USE OF THESES

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Lists and letters: An analysis of some exchanges between British museums, collectors and Australian Aborigines (1895-1910)

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University, November 1999.
I hereby affirm that this thesis is all my own original work, except where otherwise stated.

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**Museums**

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Abstract

Using the collecting of H.J. Hillier and Emile Clement as its basis, this thesis examines the movement of collections of Aboriginal objects from Australia to Britain, the relationships between collectors and curators which underlay their movement, and the anthropological discourses in Britain with which they interacted. This analysis is undertaken using three sondages of the historical terrain, against which the relationships between the three agents involved in the collection process – the museum, the collector, and the Aboriginal people from whom the objects were obtained – took place. Whilst I focus on the viewpoint of the collector, I excavate, or bring to light, something of the each agent's perspective on the collecting process. In particular, I examine the interstice between the moment when objects are collected in the field, and the time of their arrival in the museum. Within this gap time passes, distances are travelled by people, objects and letters, and relationships between collectors and curators enacted. An understanding of the events which occur, and the relationships which take place within this space is essential to developing an informed understanding of what such collections represent.

I argue that rather than being seen as collections which reflect the culture of Aboriginal people, they in fact reflect the actions of Aboriginal people, collectors and curators, and embody the interactions between each of these agents. I conclude the thesis by suggesting that collections like Hillier's and Clement's can be interpreted as having come about through the tension between two contrasting views of the place of collection. One view is set out in the scientific rationality of the museum, and the other is inherent in the indigenous understanding of place. Viewing collection as the mediation between two understandings of place acknowledges the complex interactions between curator, collector and Aboriginal people which have resulted in these objects being in British museums. Further, it acknowledges the agency of each of these participants, the colonial context in which this collecting occurred, and the specificity of the place in which it occurred.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Lists

In April 1906 a young Englishman, Henry Hillier, departed from Adelaide on a strenuous thirteen day journey by train and coach to take up his new teaching position at Hermannsburg. Upon his arrival he sent his employer a list of the expenses he had incurred along the trip (Figure 1.1). The list detailed where he had stayed, the meals he had consumed, and other sundry purchases. At one level Hillier's list evokes the experience of travel at this time, incorporating regular stops for tea and chops. In doing so it challenges the popular notion of central Australia as being a place beyond the influence of European settler culture. Hillier was a collector of Aboriginal objects, and it was the notion of remoteness which he stressed when selling object collections from Hermannsburg to museums. At another level, as a representation of a collection of both objects and experiences, Hillier's list documents some of the relationships he was involved in as he moved inland from the coast. For example the simple listing of the tea, sugar, soap, matches and accommodation which he purchased at Oodnadatta understates the likely social dimensions of his economic transactions with shopkeepers along the route.

In both these aspects, as a record of travel and transaction, the structure of this thesis mirrors Hillier's list. Just as the list of his purchases tracks and traces a path across the physical space between the metropolis of Adelaide and the perceived remoteness of central Australia, this thesis is a story of the path along which Aboriginal objects travelled from Australia to British museums. Just as the list stands for the various transactions and relationships Hillier enacted along the route, this thesis forms an annotated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 23 1906</td>
<td>Rail from Freeling to Oodnadatta</td>
<td>£3.9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>breakfast at Roseworthy</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dinner at Terowie</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tea at Orroroo</td>
<td>6d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24 1906</td>
<td>tea, bed and breakfast at Quorn</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lunch at Parachilna</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25 1906</td>
<td>tea, bed and breakfast at Hergott [Springs]</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dinner at William Creek</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26 1906</td>
<td>3lbs of chops 2/-, 2 loaves of bread 8d</td>
<td>2/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tea, sugar, 1 cake of soap and matches at Oodnadatta</td>
<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tea, bed and breakfast at Oodnadatta</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fare by coach to Alice Springs</td>
<td>£7.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28 1906</td>
<td>tea, breakfast and meat at Hamilton Bore</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29 1906</td>
<td>tea at Bloods Creek</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1 1906</td>
<td>tea and breakfast and meat at Horseshoe Bend</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5 1906</td>
<td>3 meals at Deep Well</td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7 1906</td>
<td>dinner and tin of jam at Alice Springs</td>
<td>3/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total of expenses on road</strong></td>
<td>£12.19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>excess luggage</strong></td>
<td>£1.2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.1: Henry Hillier’s expenses enroute from Adelaide to Hermannsburg

---

1 Letter from H.J. Hillier to L.Kaibel 10/5/1906, FRM file 16C4/5, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
Chapter 1 – Introduction

listing of the various transactions of both tangible and non-tangible entities in which Aboriginal objects now in museums took part, and the personal relationships and intellectual spaces which Aboriginal objects brought into being, and moved through, on their journey from Australia to Britain.

