Resident Commissioner, later during 1909, to try to improve



Plate 98: Mahaffy collected a variety of objects from his travels throughout the Western Pacific, many of which were gifted to him. This breast ornament made of whale ivory and pearl shell was once the property of Tanoa, the father of Cakobau and was presented to Mahaffy by the son of Sir Henry Berkeley (Mahaffy n.p.). (NMI AE:1923.302)



Plate 99: Fijian war club. In his catalogue Mahaffy stated that it took him three years of negotiation before he was able to purchase it (Mahaffy n.p.) (NMI AE:1923.301)



Plate 100: Object described in Mahaffy's catalogue as a child's toy, Central Malekula, Vanuatu. The stone is said to represent the crescent moon. (NMI AE:1923.335)

the situation there (Scarr 1967:273).¹³² Interestingly, Mahaffy praised the development of Banaba as benefitting not only the industrialists who mined the land but he also believed that such development improved the quality of Banaba islanders lives. He did note the significant decline in arts and crafts among islanders, a decline he believed accentuated to the monotony of their lives (Mahaffy 1910a:4). In November 1910 Mahaffy published an article on Banaba Island, which was primarily concerned with the geography, customs and material culture of the island and its people (Mahaffy 1910b).

Following Mahaffy's various reports, im Thurn seemed rather desperate to remove Mahaffy from Fiji. In late 1909, following Mahaffy's return from a visit to Vanuatu, im Thurn wrote privately to Sir Charles Lucas at the Colonial Office attempting to push for Mahaffy to be assigned the position of Resident Commissioner for Vanuatu:

There are some things that I need to say about Mahaffy which I find it impossible to put into a despatch however confidential... Now Mahaffy is persona grata to the Australians; he is hand in glove with the French; and he is pro-native to an extent

¹³² This proved to be a long and difficult process that took many years to resolve to a satisfactory conclusion for Banaba Islanders (Scarr 1967). During the same visit to Kiribati and Tuvalu Mahaffy prohibited the recruitment of labour from Tuvalu for Banaba due to the large population decline he noted, which he attributed to the labour trade, a low birth rate, and the lack of sufficient medical facilities (Mahaffy to High Commissioner, 28th February 1909, CO 225/85).

which is almost dangerous elsewhere but might suffice, under the existing circumstances in the New Hebrides, to lift the really down-trodden natives into some such position as would enable them duly to hold their own. In short I believe that it would really be a good thing to get Mahaffy and King to change places... King, as Assistant to the High Commissioner, or even as Assistant High Commissioner, would be in a very important position, and one more permanent than he now holds, he would be (and would feel that he was) much more useful to the High Commissioner than Mahaffy could ever be (as Asst. High Commissioner); and his emoluments would be about the same. As to Mahaffy he would be (and he would appreciate this) in a more independent, much more useful, and also much more congenial position than he is at present. His emoluments would be about the same; and his prospects of a career would certainly be better than these have latterly seemed.

I do not like to seem habitually to crab Mahaffy; but, in the present connection, I must repeat what I have said before ad nauseam. It may be partly my fault – it is certainly greatly due to the peculiarities of his own temperament, that as Assistant he is no use to me. For fairly obvious reasons I dare not send him to Tonga. It is with fear and trembling that I let him go to the Solomon Islands – as long as Woodford is there. Quayle Dickson, who is as practical and right minded a man as I have often come across, privately begs me to give him a chance of doing good work in the Gilbert and Ellice Protectorate by keeping Mahaffy away from there. As to the periods during which Mahaffy, while holding his present post is in Fiji I can not think of them without anxiety. His influence, undoubtedly considerable, on the natives here is distinctly disturbing to any one responsible for native administration; and his effect upon the European residents, official and unofficial, is hardly less disturbing. The only place within the Western Pacific where he could be useful would be in the New Hebrides, and, as I have tried to explain, he might, probably would be really effective there. (im Thurn to Lucas, 20th December 1909, CO 225/87)

Evidently then, im Thurn did not appreciate the work or observations Mahaffy forwarded to him and the Colonial Office, or perhaps the esteem with which he was regarded by his peers. Mahaffy continued his work as Assistant to the High Commissioner, making further visits to the Tuvalu in 1911, and Kiribati in 1913 (Scarr 1967:288), and acting as temporary Resident Commissioner for Vanuatu in late 1910-1911. Later, in 1914, in the capacity again as Acting Resident in Vanuatu, he formed part of British contingent at a

conference there, his participation in the conference being noted in *The Times* as greatly soothing to Australian fears, an indication of the esteem in which he was held by colleagues (*The Times*, 10th June, 1914).

During his period as Assistant to the High Commissioner, Mahaffy continued to add to his collection of objects, many of which are detailed in his supplementary catalogue of objects brought home in 1914. In total 28 objects in his collection come from Vanuatu, 18 of which he described in his supplementary catalogue, and 26 in the same catalogue from Kiribati and Tuvalu. This catalogue also details nine objects from Fiji, as well as 20 objects from the Solomons, all of which were acquired between 1904 and 1914.

Dominica (1914-1919)

On 19th June 1913, having spent seventeen years in the Pacific and then aged forty-four, Mahaffy applied unsuccessfully for the position of Colonial Secretary in Mauritius (CO 225/116). However, his work in the Pacific and the reports he had submitted to the Colonial Office had not gone unnoticed, as in the same file Vernon from the Colonial Office stated that he personally held a favourable opinion of Mahaffy. He further believed that Mahaffy had suffered a good deal from im Thurn's strong prejudices against him, an opinion which was apparently held by others in the Colonial Office. Having returned to Britain in late 1914 Mahaffy was invited in December the same year to forward his name for the position of Administrator of Dominica, in the British administered Leeward Islands (West Indies) (CO 152/344). Naturally he accepted the post and in early 1915 he travelled to Dominica. Interestingly, following his departure from Fiji no successor was appointed as Assistant to the High Commissioner (Scarr 1967:288).

Also in 1914, prior to taking up his new position, Mahaffy brought home a further selection of objects, catalogued in the "Supplementary List of Objects Brought Home in 1914". However, this catalogue only details seventy-two objects, which together with the objects from the "Catalogue Raisonné" amounts to 328 objects out of a collection of 530 objects. It is plausible that the opportunity to complete a full inventory of his collection never arose.

Following the inauguration by King George V, in 1917, of the award of Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and its five classes of award (Cannadine 2001:93-4), in 1919 Mahaffy was awarded an OBE for services to the British Empire. In April of that year he had attended his father's funeral in Dublin, yet newspaper reports of the funeral

made no comment on this award so it must be assumed he was awarded his OBE some stage after the funeral (*The Times*, 30th April 1919). Unfortunately, not long after his return to Dominica Arthur died, on 28th October 1919. The exact cause of his death is unclear, and in a letter to the Colonial Office his younger sister Rachel Mahaffy stated she had been unaware that her brother had not been in the best of health (CO 152/368). He left behind his wife and three children: John Pentland Tanoa, Robert, and Sybil Frances Kathleen Lucy (Montgomery-Massingberd 1976:772).

Conclusion

It is difficult to reconcile the facets of Mahaffy character, beliefs and actions. On the one hand, he did not hesitate in undertaking punitive raids against Solomon Islanders, destroying their homes, gardens and effectively disrupting their social, cultural and cosmological beliefs. Yet, at the same time, he continuously advocated for their better treatment by the High Commission and plantation owners. Woodford and Mahaffy's reliance on punitive raids as a measure to coerce Solomon Islanders into line with colonial rule can, and should be criticised. For them, punitive measures were utilised as a tactic to punish indigenous groups for murders or attacks on white people, tactics which had initially been employed by the Royal Navy (cf. Mayo 1973). Unlike the Navy, however, whose ships would have been visible long before their attack took place giving people a chance to escape, Woodford and Mahaffy's campaign provided a swifter and stealthier raid – one which targeted the core of Western Solomons culture and cosmological beliefs. When Bennett (1987:107) described Woodford using his assistant Mahaffy and several warships in 1898 'to soften up resistance by the Roviana and Simbo head-hunters', she completely underestimates the devastating effect that these actions had on the indigenous residents and their cultural institutions – their society and way of life was altered forever. In its place a new economy of plantations and reliance on European goods was created, yet, contradictorily, both men still actively sought out the "traditional" aspects of local culture, such as stone axe/adze heads and pre-contact tools.

Mahaffy, and his work, deserves to be discussed independently of Woodford's in relation to the BSIP. Even though Mahaffy's work took him to a greater range of places and work than Woodford, in his capacity as Assistant to the High Commissioner Mahaffy maintained a link with the Solomons, its people and its culture through his continued ethnographic collecting on his return visits. His writings also bear testament to his affinity

with the people of the Solomons, Tuvalu and Kiribati, an affinity that often brought him into conflict with a High Commissioner who showed little interest in the island groups remote from Fiji. As both Woodford and Mahaffy's biographies and collecting are inextricably intertwined in relation to the Solomons, the following section provides an in-depth analysis of their work, using objects in each collection to discuss case studies of their involvement in pacification. It also examines their roles as collectors, their relationships with individuals from whom they collected or purchased objects and how they in turn helped facilitate individuals in the region who were collecting ethnographic material.



Plate 101: A bamboo walking stick with the initials A.M. and the word Gizo incised. A souvenir of his time at Gizo or simply useful object?

(NMI AE:1923.357)

PART II

COLLECTING THE SOLOMON ISLANDS: PATRONAGE, PACIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Introduction

Having considered in Part I the historical context in which both men operated and familiarised ourselves with the biographical details of both men and objects, Part II of this thesis provides greater detail on *how* both men went about collecting the objects they did, and *why* they collected. What circumstances led to particular object acquisitions? Were they purchased, gifted, or taken? What was the extent of indigenous agency in the collecting process? As such, it examines encounters between people, between people and things, and the form these encounters took – some violent, some reciprocal. Different sets of narratives are located within each encounter or sets of encounter. It is not possible to extrapolate all narratives resident within these objects, but by utilising associated texts, photographs and histories it is possible to provide more in-depth insight into the level of agency and interaction between people, and between people and things.

Precise acquisition and provenance details for every object in both collections are unclear, but extant texts and documents, particularly Woodford's letters to the BM and various documents discovered in the Woodford archive papers (PMB 1290) and the Mahaffy catalogues, provide invaluable information and insight into their collecting practices. For example, when shipping crates of objects to the BM from the Solomons, Woodford frequently included a letter to the curator in which he listed the objects enclosed and the overall cost of the objects and the crate (which he would have had made specially; see Woodford to Read, 4th July 1906, BM[A]: Woodford correspondence). Frequently in these letters, which occasionally provided provenance details, Woodford made note of cost of particular objects he had purchased on their behalf. This chapter utilises the information contained within these documents, alongside colonial government records and object research, to piece together how they went about collecting, what impact their work and collecting had on the indigenous population, and the circumstances which led to object acquisition.

In order to present the histories represented here I use a variety of sources – the objects themselves, colonial archival papers, photographs and private correspondence. This archival material provides the political and economic background in which both men collected and highlights the cross-cultural interactions involved. Yet it is by looking at and through the objects themselves that these relationships become manifest (Thomas 1999; O'Hanlon 1999). In particular, Woodford's personal diaries are of great use in reconstructing his travels around the Pacific, his impressions of the people and places he visited, and what he collected (both zoological and ethnographic). These diaries date from 1884 to 1889, covering Woodford's first visit to Kiribati and Tuvalu and his first visits to the Solomon Islands, and one diary which details several months in 1896. No other diaries have yet been located from the remainder of his period as Resident Commissioner, but his correspondence with the British Museum and the Natural History Museum, in particular, help illuminate his collecting practices. Yet it needs to be noted that texts lie – they have silences within them which can potentially obviate the intricacies of the events they record. This is where other materials such as the objects themselves play a key role. As part of the network of artefacts, both objects and images can be considered as sources of historical narratives (personal, colonial, and collection) which offer a counter-history to texts alone (cf. Bell 2010; Pinney 2004). An initial overview of Woodford's ethnographic collection is followed by discussion and analysis of the factors which motivated him to extend his collecting interests from natural history specimens to ethnographic objects.

Both men's collecting appears to fit into two collecting categories identified by O'Hanlon (2000:1-34). They are (a.) secondary collecting, that is where collecting was a goal but one that was subordinate to some other primary purpose, in this case their official government work, but also (b.) concomitant collecting, where the collection was formed as a by-product of other activities. As a result of their residency, official work and movement throughout the Solomons, opportunities to collect presented themselves to both men, opportunities which both utilised. Yet their collecting also fits other categories. Collecting objects could take place at their government stations at Tulagi or Gizo, through people bringing objects to them for sale or for trade (stationary collecting), or through Woodford or Mahaffy purchasing or taking objects during their official journeys throughout the Protectorate (O'Hanlon 2000:15).

The processes of collecting and collection formation mean that Woodford and Mahaffy came to possess objects through various methods. Some methods resulted in the establishment of collecting relationships with local craftspeople while others, such as

taking objects as loot, almost certainly led to animosity from the dispossessed party. In order to examine this dichotomy within their collecting the following chapters will initially consider the processes of purchasing, commissioning and sourcing objects before moving the discussion on to examine how official duties and punitive raids became opportunities to add to their collections. In considering museums as ‘a set of objects collected by people’ Godsen and Larson asked if it were not possible to reverse this and ‘see a museum as a set of people gathered up by objects’ (2007:64). Using the title for their chapter, ‘Objects collect People’, these chapters proceed with the belief that not only do people collect objects, but objects also collect people. They collect them through the desire they exert on an individual and in doing so they affect that person in such a way as to force them to do anything to ultimately possess it (see Gell 1992, 1998).

“Split Personality” Collecting

Before proceeding it is important to acknowledge that there is a significant duality in the methods through which both men came to possess objects. One method may be viewed as following established and conventional collecting paths, which is engaging in transactions with other individuals to acquire objects through purchase or trade at agreed rates. Within this category I also include objects which may have been commissioned from an artist, sourced on the purchaser’s behalf, or objects which were gifted to a person. The second method utilised by both men placed their actions outside of “normal” collecting parameters. This occurred when they used their positions of authority and superior technology (e.g. weapons, soldiers) to take objects they desired, particularly objects which might not have been made available to them under normal collecting conventions, including valuables and heirloom objects. Such collecting usually took place during punitive raids undertaken by both men in their campaign to suppress headhunting in the Western Solomons, but also during other official work.

Why, when both had shown that they were capable of engaging in transactions and exchanges for objects, did they pursue the latter path to acquire objects, and never question the validity of their actions? Through their object gathering Woodford and Mahaffy had established collecting relationships with the people they purchased from, be they islanders, traders or missionaries. Both men had access to goods and items which indigenous people desired, such as cloth, tobacco, iron axe-heads, tinned foods, etc (see below). Yet instead of engaging or negotiating with them to acquire particular objects they simply took them

once the opportunity arose, potentially destroying or damaging any collecting relationship or network which may have existed. Was it that they believed their roles as government officials allowed them to act with impunity? Was it that being removed from established Victorian/Edwardian modes of life and civility they believed they could act as they desired? Or was it simply that the indigenous populous were understood to be savages, and as such stealing from them did not count?¹³³

I term this form of dual collecting “split personality” collecting. Obeyesekere (1992), in analysing the complexity of Captain Cook’s actions during his three Pacific voyages, offered a dual psychological model by which to consider his persona. To do this he split Cook’s persona into two opposing opposites: one was named Prospero, a person who brought civilisation to savage lands yet who remained immune to the ways of the savages themselves; the other was called Kurtz, named after the famous Kurtz in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1992:11). Obeyesekere describes this latter character as a civilizer who lost his identity, went native and became the very savage he despised (1992:11). I do not imply that Woodford and/or Mahaffy went “native” and became a Kurtz, but rather within them the civiliser and the savage seemed to vie for control of their characters at various times, and particularly came to the fore when they engaged in punitive raids and looting.¹³⁴ Perhaps their removal or distance from “the civilised world” brought forth this trait within them. Yet Woodford and Mahaffy were not unique in such looting practices. As shown with the example of Davis and his journey through the Solomons, taking objects during punitive raids was established practice for many colonial officials. Other white visitors to the islands also engaged in theft from indigenous people, including Frank Burnett who was so vocal in his criticism of the BSIP officials about their looting practices (see Chapter 7).

From the indigenous perspective their actions must have been confusing. Essentially both took on the persona of a chief or big man: through their access to wealth and goods and also in the control and power they exerted over the local population. While they actively punished people for engaging in intertribal fighting or headhunting they themselves undertook acts of war against the indigenous people by destroying their homes, gardens, canoes and valuables. The assumption of a chief’s persona was furthered through the sponsoring of feasts (Mahaffy), the construction of new buildings in local styles and

¹³³ What Sahlins might refer to as negative reciprocity (1974:195).

¹³⁴ Mahaffy’s tattooing might suggest more of a willingness on his part to identify with indigenous people, but as will be shown below through his treatment of them during punitive raids he did frequently consider them to be savage and definitely in the “other” category. There appears to have been an understanding within Mahaffy of Melanesians as savage, while Polynesians and Micronesians were civilised.

materials: a food preparation house in Mahaffy's case and a hospital in Woodford's (see the following chapter) and the display of the goods they collected or took, including the *tomoko* they captured and/or used. Essentially they were displaying their prowess as warriors and their access to spiritual efficacy. Taking this idea further and in hierarchical terms, with the knowledge that a headhunter was frequently a hired warrior paid by a chief to take heads, perhaps Woodford was understood to be the chief while Mahaffy was the headhunter (see chapter 7).

Regimes of Value

Prior to their appointments in the BSIP both men had been introduced to indigenous exchange and trade networks. Mahaffy had his introduction in Micronesia, while Woodford had been introduced to existing indigenous regimes of reciprocal exchange and value during his 1880s visits to Alu, Roviana and Guadalcanal (cf. Weiner 1992). Through Woodford's gift exchanges with Gorei and Ingava he had actively participated in these networks. As such, following his return to the Solomons as Resident Commissioner, he was aware of the items which were sought from Europeans through trade.

Unfortunately neither man provided many details about how much they paid for objects, or what they offered in exchange for them, but a brief analysis of trade imports into the BSIP helps highlight the range of articles which could have been utilised in trade/exchange with indigenous people. In his first annual report to the High Commissioner following his appointment as Resident Commissioner, Woodford listed the various items which were imported and exported from the Protectorate. In terms of object purchases and exchanges, the following excerpt highlights what Western items were favoured and valued by the indigenous population, according to Woodford:

61. Of the articles used for purpose of exchange with the natives, tobacco holds, and is likely to continue to hold, the foremost place as a medium of exchange. The quality is American, imported in boxes or tierces, and it costs about 11d. or 1s. per lb. in Sydney. It is made up in sticks, twenty-six of which go to the pound.

62. Other articles of use for the native trade are briar root pipes, clay pipes in boxes, wax vestas, wooden safety matches, American axes, shingling hatchets, plantation and butcher knives, pocket knives, plane irons for making adzes, files, large oval boilers, frying pans, cast-iron cooking pots, lamps and lanterns for mineral oil, calico, grey and white, calico print, turkey red and blue dungaree, trousers, arm rings of white earthenware (in imitation of the native shell arm rings),

white and red Venetian beads, glass bead necklaces, elastic cricket belts, rice, sugar, ship's biscuits, tinned beef, tea, kerosene, and chrysophanic acid (Goa powder), this last used extensively by the natives for curing skin disease.

64. I find that since my former residence in the Protectorate the variety of the foreign trade goods in demand among the natives has increased. This I consider a healthy sign, and likely to increase the volume of exports as the native wants to become more varied.

(Woodford, Annual Report 1896, CO 225/50)

Woodford also stated in this report that the use and circulation of native currency between the indigenous population and resident traders accounted for a significant proportion of the trade between the two. This included porpoise, dog, and whale's teeth, shell bead currency, and shell rings. In a scenario which resembles the circulation and movement of objects associated with the Kula cycle, Woodford noted that dog's teeth acquired by traders from San Cristobal (Makira) were sold at profit to inhabitants of the western islands, while porpoise teeth were acquired and circulated in the opposite direction. Evidently, while the indigenous population utilised and incorporated a wide range of Western objects in their lives and into the objects they made, the importance of indigenous valuables did not diminish with the importation of such objects. In fact, Woodford commented that demand for red shell 'currency' had increased from traders due to the discovery of gold in New Guinea (see Akin & Robbins 1999). White traders used this currency to acquire gold dust from natives of Samarai and Sud-Est, but whereas previously they had been able to acquire red shell currency at a value of between 1s. to 1s. 6d. per fathom, it now cost up to 25s. per fathom (Woodford, 1896 Annual Report).¹³⁵

Since initial contacts with Europeans imported goods had become important to indigenous society and object manufacture, but certain regimes of value which predated European goods held equal if not greater significance within indigenous trade networks (Thomas 1991). Aswani and Sheppard noted 'it was through local currencies that the indigenous sociopolitical economy was articulated' (2003:62). Following the introduction of European trade goods, understandings of object types and how they function shifted. By incorporating and appropriating European commodities into their material culture, in essence making them "local", different and new sets of social and material relations and

¹³⁵ Although manufactured on Malaita red shell currency was an article of trade which held a high value throughout the Solomons, and evidently further into New Guinea. It held and continues to hold a defined monetary value within Solomon Islands society (cf. Guo 2006).

object types were created (cf. Thomas 1991; Bell & Geismar 2009). Woodford and Mahaffy actively sought out objects from both pre-existing (“traditional forms”) and those which had been modified (“new”).

Solomon Islanders were well acquainted with Europeans and exchange protocols, and the example of the red currency above highlights that in many instances they had control over their transactions with white traders. Yet these networks and values were constantly changing or evolving (Aswani & Sheppard 2003). A final example of the level of change also comes from the 1896 report. Woodford stated that in several cases local people employed by traders, and people returning from the labour trade in Fiji or Queensland, frequently demanded wages be paid in money rather than in trade. The cash economy had become something that both white and indigenous people participated in. Solomon Islanders were not simply passive bystanders of colonialism: in many instances they were active and vocal in their entanglements with Europeans and shaped the direction encounters took. Traces of their agency are discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 6

Organised collecting and Patronage

Introduction

As discussed in Part I, Woodford and Mahaffy openly engaged in object collection while on government duty, collecting which was occasionally mentioned in their official reports and apparently not condoned by the WPHC in Suva or the Colonial Office in London. This chapter examines several facets of the collecting which both men engaged in, one of which was the purchasing or sourcing of objects from indigenous people and from resident Europeans, the other was patronage of local craftspeople. Using Woodford's papers and letters to the BM and Mahaffy's catalogues, it is possible to examine in greater detail their interactions and exchanges with the people they collected objects from. Included in this chapter is a consideration of both men's facilitating other collectors who visited the BSIP.

Official and organised collecting

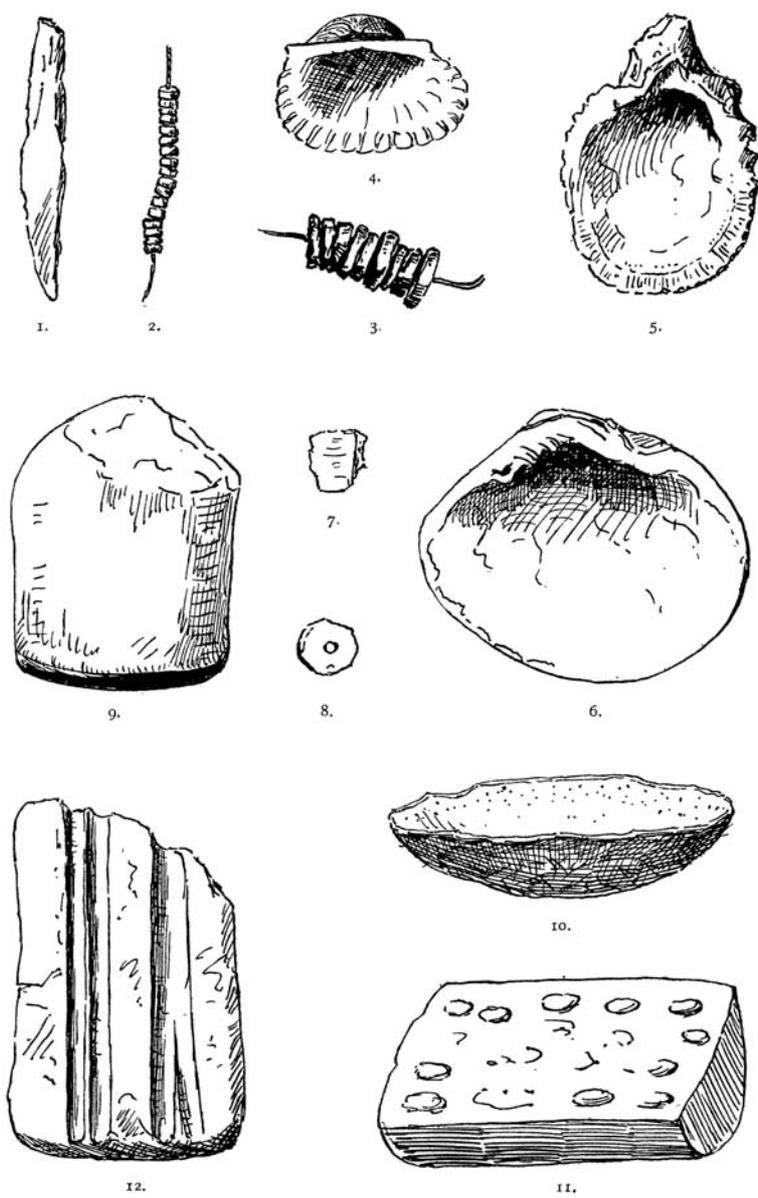
As noted in Chapter 3, Mahaffy retained the majority of the objects he collected from his time in the Pacific. For him collecting was a personal interest, a hobby. However, for Woodford collecting was undertaken in a professional manner with scientific and academic ambitions. Throughout his career Woodford developed collecting relationships with various institutions and individuals, and it was with the British Museum that his closest and most significant collecting relationship developed. Now permanently based in the Solomons, and using his connections with the BM and the Australian Museum, he was in a position to acquire objects in greater numbers and larger, more bulky items. For the British Museum in particular, he frequently filled up large boxes of objects which he sent to London via Burns Philp shipping company or, later, by Levers Pacific Plantations Ltd ships (Woodford correspondence, BM[A]).

As also noted in Chapter 3, both men displayed an interest in the manufacture of objects, and as such tools and objects in various states of manufacture were collected. Groups of objects in the collections show both men's interest in the processes of object

manufacture and also in ethnographic observation and recording. Mahaffy's Santa Cruz loom was given as an example in that chapter, but perhaps given his academic ambitions Woodford displayed a greater interest in manufacturing processes and stages than Mahaffy. One notable group of objects that indicates Woodford's interest in craft and manufacturing processes is a series illustrating the production of shell-money in Langalanga, Malaita (Guo 2007).¹³⁶ In July 1907 he sent Read at the BM a selection of implements used in the manufacture of shell-bead currency (accessioned in 1909) and a paper on the subject, which was published the following year in the journal *Man* (Vol. 8) (Plate 102). The article illustrated flint drill-bits, stone hammers, wooden grinding blocks, and a variety of moneys, both finished and unfinished, predominantly from Malaita but also from Guadalcanal. Included in this donation is Oc1909,-63 – a string of black beads (Plate 103). Woodford stated that this was a very rare coarse form of currency from Guadalcanal, formerly made by the bush natives from the centre of the island (Woodford 1908:83). Even at the time he collected it very little information could be obtained on its age, or what material was actually used for the beads. A label attached to a second string of beads, which came to the British Museum via the Beasley collection (Oc1944,02.1350) reads 'Very old bead money from Guadalcanal. Not made now. Name Kurina' (Plate 104). Gordon Nanau from Tasiboko, Guadalcanal, who was interviewed as part of the BM's Melanesia Project (2005-2010), commented that this may be the old stone money still remembered and known as *rongo vatu* (BM collections database, 2008). Although Woodford did not provide detail on where or from whom he collected/purchased these objects he verified all the names and manufacturing processes 'on the spot' in Malaita (Woodford to Read, 7th July 1907). In the 1907 letter to Read he offered to obtain examples of each type of shell currency including the highly-valued red shell currency, but stated the museum would have to pay for them as each type had a defined cash value in the Solomons: red shell was at that time valued at £4 for an *isa* (ten strings of red shell each about five feet long) (Woodford 1908: 83).

Interestingly, the label attached to Oc1944,02.1350 detailing its name and provenance is written in Woodford's own hand. It is presently unclear how frequently he provided individual labels for the objects he donated or sold. Perhaps, as this object was acquired by Beasley who placed significant value on labelling objects (cf. Carreau 2009),

¹³⁶ Woodford also donated to the Australian Museum in 1896 some examples of shell currency, shell currency blanks, and un-worked shell (AM E.05919-20).



THE MANUFACTURE OF MALAITA BEAD MONEY.

Plate 102: Illustration showing flint drill-bits, stone hammers, wooden grinding blocks, and a variety of moneys, both finished and unfinished, which accompanied Woodford's 1909 article on Malaitan shell currency (Woodford 1908).

this was something Woodford had undertaken especially for Beasley. When sending boxes of objects to the BM he did frequently include object lists, providing a brief description of the object, a local name (if known), and general provenance details. Unfortunately though, he did not often mention how he acquired or how much he paid for the objects. Only on one list did he provide any financial information. On 4th July 1906 he sent Read at the BM a letter to accompany a box of ethnological specimens he had gathered for the BM.¹³⁷ The list of objects included 21 objects from all over the Solomons, as well as what Woodford termed ‘a quantity of rubbish [*sic*] from Rennell Id’ which he thought the museum would be interested in as the people and ethnography of Rennell were little known at that time (Woodford correspondence, BM[A]). Although amounts were not included for all the objects, he did list the ones which cost him the most. They were £1 for a loom from Ontong Java (Oc1908,0624.64); ten shillings for a saw used in the production of shell rings and a quartz headed hammer, both from New Georgia (Oc1908,0624.53b & Oc1908,0624.31)¹³⁸; four shillings for a shell-headed adze from Sikaiana (Oc1908,0624.58); 30 shillings for two shell *venu* or sawn tridacna shell plaques and two shell rings from Choiseul¹³⁹, and 15 shillings for a dancing cloak from the Shortland Islands (Oc1908,0624.70) (Plate 105).¹⁴⁰ In total these objects cost him £3:19:0. He did not request payment for the other objects he sent, but asked the museum pay him £4:10:0 in order to recover the cost of these items and the wood he had to purchase in order to make the packing cases.

Considering Graham Officer’s description of the collection of objects Mahaffy had in his house it is probable locals frequently approached him to sell items, either made specifically for sale to him or older, more valuable objects. In his diary entry for 5th June 1901 Officer noted that some people from Kolombangra, including guides used by Mahaffy, had visited his house at Gizo and showed great interest in his collection (Officer Diary n.p.). Similar to his display of *tomoko* on the beach at Gizo, unintentionally the accumulation and display of objects in his official residence could have acted as a further

¹³⁷ These objects were not accessioned by the museum until 1908.

¹³⁸ This is the only saw included in Woodford’s BM collection. In his letter to Read he listed the saw as coming from New Georgia, but this object has been given a provenance of Rennell. The discrepancy is presently unclear.

¹³⁹ Woodford included three shell plaques, all from Vella Lavella with this delivery. It is unclear which two of the three shell objects he actually charged for (Oc1908,0624.65-67). With regard to the shell rings from Choiseul, the only two such objects in his BM collection were purchased from A.G. Madan in 1929 (Oc1929,0713.33&46). Perhaps the BM chose not to keep these objects and sold them to another collector (Beasley), or they were returned to Woodford.

¹⁴⁰ Although collected from the Shortland Islands this cloak originates from the Admiralty Islands, indicative of the trade networks which existed throughout Island Melanesia.

signal to local people of Mahaffy assuming the role a chief, and the accumulation of goods and objects (wealth) as a form of the acquisition of *mana*. Such a trophy collection of objects, some taken on raids, some purchased, would also have helped Mahaffy acquire prestige among visiting Europeans (see Thomas 1991).

The presence of objects on display in his house may also have served as a source of information and inspiration for other craftspeople, perhaps acting as a locus for the dissemination of artistic styles throughout the Western Solomons. Perhaps there was also some local competition or sense of prestige achieved through succeeding in having the local “white chief” or “big-man”, Mahaffy, purchase and display an object in his house. People could either replicate what they saw there or try out new styles or forms of object. Mahaffy did collect works by various craftspeople, including a carved figure from Ranongga (AE:1923.151) (Plate 106). In his catalogue he states:

some natives of Ronongo, having seen the other figures in my house, carved by Ango of Rubiana, determined to try their hand at this kind of work, and after some time brought me this figure, which I was glad to buy to provide a contrast to the work of a real artist (Mahaffy n.p.)¹⁴¹

Also in his collection are two wooden clubs decorated with finely plaited dyed grass sections from Guadalcanal, weapons which at the time he collected them had fallen out of use (AE:1923.126-127) (Plates 107 and 108). AE.1923.126 was taken by Mahaffy during a 1901 raid on Kumbakotta village in Ranongga (which is about 250 miles from Guadalcanal). The presence of this Guadalcanal war club on Ranongga could be indicative of several things: (1) trade, direct or indirect, between Ranongga and Guadalcanal, (2) a gift, or (3) evidence of Ranongga’s participation on a successful headhunting raid which reached Guadalcanal. The second club, AE:1923.127, was purchased from a chief on Savo, who took almost a year to source this object for him (Mahaffy n.p.:24). While Mahaffy did not state how much he paid the chief for the club its presence in his collection is indicative of the collecting relationships he must have established with many indigenous people during his time in the Solomons. The former club, taken from Ranongga, has a faint white lime mark on it which Mahaffy stated was painted on once the club had been used to kill a man.

¹⁴¹ Another carved figure noted in the “Catalogue Raisonné” (No. 218), presumably a purchase from another Ranongga person, is unaccounted for in the NMI collection. Apparently it was not allocated a museum number within the NMI, so may not have been part of the sale.



Plate 105: A dancing cloak from the Shortland Islands, sent by Woodford to the British Museum in 1908.
(BM Oc1908,0624.70)



Plate 106: A wooden figure sold to Mahaffy by a carver from Ranongga. (NMI AE:1923.151)



Plate 107: Two Guadalcanal wooden clubs decorated with a finely plaited dyed grass covering. The top club, AE:1923.126, was taken by Mahaffy in 1901 during a raid on the village of Kumbakotta, Ranongga. The bottom club, AE:1923.127, was purchased from a chief on Savo Island. (NMI AE:1923.126-127)



Plate 108: Detail of the two Guadalcanal clubs. A faint white lime mark is just visible on the upper club. This addition to the club was used as an indicator that the club had been used to kill a man. (NMI AE:1923.126-127)

Patronage as part of the collecting process

Collecting processes differed greatly between both men, partly due to their individual collecting tastes but also due to their access to objects and/or craftspeople. The degree of Woodford's patronage of local artists is, at present, unclear. No specific examples of objects made especially for him have yet been identified, yet the hospital he had constructed at Tulagi in 1901 could be viewed as a form of patronage of the local crafts people (Plate 14). Whereas his official Tulagi residence conformed to European construction and design, the hospital was allowed to be decorated using local motifs, with the ends decorated with a covering of woven split bamboo.

With Mahaffy however, we have clear and concise information pertaining to his engagement with and commissioning of local craftspeople. When resident at Gizo Mahaffy established collecting and patronage relationships with several indigenous people, exemplified in the house construction and decoration for his party in 1902 (see Chapter 5). However, it was with one Roviana craftsman named Ango that the primary evidence of his patronage comes. In total nine objects were created by Ango for Mahaffy, and documented in his "Catalogue Raisonné". These include the model war canoe, or *tomoko*, complete with crew (AE:1923.226) described in Chapter 1; AE:1923.222-223 – bow and stern canoe carvings (Plates 109 and 110); AE:1923.224 – a carved wooden male figure (Plates 111 and 112); and AE:1923.225 – a carved wooden female figure (Plates 113 and 114). The male figure (AE:1923.224), discussed in detail below, originally held a wooden shield in one hand. Mahaffy stated that this male figure depicted 'a man engaged in the dance which forms the most important part of the feasts so popular among these people' (Mahaffy n.p.). This recalls Mahaffy's description of the dance at his party at Gizo in 1902. The female figure (AE:1923.225) Mahaffy stated showed the patterns of cicatrisation used in New Georgia: the skin of indigenous people being too dark to show tattoo patterns (Mahaffy n.p.; also see Somerville 1897:365). However, it is possible that the facial decoration is supposed to show lime painting motifs which were commonly used by both men and women. Two further carved figures, allocated the numbers AE:1923.227-228 and which were documented by Mahaffy as also having been made by Ango, are presently unaccounted for. A search for these figures in the conservation department and the basement of the Kildare Street Museum (where the collection was originally held) was unsuccessful, and no documentation was located to reveal any clues as to the fate of these



Plate 109: Canoe ornament carved by Ango of Roviana in 1902. (NMI AE:1923.222)



Plate 110: Canoe ornament carved by Ango of Roviana in 1902. (NMI AE:1923.223)



Plate 111: The wooden male figure carved by Ango for Mahaffy in 1902. (NMI AE:1923.224)



Plate 112: Another view of the carved male figure. (NMI AE:1923.224)



Plate 113: The wooden female figure carved by Ango for Mahaffy in 1902. (NMI AE:1923.225)



Plate 114: Another view of the carved female figure. (NMI AE:1923.22)

objects. The NMI register described these figures as ‘wormeaten’ so there is a distinct possibility that they may have deteriorated over the intervening years and been discarded. A necklace made of small animal teeth on fibre cord, which originally formed part of AE:1923.227, and which was presumably also made by Ango, has been located.

Mahaffy, it appears, recognised and appreciated the great skill and talent Ango possessed as a self-taught artist. Writing in the “Catalogue Raisonné” about the model *tomoko* and crew created by Ango, Mahaffy states that the model is ‘surely a very wonderful piece of work when it is considered that the artist is a “mere savage” who has never left his home nor seen any work by European craftsmen’ (n.p.). It is assuming too much, considering the length of European activity in the western Solomons, and the popularity of western goods, that Ango had never seen work by a European craftsman, but his skill could not be doubted, nor Mahaffy’s obvious admiration. Perhaps, in placing the words ‘mere savage’ in inverted commas Mahaffy signalled his own awareness of how Ango, as an indigenous person, could have been viewed by “civilised” British Edwardian and imperial society. This was a society which understood the world and its inhabitants on a strictly hierarchical level, with British society (with its own defined internal levels of hierarchy) on the top stratum and the dark skinned inhabitants of “uncivilised” places like the Solomons at the very bottom (see Cannadine 2001). Perhaps on one level Mahaffy understood the limitations of such a world view and wished to highlight this through placing these words in inverted commas. Ango and other craftspeople were frequently praised by Mahaffy in his catalogues for their skill and competence, yet at the same time in his catalogues and colonial reports he wrote about the savage nature of Solomon Islanders and their blood thirstiness, satisfied only through headhunting. Perhaps, as seen in Ango’s case, indigenous people could raise themselves above the level of “mere savages” through artistic skill, but also through their successful negotiation with Western people, concepts and politics. Again, this highlights the Victorian/Edwardian concepts of class distinction within Mahaffy: on one level these were childlike, uncivilised people who needed the British Empire to establish civility and order, through force or arms if necessary, yet at the same time these were people capable of creating works of art which a European artist might struggle to achieve. Through his actions against the indigenous population, as shall be discussed in the following chapter, and despite his admiration of skill and ability, Mahaffy did consider indigenous peoples as “mere savages”. Unfortunately Mahaffy does not provide details on whether the objects carved for him by Ango were commissioned, or if Ango had created them with the hope of selling to



Plate 115: The shrine on Kudu Island, Vonavona Lagoon. The shrine was said to have been made by Ango.
(Photographed by A. O'Brien, November 2008)



Plate 116: Another view of the Kudu Island shrine, showing some of the skulls and shell valuables which have been placed within the shrine. (Photographed by A. O'Brien, November 2008)

Mahaffy. If we recall the shell knife which Mahaffy had made for him in Kiribati, it seems most likely that Mahaffy requested that objects be made for him.

Many questions arise as to Mahaffy's relationship with Ango. He does not inform us about how much Ango was paid for his work, and what form payment might have taken. We can also query Ango's own status in local society through his relationship with Mahaffy. Was Ango's status in his village elevated through his association with Mahaffy, and through the display of his work at Mahaffy's residence at Gizo? While little information is available on Ango directly, he did act as an informant for Hocart during his 1908 fieldwork in the Western Solomons (see Hocart unpublished papers, MS-Papers-0060, Turnbull Library). During my visit to the Western Solomons in 2008 Alfred Bisili, a resident of Munda, New Georgia Island, remarked that Ango had carved the shrine on Kudu Island in the Vonavona Lagoon, also today referred to as "Skull Island" (in interview 25.11.2008) (Plates 115 and 116). This shrine, Bisili stated, was a replica made by Ango for the older shrine which had been in a bad state of repair. A chief from Nusa Roviana village, Ronald Bei Talasasasa, stated that Ango was a local chief and would have been a young man at the time he made the carvings for Mahaffy, and that he had died sometime about 1930 (in interview 26.11.2008). It is very difficult to verify the claim that Ango did indeed create this shrine. Much archaeological work has been carried out on the shrine and its contents at Kudu, but discussions on the actual structure of the shrine as a piece of archaeology or art do not take place (Sheppard *et al.* 2000; Walter *et al.* 2004:148).

Ango: Artist of Roviana

In fact, very little information could be obtained on Ango, either in museums/archives or through conversations with people. In the absence of significant textual information we must revert to the works he created and allow them to speak for him. As one of the foremost analysts of Solomon Islands material culture, Waite has highlighted the degree of realism to be noted on many carved figures which have their provenance in the Western Solomons, and particularly in Roviana (2000; 2008). Yet within Ango's work for Mahaffy, in particular his carved figures (AE:1923.224-5) and the model *tomoko* and crew (AE:1923.226), there is a degree of naturalism, movement and artistry far exceeding that displayed on works from other collections.

The fact that Ango's works fall into the category of "tourist art" should in no way detract from his objects' importance, or his skill. Indeed, the production of such objects

was a response by local craftspeople to a market of desire from Westerners for portable, local objects to take away with them. Although the agency of such tourist objects differed from those created and used in local or “traditional” contexts, such as carvings placed on shrines or canoe prow figureheads: a carving or figurehead created for sale did embody an agency unique to it and its creator (Gell 1998).

Somerville highlighted the distinction between sculptures of deities and spirits which were carved only for indigenous ritual contexts (known *manggota*) and carvings of men (known as *tinoni*) which were carved in New Georgia: the latter were produced almost exclusively for trade with Europeans (1897:348-9). As such, indigenous people were responding to a market interest in locally produced works which were portable, and which were obviously Western Solomons in decoration and form. Considering Somerville’s statement of works being produced solely for Westerners, I wish to propose that perhaps we should consider the possibility that dedicated artistic workshops existed in Roviana (and possibly in other areas within the Western Solomons) where craftspeople, such as Ango, worked producing objects for sale alongside those to be used in local contexts. Indeed, Graham Officer may in fact have visited such a production place during his 1901 visit to the Western Solomons. In his diary entry for 29th May he wrote:

Saw several clubs unfinished fine specimens of native work, one esp [*sic*] representing a crocodile chasing a man, who is attempting to climb a tree: the crocodile has just caught him. Have seen this design several times even at Saikili [now Saikilie]. Another represented an iguana catching a frog, but these clubs are made to order by N Wheatley & are quite [useless] as weapons but are good specimens of native craft. (Officer MS Papers).

This description of ornamental clubs matches two similar clubs, one in the Woodford BM collection (Oc1929,0713.92) and the other in the Mahaffy NMI collection (AE:1923.134). Both dark-wood clubs are inlaid with very fine pearl-shell motifs and have a similar flared leaf-like head. Along the main body of both clubs is a carved crocodile, biting a human figure on the Woodford example, and a tree frog on Mahaffy’s. In his “Catalogue Raisonné” Mahaffy stated that his club was made at Roviana, perhaps in the same workshop visited by Officer (Mahaffy n.p.).

The style in which Ango carved and posed his wooden figures is very distinctive, and from objects located in other museum collections it is likely that he created objects which were sold to other collectors. Four objects have been identified which artistically



Plate 117: Two wooden clubs carved to represent a crocodile. The top object is from the Woodford collection, the bottom is from the Mahaffy collection. (BM Oc 1929,0713.92; NMI AE:1923.134)

and in their construction suggest that they may have been made by Ango, or perhaps by individuals under his artistic supervision. Again, this highlights the importance of treating research in museums as that of a field site, and taking objects as ‘contact zones’ (Clifford 1997; Peers and Brown 2003). In doing so we are able to find traces of not just collectors, but also of the people who created the objects.¹⁴² While examining objects from the Graham Officer collection in Museum Victoria’s ethnographic storeroom in September 2008 I noted by chance another object I suspect may have been made by Ango. It is no. x15011, a carved wooden figure representing a male Western Solomon Islander in a dancing pose which forms part of a collection of 67 objects presented to the museum in 1908 by the Rev. John Goldie, a member of the Methodist Mission based at Roviana (Plate 118). This figure bears striking similarity in execution and in decoration to NMI AE:1923.224, the carved male figure Ango made for Mahaffy, but no information within Museum Victoria’s records note the name of this figure’s creator.¹⁴³

The three remaining objects I believe to have been made either by Ango or under his supervision are in the British Museum. Although as noted earlier evidence for Woodford’s patronage of local artists is limited, there is evidence to suggest that he facilitated other collectors through commissioning or purchasing objects on their behalf. In

¹⁴² It is highly likely that works created by Ango are present within other museum collections.

¹⁴³ Two carved wooden pigs in the Mahaffy NMI collection (AE:1923.298) and the Goldie Museum Victoria collection (x15012) bear strong visual similarities to each other. Both stand on flat wooden stands, and the carving and shape of the face and ears of the pig appear very similar. The primary difference between them is that the Mahaffy example has a hollow body and lid, while the Goldie one is solid. At present it is unclear if they were carved by the same person (Ango?) or not.

a letter to Woodford from Basil Thomson dated 27th August 1902 Thomson wrote ‘My wife hopes that you haven’t forgotten her statuette. If the artist is amenable to bribes I will send you a cheque’ (Woodford papers). While the exact context of this letter is presently unclear, it is very possible that Thomson was referring to a Solomon Island artist whom Woodford had engaged to create a piece or pieces for Lady Thomson. Within the Lady Thomson collection at the BM is Oc1931,0722.124, a carved wooden male figure with pearl-shell inlay, wicker eyeshade, bone breast ornament and barkcloth loincloth, purchased from Lady Thomson in 1931 (Plate 119). The provenance details identify the figure as coming from the Solomons, and the dates of manufacture correlate to the period in which we know Ango was working as a craftsman. The two remaining objects, again male carved figures in various poses, were donated by William Lever to the BM in 1929 (Oc1929,0304.13&24) (Plates 120 and 121). These I believe to have been carved as a pair, perhaps representing a fallen warrior and the victorious warrior about to slay him. Both figures originally held items in their hands, noted in the way the hands have been carved, but these are unaccounted for.

Of all these objects identified here the Lady Thomson object suggests that it was in fact made by another craftsperson, perhaps under the guidance of Ango. The height of this object, which stands at 2 ft. 6 in. (76 cm), also differentiates it from the others which stand between 24 and 34 cm high.¹⁴⁴ The carving, pose and decoration of the remaining objects bear such striking similarities that I suggest they were created by the same hand. However, of these four I suggest that the Lever objects in the BM (Oc1929,0304.13&24) are slightly later in date than those in the NMI and MV. I base this statement on comparing the work and finish of these objects, which appears more refined and more naturalistic. In order to strengthen the argument that Ango did indeed create the Goldie and Lever objects, as well the examples in Mahaffy’s collection, we can use the male carved figures (NMI AE:1923.224, MV x15011, BM Oc1929,0304.13&24) to highlight the similarities between the objects, and also to show how Ango’s style developed and refined over time.

These four figures display a level of energy, movement and dynamism not frequently evident in other Solomon Island carved figures in a naturalistic style. The material used in all carvings is a similar light-coloured wood which has been smoothed

¹⁴⁴ The two carved figures by Ango which are presently unaccounted for in the NMI (AE:1923.227-228) were documented to have been 29 inches, or 74 cm, high. This can be taken as evidence that Ango did carve taller human figures, but not being able to examine them, it is impossible to draw stylistic parallels with the Lady Thomson object.



Plate 118: Carved wooden figure from the Rev. Goldie collection at Museum Victoria. (MV x15011)



Plate 119: Carved wooden figure from the Lady Thomson collection at the British Museum
(BM Oc1931,0722.124) (Image courtesy of The British Museum)



Plate 120: Carved wooden figure from the William Lever collection at the British Museum.
(BM Oc1929,0304.24) (Image courtesy of The British Museum)



Plate 121: Carved wooden figure from the William Lever collection at the British Museum.
(BM Oc1929,0304.13) (Image courtesy of The British Museum)

and stained black. All figures show similar rendering of the chest with distinctive pectoral muscles. The shape and thickness of the thighs are also similar on all figures, while on the upper arms, just above the elbow, are carved representations of shell arm rings. The rings all have slightly curved edges, as real shell arm rings would, and have been painted with white lime pigment. Three of the figures (AE:1923.224 and Oc1929,0304.13&24) have additional slightly square-shaped rings on the upper arm which appear to be slightly reddish in colour. These may be representations of a different form of shell arm ring.

Further ornamentation on the figures includes dyed yellow grass fibre inserted as hair, which also runs along the contour of the face in the form of a beard. All figures have ear ornaments, with various shell or wooden rings represented. A further distinctive

characteristic of these figures is the blue barkcloth loincloth they wear.¹⁴⁵ Although tied in a similar fashion, the blue loincloth on the Lady Thomson figure appears to be of European cloth, perhaps indicating again this figure's difference. Some figures are fixed to wooden bases, and perforations in the soles of the feet on the NMI male figure and MV figure suggest they were also originally attached to a stand of some kind.

The facial features are also extremely similar and bear similar expressions. On the two figures I believe to be earlier (AE:1923.224 and x15011), the lime face paint a warrior would have worn has been represented as incised lines on the face. This has been elaborated upon on the later figures (Oc1929,0304.13&24) into fine shell inlay on the brows of the warriors. The facial expressions on the latter objects, particularly the fallen warrior figure show a firm movement towards naturalism and more surface refinement, and expressing a level of emotional response not noted on the other figures.

Although each carving is distinctive, with individual characteristics, it is clear that the similarity of Ango's workmanship and style is evident in each object. Through his skill as a craftsman and artist Ango would have established connections with Westerners, such as Mahaffy, Goldie and others. Yet his entanglements with colonialism surpass colonial and missionary boundaries: he also acted as an informant for both A.M. Hocart and W.H.R. Rivers when they resided in the Western Solomons in 1908. In his notes from his fieldwork there, Hocart frequently mentioned Ango, spelled as Anggo by Hocart (Hocart n.p.). Ango created drawings for both men, depicting aspects of life in the Solomons including dances, canoes and shrines. The evidence of these drawings was discovered in Hocart's notes on Roviana (Hocart MS Papers.). Hocart documented a story told by Ango, and several other local men including Leve and Elona, about a legendary or mythological figure named Patareka who was travelling with men from Munda and Roviana when a bad storm arose and threatened to overthrow the *tomoko*. However, a bank of sand appeared around them and Patareka called upon a *tamasa* (a god or spirit being) to put an end to the storm, which then abated.¹⁴⁶ Ango drew a series of drawings showing a *tomoko* with a figure standing upon the prow with his arm raised. He also included the name "Patareka" with his illustration, suggesting Ango had some level of literacy. However, these drawings were not present in the Hocart papers consulted at the Turnbull Library. They were

¹⁴⁵ Woodford identified a plant from Santa Isabel which was used to create blue dye which was used to dye barkcloth and also used as paint on canoe prows (Woodford 1926:483). See Richards and Roga (2005) for a discussion of the historical and contemporary use of barkcloth in the Western Solomons.

¹⁴⁶ Hocart stated that Ango explained to him that Patareka had a *tamasa* called '*Iroto mbangara*', but that no-one now knew what form the charms they used took (Hocart MS Papers).

discovered in Rivers' papers, copies of which were available on microfilm at the same institution (Rivers MS Papers.). Included in Ango's series of drawings was an illustration of a shrine house. Unfortunately this drawing is not a representation of the skull shrine on Kudu Island, but it does bear similarities to the one photographed by Woodford in 1886. Writing on his 1893-4 visit to the Western Solomons, Somerville commented that he had asked a local man (unnamed in his text) to make a drawing for him, just for fun:

I have sent to the Oxford Museum a specimen of a native drawing by one man, which was deliberately intended as a portrait of another. It was drawn as a sort of joke, in imitation of one of our officers who had just made a recognisable portrait of one of the natives, which had pleased them a good deal, and of which they fully appreciated the likeness.

European drawings are a great source of pleasure to them; they seem to quite understand them, and took special amusement in a political cartoon I once showed some of them, in which the figures represented an eagle and a snake with human heads. Photographs of people and places also are easily recognised; and those of some spots in and near Rubiana with a portrait of a man, taken by Mr. Woodford, the engravings of which appear in "A Naturalist among the Head Hunters," were recognised and named. (Somerville 1897:378)

From this we can see that indigenous people were as well acquainted with Western modes of drawing, illustration and photography as they were with Western goods. As with indigenous appropriation of Western goods, perhaps photographs and drawings were items which could also be appropriated and transformed into items which fitted in with their own artistic canons (Thomas 1991). The images of animals with human heads would have fitted into their pre-existing carved representations of spirit beings, while the photographs, by Woodford in this case, would have acted as sites of memory and discussion of the objects and people depicted in the image (see Wright 2004, 2009; Edwards 2001). For, while colonialism and Christianity had not yet firmly taken hold of Solomons society and material culture, the physical presence of such images may have acted as a creative stimulus for local artists, as an impetus to recreate forms represented in the images, or perhaps they stimulated discussions of the people or places represented in them. Throughout his life Ango would have been witness to Western goods (objects, foods) images (drawings, photographs, books), and as such would have been well aware of Western consumption tastes. Indeed, this is visible in the Western classical pose of his

fallen warrior figure (BM Oc1929,0304.13). As such, he could have tailored his object production to suit Western tastes, and the posed figures he produced would have been very attractive to white residents and visitors to the Solomons alike.

With Ango and his work we have a case of absolute indigenous agency. Through his craft production he firmly established himself with both local chiefly polities (we may assume that Ango created objects for local consumption) and also with Westerners resident in or visiting the Solomons. The recording by a collector of an artist's name, such as Mahaffy's documentation of Ango and his work, was not unique. GC Wheeler recorded the names of several craftsmen from whom he purchased objects during his 1908-09 stay on Mono and Alu. For example, he purchased several arrows from Kaika of Bakai, Alu (Oc1927,1003.79-83). But with Ango we have more: we have an artist with a distinctive style and evidence of his collaboration with anthropologists which suggests that future research will yield more objects created by him in other museum collections.

In creating these objects Ango entered into networks of exchange and reciprocity with Westerners, seemingly on his own terms. He chose to make objects for them (presumably for sale) and as people desired his goods perhaps he had the upper hand in terms of such exchange relationships. He also acted as a collaborator, or source, for both objects and information. His connections with Mahaffy, Hocart and Rivers, and how these connections can be traced in the material and textual record highlight his importance in ethnographic studies.