A range of different sorts of lists were created as objects moved from Australia to Britain. Customs declarations, inventories and catalogues are all forms of representation which served to order and unify collections. However in order to achieve these ends such lists generated new meanings for these objects, ones which transformed their indigenous meanings. To paraphrase Susan Stewart, the ‘totality’ of such lists ‘... mark[s] the triumph over the particularity of contexts in which the individual objects were first collected’ (1994:204). The list also evokes a sense of rationality or ‘scientificness’. As I discuss in Chapter 2, Aboriginal objects were classified and placed into ‘functional niches’ by museums. Yet the illusion of order within such lists masks other responses by British curators to the collection of such objects. For example, the way in which Henry Balfour, the curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum, described his anticipation of Baldwin Spencer’s central Australian collections, makes this clear. He wrote:

The collecting possibilities mentioned in one of your early letters sent down from Central Australia, fairly made one’s mouth run.²

The lists of Western Australian Aboriginal objects used by another collector, Emile Clement, in his correspondence with museums (Figure 1.2), show how an entrepreneurial collector could bridge the gap between rationality and desire. Clement frequently used such lists as a device in selling his collections of Aboriginal objects to museums. As well as serving as a simple list of the objects he was offering for sale, his lists, which were often accompanied by drawings, were part of Clement’s strategy to allow the aesthetic qualities of his collections to exert themselves on the curator, and thus improve his chances of a sale. Clement’s lists conveyed the diversity of material he offered, including photographs, with his use of indigenous object names evoking both authenticity and a sense of exoticism. Clement

² Letter from H. Balfour to W.B. Spencer 30/5/1902, PRM Archives. Here Balfour is most almost certainly referring to Spencer’s letter to James Edge Partington which was published in Man (Spencer 1901).
Dear Sir,

I beg to offer you a very nice collection of NW Australian Weapons, Implements, ornaments etc at a very reasonable price as I am leaving England again very shortly. The objects are all labelled with native name, locality and tribe. I will send them to you for approval, as I am sure you will be satisfied with them. I have also a number of photos of the natives in groups and singles showing the tribal incisions across the chest. I will send you some on approval if you wish. They cost from 2/- to 3/- each. One, a group of warriors in their dress, is especially fine.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I am very truly yours,

E Clement

List of objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Mihras (carved throwing sticks) 5/- each</td>
<td>10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Yandi (water carrier of wood)</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pinjanbenger (Doctor's ornament of human hair and mother of pearl)</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 nets of spinifex fibre 3/-</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahrede corsada (Doctor’s implement)</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; of bone</td>
<td>3/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 hair necklaces with tassels 2/-</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>necklace of wool</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wurrindi (emu feather ornament used in corroboree)</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrurruru (human hair belt)</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautifully carved Birra-birra, of mother-of-pearl (full dress of nat. gentlemen)</td>
<td>10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaili (Boomerangs)</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shield</td>
<td>7/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 fighting spear heads 2/-</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 glass spear heads 2/-</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wailoo (mourning necklace)</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do. do. with hair of deceased within</td>
<td>3/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Boonangharry (Devil Scarer) @ 3/-</td>
<td>6/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carved Baobab nut</td>
<td>4/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnarrangnarra (netting needle)</td>
<td>1/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope of spinifex fibre</td>
<td>2/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£4.10.0

Figure 1.2: Letter sent to Bristol Museum by Emile Clement

3 Letter held in Bristol Museum History Files.
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also played upon the aesthetic qualities of the object by often sending collections to museums 'on approval'.

Letters

The lists invoked by the movement of objects often occurred as part of the correspondence between collectors and curators, and it is these letters, dispersed within the archives of museums across Britain, which are the focus of this thesis. Correspondence was the major way in which collectors such as Hillier and Clement engaged with museum staff.4

A number of writers have noted the important role that the relationship between Australian-based correspondents and British-based synthesists and theorists has played in the development of anthropological and natural history knowledge. For example John Mulvaney has described the 'web of intellectual kinship' that linked early Australian anthropologists A.W. Howitt, Lorimer Fison, and Baldwin Spencer with American-based L.H. Morgan and British-based E.B Tylor (1970; 1985; 1987; Mulvaney & Calaby 1985). Similarly Janet Garber has documented the importance of the relationship between Pacific-based naturalists and Charles Darwin (1994).

Interpreting such correspondence relationships beyond the level of particular individuals has been the focus of substantial research. For example David Allen has noted the role of correspondence amongst naturalists in overcoming geographical remoteness (1994:18). Anne Secord has extended such explanations in her analysis of the relationship between British natural history field collectors and metropolitan naturalists during the early nineteenth century, by describing how ‘... letter-writing and correspondence networks were employed ... to transcend both geographical space and social distance’ (1994:386). She notes:

An exchange of letters is maintained if the interests of both recipient and writer are satisfied (Secord 1994).

4 This mode of engagement has also formed a major part of my research, involving innumerable letters from Australia to overseas museums, often generating lists in response.
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From my own research it is clear in the correspondence between collectors and museums that each of the receiving museums, and their departments, had their own style of correspondence and curation. It is these complex and diverse relationships which I explore here; relationships, between collector and curator which Aboriginal objects called into being, and within which such objects are embedded.

***

It is not a question of objects having more to do with Aboriginal people or Europeans, but of having meanings for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal cultures differently (Healy 1997:100).

This observation by the cultural historian Chris Healy goes directly to the heart of this thesis. There is no doubt that the Aboriginal objects which the European collectors acquired and sent to Britain had, and in many cases continue to have, significance to a range of Aboriginal people. However, rather than presenting an ethnography of the significance of such objects to Aboriginal people, my thesis is primarily a study of the different meanings of these objects to the European collector and museum, particularly their role within the relationship between collector and museum. That is, rather than focusing on these indigenous meanings or the objects per se, I am primarily concerned with the non-Aboriginal social and intellectual spaces which surrounded such objects in Britain at the turn of the century.

The collectors

To illustrate these themes I analyse two collectors, Henry Hillier and Emile Clement. At the turn of the nineteenth century these collectors each independently acquired Australian Aboriginal objects and botanic and zoological specimens from different parts of Australia; Hillier collected in central Australia and Clement collected in Northwest Australia. Many of the natural history objects were acquired in an ‘ethnographic’ context, one in which Hillier and Clement were assisted by indigenous people in acquiring the specimens, and drew upon indigenous people’s ecological knowledge to contextualise the specimens. As well as the objects, they collected details about the objects social and environmental contexts. Both Hillier and Clement then
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exported the products of their collecting activities to a variety of predominantly British and European museums (Appendices 1 to 4). By choosing to focus on Hillier and Clement I am able to consider the four broad types of museums which hold Aboriginal material in Britain. These are: national museums; university museums; regional-national museums; and provincial museums. By combining the archival traces of these collectors’ relationships with different museums it is possible to identify patterns beyond those evident in their correspondence with any single museum. In other words, rather than to looking at any single collection, or the holdings of any single museum, I obtain a more detailed image of the complexities of the relationship between collector and museum by examining a collector whose collections are represented in a number of different types of museums.

There is a symmetry in the letters associated with these two collectors. Hillier’s extensive correspondence, largely written in the field, illustrates the issues involved in the collection of material in Australia, while the letters of Clement, largely written from England after returning from the field, illustrate the processes involved in engaging with curators after the objects had been collected. Whilst I do not suggest that Hillier and Clement are necessarily typical of all collectors of Aboriginal objects, analysis of their collecting does provide a way of exploring some of the general assumptions made about the collection and curation of Aboriginal objects in Britain at the turn of the century.

The focus of the thesis is on the movement of collections of Aboriginal objects from Australia to Britain, the relationships between collectors and curators which underlay their movement, and the anthropological discourses in Britain with which they interacted. In particular I examine what happens in the gap between the moment where objects are collected in the field and the time of their arrival in the museum. Such gaps are unexamined in accounts of collecting. That is, the timing of the act of collection in the field and the timing of the arrival of a collection in the museum is taken to be synchronic. However I want to prise this gap apart and show that it is a space in which time passes, distances are travelled by people, objects and letters, and relationships between collectors and curators enacted. An understanding of the events which occur, and the relationships which are enacted, within this space is essential to developing an informed understanding of what such collections represent. I
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argue that rather than being seen as collections which reflect the culture of Aboriginal people, in fact they reflect the actions of Aboriginal people, collectors and curators, and embody the interactions between each of these agents.