Facilitating other collectors in the Solomons

Between January and July 1901 Graham Officer resided in the Solomons in order to make an anthropological collection on behalf of Baldwin Spencer at Museum Victoria. Officer's collecting incorporated both ethnographic and natural history specimens. His ethnographic collection alone amounts to over 600 objects, which today forms one of Museum Victoria's finest collections (Vanderwal 2001:108). Upon his arrival at Gavutu, Officer was to have met with Mahaffy, but the latter was delayed. Instead, Woodford, whom Officer met there, advised him to travel to Aola on Guadalcanal in order to commence his collecting there, believing that Officer would do better in terms of collecting there than at Gizo (Officer MS Papers.).¹⁴⁷ This is particularly interesting as it was at Aola that

¹⁴⁷ Woodford was also in contact with Rivers prior to his 1908 visit to the Solomons, as he was with Lewis in 1910 when he visited the Solomons briefly on his collecting expedition on behalf of the Field Museum, Chicago.

Woodford had resided during his 1887 stay, and he had already made natural history collections from that region. It is unclear why Woodford recommended him to Aola, even going so far as to arrange accommodation for him there and arranging for his old guide, named Pengoa, to assist him. While a cynic might feel that Woodford did so with the intention that Officer would not discover new species, I believe that Woodford did so in order to genuinely help Officer and to use his prior experience to assist him. Officer stated that he found Woodford to be kind to him and that he felt confident in his advice: Woodford even presented several objects to him to add to his collection (Officer MS Papers).

It was in the Western Solomons, however, that Officer conducted the most significant amount of his collecting. Due to difficulties in securing transportation around the Solomons, Officer concentrated his collecting on the Western Province, particularly the New Georgia group (Vanderwal 2001:109). From April to July 1901 Officer resided with Mahaffy at Gizo, where Mahaffy appears to have facilitated Officer with his collecting by placing his *tomoko* and “boys” at his disposal, and in fact accompanied him on many collecting expeditions. On the morning of the 17th April Mahaffy organised a crew of sixteen “boys” to take him, his dog “Jack” and Officer to Roviana where, Officer noted in his diary, the inhabitants of many villages they passed en route to Ingava’s village fled at the sight of Mahaffy’s *tomoko*. Evidently, the punishments he had inflicted upon them or their neighbours had instilled significant fear into them. Landing at Ingava’s village Mahaffy informed Ingava of their purpose in visiting, and instructed the elderly chief that he was to inform the native people of the area that their visit was friendly. However, despite Mahaffy’s assurances of a friendly visit, one which potentially held positive transaction prospects for local people, villagers still fled upon sight of them and were rather reluctant to bring objects out for Officer to see or purchase. In his diary entries Officer frequently commented on how reluctant people were to show him objects of value, and in particular how owners could not be induced to part with objects which they held in high esteem or had heirloom status. For example, on 22nd April, going on house-to-house visits in Saikilie, Roviana, Officer was particularly interested in a large wooden platter but could not induce the owners to part with it. Despite this, although disappointed, he did not try to force the owners to sell. Indeed, as a visitor to the region and not a member of the colonial government, Officer had little influence over the local people he encountered. In fact, in his transactions throughout his time in the Solomons he was ultimately reliant upon local people and their agency in order to obtain objects through sale. He also experienced

difficulties in another aspect of his collecting around Roviana. Officer wished to document various sites of interest, such as shrines which he described as ‘devil houses’, but he stated in his diary that local people objected to his sketching such sacred places, and he was obliged to desist (Officer MS Papers).¹⁴⁸ He did succeed in making some brief sketches on a separate occasion, and as we shall see in the following chapter, on one occasion at least Officer disregarded local ideology, custom and sensitivities when he removed an ancestral skull from a sacred shrine.

Conclusion

The experiences detailed above show that many aspects of the collecting experience for both Woodford and Mahaffy and indigenous people proved to be mutually beneficial transactions and encounters. The colonial officials secured objects for themselves or for various institutions while indigenous sellers/craftspeople received payment in return. Of course we can question how fair these transactions were but the objects they purchased or commissioned created sets of collecting relationships between these men and indigenous people. As noted, their collecting was not undertaken in isolation. They actively assisted museum personnel and other visitors to the BSIP with their collecting, using their knowledge of the region and the craftspeople resident as the best potential collecting sites to direct the collector to. Importantly, within the objects obtained through sales and transactions, indigenous agency was present. Frequently traces of the indigenous role within the collecting process are obscured but texts such as Mahaffy’s catalogues and Officer’s diary help illuminate our knowledge of the level of indigenous input in the collecting process. Such documents provide important minute detail of artist names and transaction details, information which frequently does not find its way with the object to a museum but which is integral to our understanding of that objects biography and its materiality.

The following chapter provides a contrast to the collecting described in this chapter. It charts how punitive raids became opportunities for both Woodford and Mahaffy to take objects from indigenous people, in particular, objects which were unavailable for sale or trade.

¹⁴⁸ Officer mentioned in his diary that he intended to photograph certain sites or places, but no photographic collection belonging to Officer forms part of the Museum Victoria collection.

Chapter 7

Opportunistic collecting: pacification and the spoils of war

Introduction

The discussion begins with analysis of initial British colonial and naval responses to headhunting prior to the establishment of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, and its general failure to stem interisland raiding or attacks on white traders and ships crews. This situation is contrasted with the policy later developed by Woodford and utilised by Mahaffy to suppress or eradicate headhunting. The discussion also considers the political and economic factors which motivated Woodford to utilise such drastic methods to stem headhunting, and which also impacted on his dealings with plantation developers in the Solomons.

The discussions in this chapter are tied in to the collecting both men undertook, and describes how opportunities such as punitive raids became chances for both men to add to their collections. Theft from indigenous people was something we have already noted in this thesis, particularly the incident of Woodford stealing a whale's tooth from a shrine in Roviana in 1886. However, the theft and destruction of property undertaken by colonial officials in the name of the British colonial government took place on a scale which had not been seen before in the Solomons. As such, this chapter charts a different form of encounter between people and objects, one which stemmed from violence. The agency of these encounters sets them apart from those discussed in the previous chapter. The examples given in Chapter 6 highlighted that collecting could be mutually beneficial transactions and encounters for both European and indigenous person alike. Here social and military violence were used in order to obtain objects which were desired, and looting became the means of acquiring them. As such, this chapter charts the social, political and economic transformation of the Solomons in the early years of the BSIP, and considers how these transformations are reflected in the material culture used during this time, and how new or diverse forms were created.

Initial colonial responses in the Western Solomons

Following the Western Pacific Order in Council in 1877, the Solomons fell under the loose jurisdiction of the British High Commissioner based in Suva, Fiji. Under this order British citizen's resident in the Western Pacific were subject to governance and regulation by the Western Pacific High Commission. This order held them accountable for crimes against fellow citizens, and also for crimes against indigenous people, such as murder or the kidnapping of labourers for plantations. However, the order provided no jurisdiction over the actions of indigenous peoples in the Western Pacific (Scarr 1967:23-35). Crimes committed by indigenous populations against a British subject continued to be considered an act of war against the crown, and as such fell under the jurisdiction of the Royal Navy. Punishment for such crimes usually came in the form of a man-of-war visiting the area where the perpetrators of the crime were believed to reside, usually many months after the initial offence. The punitive raids undertaken by naval personnel and use of locals as guides and interpreters served as a precedent for the pacification later undertaken by Woodford and Mahaffy in the Solomons. An example of this occurred in 1854, when H.M.S. *Herald* visited Guadalcanal to search for the murders of Benjamin Boyd (David 1995:117-142) (Plate 122). If the remains of the British subject were not returned (in cases of murder) or if the property stolen during a raid, or the perpetrators of the crime(s) were not surrendered, then a state of war was understood by the British to exist between the entire village and the Crown (Jackson 1978:94). In such cases the village, including houses, canoe houses, shrines and gardens was destroyed. If the village was out of reach of the landing party it was shelled from the ship, as noted in examples given below.¹⁴⁹ As men-of-war only visited the group about twice a year, punitive raids by the Royal Navy during the 1880s were largely ineffectual in fully suppressing crimes and headhunting (Jackson 1978:99; Woodford 1890a:23; Bennett 1987:63, 104; Hviding 1996:109-110; Zelenietz 1979). Considering the time delay between crime and punishment, and the fact that frequently guilty parties escaped punishment while innocent villages were shelled or burned, such punitive action was doubtless not fully understood by the locals (Hviding 1996:109).

¹⁴⁹ In order to protect the economic interests of traders within the Solomons, and protect revenue that would come to the Crown, the Royal Navy was forbidden the complete destruction of coconut plantations (Jackson 1978:99; Wright 2009:227).



Plate 122: H.M.S. *Herald* being towed into Makira Harbour, 13th December 1857
(David 1995: facing page 124)

Of course not all attacks fell wide of the mark. The punitive attacks launched by Captain (later Admiral) Edward Davis (1846-1929) of H.M.S. *Royalist* in 1891 against Roviana and Munda proved particularly destructive, destroying the homes, canoes, gardens and skull assemblages of the majority of villages in the area (see Wright 2009 for a more in-depth discussion of the *Royalist* case; see Jackson 1978 for analysis of earlier naval attacks in the Solomons). In October that year *Royalist* engaged in punitive action in retaliation for the failure of locals to hand over the suspected murderers of Mr. Dabelle (a European) and two local men who were in the employ of Edmund Pratt, a white trader resident at Hombuhombu Island in the Roviana Lagoon (WPHC 8/III/18). They had been killed, and their heads taken, on 20th June 1889 by five men from Mbilua, a village on the south-east coast of Vella Lavella who had come to live in Roviana. Pratt believed they were murdered as an act of reprisal on account of his having destroyed a canoe belonging to a chief, Tooloo, from Mbilua, for non-payment of copra. Having been resident in the Western Solomons for several years, Edmund Pratt would have been aware of the value and significance of a canoe to indigenous people, both in terms of its use in trade relations but also in its material value for a chief. In callously destroying it he had directly affected

their physical and spiritual well-being, an act which could not go unpunished. Roviana and Munda had previously been attacked for these murders. In September and October 1889 the *Royalist*, then under Captain Hand, had shelled the area for failure to hand over these suspects or return the heads. However, the reef surrounding the Roviana Lagoon and the lack of a gunboat had prevented the *Royalist* and her crew from getting close to the villages to attack them, and so Hand shelled them from outside the reef. Despite this attack the Royal Navy were not satisfied that the punishment inflicted had been appropriately severe, and in their mind the murder of Dabelle and the other men was still fresh. Davis' systematic and sustained attack proved to be far more devastating to the area.

On 24th September 1891 the *Royalist* arrived at Hathorn Sound, which lies outside the reefs to the east of Roviana, from where Davis proceeded to Nusa Zonga where he was informed that the five men wanted for the Dabelle murder as well as two other men wanted in connection with the murders of two Solomon Islanders who worked on a British Schooner, *Marshall S*, were present in Roviana. He then informed people he assembled to Nusa Zonga and Nusa Roviana that if these men were not given up then he would make 'war against all the villages' of the area (WPHC 8/III/20). As no-one was handed over, the following morning, 25th September, Davis landed eighty men and marines who proceeded to destroy all the villages around Roviana, followed by a similar action the next day in Munda. He estimated that during the attacks 150 canoes, 400 houses, and 1,000 heads were destroyed. However, the house and two canoe houses of Ingava were left intact as he hoped that Ingava, who was away on a fishing trip during the time of the attacks, would assist in capturing the murder suspects (WPHC 8/III/20). Interestingly, Davis commented that many of the larger *tomoko* had been removed to shallow lagoons where neither he nor his men could get at them, and his report to the Commander-in-Chief at Australia Station made no reference to any fatalities among the native population. Having had advance warning of the British intention to attack the area the people had removed themselves and their larger canoes from sight.¹⁵⁰

Not mentioned in Davis's report were the objects taken as loot during these raids. Between 1890 and 1893 Davis collected around 700 objects in his voyages around the Western Pacific, of which the British Museum acquired 119 objects between 1894 and

¹⁵⁰ Following his attack on Roviana and Munda, Davis continued to make enquiries on the men sought for murder and continued to make threats of further attacks on local people until eventually two of the men were captured (Davis to Commander-in-Chief, 4th November 1891, WPHC 8/III/20).

1930.¹⁵¹ One object among these is of particular importance, a large food trough taken during the 1891 Roviana raid (Oc1903,1007.1). Initially this trough was believed by James Edge-Partington to be the same one Woodford documented at Ingava's residence in Sisieta in 1887 (Edge-Partington 1903) and which he later photographed (Woodford papers). However his son, Thomas Edge-Partington, who served as District Officer in the Western Solomons following Mahaffy's departure to Fiji, later stated that this food trough came from Koli kongo (known today as Kalikoqu), a village higher up in the Roviana Lagoon, and that the trough Woodford had initially seen was still present in Sisieta (Edge-Partington 1906) (see Chapter 4). If this was indeed the same trough, it indicates the value Ingava placed upon this trough. As with *tomoko* and other sacred objects, this trough was an heirloom object and emblematic of his power and position with Roviana.¹⁵²

It is important to remember that Roviana and Munda were not unique in the punishment they received from the Royal Navy on behalf of the British Government, although the destruction inflicted upon them was severe by Royal Navy standards. Shelling villages from warships was a well established procedure within the Navy, and during both Hand's and Davis's voyages numerous villages on Simbo, Vella Lavella, Malaita and others were shelled and burned (WPHC8/III/19&20).¹⁵³ But the devastation caused by Davis and his crew, in particular during their 1891 voyage of destruction, caused an unprecedented level of fear in the indigenous population, particularly in Munda where many chose to relocate to different sites rather than rebuild (Jackson 1978:101). Yet people soon realised that it was Davis and not the *Royalist* or the British Navy that was to be feared for the raids, and so ultimately people reverted to their established cultural practices. In fact, Davis's attacks may have inadvertently caused an increase in headhunting raids throughout the Western Solomons in the mid 1890s as chiefs attempted to replenish their skull assemblages, visual emblems of their wealth and vehicles through which ancestral efficacy was accessed (Jackson 1978:103). One example of this occurred in 1894, several years after the *Royalist* attack, during which time new *tomoko* and canoe

¹⁵¹ A handwritten note on the copy of the published pamphlet of Davis's collection held by the BM Library states that the BM were given first pick of this collection which was part purchased by Umlauff (BM Library MUS/26b-9-6). The objects listed in this pamphlet were sold by Edward Gerrard in 1904, with the BM purchasing 34 objects. It is unclear how many were purchased by the dealer Umlauff, based in Hamburg.

¹⁵² Hocart wrote that Ingava was considered a good chief by his people as he never killed one of his own 'countrymen', or men from his group (Hocart MS-0600-13:Chieftainship).

¹⁵³ I have ascertained that during this cruise, between 31st July and 31st October 1891 (apart from the punitive raids on Roviana and Munda discussed above) using both HMS *Royalist* and HMS *Ringdove*, Davis was responsible for the shelling and burning of nine villages and the destruction of goods and property at Maramasika (Malaita), Malaita, Vella Lavella, Makira and Simbo. He also publically subjected a man suspected of murder to what he terms a 'severe flogging' on Simbo (WPHC 8/III/20).

houses were constructed (which themselves required heads to consecrate), when Ingava launched a headhunting raid to Mbambatana on Choiseul. This was one of the largest headhunting raids ever recorded in the Western Solomons. Drawing on political alliances with neighbouring chiefs Ingava gathered about twenty-two *tomoko*, two English built boats (probably whale boats), and about 500 men with between 300-400 rifles and 5,000 rounds of ammunition (Somerville 1897:399; Bennett 1987:91).¹⁵⁴ Whereas other chiefs had suffered the total destruction of homes, canoe houses, canoes and skull shrines at the hands of Davis, Ingava had been spared the worst on account of the alliances he had cultivated over the years with British officials. Like Gorai in the Shortlands and other successful chiefs, Ingava had positioned himself within British colonial relations, appearing compliant in assisting with investigations into headhunting offences or the murders of British subjects (Bennett 1987:90-91). Through such clever political manoeuvring their own involvement in such cases was frequently overlooked while their prestige among their people was increased. Ingava himself had built upon the relations his father and uncle had established with British officials (Jackson 1978:96). As such, his position and standing within the Western Solomons increased greatly. Through indigenous eyes, his ancestral efficacy and power was left intact following the *Royalist* attack, while that of his peers had been diminished, and this was something he could build upon. Raids, like the one on Mbambatana, would help to replenish not only the wealth (skulls) of Ingava: it would benefit the chiefs who assisted him through recuperating some of the heads destroyed by Davis and so regain some ancestral efficacy, but it would also signal to other chiefs their alliance with Ingava.

Following the *Royalist* attack headhunting and attacks on European ship's crews and traders continued in the Western Solomons. The *Royalist* attack did have a significant impact upon locals, but it was not until Woodford and Mahaffy arrived in the Protectorate and introduced a sustained programme for the suppression of headhunting that any significant alterations in its practice were seen. The mode of Davis's 1891 attack and its impact on the local population may possibly have served as an inspiration to Woodford for

¹⁵⁴ Somerville based his account on information obtained from a local trader called Kelly. Jackson (1978:107) states that Kelly's information may not have been impartial as many local traders based around Roviana had interests in seeing the power of chiefs reduced, presumably to increase their own status and local islanders' reliance on their trade goods. The English-built boats were most likely borrowed from local traders (Bennett 1987:91). Traders usually had to establish good relations with local chiefs, not just in terms of securing trade. Such good relations should ensure a trader's safety, particularly in areas where traders were vulnerable to attack (Bennett 1987:88). Perhaps refusing Ingava's request for assistance was not an option.

the methods he would later adopt as Resident Commissioner in the suppression of headhunting. He believed that the action adopted by the British government, of firing shells from a man-of-war into the bush at random in retaliation for the murder of British subjects, was a ‘farce’ (Woodford 1890a:23). He also considered that the murderers enjoyed relative ‘immunity’ from their crimes, while noting that under WPHC regulations traders were forbidden to retaliate against Solomon Islanders for murders committed, and that they had a right to expect adequate protection from Britain.¹⁵⁵ His system would offer a new approach to pacification which would ensure a rapid response to headhunting, one which proved to be equally as destructive as Davis’ attacks. For Woodford the act of undertaking raids with the sole purpose of capturing heads or taking slaves served only to confirm the barbarity of those responsible, and this was something that British Victorian morality and notions of racial superiority could not allow to persist. However, moral duty was not the only motivation behind the suppression of headhunting: economic factors were essentially the main driving force behind his policy of pacification (see Boutilier 1979).

Woodford had recognised the importance of war canoes to local communities during his earlier visits to the Western Solomons, both for the role they played in headhunting raids, and for their importance as visual symbols of the power and wealth of a local chief, and by extension, his people. By actively seeking them out and destroying them in punitive raids, along with canoe houses, skull assemblages, ancestral shrines and gardens, Woodford and Mahaffy targeted the core beliefs and symbols of Western Solomons society. Through a sustained campaign of punitive raids, commencing in early 1899, Woodford as orchestrator and Mahaffy as enforcer did succeed in stopping headhunting practices by the early 1900s, though sporadic raids continued during the early twentieth century.

With the arrival of Mahaffy in early 1898, Woodford was able to put his plan for the eradication of headhunting into action. In a practice similar to that implemented by MacGregor in British New Guinea (Kituai 1998) about 25 men from Malaita, Savo and Isabel were trained as “police-boys” to assist Mahaffy. The decision to appoint Solomon Islanders as police was not without consequence. Most island groups, but particularly coastal Isabel and Choiseul, and the Russell Islands, had long suffered at the hands of headhunting parties from the Roviana, Simbo, Rendova and others (Woodford 1888; Zelenietz 1979; Aswani & Sheppard 2003). Their appointment as police and engagement

¹⁵⁵ Woodford noted in his 1888 paper that he had communicated with the High Commissioner on the subject of headhunting, and his experience of it while in the Solomons (1888:375).

in punitive raids inevitably led to tensions between previously warring groups, and possible revenge attacks. In his 1911 book recounting his travels through the Pacific, Frank Burnett accused the government and its native police force of serious atrocities during punitive raids.¹⁵⁶ He stated that the native police force (mostly Malaitan) were allowed to run riot during various punitive raids, particularly on Vella Lavella in attempts to capture Sito following the Binskin massacre, during which they openly engaged in headhunting and cannibalism (Burnett 1911:152-156) (see below). Burnett's accusations were backed up by the account of the local Methodist Missionary Nicholson, resident at Mbilua on Vella Lavella (Luxton 1955:95-96).

Woodford had hired local men to assist them during the attempt to capture Sito, giving them instructions that they were to capture or kill anyone who made armed resistance to them (WPHC 4/1121/09).¹⁵⁷ Both the Malaitan militia and the indigenous men hired to assist in the raid brought a continual stream of prisoners or the heads of suspects back to the government steamer *Belama*. The entire event, which occurred over several weeks, seems to have been organised and managed in a very haphazard manner with both indigenous and white men being allowed to act with impunity, resulting in the loss of many innocent lives and significant destruction to property and valuables. In effect, Woodford had allowed the people under his control, and also himself as their leader, to become the "savages" they were attempting to capture or kill. As a side note, Burnett criticised the destruction and looting which took place during this period, in particular the destruction of an ancestral shrine and the removal of the valuables and skulls (1911:152). Yet earlier in his text he admitted that during his "curio collecting" he himself had removed a carved shell piece, presumably a *venu*, from a shrine (1911:118).

It is evident then that hiring local men as police had great potential to backfire.¹⁵⁸ In employing these locals as a police force Woodford again showed his dependence on local or intimate knowledge, knowledge that could be employed in punitive raids, and in the general governance of the region. Both Woodford and Mahaffy also relied on local people to act as guides during punitive raids, some of whom may have been under duress to perform this task from government officials. Yet these guides were placed in a position where, should they choose to do so, they could provide misinformation on routes or

¹⁵⁶ See Appendix III.

¹⁵⁷ Following the murder of the trader Oliver Burns in Marovo in 1908, many resident traders, including Norman Wheatley and Frank Wickham, had volunteered their services and those of the men who worked for them to Woodford for any punitive raids that would take place (WPHC 4/261/08).

¹⁵⁸ Police from India were also drafted in to work in the Solomons.

locations of villages. While other members of the indigenous population had to acquiesce to colonial rule and its economic demands (or face severe punishments), these police and guides were in a position to offer other forms of resistance, individually and collectively, to their new rulers – both colonial officers and plantation owners. Providing misinformation during punitive expeditions in terms of location details and information on individuals sought, and challenging terms of employment and contract durations, are two examples of what Scott has termed ‘weapons of the weak’ (1985). Such resistances, in the case of Woodford and Mahaffy’s efforts as collectors, may have extended to indigenous attempts to maintain the upper hand in certain object trade negotiations.

However, it is important to note that posting Mahaffy to Gizo, together with the newly trained police, resulted in an effective mobile attack force that could inflict an almost immediate and severe punishment on headhunters and murderers in the Western Province. The captured *tomoko* which were utilised as the method of transport around these islands by Mahaffy and his police proved to be a cheap and reliable method of travel. They were effective and fast, and offered the best solution to questions of transport throughout the Western Province. This mobile attack force proved to be so effective that in his annual report for 1900-01 Woodford stated that:

The establishment of the Gizo Station, and the ever present force of police, have had a most deterrent effect upon the head-hunting instincts of the natives in the neighbourhood. So far as Simbo and the Rubiana Lagoon are concerned, head-hunting raids upon any extensive scale, may be said to be things of the past. The natives of Vella Lavella and Ronongo have still to learn their lesson, but if fear is the beginning of wisdom, they may be said to have already passed the first Standard (Woodford annual report 1900-01, CO 225/61).

Woodford’s new plan would provide a prompt and swift response to headhunters. The *tomoko* used by Mahaffy could be manoeuvred right up to a village at dawn without attracting the attention that a man-of-war would have done, and so the inhabitants would not have time to hide themselves, their canoes or their valuables. Effectively this would strike at the heart of the village, and at the heart of headhunting itself.

Unorthodox collecting: pacification and violence in the collecting process

Punitive raids became opportunities which provided both men access to a wide range of objects that they otherwise might not have found, particularly sacred objects associated

with headhunting or ancestral veneration. From the commencement of Woodford's campaign to eradicate headhunting, punitive raids became occasions for both to add to their collections, but they also were occasions when the property of innocent Solomon Islanders was destroyed or taken from them. Within both collections there is an imbalance of objects which were taken during punitive raids. This is principally due to the fact that while Woodford was the orchestrator of the pacification policy it was Mahaffy who undertook the majority of raids. Accordingly, Mahaffy had greater access to objects which he took as loot from villages. Mahaffy's catalogues and the diaries of Graham Officer who stayed with Mahaffy at Gizo in 1901 provide important information on some examples of objects taken during raids, but similar information on Woodford's collecting during punitive raids is limited. One example, however, from the Woodford collection is recorded in a letter dated 12th October 1899, when Woodford wrote to C.H. Read, a curator at the British Museum, offering him bows and sterns of some headhunting canoes he destroyed at Simbo. He stated that 'it went to my heart to' destroy them, but 'they were too large to carry away entire'. Following the punitive raids upon Kolokongo and Nusarua in the Roviana Lagoon in January 1900 (discussed in Chapter 5), Woodford wrote to Read at the British Museum:

I had to punish some natives for head hunting near Rubiana [Roviana] on Jan 21st last and as the village was taken completely by surprise they had no time to remove their property. The native police took a quantity of loot from which I afterwards made a selection. I also captured the large head-hunting canoe.

Of the objects taken during this raid he continues:

Among them are two very fine examples of the tortoiseshell fretwork on discs ground down from old plates. The tortoiseshell work is the finest I ever remember to have seen. (Woodford to Read, 4 March 1900, BM[A])

These forehead ornaments, commonly known in the Solomon Islands as *dala* (similar in appearance to the *kapkap* of the Bismarck Archipelago), formed part of Woodford's 1900 donation to the BM of seven objects (Oc1900,1008.1-1008.6) (Plates 123 and 124). *Dala*, which were a specialised production of Ranongga craftspeople (Aswani & Sheppard 2003:s56), are usually composed of a section of fretted turtleshell mounted on to a disk of clamshell, but in these two cases the clamshell has been replaced with circular ceramic

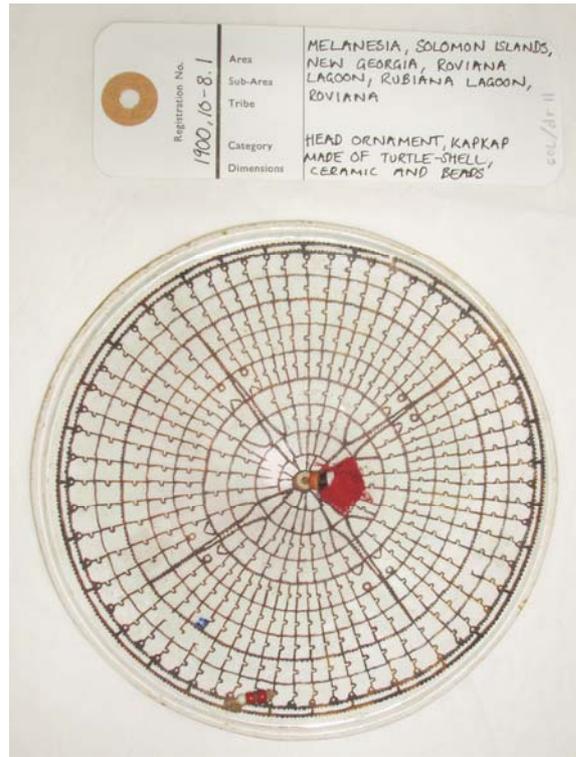


Plate 123: *Dala* ornament, taken by Woodford the punitive raids upon Kolokongo and Nusarua in the Roviana Lagoon in January 1900. (BM Oc1900,1008.1)



Plate 124: *Dala* ornament, taken by Woodford the punitive raids upon Kolokongo and Nusarua in the Roviana Lagoon in January 1900. (BM Oc1900,1008.2)

disks ground down from china plates, one with a willow-pattern design on the back. Presumably these ceramic plates had never been used as “plates” in the Western Solomons. Rather, they had been selected for their potential as valuables and adapted into a pre-existing form, similar to what Thomas calls a ‘subtype’ (1991:105). In terms of appropriation and objects which highlight the social and tangible links between indigenous people and Europeans, these *dala* embody many aspects the indigenous agency which this thesis is concerned with. As noted in the introduction, this was a period of social, cosmological and cultural change in the Solomons. The introduction of new technologies, tools, and material led to the creation of new and/or modified object types. But through their invention or modification such objects were made local, and as such became part of the material culture universe of the Solomons. Objects like these acted as signifiers of those changes and the utilisation of European objects may have increased their cultural and economic value in Roviana society.¹⁵⁹

For Mahaffy in particular, the suppression of headhunting, punitive raids and looting were inextricably linked. In fact, the destruction of indigenous property, goods and valuables seemed to be an essential part of punitive raids. In turn he transformed and personalised the objects he took during such raids. In November 1897 Jean Pratt, a trader resident at Narovo on Simbo Island in the Western Solomons, was attacked along with his crew when his schooner “Eclipse” was stopped at Mbilua in Vella Lavella. The attack was instigated by a noted warrior named Sito on account of Jean’s brother Edmund Pratt’s failure to honour a contract to supply him with weapons. In June 1898 while travelling onboard H.M.S *Mohawk* Mahaffy was present during the first punitive raid against Sito for this attack. A party was landed at the village which was found to be deserted. Commander Freeman, *Mohawk’s* captain, believed that the inhabitants had moved inland to fortified hilltop settlements which were out of range of the man-of-war’s guns (WPHC 4/295/98). Instead the village, including the canoe house and canoes, were all burnt.

Unconvinced that the 1898 punishment inflicted on Sito and his people was severe enough, and on account of Vella Lavella inhabitants failing to adhere to government warnings concerning the continuation of headhunting, Mahaffy led a further punitive expedition to Vella Lavella in November 1901, taking with him 32 policemen and 14 volunteers, who included several resident traders and many locals from the Western

¹⁵⁹ The incorporation of this ceramic plate into an indigenous form correlates to an industry which developed in which indigenous forms, such as shell arm rings, were recreated in ceramic and used in the labour trade (Gesner 1991). Interestingly, neither Woodford nor Mahaffy collected any such imitation objects.

Solomons. Travelling by boat and *tomoko* from Gizo this force intended to attack Mbilua, Sito's inland hilltop fortified village. Finding it impossible to attack the village from the direction in which they came, Mahaffy led the group back to the sea, where they burned a canoe house close by and captured several canoes. They proceeded along the coast repeating these actions for several days, including confiscating any copra they found, until they approached Mbilua again from another direction. Now they found that they were able to breach the defences of the palisade surrounding the village, but the inhabitants were aware they were breaking through and had fled by the time they entered. The village at Mbilua, which consisted of about twenty houses, was burnt to the ground but yet again Sito evaded capture.

This expedition lasted several days and was directed against all the people and villages of that part of Vella Lavella. In total ten villages were destroyed by Mahaffy and his force. Mahaffy's report to Woodford names many different villages, and states that whenever a house, canoe house, or "tambu" house was located it was burnt (CO 225/63). One hundred *tomoko* were either destroyed or captured. Of his "success" on Vella Lavella, Mahaffy noted in his report to Woodford the fear that this punitive action had on the indigenous people with the Western Solomons:

Ever since my return natives from Ronongo [Ranongga] have been coming here in boats and canoes to make submission and with promises of good behaviour in the future. (Mahaffy to Woodford, 15th November 1901, CO 225/63)

While the 1898 raid was directed against Sito, the 1901 raid destroyed Sito's coastal and inland villages, and his property and valuables – the visual symbols of his wealth – as well as those of many surrounding villages. Although Sito was the principal target of this raid, this was ultimately not a punishment against one man, it was against an entire region. Several of the guides Mahaffy used for this expedition had been refugees from Vella Lavella who had fled to Kolumbangara, Roviana and Gizo following attacks on their villages from other villages on Vella Lavella (Woodford to O'Brien, 28th December 1901, CO225/63). It is highly likely that revenge was a significant motivation behind their helping the colonial administration. The involvement of numerous islanders in colonial government military actions was not a new phenomenon in the Western Pacific. Indeed a precedent for Woodford and Mahaffy's arrangements was probably provided by experience in Fiji. After the establishment of the British colonial government there in

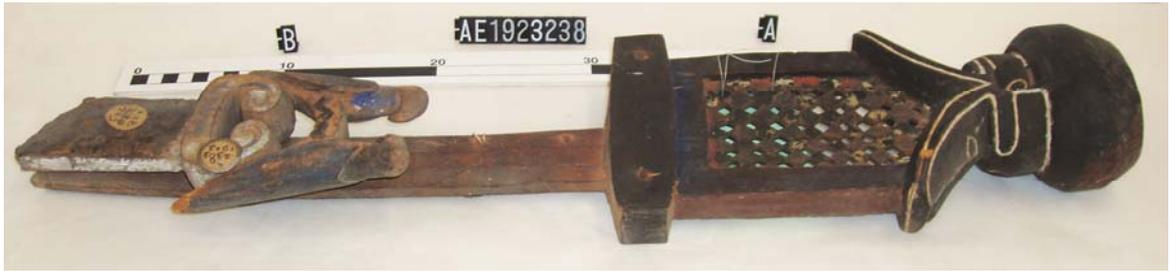


Plate 125: An ornament taken by Mahaffy from Sito's village at Mbiula, Vella Lavella, November 1901.
(NMI AE:1923.238a-b)



Plate 126: Detail of AE:1923.238a-b highlighting blue pigment which was used to decorate the sculpture.



Plate 127: Canoe prow figurehead taken by Mahaffy during the 1901 raid on Sito's village. The figurehead shows signs of considerable use with salt stains visible from its use on *tomoko* voyages.
(NMI AE:1923.201)



Plate 128: Over-modelled skull. One of three collected by Mahaffy in the Western Solomons between 1898 and 1904. (NMI AE:1923.188)



Plate 129: Over-modelled skull. One of three collected by Mahaffy in the Western Solomons between 1898 and 1904. (NMI AE:1923.189)



Plate 130: Over-modelled skull. One of three collected by Mahaffy in the Western Solomons between 1898 and 1904. (NMI AE:1923.190)



Plate 131: Shell ornaments taken by Mahaffy from a grave site at Mbilua, Vella Lavella. (NMI AE:1923.186)

1875, the interior people of the largest island, Viti Levu, resisted control and had threatened coastal peoples – with whom there was long-standing rivalry. A force of Armed Native Constabulary (ANC), together with many other enthusiastic Fijian volunteers, and led by a few Europeans, marked an expedition against the “hill people” in 1876 and conducted a violent campaign of pacification. The Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, published an account of this action in 1879, known as *The Story of a Little War* (Gordon 1879; Roth and Hooper 1990:371-422). The event was clearly used by many Fijians to settle old scores under the guise of a police action.

During these raids Mahaffy took an ornament from inside one house as a trophy (AE:1923.238a-b) (Plates 125 and 126).¹⁶⁰ He also destroyed a skull shrine, or what he refers to as a ‘tambu’ house believed to belong to Sito, in which he noted that there were fifty heads, the trophies of headhunting raids. He also took a canoe prow figurehead from this house, which would have been attached to a war canoe prior to any voyage but which could be stored in a canoe house when not in use (AE:1923.201) (Plate 127). We can only assume, considering the policy of burning war canoes and canoe houses that characterised punitive expeditions, that the war canoe to which this figurehead belonged was either burned or confiscated. In his catalogue Mahaffy noted that in this ‘tambu’ house he also found a preserved head – presumably an over-modelled skull – on which the malformed lip of the individual had been reconstructed. Mahaffy showed the skull to Norman Wheatley, a European trader resident in the group, who said he recognised the reconstructed facial features of the person, a Solomon Islander, who had been missing for several months (Mahaffy n.p.). While this skull does not form part of the Mahaffy collection, it does contain three other over-modelled skulls, one from the Roviana Lagoon and two from Ranonga Island, all in the Western Province (NMI AE:1923.188-190) (Plates 128 to 130). Other objects in Mahaffy’s collection which were collected at Mbilua are a small stone charm which he removed from a grave (AE:1923.186a-c) (Plate 131), and two tomahawks (AE:1923.240b-c). In his catalogue he does not specify whether these were collected at the same time as the Sito raid. Following the raid on Mbilua, Mahaffy, together with Hazelton and thirty police, travelled to Sakasukuru and Pakapaka, locations on the west coast of Vella Lavella as they believed other *tomoko* were stored there. Bennett comments that following Sito’s initial 1897 attack on Pratt, his own wife and children were shot by colonial forces during a punitive raid (1987:108; also see Boutilier

¹⁶⁰ Mahaffy’s report to Woodford mentioned that the native police force were allowed to take some shell rings that they found.

1975:34). Mahaffy's report to Woodford on the attack on Mbilua itself in 1901 mentions that one shot was fired on the approach to the village, but that when they finally gained access to the village, having scaled the hill and fortifications, they found that all the inhabitants had fled. It is therefore unclear whether Sito's wife and children were indeed shot or killed during this or some later attack. Regardless, in revenge and retaliation, Sito appears to have determined that a white man's head was required to set the balance straight. In 1909 he sent his warriors to Mbava, an island to the west of Vella Lavella where resided Joseph Binskin, a white trader who had assisted during the 1901 raid. The intention was to kill Binskin but as he was away they killed his wife and children and several staff instead. This murder caused uproar among the traders resident in the Western Solomons and among the colonial government, and led to what was effectively a lynch mob led by revenge-seeking Europeans including Woodford and resident traders with indigenous police combing Vella Lavella (see Bennett 1987, Burnett 1911 and Luxton 1955: 95-96 for discussions of this case). Frank Burnett, who visited the Solomons in 1908, wrote that the colonial administration granted the native police force, in particular Malaitans, a 'carte blanche' to kill with impunity and engage in their own private headhunting expeditions (Burnett 1911:142-157).¹⁶¹ In the end it was the intervention of Nicholson, a Methodist missionary resident on that island, who prevented further bloodshed on the part of the administration and organised a party of local people who tracked down and captured Sito, and delivered him to Woodford.

Within Mahaffy's collection there is a shell ring, a *poata*, upon which he inscribed the name 'Sakasukuru' and the date of '9.11.1901' (AE:1923.477) (Plates 132 and 133). As both he and Woodford had done on previous raids, Mahaffy was again creating souvenirs, mementos of his expeditions.¹⁶² In discussing the role of the souvenir in the collecting process, Stewart stated that the 'capacity of objects to serve as traces of authentic experience is [...] exemplified by the souvenir' (1993:135). The souvenir becomes the instantiation of the experience of its collection and its collector, not its maker. They are desirable mementos of events which have passed and which cannot be repeated.

¹⁶¹ A similar event had occurred during the previous year. In May 1908 a young trader named Oliver Burns, who worked as an agent for Norman Wheatley, was attacked and killed in the Marovo Lagoon. The punitive expedition which followed his murder followed similar lines as the Binskin one, with traders and other whites and various indigenous people acting as a militia to support the government agents (WPHC 4/261/08). During this case also it fell to missionaries to try to protect the lives of innocent Solomon Islanders.

¹⁶² Another shell ring bears the date '25.10.1901' and the words 'Kearu [?] Ronongo' (AE:1923.478). This may have been taken on a separate raid just prior to the Vella Lavella action.



Plate 132: A shell ring, *poata*, taken during a raid upon Sakasukuru. Mahaffy inscribed the name 'Sakasukuru' and the date of '9.11.1901' onto the ring. (NMI AE:1923.447)



Plate 133: Another shell ring which has the word "Ronongo" and the date '25.10.1901' written upon it. (NMI AE:1923.478)

Yet the objects discussed by Stewart (1993) and Phillips (1998) in their analyses of souvenir creation were, for the most part, objects which had been made (as tourist art) or those which served as a reminder of particular events. In the case of the shell rings taken by Mahaffy the objects were transformed from their original status into that of a souvenir. These were objects which originally had a defined function within Western Solomons culture and cosmology. They were removed from their original sphere of existence and re-created/re-contextualised and personalised into a new object, a souvenir. They became a memento of a single event (the punitive raid), but now the object, the event during which it was created as a souvenir, and the person who collected and transformed it (particularly through their modification of the object, such as through inscription) are all linked in the one set of narratives, within the one set of material relations (Stewart 1993; Miller 2005). Although the event has passed, the souvenir becomes a material and tangible marker and reminder of the narrative and/or event of its collection, a narrative which continues through the preservation of the souvenir. In this respects objects of this kind differ from those made for Mahaffy, such as Ango's model *tomoko* or carved figures (see Chapter 6), which although they also act as souvenirs they contain different sets of narratives.

Stewart claims that souvenirs only generate narratives which look back, that the souvenir has a double function to authenticate a past or distant event or experience which at the same time discredits the present (1993:135, 139). I disagree. I would argue that through an object's transformation into a souvenir, one which is retained and referred to throughout its life with its owner, the narratives contained within it are re-lived, even re-invented, and made part of the owner's present. Denning argued that history is always in a state of becoming through its formation and retelling (1996). The same is true in the case of objects. They are constantly in what could be described as a state of flux: the past and present are embodied with these objects and the stories/histories contained within them are constantly trying to make themselves known and valid for contemporary people. Having a souvenir of an event served as a tangible reminder of an event, in which the owner participated, would constantly make that event and its memories part of the present of its owner.

One of the principal differences between both men's collections is the presence, or absence, of human remains. While Woodford collected few human remains Mahaffy formed his own collection of trophy skulls, with a total of four human heads. One, the head of an ancestor, comes from the Kwaio region of Malaita (AE:1923.214) (Plate 95), but Mahaffy does not provide any information in his catalogue about how he obtained this

skull. However, he does note that the method of preservation was similar to that of Kiribati. The skull is contained within a finely plaited grass bag which has a red stain (possibly a dye) coming through it. It was not possible for me to examine the skull itself as removing it from the bag may have proved injurious to the object.¹⁶³

The three remaining human skulls in Mahaffy's collection originate from the Western Solomons. These are all over-modelled skulls, one from Roviana, and two from Ranonga (AE:1923.188-190) (Plates 128 to 130). Such skulls were previously believed to be the heads of ancestors but new thinking now considers them to be the heads of enemies decorated with a new 'skin', a face modelled from nut paste inlaid with shell eyes and decorative shell inlay motifs (Thomas 2003:323). This skin meant the soul of the deceased was kept in the world of the living and prevented from transitioning to ancestral status, leaving the deceased forever haunted (Thomas 2003:323). Such enemy skulls were kept in canoe houses or in shrines, tangible reminders of a warrior's prowess and spiritual wealth. This objectification of people and their transformation into commodities can be understood as an extension of the indigenous trade networks, which included objects, produce and people (slaves) which existed in the Western Solomons, both prior to and following the establishment of the BSIP (McKinnon 1975; Thomas 1991:45; Aswani & Sheppard 2003). The desire to have control over enemies, in life and in death, may have been a factor in the creation of such heads.

Mahaffy does not provide any information on how he acquired these heads, but their presence in shrines or in canoe houses would have made them easy to spot and collect during punitive raids. They were commodities, indicators of a warrior's prowess and spiritual wealth. Yet, might it be possible that such skulls were sold to White people? While no direct evidence of this has yet been discovered these were commodities which the owner could dispose of in return for trade or money. While disposing of an enemy skull to a White person would ensure the damnation of that enemy's soul (Thomas 2003:323), perhaps the act of selling or removing it as part of the owner's wealth would deplete the owner's access to spiritual efficacy. White people were morbidly fascinated by

¹⁶³ The nature of Mahaffy's work required him to travel frequently to different areas to investigate various offences against colonial law (Burt 2002:198-200). He also collected taxes from trading stations and labour recruiting vessels to gain revenue for the Protectorate, which was supposed to be self-supporting (Mahaffy 1902:193; Scarr 1967:263). In 1902 he toured Malaita on H.M.S. *Sparrow*, investigating several offences, and he must have used these opportunities to acquire, through trade or purchase, many items which interested him. Apart from the human skull there are other Malaitan objects, of which there are 14 in total in his collection. These include a wooden club from the east coast (AE:1923.128), two hair combs (AE:1923.184&185 – latter now missing), and a necklace of porpoise teeth and glass trade beads from Sio Harbour (AE:1923.215).

the act of headhunting and the preservation of human skulls, and would have been willing to pay well to acquire such objects. Perhaps these were considered alienable possessions. While Mahaffy collected objects such as heads without hesitation, he criticised Graham Officer for taking a shell-overlaid skull from an ancestral shrine on Ranongga Island during his visit to the Solomons (MV x7563) (Officer MS Papers; Vanderwal 2001). The skulls of ancestors were the polar opposite of an enemy skull, in intention, decoration, spiritual significance and decoration (see Hocart 1922). These were inalienable, critical to the success of a chief and/or warrior (cf. Weiner 1985).

On Tuesday 11th June 1901 Mahaffy took Officer along to participate in a punitive raid on a village identified as Kumbukotta on Ranongga Island. Villagers were suspected of having undertaken a headhunting raid along with a group from Vella Lavella upon Choiseul, and taken nine heads (Officer MS Papers). Mahaffy and Officer, together with eighteen police and the ship's crew departed Gizo on the previous afternoon in the government yacht *Lahloo*. Officer stated that they also took along the Gizo boat, possibly the *tomoko* taken by Mahaffy from Kolokongo and the boat from the *Lahloo*. Having reached Ranongga that night they set out in these boats the following morning at 4am, Mahaffy in charge of one, Officer the other. It was daylight before they reached the village, and having rushed it they found it to be deserted. Officer described the raid in his diary:

...but no natives appeared. We had quite expected to be fired at. Here we found 2 large boats & a no. of canoes, the smaller of the boats was broken up & the larger one launched. M secured one canoe for Cunningham & the others were smashed. Having taken all of value mostly taken by the boys, we then set fire to the huts & getting into the boats again went a little further along the coast & landed again at some houses, where we found a large no. of canoes, including 2 "tommakos" [*sic*] or large head-hunting canoes. There were all smashed & the houses looted. (Officer MS Papers).

Evidently the police forces under Mahaffy's control were encouraged to take what they wanted from the houses. Officer later stated that although most items of value had been removed from the houses prior to their arrival, the police force took fish hooks, fly's, and a saw.¹⁶⁴ Having taken what they wanted from the villages and destroyed the canoes and

¹⁶⁴ It is plausible that objects taken by the police force, especially if they were of particular value or significance, could have later been sold to white collectors such as Mahaffy, Woodford or Officer.

houses Mahaffy, Officer and some of the police then proceeded inland in search of any residents who may have been hiding. None were located but they did find a garden belonging to the village, which in keeping with government policy they proceed to destroy:

M & I & no. of boys then followed a track into the bush, hoping to come on the natives, but it only led to a garden, of banana taro & sugar cane. These were all cut down & a shed burnt. We then returned to the last place & there cut down a number of cocoanut trees after wh. we returned to the “*Lahloo*”, wh. by this time had come up along close. (Officer MS Papers)¹⁶⁵

The most significant event during this raid occurred following the destruction of the second village. Near there they discovered an altar or shrine upon which the remains of what Officer described as a “devil-house” containing a number of skulls was found. Vanderwal identified this as a cairn tomb and the burial place of a high-ranking man (2001:109).¹⁶⁶ Officer proceeded to remove one of the skulls from the shrine, noting that it was remarkably decorated with shell work, but also noting that Mahaffy was against his taking it.¹⁶⁷ The skull Officer took was that of an ancestor, adorned with attachments of shell ring valuables. I was not permitted to photograph this skull, now part of the Officer collection in Museum Victoria Melbourne, but it follows the form of other decorated skulls such as those in the Field Museum, Chicago (276646) and the Conru collection (CS 50, Waite 2008:79-81) (Plate 134). The skull was not the only item Officer secured for Museum Victoria that day. He also took a small fish trap, an unfinished mortar, some cordage and several prow and stern pieces from canoes, while Mahaffy took for himself several canoe prow figureheads, a paddle ornamented with frigate bird motifs, and a war club originating from Guadalcanal (mentioned previously). Within the Mahaffy NMI collection are several Western Solomon Islands paddles with frigate bird motifs on them,

¹⁶⁵ Officer wrote in his diary that following the completion of the raid, when they had returned to their boat, two native men came and sat on the beach close to where they were anchored. Mahaffy and another member of the crew then started firing at them. While neither man was hit this does display Mahaffy’s willingness for indiscriminate and unrestrained violence against the indigenous population.

¹⁶⁶ Vanderwal commented that the shrine from which the skull was taken is similar to one photographed by Rodolphe Festetics de Tolna, who visited the Solomons between 1893 and 1902 and which he illustrated in his subsequent publication (1903:331). Between October 2007 and January 2008 the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, held an exhibition charting Festetics de Tolna’s voyages and collecting through the Pacific (see Antoni and Boulay 2007).

¹⁶⁷ Vanderwal noted that this skull was one of the few objects which Officer did not acquire by purchase during his entire eight month stay in the Solomons (2001:109).

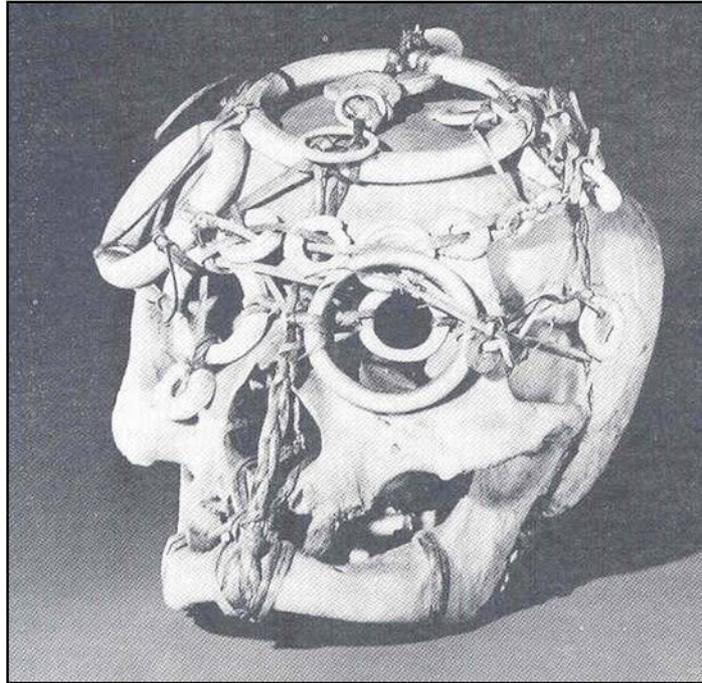


Plate 134: Skull decorated with shell rings. Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 276646.
(Waite 1990:60).

although their exact provenance is unknown (NMI AE:1923.191-193), as is the case for many of the canoe prow figureheads (AE:1923.135-140).¹⁶⁸ Just prior to Officer's departure from the Solomons it appears that Mahaffy again asked him to return the skull to the son of the man whose skull it was: Officer refused.

Mir [Mahaffy?] came up & spotted the skull I got from Kumbu Kotta. He says all the Rubiana people know I have it. Mir asked me to give it back to a man called Panangatta who is the son of the man whose skull I have. He was a chief called [blank] & the most powerful man on Ronongo. I took no notice of the natives who came around & seemed much excited. When they went away I moved the box into the house.

(30th July 1901, Officer MS Papers).

In his diary entries Officer either referred to Mahaffy as 'M' or 'Mahaffy', yet no other entries in his diary could be located which referred to a person referred to as Mir. There is a possibility that 'Mir' was a Solomon Islander, perhaps someone who worked as a guide

¹⁶⁸ The only canoe prow figurehead with an exact provenance is AE:1923.201, the figurehead taken from Mbilua, Vella Lavella during the raid on Sito. It is not known, of course, if it was made there.

or a member of the police force. It is not clear in his diary who Mir was. However, if we presume that Officer was referring to Mahaffy asking him to return the skull then this episode marked a perceptible shift in Mahaffy's outlook and relationship with the indigenous population. He had already voiced concerns at the time Officer removed the skull, but perhaps this had continued to play on his mind or perhaps people from Ranongga had approached him for assistance in securing the return of the skull. Perhaps Mahaffy was beginning to understand Solomon Islanders as people too and that care for a deceased relative's remains was something both he and Solomon Islanders could relate to. Yet it is sad to think that even today this skull remains far from that person's descendants.

Officer's participation in and behaviour during this raid is highly questionable. He was in the Solomons to collect, not to destroy, yet he actively assisted in the destruction of canoes, objects and gardens. He was an educated man who graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1892 with a science degree (Vanderwal 2001:108), yet he never questioned the barbarity of his own actions while engaging in punitive raids, looting and destruction. Perhaps Officer felt that it was acceptable to engage in such behaviour, considering Victorian notions of moral superiority and their misunderstanding of the act of headhunting as purely a barbarous and savage act. Equally questionable was his absolute disregard for the people from whom he stole the skull and his refusal to return it. Officer saw several skull shrines during his collecting expeditions around the Western Solomons both prior to and following this raid, at least one of which was ornamented in a similar fashion to the one taken from Ranongga (Officer MS Papers). Yet he did not take any from these other shrines. Perhaps through participation in the raid he felt justified in acting as he did, and able to take what he wanted without reference to his usual moral concerns.

It is interesting to examine Mahaffy's reaction to Officer's taking the skull. With his own collecting Mahaffy did not seem to be aware of any sense of transgression through his taking objects from people by force. In essence he was the law in the Solomons and acted under the rules prescribed by the British colonial government. However, he had access to similar skulls and doubtless could have collected many, yet in his collection are only the four skulls already noted, the three from the Western Solomons being the over-modelled heads of enemies.¹⁶⁹ He seemed to understand the importance of the Ranongga skull obtained by Officer to the descendants of the deceased man, the role of ancestral

¹⁶⁹ Mahaffy does not clarify in his catalogue when he collected the two over-modelled skulls from Ranongga, but the fact that Officer did not mention Mahaffy taking one during this raid suggests that Mahaffy did not collect them on this occasion.

efficacy to them, and how the removal of such a skull would impact negatively upon them and their village. He seems to have considered this much more significant than the destruction he himself had inflicted upon them through the destruction of their canoes, houses and gardens.

An example from a few years following this event showed a more proactive attitude on the part in the colonial government in dealing with the return of ancestral remains. On Choiseul in the late 1910s or early 1920s the trader Clifford Collinson was presented with the skull of a chief named Liliboi by his killer, another chief named Ongeli (Collinson 1926:178-180).¹⁷⁰ Collinson had requested to Ongeli that he should give him the skull as a souvenir of his victory, and Ongeli duly presented to Collinson and his companion, Pybus, the skull stuck on the end of a spear along with the musket with which Liliboi had been shot and the axe that ultimately killed him. In return Collinson presented Ongeli with printed cottons, beads, tobacco and matches (1926:179). Unlike other chiefs within the New Georgia group who proudly displayed their slain enemies' skulls on shrines or in canoe houses, Ongeli apparently placed limited value on either retaining or displaying Liliboi's skull as a trophy. Trading the skull for something upon which Ongeli did indeed place a value, such as the trade goods Collinson offered him, serves as an indicator of the important role trade goods had assumed within Solomons society.