I do not present this work as the definitive history of how Aboriginal objects moved from Australia to British museums. My research of Hillier and Clement shows that the complexities inherent in the relationships which underlay the movement of such objects defy a single work. Confronting such an expansive and, in many ways, still unknown historical terrain, my approach has been to borrow a methodology from archaeology; that of using test pits or sondages. In archaeology this is used as a preliminary excavation technique to develop an understanding of the stratigraphy of a site, to guide a more extensive program of excavation. By excavating below the surface in a number of locations across an archaeological site, the underlying stratigraphy is revealed, and the relationship between the cultural and geomorphological history of different parts of the site can be resolved. Thus an overview of the whole site is derived.

In this thesis I use three sondages, which examine each of the three sets of relationships involved in the collection process, the museum, the collector, and the Aboriginal people\(^5\) from whom the objects were obtained. Whilst I focus on the viewpoint of the collector, I excavate, or bring to light, something of the perspective of each agent on the collecting process.

Throughout the thesis I use the category ‘Aboriginal objects’, and by this I mean that body of artefacts which have historically been classified by curators as being anthropological, in that their style and function embodied a pre-modern state of being, and ideally that their form did not display European influence. I also use the category of ‘Aboriginal object’ to include a specific range of what are usually described as natural history specimens, but which my research has shown have collection histories intertwined with those of corresponding anthropological collections. That is, these natural history objects and their indigenous descriptions were collected at the same time and from the

\(^5\) I hesitate to use the term ‘maker and user’ to describe Aboriginal people’s relationship to these objects since, in a sense, all three agents have made and used the objects in such museum collections. In addition they may not have been obtained from the maker or user, but from an indigenous entrepreneur.
same place as anthropological objects, using the physical and intellectual labour of Aboriginal people.

Previous literature

Conceptually, this thesis straddles the disciplinary boundaries of anthropology, history, and museology. Within each of these disciplines there has been a dramatic increase in research based on collecting and museums during the last two decades, for example (Impey & MacGregor 1985; Lumley 1988; Pearce 1992; 1994; Stocking 1985; Vergo 1989). This interest has also been reflected in the establishment in 1989 of the *Journal of the history of collections*, the first multi-disciplinary journal focusing specifically on collection histories. Such research can be categorized into three broad themes which relate to the ideas developed in this thesis. These themes are: collectors, objects, and museums.

Within studies of anthropological collecting there have been two major strands relevant to my research. Firstly, there are a growing number of regional studies which have explored the relationship between collected anthropological objects and the ways in which European collectors acquired them from indigenous peoples. Arenas for this research have included the Pacific (O'Hanlon & Welsch forthcoming; Stanley 1994; Thomas 1991; 1992), the American southwest (Parezo 1987), the Canadian northwest (Cole 1985) and Africa (Schildkrout & Keim 1998). Within Australia too, a substantial body of work has been produced concerning the practice of collecting Australian Aboriginal objects and its linkage to colonial relations between Aboriginal people and Europeans. Examples include Isobel McByde’s important work on cross-cultural exchange with Europeans at Port Jackson (1989), and Philip Jones’ extensive research of different facets of the interaction between various collectors and the South Australia Museum at the turn of the century (1988a; 1988b; 1992; 1995; 1996; & E. Sutton 1986). More recently the historian Tom Griffiths has presented an interpretation of collecting which goes beyond anthropology, one in which he explores the phenomenon of Europeans collecting Aboriginal objects as part of a wider response by European settlers to a new landscape (1996).
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Secondly, there is a growing body of research which has focused on the significance of collecting, and the significance of objects, in the lives of collectors (Danet & Katriel 1994; Elsner & Cardinal 1994; Pearce 1995). Some studies have also focused on the ‘unscientific’ aspects of collecting, in constructing the identity of the collector (Muensterberger 1994; Stewart 1984). The relationship between collector and collecting is also a theme which has been developed in arenas beyond the academy, including autobiography (McAlpine 1994) and fiction (Nicholson 1994).