Similar to the over-modelled skulls Mahaffy collected, Ongeli turned the skull into a commodity which he could exchange for items upon which he placed a greater value. Not long after Collinson took the skull, Liliboi's tribe discovered what had happened and undertook a revenge attack, killing several women and children from Ongeli's village (Collinson 1926:180). As a result of these deaths, and the threat of further disruption, Collinson was requested by colonial government to return the skull, which he did. In this case the colonial government directly intervened to try to prevent further bloodshed. As District Officer, Mahaffy had the authority to take the skull from Officer. He would have understood the significance of the skull's theft to the Kumbukotta people yet he failed in his capacity as a District Officer to act in their best interests. Perhaps Officer's blatant refusal to return the skull, coupled with his position and association with a scientific institute (Museum Victoria), granted him a certain element of authority over Mahaffy in terms of object collection. Although a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and an

¹⁷⁰ Collinson does not name this village, but it was a fortified village about ten miles inland on the north-east side of the island (Collinson 1926:169-170). In his book Collinson stated that the Resident Commissioner for the BSIP at that time was Charles Workman, who held that post from 1917 until 1921 (Collinson 1926:34).

amateur ethnographic collector, Collinson had no such academic or institutional affiliations. However, by the time of Collinson's experience collecting ethics and practices had altered from earlier in the century, as had the Solomons and its people.¹⁷¹

As evidenced above, punitive raids granted Woodford, and particularly Mahaffy, access to a range of material which might otherwise have been withheld from them. The power of their weapons, mobility of force, and the fear of further reprisals had a powerful impact upon Solomon Islanders. By extension, this fear of reprisal granted them access to all locations in the Solomons, including burial sites and taboo areas. The removal of objects from taboo or sacred areas was carried out openly by both men. When Woodford stole the whale's tooth from a shrine on Nusa Roviana in 1886 he was a visitor to the region and did not have any real power over the locals, yet he recorded he took the tooth by stealth. Once in his position of power as Resident Commissioner, and also for Mahaffy as District Officer, such stealth was not necessary. Similar objects taken from sacred areas are exemplified in two spear-heads carved from human shin bone, "found" by Mahaffy on a burial island close to Nggatokae in the Marovo Lagoon, New Georgia. One Mahaffy kept for his own collection, but states in his supplementary catalogue that the second example was sent to the British Museum. Interestingly, the catalogue details for the BM spear-head (Oc1915,-.52) note that it was donated by Woodford, with no mention of Mahaffy (Plate 135). Furthermore, a paper Woodford published in *Man* (1911) on both spearheads gives no mention or credit to Mahaffy for having collected these objects (Plate 136). This could be read as an indication of collecting rivalry between the men, but the fact that Mahaffy possibly presented this spear-head to Woodford suggests they shared a close working and collecting relationship, and shared information on objects they collected. Unfortunately, the NMI object (AE:1923.307) has not been located within the museum and no visual record of it is extant in the NMI records. Fortunately, Woodford's article on the spear-heads contains a photograph of both alongside each other.¹⁷² Both were of a similar length (10½ inches) and bore the same carved image of a frigate bird towards the point of the spear, with serrated or notched decoration on the edge of the shaft and carved triangular projections on the upper edge. These triangular projections resemble the simplified form of *barava*, as discussed by Thomas, T. (2003:196-7). The spear-head on the bottom appears

¹⁷¹ Nine objects Collinson collected in the Solomons were acquired by Harry Beasley in 1933 and are now held by the BM (Oc1944,02.1343, 1372,1373, 1376, 1381-1384, 2111) (see Carreau 2009).

¹⁷² Photographs of these spear-heads are also located with the Woodford Papers, microfilmed by the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PMB 1290).



Plate 135: Photograph one of the two spear-heads carved from human shin bone, “found” by Mahaffy on a burial island close to Nggatokae in the Marovo Lagoon, New Georgia. (BM Oc1915,-.52)



Plate 136: Photograph showing the two bone spear-heads (Woodford 1911:121).

to be the example Woodford presented to the BM, but it has lost several of the triangular projections since its arrival in the museum. These are highly unusual objects, and as yet I have not encountered a similarly formed spear-head in other museum collections. Mahaffy's entry for his example states:

So far as I know there are no other examples known of this particular form of spear head. They must be very old for the wood of the shafts was found near them crumbled into dust, and all the appearance on the burial place pointed to considerable antiquity. The natives said that spears of this kind are no longer made. (Mahaffy n.p.)

Mahaffy and Woodford's activities may be situated within the larger practice of many Victorian military personnel, of collecting enemy skulls and other body parts as trophies to be put on display (Harrison 2008). The contradictions such actions entailed, in "civilised" Western armies in effect becoming like the enemies they perceived as "savage", will help shape this discussion. Harrison has argued that many British military personnel in nineteenth-century Southern Africa, considering their African opponents as outside the conventions of civilised warfare, collected their defeated enemies' body parts not only as trophies but in response to developments in science, 'in which the collection, measurement, and classification of skulls became central to scientific understandings of human difference, especially moral and intellectual inequality' (Harrison 2008:286).¹⁷³ Woodford's, and in particular Mahaffy's, collecting of body parts, possibly reflects a similar interest in scientific analysis of "savage others", but it also fits into the trophy category.

Mahaffy took other objects from the same burial site, including a shell armband upon which he inscribed the word "Monaka Gatukai" on the flat inside surface of the armband (AE:1923.308), this being the name given to the object which Mahaffy obtained from locals (Mahaffy n.p.). This shell ring does not conform to the range of shell rings produced in New Georgia, but does resemble a form of thinner shell ring known as *kisa* which was produced in Choiseul (Piko 1976). However, the fluting around the object is unusual.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Within military circles the practice of collecting enemy body parts still exists today, as evidenced by the recent atrocities carried out by U.S. Army personnel in Afghanistan.

¹⁷⁴ Several Choiseul shell rings similar to this one, but lacking fluting, were donated by Woodford to the BM in 1902 (Oc1902,0603.18a-b).



Plate 137: A miniature canoe ornament taken from a burial island in the Marovo Lagoon, New Georgia. (NMI AE:1923.348)



Plate 138: Miniature canoe prow figurehead and a broken shell ornament, also taken from the burial island in the Marovo Lagoon, New Georgia. (NMI AE:1923.460a-b)

He also took a miniature canoe ornament from this burial site (AE:1923.348). Measuring only 7½ cm high, this is a miniature representation of the carved paired half figures (facing away from each other) which were placed at the top of a canoe prow, above the position of the canoe prow figurehead (Waite 1979a:207) (Plate 137). Mahaffy speculated that the object, which he believed to be of considerable antiquity, had been placed by the grave of a notable chief ‘as a memorial of a famous canoe with which he was associated’ (Mahaffy, n.p.).¹⁷⁵ Another miniature canoe prow figurehead (AE:1923.460b) along with a miniaturised carved shell object, now broken (AE:1923.460a), was also collected by him in the Western Solomons, although no specific provenance was provided (Plate 138). Stewart (1993:43) notes that ‘a reduction in dimensions does not produce a corresponding reduction in significance’. The efficacy of these miniatures in their roles as representations of objects used during the lives of individuals acted as mediums through which newly created ancestral spirits could commune and interact with the living.

Conclusion

Punitive raids and the removal of valuables or heirloom objects were not the only methods employed by the colonial government to coerce the indigenous population into a state of submission: people were pacified and dispossessed in other ways. For example in September 1898, while administering “punishment” to the inhabitants of a village on Uki, Woodford removed a naval officer’s coat decorated with various medals and military emblems from the house of Rora, the chief of the village who was known to don the coat during his interactions with Europeans (CO 225/55; WPHC 4/98/343). Knowing that Woodford and the soldiers who accompanied him had come to punish them, Rora and the other inhabitants of the village had fled prior to Woodford’s arrival. On finding the village deserted, Woodford ordered the destruction of wooden drums and food troughs, and the killing of the twelve pigs which had been left behind. Woodford then ordered the destruction of the valuables from the house of Rora, and the houses of two other high-ranking men. The remaining houses, he stated in his report, were left untouched. It is interesting to note that Woodford did not destroy Rora’s coat. Rather, he left the coat in the

¹⁷⁵ This reminds us of Hocart’s description of the naming of canoes in Simbo (1931:308), discussed in Chapter 2.

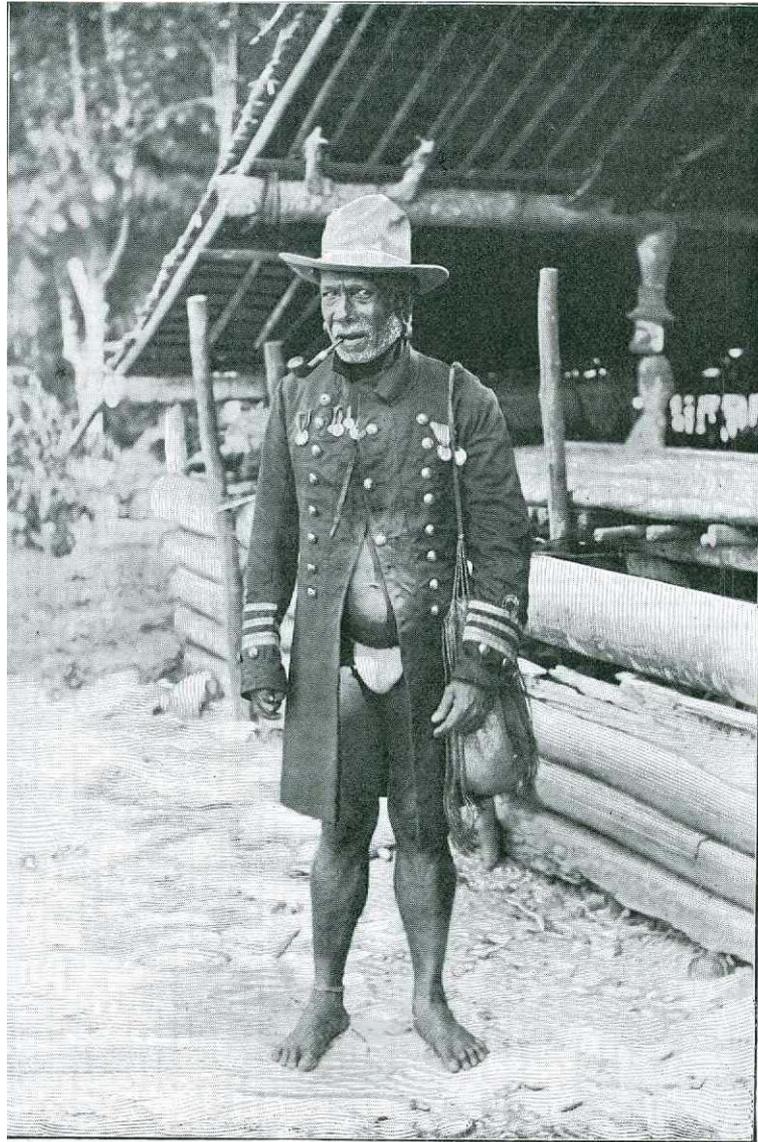


Plate 139: Rora, a chief from Uki Island photographed by Festetics de Tolna circa 1895 wearing his naval officers coat, which Woodford confiscated from him in 1989 (Festetics de Tolna 1903:303).

possession of Thomas Woodhouse, a resident trader on Uki, who Woodford noted would return it to Rora only as a result of his future good behaviour.¹⁷⁶

Bennett has noted that Rora may have been attempting to establish or display some level of equality with the Europeans who visited him through wearing this coat, and this was the motivation behind Woodford's removal of it (1987:98). Perhaps Rora's attempt to gain some measure of equality with Europeans through the wearing of their clothes and emblems of power (see Taussig 1993:191) was something Woodford could not tolerate in

¹⁷⁶ Woodhouse had instigated the punishment of Rora and his people through his complaints to Woodford about their stealing and killing of pigs and fowl belonging to him.

his position as Resident Commissioner: indigenous men, even chiefs, could not be on an equal standing with a white official.

Clothes, and emblems, were powerful symbols of status and rank, and in removing his coat Woodford did indeed subordinate Rora to a position well below his own standing. He understood the effect its removal would have on the morale of both Rora and his people (cf. Gosden and Knowles 2001). The objects Woodford and Mahaffy took from indigenous people during punitive raids, or those they stole in the course of their government work, served as tokens of their performances in the pacification of the Solomon Islands and in empire formation (Cannadine 2001). Their relationships with indigenous people may have been unequal but, as noted in this chapter and the previous one, indigenous people were occasionally in positions to offer resistance to colonial rule or to take control of exchange/collecting transactions. The following chapter considers another aspect of Woodford and Mahaffy's collecting: their writings and photographs.

Chapter 8

Recording the Solomon Islands: archives, writings, and photographs as part of the collection process

It seems to be the destiny of the Solomon Islanders to have their anthropology investigated by entomologists, and of naturalists to have their attention seduced from the lower organisms by the absorbing interest of the native races with which they are daily brought in contact (Basil Thomson 1904:142).

Introduction

The modes of collecting and collection formation discussed in the previous chapters were not the only “collections” both men formed. Equally as important as the tangible, material items collected (objects, insects) was the immaterial or intangible information and knowledge both men accumulated (Douglas 1998). Both recorded information on the people they encountered, their ways of life, the objects they used, and on certain aspects of indigenous cosmological beliefs. These recordings took the form of writings (diaries, letters and published papers) and photographs. Their writings were not the ethnographies of the kind produced by trained anthropologists who worked in the Solomons during the period both men were active, for example Hocart, Rivers, Wheeler and Blackwood (see bibliography). These had received university-based training in the developing science of anthropology and many had museum affiliations, factors which shaped their writings into more acceptably academic texts. Woodford and Mahaffy’s writings, as with their object collection, fall into the realm of the amateur, but this should not detract from the value of the information contained within their texts, both private and published. In essence, their writings and photographs can be viewed as another form of collection, a knowledge-based collection. This chapter examines how both men recorded their experiences in the Pacific in general, and particularly in the Solomons. What do these documents tell us about the

men themselves and their understandings of their work, and of the people they encountered?

Before addressing these questions, it should be noted, however, that there is a significant imbalance within these information sources. Woodford wrote diaries to accompany his initial expeditions to the Pacific which cover the dates 1884 (his visit to Kiribati and Tuvalu), and 1886 to 1889 (which cover his three residences in the Solomons as a naturalist), and 1896 (a diary which covers his tour of the Solomons on board H.M.S. *Pylades* during which time he compiled a report for the High Commissioner). Although diaries relating to his tenure as Resident Commissioner have yet to be located, throughout his professional and private life Woodford maintained correspondence with scientists, museum personnel and private individuals, correspondence which offers insights into his understandings of his work and the people he encountered. He also wrote a book on his initial expeditions to the Solomons (1890) and numerous articles on aspects of the islands he visited, their flora and fauna, and on the people themselves and their objects (see bibliography). He further extended his recording of the Solomon Islands through photography: from his first visit to the Solomons in 1886, Woodford took photographs of the people and places he encountered. This visual record is also discussed within this chapter. While this wealth of information pertaining to Woodford is available for reference, almost the opposite is true in the case of Mahaffy. While the extent of his writings is significantly less than Woodford's, comprising two published papers and his catalogue documents, the wealth of information contained within these texts make them equally as valuable as Woodford's writings.

Before proceeding to examine their writings in greater detail, and how these, alongside their collecting, helped situate them within scientific and academic communities, it is important to highlight the importance of the unpublished and private documents deriving from both men. This includes Woodford's diaries and Mahaffy's introductory text and catalogues. Texts have the potential to deceive. In particular, published texts which refer to a person's experiences can be manipulated; histories and events can be transformed into something which in reality may have occurred differently. The author will have carefully selected the information and presented it in a particular way, perhaps in ways which were not entirely truthful to the original event. In essence these published texts offer a view of an event or history as if through a lens: slightly filtered. Yet diaries are more truthful, they are the personal and private thoughts of the writer, and are generally intended only for the writer's eyes. As such, the need or inclination for embellishment or

deception is reduced. Considering the authenticity of such texts, that is as documents which record the truth as the author experienced events, the importance of Woodford's diaries and Mahaffy's catalogues comes to the fore.

Woodford's Recording of the Pacific

While Woodford's published texts are perhaps what he is best known for, his unpublished letters and diaries offer a significant insight and primary source on his own views, understandings and opinions of the places he visited and the people and objects he encountered. His diaries which date to his initial visits to the Pacific (1884) and Solomons (1886-1888, 1896) are of particular importance. It is highly likely that Woodford continued to write diaries following the commencement of his colonial career, beyond the one extant diary from 1896, yet these remain to be located.¹⁷⁷ In these diaries Woodford documented his first impressions of the Solomons and its people, and they also provide critical ethnographic information on the objects Woodford collected, purchased and actively sought. They document how ethnographic collecting gradually dominated over natural history specimen collecting. Much of what he wrote in these diaries informed his subsequent publications, but in many instances the subtle nuances of his collecting and encounters were not transcribed into the published texts. For instance, while resident at Aola, Guadalcanal in 1887, where his primary purpose was the collection of natural history specimens, Woodford wrote in his diary that he had purchased several stone axe heads from locals. Having expressed an interest in acquiring more, people actively went to seek out stone axe heads, which by that time seemed to have fallen out of general use in favour of metal axe heads. In many cases people resorted to digging them up from the floors of their houses (Woodford Diary, 21st April 1887). Here indigenous people were actively disposing of objects upon which they placed little value in order to acquire objects which were valued, such as the tobacco which Woodford paid them. Interestingly, Woodford's flurry of collecting stone axe heads had commenced on 11th April, but by the 21st April he had so many of them being offered to him that he stated in his diary that he was only offering one stick of tobacco for a single axe head. He did not state in his earlier entries how much he had originally offered for an axe head, but evidently as the supply increased the value he placed on them had decreased. Such intimate cases of collecting and exchange

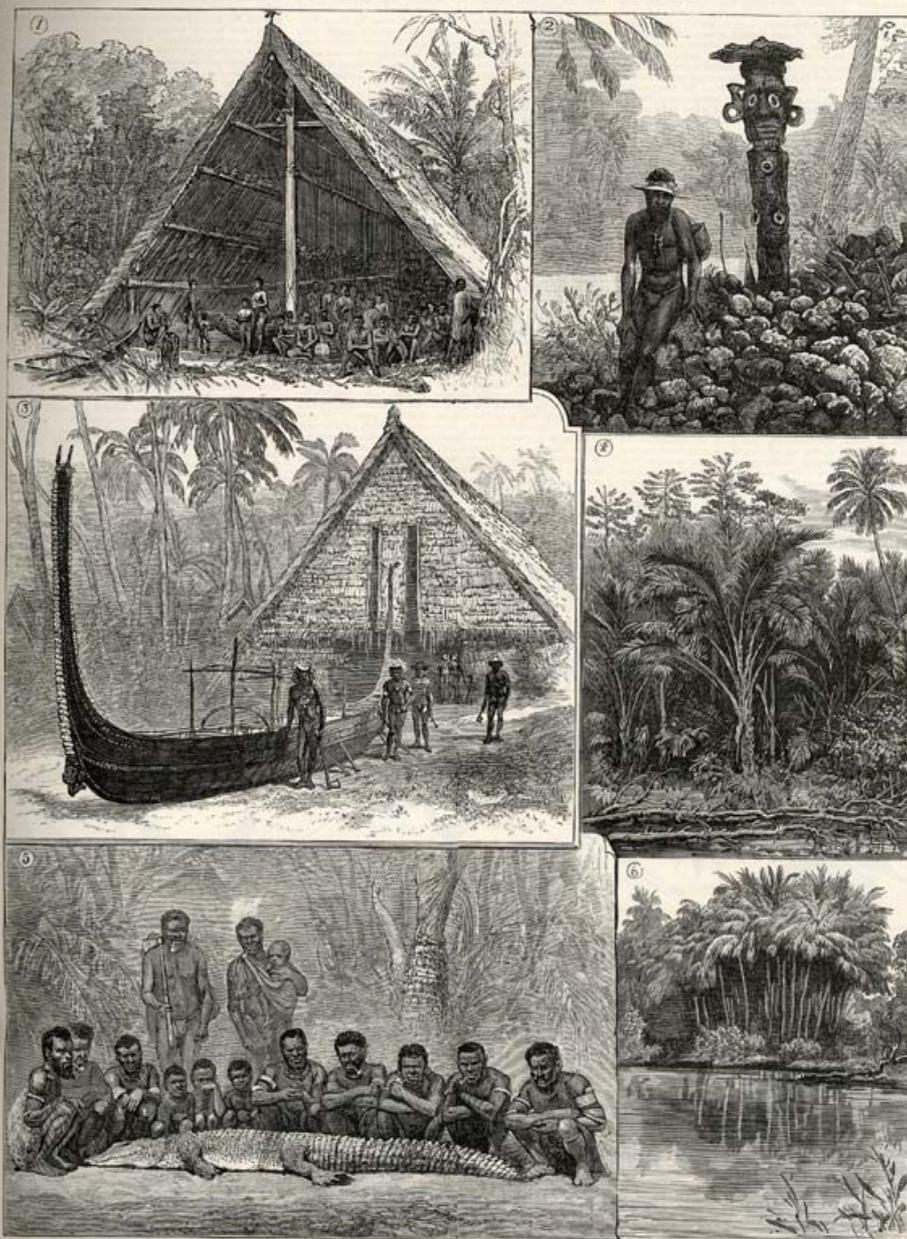
¹⁷⁷ In the absence of diaries from his period as Resident Commissioner we must rely on his reports and correspondence with the High Commissioner and the Colonial Office (CO and WPHC records) to gain an insight into his work in the BSIP.

highlight the reciprocal nature of some early collecting encounters, but it is only through Woodford's private diary that we have a record of these events.

As evidenced throughout the previous chapters, both men had wider collecting interests within the Pacific. As a naturalist Woodford developed professional affiliations and links through the sale or donation of zoological specimens to the Natural History departments of the British Museum and The Australian Museum, and to private collectors. Throughout his zoological collecting Woodford discovered many new species of both flora and fauna, to which he gave his own name. This extension of himself and his person through the naming of species further highlights his associating and connecting himself with the Solomons. While he extended himself into academic and scientific circles through his correspondence with curators, it was with his publications in particular that he established his name as an authority on the Solomons, its people and its flora and fauna. Immediately following his return to England in 1887, upon the completion of his second period of residence in the Solomons, Woodford had commenced writing up accounts of his first explorations of the Solomons, presenting talks at the Royal Geographical Society and publishing articles such as 'Exploration of the Solomon Islands' (1888), 'Life in the Solomon Islands' (1889), 'Further Explorations in the Solomon Islands' (1890b), and his book *A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters: Being an account of three visits to the Solomon Islands in the years 1886, 1887 and 1888* (1890a) (Plate 140).

As noted previously, the academic field was something Woodford, even as a self-taught and amateur scientist, could become part of. Much of his book (1890a) was devoted to descriptions of his explorations of the places visited and the flora and fauna he encountered; discussions of the people and their objects were also featured but frequently they fell into the realms of "savage others". Although he discovered many new species of plants and animals throughout his career (see Chapter 4) Woodford only produced one article solely devoted to scientific concerns, namely zoology. In 1916 he published an article on a small honey-eater bird which he had discovered on Rennell Island ten years previously (1916a). This perhaps indicates the important place that ethnological concerns had taken in his life and work during his career.

In terms of ethnology, Woodford's publications in *Man*, *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography*, *The Geographical Journal*, and *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, highlight his positioning of himself within the developing scientific field of ethnology and



1. Canoe-House at Eritiana. 2. Sacred Image at Eritiana. 3. Hand-Holding Canoe and Canoe-House at Eritiana. 4. Sugar Palms and Nuts; View on the Dehoktoko River, Guadalcanar. 5. Natives of Aola, Guadalcanar. 6. Group of Cocoa-Nut Palms, Aola River, Guadalcanar.

SKETCHES IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS: FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY MR. C. W. WOODFORD.

Plate 140: Illustrations of photographs taken by Woodford, published in *The Illustrated London News*, 23rd February 1889. Several of the illustrations in this edition came from his 1890 book.

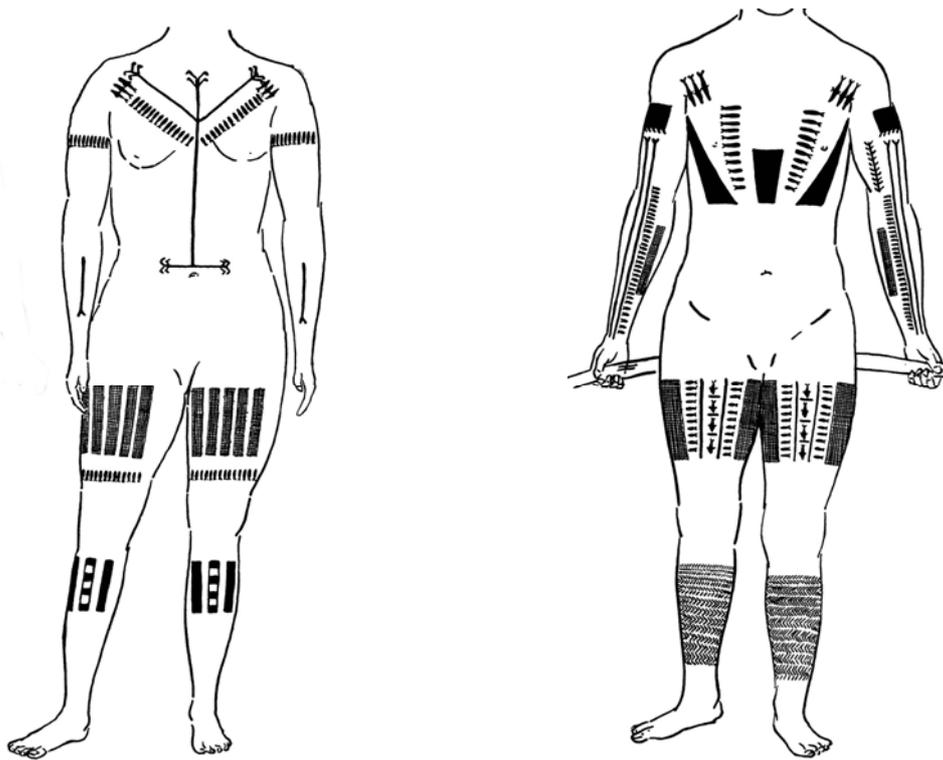


Plate 141: Drawings of Rennell Island tattoo patterns. On the left are female tattoos, on the right are male (Woodford 1907:34-35).

anthropology. Many of these texts were produced while Woodford was resident in the Solomons as Resident Commissioner, but evidently time spent contributing to scientific concerns was not frowned upon by the Colonial Office.¹⁷⁸ In terms of being in a position to offer new information Woodford contributed firsthand accounts of what he had witnessed in the Solomons and its Polynesian outliers. In many cases no other anthropologist (either professional or amateur) had previously visited or resided on many of the islands he visited through his duties as Resident Commission, so in fact he was contributing new and useful information to the development of anthropological science and knowledge. For example, his interest in language and the tattoo patterns used by indigenous people on Polynesian outliers led to the publication of articles on Ontong Java (1901) and Leueneuwa (1906a), and his paper on Sikaiana (1906b) (Plate 141). For these texts, all published in *Man*, Woodford had sent texts and drawings to Read at the BM who prepared them for publication. Not all the information he sent was published, however, as in the BM archives there exist several documents from Woodford on shell and feather

¹⁷⁸ Woodford acted as a local correspondent for the Royal Anthropological Association while he held his post as Resident Commissioner.

currency, tattooing patterns on Rennell Island and Sikaiana, and the language and history of Ontong Java (BM[A]). In relation to this information gathering by Woodford, he also published accounts of the material culture used by Indigenous peoples, such as Malaitan shell currency manufacture (1908a), funerary objects from the Solomons (1905), Malaitan stone-headed clubs (1908b), Solomon Island and Sikaiana canoes (1909a, 1912), fish-hooks (1918), stone-headed maces from Rennell (1910), and a note on a bone spear head from Marovo Lagoon (1911). One of the more unusual topics on which Woodford published was the use of spider's webs for fishing in the Solomons and also in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) (1921). Although Woodford had visited the New Hebrides briefly, the information on the use of spider's webs in this short note was seemingly not based on first-hand experience. Many of his publications became source material for other authors in their own writings on aspects of Melanesian and Polynesian anthropology: for example Haddon and Hornell utilised several of his articles on Ontong Java and the Solomons for their analysis of the canoes of Oceania (1975[1937]).