There have also been numerous biographical studies of some of the prominent individuals involved with particular museums, for example studies of the British Museum curator and collector A.W. Franks (Caygill & Cherry 1997; Wilson 1984) and studies of the British Museum’s African collector, Emile Torday (Mack 1990; 1998). Within Australian scholarship a small number of similar biographical studies of museum collectors has been undertaken, such as Ray Sumner’s study of Amalie Dietrich, the German anthropological and natural history collector (1993).

Linked to such a focus on the ‘collector’, the ‘object’ has also recently received considerable scholarly attention. Within anthropology the most influential recent work here has been the volume edited by Arjun Appadurai (1986), in which objects are revealed to be dynamic entities, whose meanings change throughout their ‘lives’ of production and consumption. Such work highlights the paradox of the object, in that while an object may have a fixed physicality, it also has a multitude of meanings; meanings which are subject to change depending on its context. This is an issue which has been extensively explored in the post-processual and contextual schools of archaeology theory, most prominently through the work of Ian Hodder, Christopher Tilley and Michael Shanks (Hodder 1982; 1989; 1991; Shanks & Tilley 1992; Tilley 1990).

Building on such work I treat Hillier’s and Clement’s collections of Aboriginal objects as objects in themselves. Borrowing a concept developed by Kopytoff (1986), I examine the ‘lives’ or ‘biographies’ of these collections of objects, as they shift from Australia to Britain. Such an approach provides an opportunity to explore changes in the meanings and values ascribed to them throughout their circulation, and how those values are determined and encoded (1986: 66-
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67). It also provides a framework for bringing together all the fragmentary and dissipated archival records of this movement of objects.

In contrast to the recent nature of much of the work on collectors and objects, there is a much older tradition for museums to produce an historical account of their establishment. Indeed, the publication of an institutional history, a common feature common amongst many British museums (for example Jenni Calder’s history of the Royal Scottish Museum (nd), William Stearn’s encyclopedic study of the Natural History Museum (1981)) appears to be almost de rigueur for museums. A similar pattern is evident in Australia where there has been something of a trend for state museums to produce ‘anniversary’ histories. Examples include Patricia Mather’s description of the Queensland Museum (1986), Pescott’s centenary history of the Museum of Victoria (1954), Ronald Strahan’s history of the Australian Museum (1979), and Herbert Hale’s account of the South Australian Museum (1956). Whilst such works are useful records of the activities and chronology of changes within each museum, the particularity of their focus does not allow them to address a more structural history of their formation, nor does it allow for a critical discussion of the relationship between collector and museum. It is only more recently that such works has began to appear, for example Impey and MacGregor’s study of the origins of the museum (1985), and the Foucaultian analyses of the development of the modern museum presented by Tony Bennett (1995a) and Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (1992).

Specifically in relation to British anthropological museums, a number of works examining the history of anthropology at the end of the nineteenth century have touched on the role of museums in the formation of the discipline, for example (Kuklick 1993; Stocking Jr. 1999; Urry 1993). There has also been a limited amount of research examining the relationship between the development of anthropology and Australian museums (Jones 1988a; 1996; Sutton 1986). However within such histories there has been a tendency to focus on the intellectual leaders of the time, and whilst such work is useful in detailing the intellectual contexts within which collections of Australian Aboriginal objects were given meaning, they are less useful for assessing the contribution of the collectors of such material. Although aware of events and debates within the British anthropological world, many of the collectors from whom British museums acquired anthropological objects did not play a direct
role in the key anthropological forums of the day such as the Anthropological Institute. Rather than presenting papers, their contribution was through their collections.

Another theme in research of museums has been the study of their role as arenas for the display and consumption of objects (Bennett 1995a; 1995b; 1997; Coombes 1991; 1994; Jenkins 1994; Karp & Lavine 1991; Sherman & Rogoff 1994). The exhibition techniques developed by Augustus Pitt Rivers have been a particular focus of this work (Chapman 1985; van Keuren 1984; 1989). There has also been important related research exploring different aspects of the display of anthropological material at international exhibitions, at which anthropological objects, including Aboriginal objects, were displayed (Breckenridge 1989; Mitchell 1988). Judith McKay has similarly analyzed the representation of Queensland Aborigines in such arenas (1998:232-245). Taking a slightly different focus, Sophie Forgan has examined the relationship between the physical space of the museum and its role 'as a site of scientific activity' (1994).