Following his retirement from the Colonial Government and his return to England, Woodford busied himself writing articles for publication and presenting papers (1916a, 1916b, 1918, 1921, 1922a, 1922b, 1926). From his correspondence with the Royal Geographical Society it is clear that he maintained an active interest in the Solomons throughout his retirement and the later years of his life, corresponding and meeting with W.G. Ivens (1927, 1930), Dr. Northcote Deck (1945), and with the Admiralty, providing them with more accurate and detailed information regarding chart details and island names (RGS/CB9/Woodford). As a local "expert" on the Solomons, the information Woodford could provide to these people and institutions on the region was invaluable. In fact, Woodford also contributed numerous maps to the Royal Geographical Society, providing greater detail on various islands such as Guadalcanal, Santa Isabel, and the Bougainville Straits.¹⁷⁹

However, his state of health, which had rapidly deteriorated towards the end of his life through deafness and paralysis of the vocal cords, meant that his opportunities to publish or present papers became much more constrained. Although he intended publishing a book on the history and natural history of the Solomon Islands, it was a project that never materialised (Woodford Papers; Heath 1978:208). He did, however, continue to write and publish articles on various aspects of life and material culture of the

¹⁷⁹ These maps (RGS: mr Pacific Ocean S.77; S.79; S/D.14; S.76; D.184; and S/D.12) were given by Woodford to the Royal Geographical Society in 1888, 1890, and 1927.

Solomons, published in *Ibis* (1916a), *The Geographical Journal* (1916b, 1926) and *Man* (191918, 1921, 1922b). He also contributed a chapter entitled 'the Solomon Islands' for the 1922 book "Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia", edited by W.H.R. Rivers.

Throughout his life Woodford eagerly read everything he could find written about the Solomons, retaining copies of books or journal articles, and even newspaper cuttings which referred to those islands (Woodford papers, n.p.). He corresponded with the Royal Geographical Society and various authors on particular points which had been raised in their writing, particularly if he disagreed with them, frequently referring them to his own work as a more authoritative source. One particular instance of this occurred in 1921 following the publication of an account of Rennell Island which had been sent to the Royal Geographical Society by Dr Northcote Deck, a member of the South Sea Evangelical Mission based on Guadalcanal, based on information which he had obtained on visits to Rennell between 1908 and 1911 (*The Monthly Record of The Geographical Journal*, June 1921, pp. 474-476). Although this was a rather general article about Rennell Island, describing the people in their "primitive" and "stone-age" states, Woodford appeared to take umbrage with the RGS's and Deck's failure to reference his own writings on Rennell. So in July 1921 Woodford wrote to the RGS reminding them of his publications pertaining to Rennell (1907, 1910, 1916b), and of the fact that he had donated several objects from Rennell to the British Museum, one of which had been given by Deck to Woodford.

It appears that Woodford enjoyed being considered and presenting himself as an authority on the Solomons. In relation to this he frequently presented talks on the Solomons, mostly it seems at the Royal Geographical Society, but interestingly in 1916 he also travelled to Port Sunlight on the Wirral, the heart of Lever Brothers industries, to present a paper on the Solomons to workers at the Lever plant. For this presentation Woodford also showed a selection of lantern slides, some presumably his own, but also others which had been borrowed from the Royal Geographical Society and from William Lever. Lever had suggested to Woodford that he would arrange for the smaller of his two Solomon Island canoes to be displayed during Woodford's talk. William Lever had visited the Solomons in 1906 and again in 1913, and during the latter visit had purchased two Western Solomons canoes, one a smaller fishing canoe, the other a large *tomoko* (West 1992:277; Lord Leverhulme papers, MS-Coll-20-1646-1882) (Plates 142 and 143).

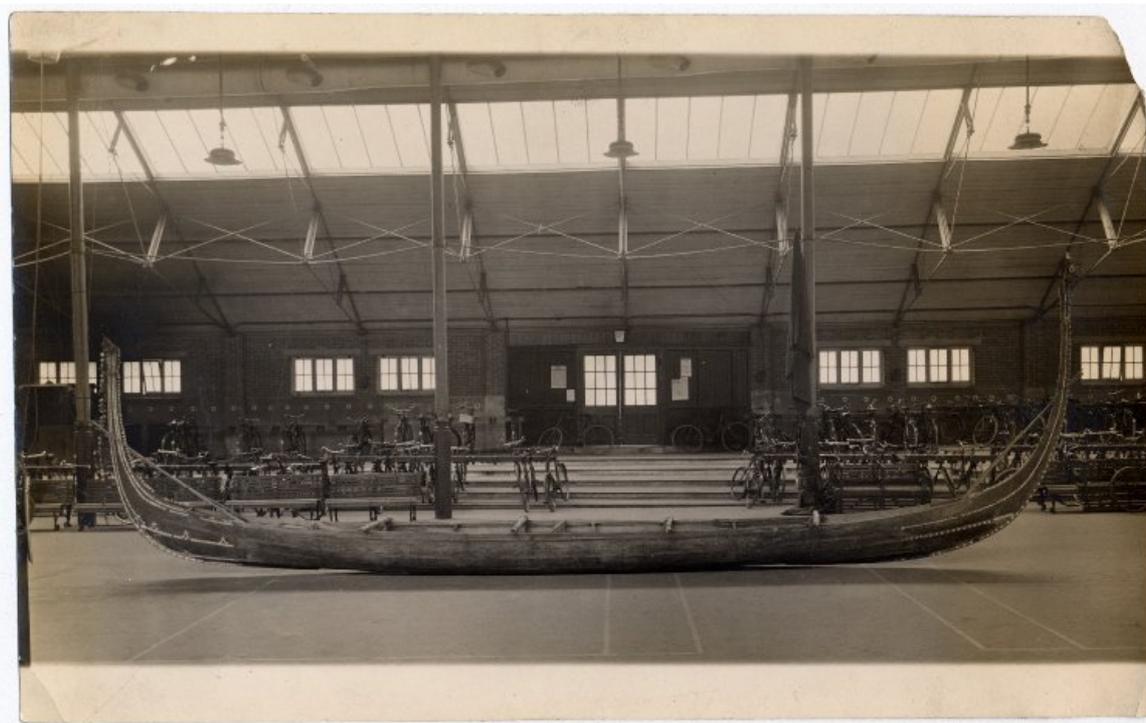


Plate 142: Photograph of the *tomoko* purchased by William Lever from Broadhurst Hill in 1910. The photograph was taken when the canoe was stored at Port Sunlight. (BM Oc,1927-1022-1)
(Image courtesy of The British Museum).

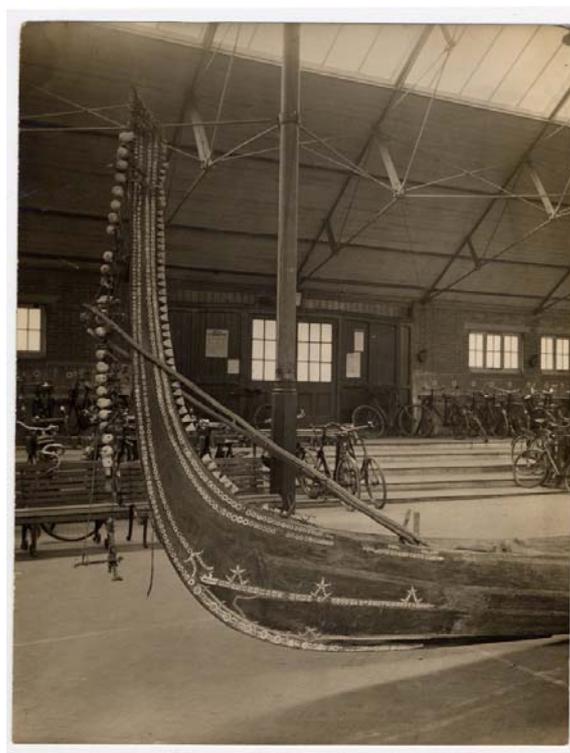


Plate 143: Photograph of the stern of William Levers *tomoko*, taken when it was stored at Port Sunlight. (BM Oc,1927-1022-1) (Image courtesy of The British Museum).

Ultimately Woodford declined the offer to display the smaller canoe as he was to show slides of canoes which he believed would suffice; the *tomoko* was too large to consider putting on display. This *tomoko*, now in the British Museum (Oc1927, 1022.1) had been made on Vella Lavella in 1910 for R. Broadhurst Hill, a District Officer in the Protectorate.¹⁸⁰ When back in London, Lever agreed the purchase of the *tomoko* for £75, a price he considered high but he realised that the possibility of acquiring a similar object in the future may have presented difficulties, as *tomoko* were not regularly constructed following the success of the punitive action undertaken by Mahaffy (Lord Leverhulme papers, MS-Coll-20-1646-1882). The following year, 1917, Woodford also presented a lecture at the Liverpool Geographical Society. Again, William Lever was helpful in assisting Woodford with the creation of slides which were to be shown during the talk, commenting in a letter that Woodford always tried to do all in his power to assist Levers in the Solomons (Lord Leverhulme papers, MS-Coll-20-1648).

Woodford's Photography

As noted in his biographical chapter, photography formed another important extension of Woodford's recording and collecting of the Solomons. In fact, Henry Guppy described Woodford's photographs as the best set of photographs ever obtained in the Solomons (Guppy, in Woodford 1888:376). Photographs taken by Woodford have been located in several institutions (BM, PRM, RGS), but the majority of his collection remains in the ownership of his family (Plate 144). Although some of these images were used as illustrations in his book, *A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters* (1890a), the majority have not been previously documented and have not been subjected to academic investigation. Within his family records are numerous loose photographs depicting images from the Solomons from his initial visits there in the later 1880s, but also images from his tenure as

¹⁸⁰ See the British Museum object catalogue entry for this object, which provides a copy of Broadhurst Hill's letter to the BM regarding the manufacture of and payment for this *tomoko*. (http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/search_object_details.aspx?objectId=499096&partid=1&searchText=lady+lever&fromADBC=ad&toADBC=ad&numpages=10&orig=%2fsearch_the_collection_database.aspx¤tPage=3). The entry also includes a letter from Graham Baines stating he believed a man named Jiosi Angele, from Njava, Vella Lavella had made the *tomoko*, and that the name probably given to the canoe was *Lotu*. This reminds us of Hocart's comment that all *tomoko* were given an individual name (1931:308). Evidently this *tomoko* was not for use on headhunting raids and so was not consecrated with human blood as its predecessors would have been. Although headhunting had been suppressed and the construction of *tomoko* significantly curtailed at time of manufacture, the ritual naming of *tomoko* was evidently still an integral part in their manufacture.



Plate 144: One of the cameras which Woodford took with him to the Solomons in 1886 and 1887.

(Property of Joan Presswell)

Resident Commissioner, visits to other areas of the Pacific such as Vanuatu, images of his residence at Tulagi and the hospital there, and also images of government agents undertaking a punitive raid.

However, what is probably the most significant group of Woodford's images is contained in a photographic album entitled 'Photographs taken during a voyage to and residence in the Solomon Islands from April to October 1886. C.M. Woodford. F.R.G.S.' (Plates 145 to 151). This album also contains images from Aola, Guadalcanal, where Woodford resided between March and September 1887 during his second stay in the Solomons, so he must have taken this album back into the field with him for his second stay. This album contains almost ninety photographs and as a corpus of images they constitute important documentation of a particular period in time, a "snap shot" as it were of a changing society under increasing European influence, but one in which "traditional"

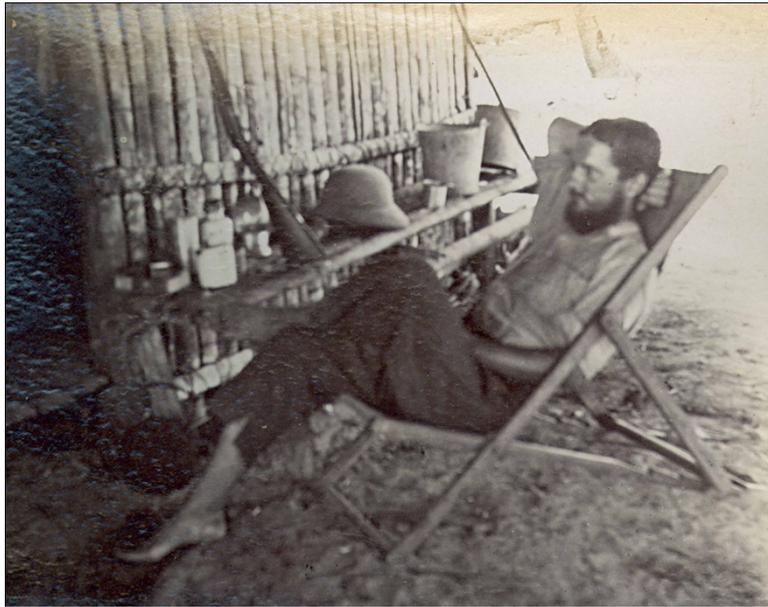


Plate 145: Woodford resting outside his residence at Fauro, 1886. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)



Plate 146: A view of Woodford's house at Alu, 1886.

(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)



Plate 147: Men at Alu hunting wild pig, 1886. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

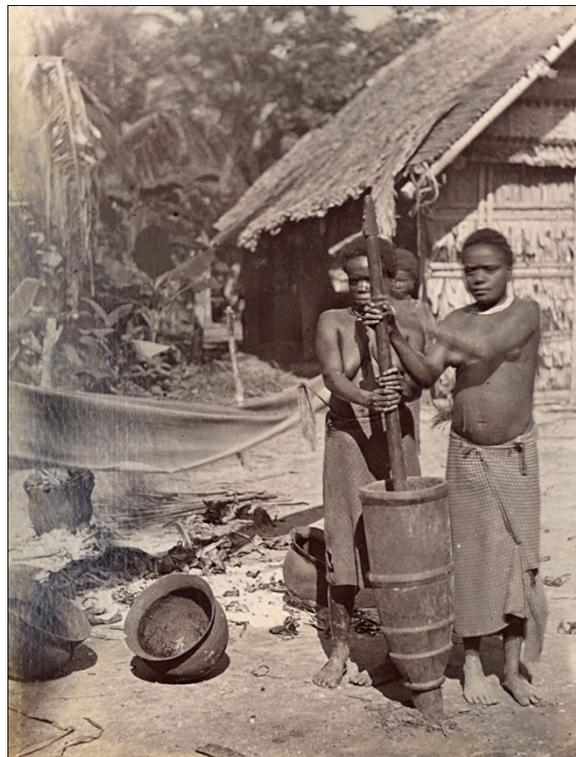


Plate 148: Women at Alu with a pestle and mortar, 1886.
(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

elements and modes of life still existed. As a record of his stay, Woodford photographed various themes including scenes of village life from Alu, Fauro and Roviana, sago making, men hunting pigs, woodcarvers at work, and shrines.

Many of the photographs are portraits and studies of indigenous people. These types of studies, or anthropometric photographs, were very common among colonial scientists at the turn of the century.¹⁸¹ It is particularly interesting to note that many of the people, including children, were photographed smoking tobacco pipes, indicating the importance this commodity had in the developing Pacific colonial economy (cf. Hays 1991). Frequently Woodford photographed the chiefs of the places he stayed, including Gorai at Alu and Tomimari at Fauro (Plates 152 and 153). In both these portraits the chiefs chose to wear European clothing, Tomimari wearing a shirt and hat, Gorai photographed wearing a shirt, trousers and hat while his wife and children remained in local dress. Wearing European clothes could simply be the result of an aesthetic choice, but if both chiefs usually wore local dress, and put on European clothes only for the photographic session, then this indicates an indigenous value set on appearing on formal occasions in a European style, demonstrating access to valued European goods and adoption of certain European attributes. They used European “paraphernalia” as markers of their high status – markers which in turn could suggest the intention of “being on the same level” as the European partners. Regarding the women and children: during this period remote places such as Alu were predominantly only visited by white men, so that we can assume that less women’s and children’s clothing was in circulation. Only in places close to missions did women and children usually acquire European clothing.

Woodford also included several portraits of himself and the houses he resided in at Alu and Fauro. While such images act as souvenirs for Woodford and a visual memento of his trips, in essence they also tie him to these places and people. They are evidence of him in the field, undertaking his scientific work which could be shown as a lantern slide once back in London.

As noted in Chapter 4, Woodford developed most of the images he took on site. It appears that he put many of these images into an album while still in the Solomons (perhaps the same one they are housed in today), and this album seems to have attracted a lot of attention. While at Aola in 1887, Woodford frequently commented in his diary entries that people took great interest in seeing his photographs, and that on one occasion a

¹⁸¹ For the examination of anthropological photography see for example Edwards 1990, 1992, 2001.

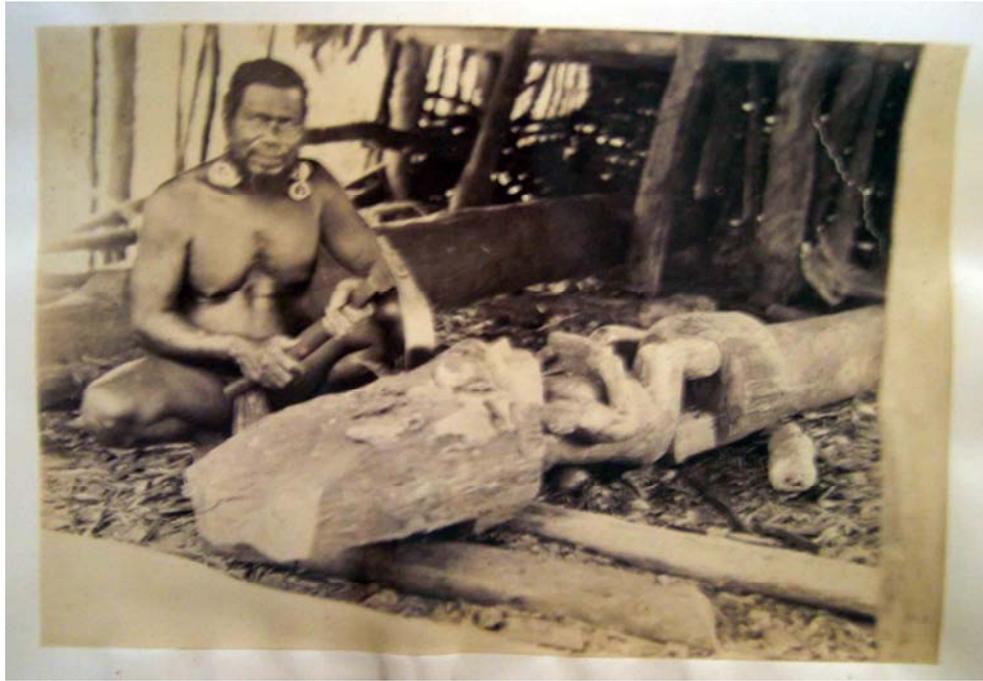


Plate 149: Photograph of a woodcarver at work, Guadalcanal. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

chief from a neighbouring village came to him with the single intention of having Woodford photograph him, a photograph which he wished to keep (Woodford Diary, 18th April 1887). The chief stated that he wanted the image to be taken in a particular position, to which Woodford agreed. This encounter serves as a telling example of how indigenous people did not necessarily have a passive attitude in the photographic moment and were not incapable of speaking and acting as implied in many studies influenced by a Foucaultian-derived configuration of surveillance, gaze and objectification state. The example of the chief from a neighbouring village going to Woodford to have a photograph taken, shows instead how in some circumstances the photographic encounter not only emerged from an indigenous initiative, it was also shaped by an indigenous agency that directed events with an end-product in mind.

Woodford's photography deserves a chapter, if not a thesis, on its own, with complete and full analysis of his images and their subjects. Unfortunately, there is not scope within this thesis to address this corpus of material in significant detail. There can be no doubt that his images offer enormous potential and scope for future research.



Plate 150: Photograph of a child at Fauro smoking a pipe. (Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

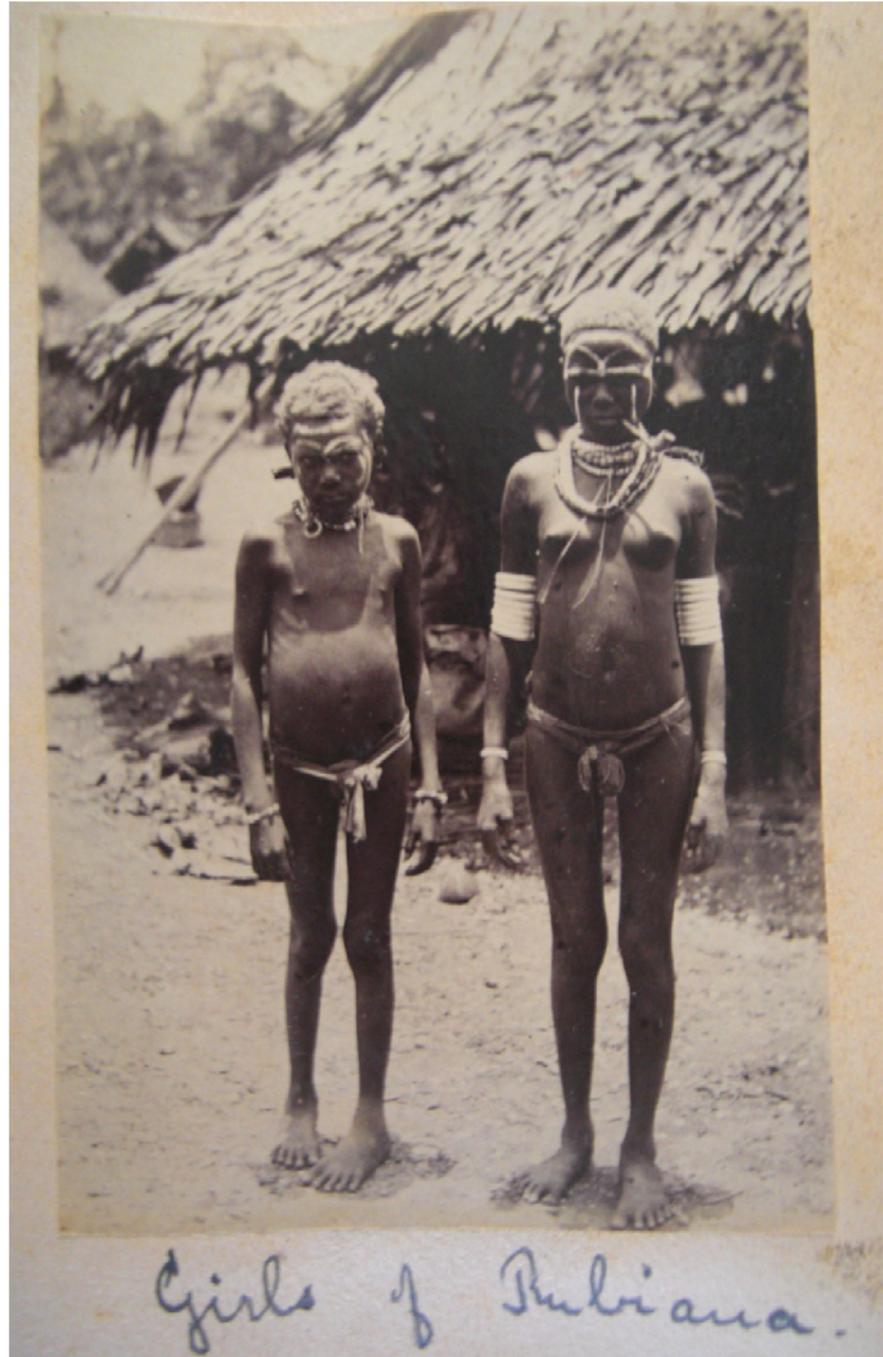


Plate 151: Two girls from the Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia. Photographed by Woodford in 1886.

(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)



Plate 152: Gorai, chief of Alu (seated), with his family. Taken by Woodford, 1886.

(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)



Plate 153: Portrait of Tomimari, chief of Fauro. Taken by Woodford in 1886.
(Photograph owned by Joan Presswell)

Mahaffy's recording of the Pacific

Unlike Woodford's collecting experience, which incorporated objects, insects and animals, Mahaffy's collecting was restricted to ethnographic objects. He did not develop a similar network of correspondence within academic and scientific communities as Woodford. Mahaffy's narrower collecting focus and his considerably limited correspondence with museums results in a scarcity of texts, documents and photographs pertaining to him. However, despite this it is still possible from extant documents to gain an insight into his character and his understandings of the world he inhabited. In his published and unpublished papers can be read his interest in associating himself with the locations he visited and collected from, and his scientific observations of the people and cultures he encountered.

Apart from the unpublished catalogues written by him (discussed in Chapter 3), Mahaffy only published two articles. These are 'The Solomon Islands' published in the *Empire Review* (1902), and 'Ocean Island' published in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1910). Apart from these, several of the reports he compiled as part of his colonial duties were published for Parliament, including his report to Woodford on a 1902 visit to Malaita in H.M.S. *Sparrow* (which formed part of Woodford's 1902-3 Annual Report), and a 'Visit to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, 1909' (1910).

The earliest texts written by Mahaffy were the "Collection of Arms and other objects made in the Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903 by Arthur Mahaffy", which includes the "Catalogue Raisonné", and his article 'The Solomon Islands' (1902). This last publication provides quite a general overview of the Solomons, generalisations about the "savage" character of its inhabitants and information on its economic status. However, the unpublished catalogue texts offer perhaps the most informative insight into Mahaffy's understandings of the Solomon Islands and its people, and also of his perceptions of the places within Polynesia and Micronesia he visited. Mahaffy began his document with an introductory description of the various racial divisions within the Pacific (Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian peoples), their geographical distribution, and some comments on their craftsmanship. While the remainder of the text, the "Collection of Arms..." was devoted to the Solomons, a greater proportion of this introductory section was concerned with the people, places and material culture of Micronesia. This perhaps reflects the fact that Mahaffy had spent several years resident in Micronesia as a District Officer, and as noted in Chapter 3, Micronesian objects represent the second largest group of objects

within his collection. The main text, devoted to the Solomons, begins with a brief account of the European discovery of the Solomon Islands, and the recent work undertaken by Amherst and Thompson, together with the assistance of Woodford in retracing the route of de Mendaña's voyage around the group. Mahaffy may initially have followed advice provided in *Notes & Queries* as following a general overview of the Solomons he wrote two sections, one devoted to burial customs, the other to money. He also described a totemic system he named *kema* which he stated was found on the islands of Guadalcanal, Savo, Eastern Isabel, Malaita, Ugi, Ulawa and Nggela. This was a system of five exogamous groups each with its own protective or totemic animal: porpoise; logger-head turtle; land crab; cockatoo; or shark (Mahaffy n.p.). Within marriages between these groups boys took the *kema* of their mother, while girls took that of their father. Mahaffy stated that members from different *kema*, even when they came from different islands, were able at once to recognise which *kema* a person came from simply by examining that person's palm, but he admitted that language may have played a part in identification.

He followed these sections with more general discussions of headhunting practices, including the display of trophy heads within canoe houses and in shrines, and on the mode of attack used by a war party in undertaking a raid. While he stated that during his own campaigns against headhunting he did not find one '*tambu*' house which did not contain several 'ghastly trophies', he did not seem to question his own collecting and retention of such objects as an act that could be considered equally ghastly. In discussing the role and importance of *tomoko* within Western Solomons society Mahaffy noted how valuable a possession they were, and the importance of the *paele* (canoe house) within communities. As with Woodford, Mahaffy was equally aware of the negative impact on indigenous society of the destruction of *tomoko* and *paele*. The remainder of the text was devoted to a description of the party he held at Gizo in November 1902 for the coronation of King Edward VII (see Chapter 5). Of particular interest in this document is Mahaffy's discussion of the frigate bird and its importance in both the Solomons and Micronesia, in particular Nauru (Pleasant Island). Noting their importance within Solomons art he described seeing small children, barely able to walk, drawing images of frigate birds, as well as ships and canoes, in the sand, and the dominance of the frigate bird motif in Solomon Islands art (see Waite 1989 for analysis of animal motifs within Solomons art). Within his collection at the NMI are AE:1923.39-40, two frigate bird catchers collected on Nauru (Plates 154 and 155). They comprise a stone plummet with a long length of fibre cord attached, which was used to capture frigate birds in order to tame and train them to

assist men in capturing more birds. In his “Catalogue Raisonné” entry for these objects Mahaffy wrote:

A boy before he is considered grown up, must capture a certain number of these wild frigate birds and tame them. Those already domesticated by the natives, and they number thousands, are accommodated with perches outside the houses and are most carefully fed and watched over. I was assured by a man who had lived thirty years upon this Island that the natives would give fish to these birds to the exclusion of their hungry children. The captive or tame birds are used as decoys to attract the wild ones. They circle lazily over a small hut on the beach in which the boy (candidate for man’s estate) lies concealed, and when a wild bird comes out of the blue to see the decoy the boy casts the stone plummet into the air, it falls over the back of the wild bird and is entangled in his wings, when he is hauled to earth, his wings clipped, made fast to a perch, where ample food, care and kindness soon reduce him to a tame bird, to be used in his turn as a decoy. A certain number of birds must be caught by the boy before he is considered to be a man. (Mahaffy n.p.).

In the “Collection of Arms...” Mahaffy stated that he spent twelve days on Nauru and during that time was able to verify the facts he wrote about these objects and their use. He also noted he experienced considerable difficulty in acquiring these two examples, evidence of the importance of these objects and of frigate birds on Nauru.¹⁸² Interestingly, these were two objects which piqued von Hügel’s interest when he and Ridgeway examined Mahaffy’s collection in 1922 with a possible view to purchasing it for the Cambridge collection (MAA[A] OA1/1/5).

In 1910 Mahaffy published his article on Ocean Island (Banaba), again providing quite a general overview of the island and its people, descriptions of a type of fish hook made from a semi-transparent stalactite, and the presence on this island as well as on Nauru of what he termed the “frigate bird cult”, described above. Of this practice of taming frigate birds he stated that they were also used to carry items such as fish hooks between Banaba and Nauru, and that white traders may also have used them to carry messages between the islands in the manner of carrier pigeons, a distance of about 180 miles (1910:580-581). He also commented on the recent economic developments which had taken place on the island through the discovery of vast quantities of phosphate, but interestingly he stated that he was:

¹⁸² See Pollock (2009) for a discussion on the importance of frigate birds in Micronesia.



Plates 154 & 155: Two frigate bird catchers from Nauru. The National Museum of Ireland.

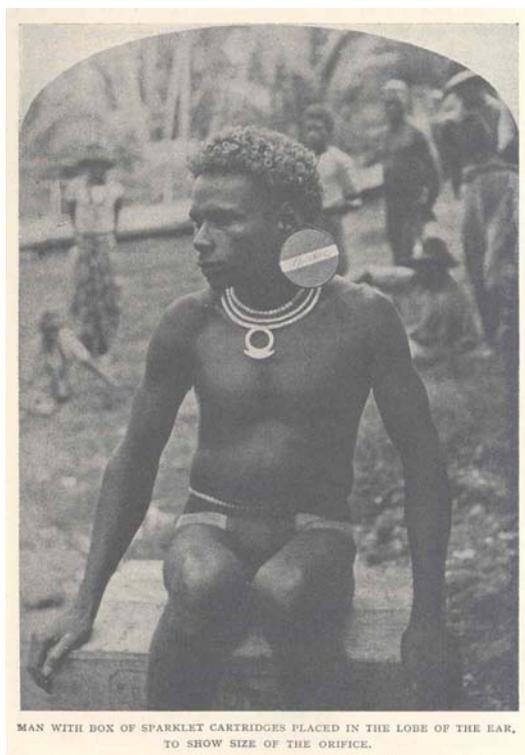
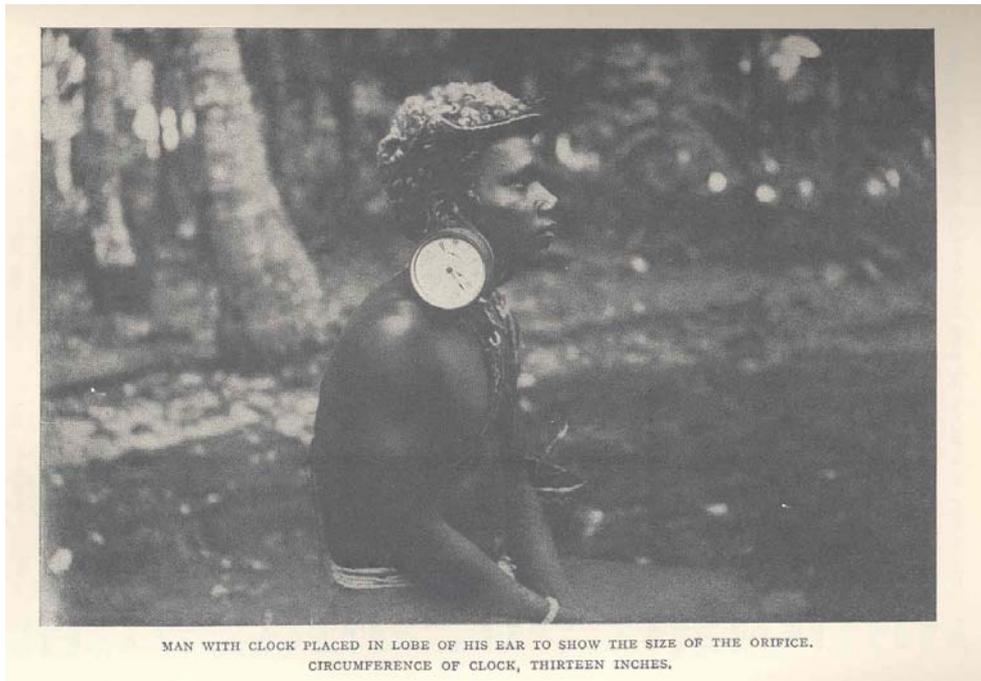
(Top: AE:1923.39. Bottom: AE:1923.40).

Not so much concerned with this interesting but commercial phase of the history of Ocean Island as with the appearance and formation of, and the life upon, this wonderful place (Mahaffy n.p.).

Still, as a memento of his visits to Banaba he collected a phosphate specimen (AE:1923.486) which is presently unaccounted for in the NMI collection. The only other object he collected from Banaba, a shell adze head (AE:1923.329), is also unaccounted for. Mahaffy had an eye for interesting objects and devoted time to gathering as much information as he could, but ultimately his writings, however informative and entertaining, were not academic texts. Rather they were more personal, but truthful, reflections on the people he encountered and their material culture. Despite his occasionally violent treatment of them, an affinity with all the people he encountered in the Pacific is expressed in his texts, but it seems it was with the people of Micronesia that his strongest affections lay. These had been the people he had lived among during his first employment in the Pacific, and through his tattooing on Kiribati he had perhaps become, in his own view, part of their culture. Perhaps the bonds he had formed there helped mould and shape him and his future work in the Pacific.

Mahaffy and Photography

As noted in the biographical discussion of Mahaffy, no diaries or photographs belonging to him have yet been located. Yet for one of the entries within the “Catalogue Raisonné”, regarding three ear discs from Marovo Lagoon and Simbo (AE:1923.203-205), Mahaffy referred to a collection of photographs which would provide the viewer with an idea of the size such ear perforations occasionally attained (Mahaffy n.p.). He stated that one of the photographs showed an American clock suspended from a person’s ear while the person in the other photograph had a circular lid from a box of sparklet cartridges inserted into their ear (Mahaffy n.p.). These image descriptions correspond with two photographs printed in George Brown’s autobiography (1978:518,520), photographs which were taken by Brown himself (also see Webb 1995) (Plate 156). It is likely that Mahaffy assembled a collection of photographs, and perhaps postcards, which had been taken by other people. Should it transpire that Mahaffy did in fact take and make a collection of photographs, their present absence as part of his overall collection does result in a void in terms of information on him and the people he encountered, and in our understanding of his persona and collection.



Plates 156: Two photographs taken by Rev. George Brown which correspond with the photographic descriptions given by Mahaffy in his catalogue (Brown 1978:518, 520)

Conclusion

Woodford and Mahaffy were by no means unique in their collecting and documentation: ethnographic collecting formed an extension of colonialism and colonial rule throughout the Pacific (see O'Hanlon and Welsch 2000; Gosden and Knowles 2001). Colonialism afforded Westerners, predominantly white men, the opportunity to travel to little explored lands and occasionally to further pre-existing scientific or collecting interests. For example, one of the motivating factors behind Dr William MacGregor's joining the Colonial Office and travelling to Fiji and New Guinea was the intention of undertaking natural history and ethnological collecting (Quinnell 2000:82). Prevailing beliefs that the Melanesian population was doomed to extinction (Rivers 1922) further stimulated colonial officers, such as Woodford and Mahaffy, and other visitors to Melanesia to collect objects while in the field, in essence preserving aspects of those supposedly dying cultures. Recording their experiences in written form and/or through photography acted as an extension of this salvage paradigm. This notion of a doomed race ultimately led to the scramble for objects which took place in Africa in the early twentieth century being replicated in the Pacific. While the work of Haddon and the Cambridge Torres Straits Expedition in late 1898 helped to shape the development of anthropology as a science (Herle & Rouse 1998) amateur ethnology during this period remained focused on salvaging material from fast-disappearing races and the advancement of ethnological research (Urry 1993).¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Beliefs in the impending doom of the "Melanesian race" continued into the late 1920s. Of his fieldwork on Alu and Mono, Wheeler wrote in 1926 'here, as always, we must bear in mind that the Mono people (including those in Alu and Fauro) are a dying race; with them is dying their culture; on their life and thought lies the weakness that comes before the end. We are in the last twilight of a people' (Wheeler 1926:viii).

Chapter 9

Conclusion

The preceding chapters have demonstrated how, through careful examination of colonial collections and archival material, indigenous and colonial biographies nested within objects and collections can be uncovered. Objects from the collections of Woodford and Mahaffy contain many layers of meaning and narratives, and accessing these narratives allows an insight in the varied entanglements that existed in the Solomons during the early days of the BSIP. In offering a conclusion I will begin by revisiting the main questions around which the thesis was based, as set out in Chapter 1. One of the principal aims of the thesis has been to gain a fuller insight into colonial relations in the Solomon Islands as manifest through the collections of Woodford and Mahaffy. Combining collection analysis alongside research on associated archival texts and photographs, this study has considered the agency of the objects they collected, the motivating factors behind their collection and how the life histories and distributed personhood of those objects became entwined with the lives of both Woodford and Mahaffy. The ties between people and the objects they collected, frequently obscured over time, can be rediscovered through approaching museum storerooms and archives as primary sources of information, in essence they became my field-site. Approaching and utilising these sources in this way has allowed for re-engagement with the material involved in which hidden associations and histories of both objects and Woodford and Mahaffy emerged. Most importantly, the history of indigenous people and their agency was also prevalent within the objects, texts and photographs analysed. Throughout this research their agency became as present and as tangible as the objects themselves. The sources utilised have become sites of cross-cultural interaction, moments of encounter between people and between people and things, and ultimately these histories have inscribed themselves upon these artefacts. The research in this thesis has helped to position and highlight the significance of Woodford and Mahaffy's impact on the Solomon Islands and its inhabitants during the early colonial period, and the importance of their collections today.

Woodford and Mahaffy's collections in perspective

Despite Woodford and Mahaffy's seeming affection and concerns for the fair treatment of the indigenous people under their rule, both men readily resorted to violence as a means to bring the indigenous population into line with colonial rule. In the course of this violence they frequently stole objects they knew to be highly valued by their owners. They understood the negative effect the removal of such objects would have on the indigenous population. In essence, such looting on their part became part of the pacification plan Woodford had devised for the Western Solomons. It is difficult to reconcile these opposing facets of their characters: on the one hand commissioning objects, while on the other, stealing from the same people. Colonialism and its rule were never one-dimensional, and it is these opposition and layers which contain the narratives this thesis has been concerned with.

The collections made by such individuals offer another way of looking at and into colonial relations, how social relations are made and embodied in and through objects, and provide an important insight into the development of anthropology as a science. This thesis has traced the shifts that occurred in Woodford's collecting interests from natural history and zoological specimens to objects of ethnographic interest, developments that took place once he reached the Pacific. Mahaffy, similarly, displayed an immediate interest in the objects created by the indigenous people he encountered, and actively collected objects from all the areas he visited in the Pacific. The tattooing he received in Kiribati displayed a willingness on his part to engage with indigenous people on a more personal and profound level.

Gaining an understanding of how local people negotiated within the parameters of imposed colonial rule was a central concern of this thesis. It was they who had their customary ways of life and society altered through British rule, they who had to deal with the consequences of punitive raids and they who had their hereditary land rights forcibly removed. The disputes caused by the sectioning off of lands as waste land continues to be an issue within the contemporary Solomon Islands. As demonstrated throughout the thesis, objects were centrally placed within the interactions of Woodford and Mahaffy with the indigenous people they encountered. Objects, acquired through purchase or trade or by looting, played a mediating role in how each group negotiated with and understood each other. Objects taken from their indigenous owners would have created a material void within that society, as predominantly items taken during punitive raids were those held

back from sale or trade. Within the latter form of “transaction” European actors held the power. They selected and removed by force the objects they desired, for example the objects both men took during the 1900 Kolokongo and Nusarua raids. In such situations indigenous people had little power to influence events or outcomes. When one considers that certain objects were withheld from trade or circulation and could only be obtained through force of arms and looting, then traces of indigenous power are still evident. Although physically the object may not bear any marks, the knowledge of the resistance and intent of the indigenous owner to its removal remains like an invisible scar within that object.

However, it has also been noted that not all transactions were as one-sided or in the favour of the European actor only. Objects offered for trade or sale would have been purchased with items the indigenous seller would have valued, such as tinned foods, cloth or glass beads. Equally, those objects purchased by Woodford and Mahaffy from resident whites within the Solomons helped to establish relations and connections between individuals who most probably lived considerable distances apart from each other. Patronage of local craftspeople was also of significance in terms of what objects they collected. This was particularly true in Mahaffy’s case. The objects created by Ango were very much a source of pride for Mahaffy. The skill of the craftsman was celebrated and even compared with inferior quality objects in order to highlight Ango’s skill as an artist, as noted in the case of Mahaffy purchasing a carved figure from a Ranongga craftsperson in order to compare it with Ango’s work. Both he and Woodford proudly displayed parts of their collection, Mahaffy at his house in Gizo and Woodford at his home once settled back in Britain following his retirement. Such displays were of course used as evidence of these men’s work and experience in the Solomons and would have been used as signifiers of their knowledge of the region and its inhabitants. Mahaffy’s patronage of Ango also highlights the importance of the associated documentary evidence which accompany his collection. His catalogues, and Woodford’s many letters to the British Museum and his published papers contain within them narratives and details equally as important as the physical object they collected.

In examining the role of amateur collectors, such as Woodford and Mahaffy, within museum collections it becomes clear that frequently ethnographic collecting stemmed from other personal and professional interests. This is particularly true of the explorers, zoologists and botanists, and colonial officials who during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century accumulated objects, photographs, and information on the indigenous

groups they encountered. It is clearly demonstrated throughout the thesis that ethnographic collecting became an extension of both men's work as colonial officials and their personas. Although Mahaffy's contributions were limited, this was particularly true in Woodford's case. He used his collections, connections and publications to firmly establish himself in British scientific circles as the preeminent expert on the Solomons, its people, material culture and flora and fauna. As noted in Chapter 4, throughout the nineteenth century contributions were welcomed in scientific communities from amateurs and travellers, and in particular from government personnel who resided in far off lands. Following the questionnaires set out in books such as *Notes and Queries* and the *Manual of Scientific Inquiry* their contributions were used to further anthropological knowledge of the many regions and peoples that many academics could not travel to. As such, Woodford's writings firmly established himself at the heart of anthropology in terms of the Solomon Islands.

Equally as important as his texts are Woodford's photographs. As discussed in Chapter 8, Woodford used his photographs as mementos of his residence in the Solomons, visual reminders of his expeditions and the indigenous people he encountered, using them in several publications and as lantern slide during many of the talks he presented. More importantly for us, however, his field photographs, though largely unpublished, provide important insights into the extent of cross-cultural interactions that were taking place in the Solomons during his residencies. His photographs highlight the level of indigenous appropriation of European items, such as clothing and tobacco, while also demonstrating the extent to which Woodford relied upon indigenous knowledge, noted in particular in the image of page 149 which depicts Woodford and his guides about to embark on an expedition into the interior of Guadalcanal. Without the assistance and knowledge of these guides, Woodford would have been unable to undertake such an expedition. Through his photography, Woodford physically tied himself to the Solomons, as much as he did through his ethnographic and zoological collecting.

The ethnographic collecting and writings of both men were not the only methods by which Woodford, in particular, but also Mahaffy established themselves within scientific circles and the development of anthropology. By forming associations with various museums, such as the British Museum, the Australian Museum, and Museum Victoria they again linked themselves to the Solomons beyond their roles as government agents. Their knowledge and expertise on the Solomons, its inhabitants and their material culture was something they actively used in assisting collectors such as Officer and Lewis

when they travelled around the Protectorate. Their assistance of such collectors highlights the important links which existed between colonial agents, anthropology, and ethnographic collecting.

Outcomes of the research

This thesis has highlighted the benefits of collection-based research as a means of gaining an insight into indigenous and colonial relations. The overarching concern within the thesis of considering the interaction between people, and between people and things within a historical context does pose certain limitations. Frequently, silences pertaining to object history or precise acquisition details are present, and in many cases we are quite simply unable to gain the answers we seek on a particular artefact's history, exact provenance, or biography. Yet this thesis has demonstrated that in many cases, such as the tally stick collected by Mahaffy (discussed in Chapter 2), through combining artefact and textual analysis certain elements of these absences or silences can be addressed. It has offered a reassessment of museums and archival material as being far from inert and disassociated repositories of objects and information. My research shows that they are in fact rich resources of source material, narratives and information for both the historical and contemporary researcher. Museums and their collections are dynamic and ever-changing, constantly remade through the acquisition of new information pertaining to objects, for example acquiring the indigenous name of an object or the maker's name. Reassessing the establishment of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate and its affects on indigenous colonial populations through artefact analysis forces a rethinking of the nature of colonialism in the Solomons and the various processes of Empire construction and maintenance that were taking place during this time, while also informing discourses on the development of anthropological science and British colonial history.

Perhaps one of the more unexpected outcomes of this research but of great significance has been the identification of the Roviana Lagoon artist Ango (discussed in Chapter 6). An initial attempt at identifying a corpus of Ango's sculptures is made, but it is highly likely that further research will reveal many more works by him, leading to a potential art-historical study of him as an artist. Through combining object-based research alongside analysis of documents pertaining to collections, it has been possible to reconstruct aspects of Ango's relationship with Mahaffy and also with other visitors to the Solomons, such as Hocart and Rivers. The case of Ango acts to highlight the importance of

using a multi-disciplinary approach to ethnographic research. Without the information contained within Mahaffy's catalogues or the references and sketches contained in the Hocart and Rivers papers, Ango and his work might not have been visible in the ethnographic record.

The discovery of the corpus of photographs taken by Woodford (discussed above and in Chapter 8) during his initial visits to the Solomon Islands is also of considerable importance. The majority of these have never been published or researched. Although not dwelt upon in great detail in the thesis, these photographs offer enormous potential in furthering our understandings of how indigenous people negotiated within the parameters of colonial rule and how their material culture became an interface for colonial and indigenous encounters. By linking these photographs with the information Woodford provided in his diaries we have the potential of building up a greater understanding of Woodford's fieldwork and his experiences, but also of a society which was undergoing significant social and economic change. These are vital documentary sources and further analysis and research into these materials will be pursued in the future.

When considered together, both men's writings, object collections, and photographs (in Woodford's case) highlight the fact that ethnographic collections and archival resources are, in fact, incredibly rich and important resources in our attempts to understand colonial history and indigenous experiences. Drawing these various types of collections together demonstrates the potential of such sources in both ethnographic and historical research.

Contemporary resonances

This thesis has the potential to increase Solomon Islanders' understandings of their own history and the processes of nation-building and identity-construction, while also highlighting the relevance of museum collections for the contemporary populations of the Solomon Islands. Indeed, many of the objects discussed in the thesis still circulate today, often for significant amounts of money. But beyond a museum or collector context, many objects discussed in the thesis form an active part of the transactions and dealings of contemporary Solomon Islanders. For instance, the Solomon Island National Museum occasionally purchases shell currency from people who are in need of cash. This shell currency still has a defined cash value within the Solomons today, as it did during Woodford and Mahaffy's time. Although my research in the Solomon Islands itself was

limited, while I was in Honiara I witnessed several people offering objects for sale, including stone axe heads or shell valuables. Frequently, the provenance for such objects is unclear, and in reality it is most likely that they were illegally removed from old sites. The point is that there is still a collectors market for these objects and the sale of such objects, to tourists or collectors, brings the seller cash. There is recognition that these items are desirable to foreigners. Perhaps cash from the sale of these objects is more desirable (and more useful) to the Solomon Islander who sells them. In many aspects this is a continuation of the looting undertaken by Woodford and Mahaffy, but this time it is Solomon Islanders who are undertaking the looting and, in their case, selling the objects.

Although historical in context, the research involved in this thesis has the potential to facilitate a re-engagement of local communities with their cultural heritage by highlighting the agency of the indigenous population in dealing with colonial relations, such as how people adapted and changed their material culture in the face of imposed colonial rule, European trade goods, and Christianity. Indeed, many of the objects discussed throughout the thesis, including canoe prow figureheads and *tomoko*, have become emblems of national identity in the Solomons (see Kupiainen 2000; O'Brien 2005). In understanding the historical significance of these objects we can better understand the importance of their re-contextualisation in contemporary society as national emblems and so-called tourist art.

Colonial agents have been justly criticised for their actions in the Pacific in land alienation and pacification. However, this research has demonstrated that the relationships between colonial agents and the indigenous population were highly complex. They were not completely one-sided, and frequently indigenous people were able to negotiate and control exchange relations to their advantage. This thesis has only touched the surface of the many histories and narratives from the Solomon Islands during this period. Yet in offering a more nuanced view of the early colonial period in the Solomons and the significance of Woodford and Mahaffy within that time, their collections highlight the social relations and mutual entanglement that are embodied within objects and collections.

Epilogue

The collections and objects discussed in this thesis represent the truth of the Solomons in the early colonial period, the truth of Woodford and Mahaffy's experience of it, and of indigenous people's experience of these men. These collections offer us a glimpse of a

society that was changing and adapting to new experiences. As noted in Chapter 2, the Solomon Islands have never been a static society. They have constantly changed and adapted to new ideas, technologies and materials and to new ways of life. As we make our way through the challenges faced by all societies in the twenty-first century Solomon Islanders will continue to change and adapt to new situations. How they as a sovereign nation chose to respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century, challenges faced by many post-colonial societies', remains to be seen. The upcoming Pacific Islands Festival due to be held in Honiara in 2012 offers the Solomons a platform from which it can project itself as a dynamic and vibrant country in which culturally diverse people live in harmony side by side. The alternative is one which looks back to the civil unrest and destruction witnessed during the last decades of the twentieth century.

Appendix I

Overview of the Collections

Overview of the Collections

Located at the back of the thesis is an overview of both the Woodford and Mahaffy collections, presented in database format on a data DVD. This information has been compiled in two separate databases (one for each collection) using the Microsoft Access programme (2007 version).

Presentation of the material

In order to maintain the sequence in which objects were collected and sold or donated to various institutions (particularly applicable with the Woodford collection), I have chosen to present the objects using the original museum numbers assigned to them within their institutions. Microsoft Access has the ability to assign a new number to each entry, such as 1, 2, 3, etc. However, I felt that to present the information in that manner would confuse the reader in terms of when objects were received by museums.

Data fields

Upon opening the database (overriding any Microsoft warning messages about content or macros) the objects are presented in a listing form which provides basic information on the objects at a glance, including object number, name, description, provenance, institution and an image of the object. Located to the left of each object entry in this listing is a “details” link. By clicking on this link an individual form (called “Objects”) opens giving greater detail on the individual object including measurements, collection date, any relevant information known on the object and the option to view more images of the object, should they have been included.¹⁸⁴ Click on the “Objects list” tab to return to the listing view (the “Objects” form can be left open for another object or closed by clicking “x”).

There are several ways to look through the entries. On the bottom left of the screen is a small text box indicating how many entries the database contains, and arrows which enable the viewer to “click” through the entries. This can be used in both the “Objects List” and “Objects” forms. Alternatively, the reader may use the “search” button in the “Objects List” form which enables the user to search by object name, provenance,

¹⁸⁴ Please note that the contemporary names of islands or island groups have been used in these databases.

materials, etc., i.e. the main descriptive fields of the objects.¹⁸⁵ Once the search has been completed click the “x” beside the search box to clear that form and return to the full list of objects.

Another way to search the database is to click on the “Details” tab for an individual object to open the “Objects” form and click on the “Filtered” button at the bottom of the screen. This removes the ‘filter’ or link to an individual object and displays all the entries for the database in the “Objects” form. The bottom left arrows can be used to scroll through the entries. To search the entire database using this form use the “Home” tab (on the top of the screen) and click “Advanced” and “Filter by form”. If the viewer then clicks in a particular field, say Institution or Object Name, a drop-down menu from which the viewer can select the information they wish to see in that field. To apply this search go to “Home”, “Advanced” and “Apply Filter/Sort”. As above, to return to the full list of objects clicked the “filtered” button at the bottom of the screen.

Finally, once an object is displayed using the “Objects” form, by right clicking in a field you open another set of options for searching using ‘text filters’ on that particular field. The “contains” option is particularly useful for looking for a word within a large text field (e.g. description).

Images

Each entry also includes an image, or several images of that object. If no photograph appears within the entry then either the object was not located in order to photograph, or the object was not documented in person. In order to see if an entry contains more than one object photograph, please click once on the image. A small tool bar will then appear above the image. If one of the arrows shown is green this indicates that more photographs are available. Please click on the green arrow to view the other image(s).

Object photographs may be viewed in greater detail. Simply double-click the image and an information box listing the image(s) for that entry will open. To view a particular image please click once on the image name to highlight it and hit “open”. This will open the image in a separate viewing window using the default image viewing software for your computer, such as Windows Picture and Fax Viewer. Please note that all images are copyright.

¹⁸⁵ It is not possible to search the following fields from the search box: Mahaffy catalogue documentation: CR or SUPP, Length (cm), Height (cm), Width (cm), Solomon Islands: Yes/No, Collection Date, Institution Purchase/Donation, Institution acquisition date, Gift/Raid/Commissioned, Male/Female, Documented in person.