Again like studies of collecting, such research of the display of objects within museums, and the way in which the internal architecture of the museums functioned, is comparatively recent. For example, it was only in 1986 that Ghislaine Skinner noted in her study of the Henry Wellcome Museum that at that time within the literature there was a 'general lack of interest in the nature of museum display' (1986:417). This situation was in contrast to the situation at end of the nineteenth century. At that time critical surveys of the exhibition techniques used in different museums were of great interest within the museological world. This is demonstrated by the number of reports produced by curators who travelled overseas to compare the state of museums internationally, for example Oliver Farrington's 1899 survey of European and British museums (1899), and A.B. Meyer's 1903 survey (1905).

Despite this emerging literature on collectors, objects and museums, there are two major gaps in research, and to which this thesis makes a substantial contribution. Firstly, there has been very little research published that specifically concerns collections of Aboriginal objects which are held in British museums, or about the relationship between Australian-based collectors and British museums. The work which does exist is largely in the form of baseline
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inventories of Aboriginal objects held in overseas museums, for example (Cooper 1989; Gathercole & Clarke 1979). Only a small number of studies examining the context in which such collections were acquired have been published. These include works which document Aboriginal objects from a particular area which are now held in museums, for example Isobel McBayde’s work on the Richmond River District (1978; 1993), and accounts of those objects associated with well-known historical figures, such as Gaye Sculthorpe’s important study of the anthropological collections of G.A. Robinson (1990). There is no work which extends beyond the individual collector or museum.

There are a number of reasons for this lack of published research of indigenous cultural objects held in overseas museums. Firstly, as a result of the colonial context within which Australian museums have and continue to operate, a higher priority has been given to research aimed at identifying the location of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander human remains and secret/sacred objects in both Australian and overseas museums. Such research has been largely initiated by Aboriginal community organisations, and whilst it has resulted in some publications (Fforde 1992), the sensitivity of such information has meant that little of it has been distributed outside of the indigenous communities to which it relates. The prominence of repatriation within the Australian museum community has also led to a literature concerning the various intellectual and political issues involved in the repatriation of Aboriginal artefacts and human remains from Australian and overseas museums (Anderson 1995b; Fourmile 1987; 1990; 1992; Ormond-Parker 1997; Pannell 1995).

Another reason for the general lack of research of Aboriginal collections in British museums is that few British based scholars have been interested in the research potential of Aboriginal collections. Some of the few exceptions to this are Glover (1987), and Morphy & Edwards (1988), and the recent collection of essays marking the centenary of the Cambridge Expedition to the Torres Strait (Herle & Rouse 1998).

The second major gap in the literature is that whilst there is a growing body of work examining the relationship between museum and objects, between non-indigenous collectors and objects, and between indigenous people and objects, there has been little attention given to the relationships between the agents
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involved the collecting process. This is a feature which Markus Schindlebeck touched on in 1993, when he made the point that whilst the products of collecting – the objects – had received a lot of attention, the process by which they had come to be in museums had not (1993). He made the observation that Objects and others: Essays on museums and material culture, a foundational collection of essays edited by George Stocking in 1985, did not contain any articles on collecting (1993:57). Similarly, despite the impression given by the title of a recent collection, The scramble for art in Central Africa (Schildkrout & Keim 1998), much of its content does not address the process of collecting.

In order to fill these gaps in the literature I present my work as a series of examinations, or sondages, of each of the agents involved in the collecting process. I begin the first sondage with two chapters examining the British context into which Aboriginal objects, and accounts of such objects, flowed at the end of the nineteenth century. In Chapter 2 I address the question of what paradigms, discourse, structures and individuals were present in British anthropological forums at the end of the nineteenth century that encouraged the collection of Australian Aboriginal objects. I approach this through a study of the changes in the content of ‘anthropology’ presented at the Anthropological Institute and Section H of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the influence of key curators whose views publicly set out the subject matter and approaches which defined anthropology at the turn of the century. I demonstrate that the collection of Australian Aboriginal objects was part of a broader pattern of growth in intellectual interest in anthropological material culture. I also show how the prominent discourses about totemism created an interest in a particular type of Aboriginal object, the tjurunga, an object which was seen to embody, or represent, totemism. As well as the intellectual interest in objects, tjurungas engendered a personal and passionate acquisitive interest in curators. Collectors such as Sarah Hillier were able to take advantage of this interest by museums in marketing their collections to museums.