Appendix II

Object Categories

Pacific Island objects collected by Arthur Mahaffy

*Held at The National Museum of Ireland and the Pitt Rivers
Museum, Oxford*

<i>Category/Object</i>	<i>Total</i>
Warfare	
Dagger	4
Spear & Spear Heads	21
Shield	4
Club	21
Armour	1
Total	52
Hunting/ Fishing	
Fish Hooks	19
Fishing Lines & Nets	5
Fishing Hooks & Floats	13
Fishing Lures	3
Fishing Bamboo Lure "pio pio"	3
Fishing Kite	1
Fish Cage	1
Bird Sling	2
Bailer	1
Arrows/ Bows	86
Boomerang	1
Total	135
Transportation	
Tomoko	1
Total	1
Axes/ Adzes	
Axes	4
Adzes	19
Total	23
Craft Production	
Tapa Beater	4
Tapa Pattern	1
Mallet	1
Needle	1
Hammer Head	3
Graver	1
Saw (and saw holder)	2

Bow Drill	1
Total	14

Food Production/ Eating

Hammer	1
Knife	1
Grater	1
Scraper	2
Package of nuts	1
Total	6

Containers

Lime Containers	4
Bags	5
Water Bottles and slings	5
Baskets	3
Bowls/ Dishes	2
Boxes	3
Package of tobacco	1
Pyrite containers	3
Total	26

Ornament/ Clothing

Neck Ornaments	13
Ear Ornaments	3
Arm Ornaments	17
Nose Ornaments	2
Forehead Ornaments, inc. Dala	4
Apron Mats & Mats	23
Barkcloth	2
Belt	7
Hair Accessories	3
Sun Hat	1
Girdles	2
Sandals	2
Fly Flapper	1
Fan	2
Feathers	1
Tassels	2
Skirt/Kilt	1
Total	86

Valuables

Shell Valuables	32
Bone/ Tusk valuables	5
Whales teeth	5
Currency	1
Ornaments	8
Total	51

Ritual Objects	
Charms	5
Canoe Prow Figureheads	9
Canoe Ornaments	3
Carved Stones	2
Carved ritual figures	4
Funerary/ Grave Ornaments	2
Misc. Ritual Ornaments	4
Ceremonial Staff	1
Spear head & “King Spears”	3
Human Heads	4
Kava, Kava Bowl & Cup	5
Total	42
Tourist Art	
Model Canoe	4
Model Canoe Crew	11
Canoe Ornaments	3
Carved Figures	12
Club	1
Cannibal Fork	1
Total	32
Music	
Musical Instruments	8
Total	8
Dance	
Dance Ornament	1
Dance Charm	2
Total	3
Miscellaneous	
Paddles	8
Headrest	3
Games	9
Cord/ String	1
Tally Stick	1
Boxing Gloves	4
Baby-soother brush	1
Beak of Swordfish	1
Plummets – shell & stone	3
Twigs	1
Misc. Shells	2
Walking Sticks & Staffs	12
Phosphate sample	1
Whip – Rhinoceros hide	1
Tooth	1
Tobacco	1

Photographs	3
Total	53

<i>Grand Total</i>	530
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Percentage of Objects provenance:

Solomon Islands (341 objects)	64.5%
Non-Solomons (140 objects)	26.5%
Unknown Provenance (49 objects)	9%

Pacific Island objects collected by Woodford

***Held at The British Museum, The Pitt Rivers Museum, CUMAA,
The World Museum Liverpool, and The Australian Museum***

<i>Category/Object</i>	<i>Total</i>
Warfare	
Shields	2
Spears	16
Clubs	17
Knives/Daggers	1
Maces	5
Total	41
Hunting/Fishing	
Fish Hooks	26
Fishing Line & Bait	5
Fishing Bamboo Lure “pio pio”	2
Fishing Nets & Trap	14
Fishing Floats	3
Box, used on canoe voyages	1
Bows	5
Arrows	12
Total	68
Axes/Adzes	
Axes	8
Adzes	27
Celts	2
Total	37
Craft Production	
Needle /Bodkin	2
Whetstone	2
Saw	2
Pump Drill	1
Loom	2
Currency manufacture Stand	2
Drill Weight	2
Drill Point	7
Drill Sharpener	1
Grinding Block	1
Hammer	2
Misc	3
Total	27

Food Production/ Eating

Mortars	5
Hammers/Tools	5
Scrapers	8
Graters	4
Package of food	1
Spatulas	1
Food Bowl	1
Total	25

Containers

Lime Containers	9
Lime accessories	2
Bags/Carriers	8
Water Containers	4
Baskets	8
Cups	5
Ladles	4
Bowls	4
Pyrite holder	1
Spoons	7
Scoop	1
Total	53

Ornament/ Clothing

Apron Mats & Mats	11
Arm Ornaments	13
Barkcloth	9
Belt	1
Combs	6
Ear Ornaments	18
Girdles	3
Head-dress	1
<i>Dala</i> (forehead ornaments)	5
Neck Ornaments	5
Nose Ornaments	9
Pendants	2
Wigs	2
Cap	1
Various Ornaments	21
Total	107

Valuables

Shell Arm Ornaments	4
Shell Valuables	42
Currency	24
Whale teeth	7
Necklace Ornaments	8
Stone Ring	2

Misc.	1
Total	88
Ritual Objects	
Charms	8
Canoe Prow Figureheads	3
Canoe Ornaments	8
Canoe House Posts	3
Carved Shell Plaques	5
Carved Stones	2
Funerary/ Grave Ornaments	15
Ceremonial Paddle	1
Ceremonial Club	1
Spear head	1
Tattooing Implements	7
Mask	1
Kava Bowl	1
Carved Figure	1
Total	57
Transportation	
Canoe & Paddle	2
Total	2
Tourist Art	
Model Canoe	3
Model Canoe Paddles	8
Club	1
Total	12
Music	
Musical Instruments	4
Total	4
Dance	
Dance Ornament	1
Dance Shield	1
Dance Club	1
Total	3
Miscellaneous	
Paddles	7
Headrest	2
Pipe	1
Toy	1
Cord/String	6
Bundle of hair	1
Implements	1
Bone Fragment	1
Metal Objects	2

Total	22
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<i>Grand Total</i>	546
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Percentage of Objects provenance:

Solomon Islands	94.5%
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Non-Solomons	5.5%
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Appendix III

Biographies

- Allardyce, Sir William L.**
(1861-1930) Allardyce served as Acting High Commissioner for the WPHC based at Suva from July 1901 to September 1902.
- Amherst, Lord**
(1835-1909) William Amherst Tyssen-Amherst, the first Baron Amherst of Hackney formed a substantial private collection of manuscripts, book and art.
- Ango, of Roviana.**
(d.1920s/30s) An artist who made objects for Mahaffy, but whose works have also been found in the collections of the Rev. John Goldie in Museum Victoria, and in the Lady Thompson and William Lever collections in the British Museum. May also have created the shrine which contains the skulls of chiefs on Kudu Island (“Skull Island”) in the Vonavona Lagoon, New Georgia Island. Said to have died in the 1930s.
- Bates, Henry Walter**
(1852-1892) An explorer and naturalist, Bates undertook expeditions to the Amazon with his friend and fellow scientist Alfred Russel Wallace. Like Wallace, Bates was self-taught but through his successful expeditions he firmly established himself with the scientific community in England. See Raffles (2002:115-149) for analysis of Bates’ training and collecting.
- Beasley, Harry**
(1882-1939) A brewer by profession, Harry Beasley became one of the largest private collectors of ethnographic material in the early twentieth century. His collection, which comprised of objects from Oceania, Africa, Asia, The Americas and Scandinavia was put on display at his private museum, The Cranmore Ethnological Museum (est. 1928) in Chislehurst, Kent where it was open to the public. Following his death in 1939 his collection was disassembled and sold or donated to museums and private collectors (Carreau 2009; Waterfield & King 2006).
- Beasley, Irene** The wife of Harry Beasley, Irene was responsible for the sale/donation of his collections following Harry’s death (Carreau 2009).
- Belangana** A chief from Simbo, Belangana was the chief depicted in Ango’s model *tomoko*. He was arrested and imprisoned by Mahaffy in 1898 for two months for undertaking a headhunting raid upon the village of “Grasse” on New Georgia Island and for his failure to return two women taken captive during that raid to their homes.
There is evidence to suggest that towards the end of his life Belangana converted to Christianity. A photograph in Luxton’s history of the Methodist Mission clearly shows Belangana with the image heading “An old chief of Simbo. “From enemy to Friend”, ready to lay aside the weapons of warfare that the teaching of Christ might bring peace and

goodwill to his people' (Luxton 1955: facing page 37)

Berkeley, Sir Henry

From February until July 1897 Berkeley served as Acting High Commissioner for the WPHC based at Suva.

**Binskin, Joseph
(1870-1941)**

Born in Kent, England, Binskin initially travelled to New Zealand as a child and later began working on sailing ships. He arrived in the Solomons in the late 1890s where he worked for Norman Wheatley before starting his own trading station on the island of Mbava island, to the west of Vella Lavella. He had married a Malaitan woman, but she and their two children were murdered by Sito's warriors in 1909. He later remarried one of Norman Wheatley's daughters (Golden 1993:231-233).

Broadhurst Hill, R.

Broadhurst Hill served as a District Officer in the BSIP from the mid-1910s until (it appears) the 1920s. A *tomoko* collected by him from Vella Lavella and a photograph of the same *tomoko* now part of the BM collections. The *tomoko* forms part of the Lady Lever collection.

Brown, Rev. George

Born in Belfast, Brown was a member of the Methodist Mission who worked in German New Guinea (1891-1896) and Fiji (1900-1919) (Welsch 1998b:36-37). He visited the Solomons on several occasions, particularly Roviana where Rev. Goldie was based. Several objects collected by him are now in the Auckland Museum.

**Burnett, Frank
(1852-1930)**

Born in Liverpool, Burnett initially travelled throughout Europe, Africa, and Canada before settling in Vancouver in 1895. From the same year into the early twentieth century he undertook several visits to the Pacific and published numerous accounts of these trips. He donated the majority of his ethnographic collections to the University of British Columbia.

**Burns, Oliver
(d.1908)**

A British citizen Burns was working as an agent for Norman Wheatley at the time of his death in 1908. He was returning to the Marovo Lagoon in May that year when his cutter was surrounded by native canoes, many of which came onboard. Uneasy at this, Burns order all to leave the ship but one man remained, who struck him with an axe, killing him. It is believed that the indigenous people had been seeking a head to consecrate a new *tomoko*. While the man who committed the murder was arrested the two punitive expeditions undertaken following his murder failed to secure either Burns' head or the chief who ordered the killing (Golden 1993:239-241; CO 225/85; WPHC 4261/08).

Cheyne, Andrew
(b.1817)

Cheyne was born in the Shetland Islands, Scotland in 1817. Around 1840 he travelled to the Pacific where he worked as a trader. His account of his trading voyages around the Pacific in the vessel *Naiad* between 1841 and 1844, during which time he visited the Solomons, were published by Shineberg (1971).

Collinson, Clifford

A Fellow of the RGS, Collinson spent several years in the Western Solomons working as a trader where he resided principally on Simbo. He first travelled to the Solomons in the 1920s and worked as a trader in Ontong Java, the Shortland Islands, and Simbo (Golden 1993:267). He collected many objects while resident in the Solomons, several of which were purchased by the collector Harry Beasley (Carreau 2009). In 1926 he published an account of his life in the Solomons.

Davis, Admiral Edward
(1846-1929)

Davis served as a Captain and later an Admiral for the British Navy in the Pacific. During his voyages he collected many ethnographic objects, some of which were taken during punitive raids. Many of the objects he collected were acquired by the British Museum.

de Mendaña de Neyra, Alvaro
(1542-1595)

Born in Spain, de Mendaña was a navigator who undertook two expeditions into the Pacific on behalf of the Spanish Crown during the years 1567-1569 and again from 1595-1596. During this second voyage de Mendaña landed at the Santa Cruz Islands where he established a settlement. However, this settlement did not prove to be successful due to illness and internal conflict. De Mendaña himself died during this period and the settlement was sooner after abandoned.

Deck, Dr Northcote
(1875-1957)

Born in England Deck was a medical doctor who joined the South Sea Evangelical Mission based in the Solomons in 1908. He travelled around the Protectorate onboard the mission's vessel *Evangel* undertaking both missionary and medical work. He was a Fellow of the RGS and wrote numerous articles on the Solomons, particularly Rennell Island.

Edge-Partington, Thomas
(1886-1920)

Thomas, the son of James Edge-Partington who was an authority on Pacific material culture, began work in the Solomon in 1904 when he took over the post Mahaffy vacated at Gizo. It appears that while at Gizo Edge-Partington had an affair with a woman from Simbo. He was a very young man at the time of this incident so instead of firing him he was transferred to Malaita in 1909 where he continued to work as a District Officer (CO 225/85). He resigned his post in 1915. Objects collect by him and his (later) wife are now located in the British Museum and the Auckland Museum.

- Franks, Sir Augustus Wollaston (1826-1897)** Franks joined the British Museum staff in 1851, and was largely responsible for expanding the scope and range of material collected by the museum. See Caygill and Cherry (1997) for an overview of Franks' work at the British Museum.
- Gerrard, Edward** Edward Gerrard and Sons were a firm a taxidermists who also made anatomical models, as well as dealers in ethnographic objects through which they sold objects to many museums and institutions including the BM.
- Goldie, Rev John Francis (1870-1954)** Born in Tasmania Goldie was a member of the Methodist Mission. Goldie, together with Rev. George Brown and Rev. S. Rooney arrived in Roviana in 1902 to establish the first Methodist Mission station, where Goldie resided until retirement in 1951 (Welsch 1998b:65). Goldie and his wife assisted in providing medical assistance to people in and around the Roviana Lagoon. The Goldie collection now forms part of the Museum Victoria ethnographic collections.
- Gordon, Sir Arthur (Later Lord Stanmore) (1829-1912)** From November 1877 until October 1883 Gordon served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC. He also served as governor for Trinidad, Mauritius and Sri Lanka.
- Gorai** As with Ingava in Roviana, Gorai successfully interacted with visiting traders, naval and colonial personnel and in doing so he secured trade (wealth) and prestige for himself.
- Guppy, Dr. Henry Brougham (1854-1926)** A naturalist and medical officer, Guppy served onboard H.M.S. *Lark* in 1881 during its surveying expedition in the Western Pacific. When in the Northern Solomons Guppy collected natural history specimens and objects from the Shortland Islands where he collected under the guidance of Gorai. Objects collected by Guppy during his time in the Solomons now form part of the British Museum collections.
- Haddon, Alfred Court (1855-1940)** Haddon initially trained as a zoologist at the Royal College of Science, Dublin, and travelled to the Torres Straits from 1888 to 1889 to study the natural history and ethnology of the area. Following this he undertook the seminal Cambridge Torres Straits Expedition from 1898 to 1899. Objects collected by Haddon are located in various institutions including the British Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge.
- Hamilton, William "Squeaker" (1852-1937)** Born in Scotland, Hamilton travelled to Australia as a child. He arrived in the Solomons in the 1890s when together with

N.J. Howes he established the “Hamilton Pearling Company” in 1890 which sought out pearl-shell in the Manning Straits and the Admiralty Islands. A highly successful business man Hamilton also established copra plantations in the Manning Straits, Bougainville and the Admiralty Islands, and Choiseul Bay. A speech impediment earned him the nickname “Squeaker” (Golden 1993:225-226).

Hocart, Arthur Maurice
(1883-1939)

Born in Belgium but educated in England, Hocart travelled to the Solomons in 1908 as part of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition as the student of Rivers. The primary aim of the expedition was to study and document what were believed to be a rapidly disappearing peoples. As such, this fitted into salvage paradigm that prevailed with early anthropological concerns. In total Hocart spent six months in the Solomons. The first three months was spent with Rivers on Simbo before they toured Vella Lavella for three more weeks. Rivers then departed and Hocart spent the remainder of his time at Roviana, Simbo, and Nduke. His anthropological research and writings offered a significant and important insight into Western Solomons society during the early colonial period (see Scales 1998). He also undertook extensive fieldwork in Fiji and other areas in Polynesia, and later in career undertook archaeological excavations in Sri Lanka (Welsch 1998b:82).

im Thurn, Sir Everard
(1852-1932)

Im Thurn served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC from October 1904 until August 1910. A naturalist and explorer im Thurn had previously worked as a curator in the British Guiana Museum in the 1870s and 1880s before joining the Colonial Office at the turn of the century. He formed many academic and professional affiliations with institutions such as the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, the RGS, and the RAI (in which institution he served as president from 1919-20). He was also a collector of ethnographic objects which now form part of the PRM and MAA collections.

Ingava
(d.1906)

One of the most successful chiefs and headhunters in the Western Solomons, Ingava successfully negotiated and managed encounters and transactions with traders and colonial officials. In doing so he secured trade, and as such wealth, for himself and his people. See Edge-Partington (1907) for an account of the ceremonies following Ingava’s death in 1906.

Jackson, Sir Henry Moore
(1849-1908)

Born in Grenada Jackson initially served in the British army before joining the Colonial Office. Served as a Colonial Secretary in the Bahamas and Gibraltar, and as Governor for the Leeward Islands. From September 1902 until March 1904 Jackson served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC.

- Lewis, A.B.***
(1867-1940)
- Born in Ohio, Lewis initially began his career in biological sciences before returning to Columbia University aged 35 to study anthropology under Franz Boas. Following graduation Lewis spent four years in Melanesia (from 1909 to 1913) as the leaders of the Joseph N. Field South Pacific Expedition, which was undertaken on behalf of the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago (Welsch 1998a, 1998b).
- Lever, William Hesketh***
(Lord Leverhulme)
(1851-1925)
- A hugely successful business man who built his wealth upon the soap making industry. His company, Lever Brothers, established large copra plantations in Africa and the Solomons in order to supply the palm oil required in their industry. He was awarded the title “Sir” in 1911 and became Lord Leverhulme in 1917. See West (1992) for a history of Levers’ ethnographic collections.
- Madan, Arthur G.***
- Madan worked as private secretary to Harry Beasley, and also as a curator for Beasley’s Cranmore Ethnographic Museum (Carreau 2009).
- Mahaffy, Rachel***
(1874-1944)
- The youngest of the Mahaffy children, Rachel never married and resided at the family home in Howth, Co. Dublin.
- Major, Sir Charles***
- A lawyer, Major served as Attorney-General of Grenada until being promoted to Chief Justice of Fiji in 1902. Between March and October 1904, and again between August 1910 and February 1911 Major also served as Acting High Commissioner for the WPHC based at Suva.
- May, Sir Francis Henry***
(1860-1922)
- Born in Dublin May initially worked in various administrative and secretarial roles in Hong Kong before being appointed acting administrator there in 1903. From February 1911 until June 1912 May served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC.
- MacGregor, Sir William***
(1846-1919)
- Born in Scotland MacGregor initially trained as a medical doctor. He served as chief medical officer in Fiji from 1875 to 1888, lieutenant-governor of British New Guinea from 1888 to 1898 and governor of Queensland from 1909 to 1914. He also served as Acting High Commissioner for the WPHC in Suva from January to August 1885, during which time Woodford worked for him. Welsch had noted that MacGregor was quick to undertake punitive raids against indigenous people in New Guinea: perhaps his work served as a model for Woodford in the Solomons (Welsch 1998b:108).
During his time in New Guinea MacGregor collected an extensive collection of ethnographic material, which he placed in trust for the people of New Guinea at the museum of the

University of Queensland, and which was later repatriated to Papua once a museum had been established which had the capabilities of caring correctly for the objects (see Welsch 2007). For biographies of MacGregor see Joyce (1971) and Welsch (1998b:107-109).

Murray, Hubert
(1861-1940)

Born in Australia and educated in England, Murray served as chief judicial officer in British New Guinea from 1904 to 1908. In 1908 he was appointed lieutenant-governor of that area, a post he held until his death in 1940 (Welsch 1998b:117-118). His approach to government differed greatly from MacGregor, taking a greater interest in the welfare of the indigenous population and undertaking a less aggressive in their treatment approach to that utilised by MacGregor.

Newman, Sir George
(1870-1948)

Newman, a Quaker, trained in medicine and was appointed the first Chief Medical Officer for the Ministry of Health in England in 1919.

Nielson, Lars

A Norwegian by birth, Nielsen was shipwrecked along with his English crewmate Frank Wickham in the Solomons about 1875. They were employed by Captain Ferguson, a trader in the Roviana Lagoon, for several years before they established their own trading stations on Gavutu in the Florida Islands (Nielsen) and Roviana (Wickham) (Golden 1993:68-70:206-208). An erroneous report of the murder of Nielson and some of his crew reached Woodford before the publication of his paper and book in 1890 (Woodford 1890a:397; 1890b:21).

O'Brien, Sir George Thomas
Michael

From July 1897 until July 1901 O'Brien served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC.

Officer, Graham
(b.1867)

Of Scottish ancestry Officer was born in Tasmania in 1867. He graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1892 with a science degree, and worked as a geologist in both Tasmania and Victoria prior to his expedition to the Solomons (Vanderwal 2001).

Pratt, Jean Pascal
(d.1898)

The brother of Edmund Pratt, Jean worked as trader based out of Simbo in the 1890s. He was attacked and severely wounded during the 1897 raid undertaken by Sito against Edmund Pratt's schooner *Eclipse*. He later died as a result of these injuries (Golden 1993:218-219).

Pratt, Peter Edmund

Pratt seems to have arrived in the Solomons during the 1880s, setting up a trading station at Roviana initially but later at Simbo. He seemed to have been a rather unlikeable man who frequently resorted to violence in his dealings with indigenous

people (Golden 1993:215-217). He was also openly traded weapons to local communities, a crime for which he was eventually removed from the BSIP.

Read, Sir Charles Hercules
(1857-1929)

In 1874 Read was put in charge of the Christy Collection, and in 1896 succeeded Franks at the British Museum. He also donated 127 objects to the Pitt Rivers Museum (Gosden & Larson 2007:11).

Rivers, W.H.R.
(1864-1922)

William Halse Rivers Rivers was educated party at Tonbridge school, the school Woodford had attended. Rivers studied medicine and psychology, and in 1898 was offered a place on the Cambridge Torres Straits Expedition organised by Haddon, where he developed his ethnologic training. In 1908 he returned to the Pacific, namely the Solomon Islands as part of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition.

Rothschild, Sir Walter
(1868-1937)

Born into an extremely wealthy family, Rothschild showed an interest in natural history from an early age. He hired many explored to collect specimens for him which ultimate formed part of his museum collection at Tring. Most of his extensive collections were gifted to the Natural History Museum in 1937.

Sito

Named as Sito Latavaki by Bennett (1987:108), Sito was either a chief or a warrior from Mbilua, Vella Lavella. He and his warriors were responsible for many indigenous and European deaths in the Western Solomons.

Southgate, C

Southgate worked as Woodford's solicitor. No biographical information on Southgate could be found.

Spencer, Sir Walter Baldwin
(1860-1929)

Born in Lancashire and educated at Oxford, Spencer worked at Museum Victoria, Melbourne, from 1895 until 1919. He is most famous for his work with F.J. Gillen at Alice Springs. See Welsch for a short biography of Spencer (1998b:153).

Sweet--Escott, Sir Ernest Bickham
(1857-1941)

From July 1912 until June 1918 Sweet-Escott served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC.

Thomson, Basil
(1861-1939)

Thomson worked as a magistrate for the Colonial Office at Suva in 1884. He also served in Tonga from 1890 to 1891 (Scarr 1967:84). He later served as governor for several prisons in England and also for the Metropolitan Police in London. Ethnographic objects collected by both Thomson and his wife are now in the British Museum collections.

- Thurston, John Bates*** Thurston initially work for the Colonial Office in Tonga and Fiji. Between August 1885 and January 1887 Thurston served as Acting High Commissioner for the WPHC based at Suva. From February 1888 until his death in February 1897 Thurston served as Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner to the WPHC. He also established the Suva Botanical Gardens in 1879 which were renamed the Thurston Gardens in 1976. See Scarr (1978/79) for a short biography of Thurston.
- Wallace, Alfred Russel (1823-1913)*** A self-taught naturalist, explorer, geographer and anthropologist Wallace undertook several expeditions to South America and the Malay Archipelago. He developed a similar theory of natural selection independently of Darwin. He formed extensive natural history specimen collections and also collected objects of ethnographic interest.
- Welchman, Reverend Henry (1850-1908)*** Born in England, a medical doctor by training, Welchman joined the Melanesian Mission in 1888 and was sent to the Solomon Islands. In 1890 he was sent to Bughotu on Santa Isabel where he established a small hospital. He was based here until his death in 1908. In 1902, during a visit to England, Welchman also travelled to Ireland where he stayed in Dublin as a guest of Mahaffy's father, John Pentland Mahaffy (ML:M805).
- Wheatley, Norman (c1868-1938)*** Born in Yorkshire Wheatley arrived in the Solomons about 1893. He married a local woman, and through this alliance and the protection of Ingava he was able to secure land and trade successfully with local groups, most likely also supplying arms to local groups. It is possible that he had in fact married a member of Ingava's family. Wheatley became one of the most successful trader's resident in the Western Solomons and was partly responsible for securing the arrival of the Methodist Mission in Roviana (Boutilier 1975; Welsch 1998b:166).
- Wheeler, Gerald Camden (1872-1943)*** Wheeler was an anthropologist who travelled as part of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition in 1908 to the Western Solomon Islands with A.M. Hocart and W.H.R. Rivers. All three men worked together on Simbo Islands for two and a half months before Wheeler eventually settled on Alu in the Shortland Islands to undertake further fieldwork.
- Wickham, Frank*** Born in England Wickham was shipwrecked along with his Norwegian crewmate Lars Nielsen in the Solomons about 1875. They were employed by Captain Ferguson, a trader in the Roviana Lagoon, for several years. Following Ferguson's murder in 1880 they established their own trading stations on Gavutu in the Florida Islands (Nielsen) and Roviana (Wickham) (Golden 1993:68-70:206-208). As with Wheatley,

Wickham also was reliant upon the favour of Ingava for protection and in order to strengthen his ties with the local people he took a second wife from Munda (Golden 1993:206). He became a very successful trader with large tracts of plantations, and also encouraged the Methodist Missions to establish their base at Roviana.

Woodford, Florence

Born in Bathurst, New South Wales, Florence Palmer married Charles Morris Woodford in 1889, with whom she had two children.

***Wootton-Isaacson, Frederick
John
(d.1948)***

Research at both MAA and the RGS failed to turn up any firm biographical information on Wootton-Isaacson. However, from his photographs at MAA it is clear he was present in the Solomon Islands in 1903, during which time he photographed Mahaffy's canoes on Gizo beach, and presumably established contact with Woodford.

Appendix IV

*Extract from Woodford's book A Naturalist Among
the Headhunters*

Extract from Woodford's book A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters: being an account of three visits to the Solomon Islands in the years 1886, 1887 and 1888 (1890a:155-157). The following details the sacrifices which accompanied the consecration of a paele (canoe house):

‘The following story was told me by a trader who afterwards met with a terrible death in the islands. He assured me that he witnessed the occurrence, and his account was so minutely circumstantial that I entirely believe it. It occurred in May or June 1883, at the village of Rubiana, upon the completion of a large house for keeping a head-hunting canoe. The chief of the village was a man named Nono. The sacrifice in this instance was a male child and a female pig. It is necessary for the victims to be of opposite sexes. The child, a boy of about nine years old, had been brought with four other slaves, one of them his mother, from a village called Kokota, on the north side of Ysabel. (I found this village deserted in 1888.)

The house was, of course near the sea, and the men of the village sat in a circle round the front of it, while the women and children stood in the background, among the latter being the child and its mother, the latter aware of what was to come, but the child all unconscious. It was, however, crying, as it had been kept for two days without food.

My informant was invited to go inside the house, which was rather dark, as all canoe-houses are; but upon his eyes becoming accustomed to the dim light, he saw three old men sitting against the posts of the house, and behind each was a cooked body tied upright to the post; the heads had been removed. Two of them were women, and had been disembowelled; the third was a man. My informant came out of the house again, and suddenly an old man appeared standing near the end of the house that was nearest the sea. He had apparently worked himself into a frenzy, and stood glaring upon the surrounding people. Nono, the chief, went up to the mother and seized the child by the hand. The woman made some slight resistance, but it was but feeble, and the child was dragged

reluctantly to the old man, who seized it by the legs and threw it over his head, holding it by the legs in his two hands so that the child was sitting on his neck in the position that we call "pick-a-back." With a loud yell the old man began running round the house; this he did three times, and then ran into the sea. When he had got above his waist he threw himself backwards, and repeated this operation two or three times, of course ducking the child, and then ran out of the water again, the child meanwhile somewhat exhausted and clutching his shoulders with its hands. Again he ran round the house, and then again into the sea, where he again ducked the child. This time, on coming out of the water, the child, now thoroughly exhausted, was hanging head downwards on his back. He went up to the front of the house. Nono, the chief, now took a twelve-inch trade-knife, and with one gash across the child's throat, and then a chop, the head was off and the blood streaming from the neck.

The man, still carrying the child on his back, then ran round and round the house as before, scattering the blood on the house and ground till the body ceased to bleed. It was then thrown down in front of the house. The pig, a small one, which was close by, with its four legs tied together, was brought and killed by being thumped and jumped on, and finally stifled in the usual way, and the two were then cooked together. They were afterwards eaten with the other cooked bodies, and the child's head stuck up in the canoe-house.'

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