In Chapter 3 I examine the variety of museums with which collectors of Australian Aboriginal objects were engaging. I describe how, within British museological circles during the second half of the nineteenth century, there

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6 An exception here is Buschmann’s excellent study of the relationship between the collector Franz Boluminski and German museums (1996).
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were moves to influence museums to move away from being ‘unscientific’ and aesthetic institutions, to become ‘scientific’ and didactic in their social role. I then examine the range of British museums collecting Aboriginal objects, the sorts of relationships they had with their collectors, and their subsequent differing abilities to influence the types of objects they were receiving. For museums to best achieve their didactic aims, they had to be able to acquire particular types of objects and collections, with particular levels of contextual information. One way that national museums attempted to achieve this was through issuing ‘instructions’ and guides for collectors. I explore the structure of these guides, focusing on what they were intended to achieve, and on the extent to which they were successful. I argue that such guides became objects in themselves, within a broader exchange system.

Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 comprise the second sondage, in which I examine the lives of two collectors, and the complexity of their engagement with curators. In Chapter 4 I critically review the way in which collector categories have been used in the literature, and existing models of the relationship between collectors and their collections. In Chapters 5 and 6 I present biographical contexts for two particular collectors of Aboriginal objects, Henry Hillier and Emile Clement. I detail the complex, ambiguous, and at times contradictory relationships between their collection of anthropological and natural history objects and other aspects of their lives. In Chapter 7 I compare and contrast Hillier’s extensive and diverse correspondence with both natural history and anthropological curators. I tease out the differences in the way Hillier interacted with these bodies of material. Hillier is revealed to be an active participant in a complex exchange of objects and ideas moving back and forth between central Australia and Britain.

Chapter 8 completes the trilogy of sondages. Here I shift the focus of my analysis to Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, the two central Australian Lutheran missions where Hillier collected. I explore how his activities connected with relationships between the mission staff and Aboriginal people, which existed before and during his presence. I argue that collection of objects was only one aspect of a broader activity of cultural collecting taking place, involving both Hillier and other mission staff. I also explore how the pre-European significance of the Killalpaninna landscape to Aboriginal people relates to the action of Europeans collecting there. I argue that rather than
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seeing the European act of collecting as a rupture from the pre-settler Aboriginal activities associated with the place, there were dimensions to the indigenous significance of Killalpaninna— for example as a centre for trade and as a place of sanctuary— which allowed collecting to be interpreted by Aboriginal people as an activity related to past practices.

I conclude the thesis by raising the question of what sort of landscapes are invoked and or represented in the museum collections of such objects. In addressing this question I propose a model of collecting in which the objects and their documentation are viewed as the result of the collector mediating between the scientific view of place as an environment promoted by the museum, and the indigenous view of place as cultural landscape. Such a model acknowledges the links between material now held in separate anthropological museums and natural history museums, the agency of Aboriginal people, and the complexity of the collectors relationships with both curators and Aboriginal people. It also allows links to be drawn between the objects held by these institutions and other cultural products, such as Clement’s anthropological photographs and Hillier’s watercolours of material culture objects and natural history specimens, which document the response of collectors to their surrounds.
Chapter 2 – Aboriginal objects and the British anthropological world

In 1889 W.H. Flower, the esteemed museologist and President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), emphasised what he saw as the important role of objects and museums within British science.

There can be no doubt that among the various methods by which the aims of the British Association (as expressed in its full title, the advancement of science) may be brought about, the collection of objects available for examination, study and reference – in fact the formation of what are now called ‘museums’ – is one of very practical importance (1890:4).

By the end of the nineteenth century, such views within the museums and anthropological community underpinned the fashion to possess anthropological objects, including Australian Aboriginal material. It was this desire by British museums to possess Aboriginal objects which I explore in this chapter. I argue that it was both the intellectual developments within anthropology and the administrative location of the discipline which encouraged the collection of such objects.

Anthropology in Britain at the turn of the century was a mix of people, ideas and institutions. The collection of Aboriginal objects both contributed to and was encouraged by this synergy. Under the influence of key British museum curators, the study of objects became a major focus in British anthropology at this time. Here I will examine the way in which Australian Aboriginal objects articulated with the discipline.

Late nineteenth century anthropology had developed out of the plethora of diverse interests of those involved, including individuals with medical,
geographical, zoological backgrounds and professional training. Their backgrounds influenced the character of anthropology at that time. For example, the museologist W.H. Flower, who had trained in medicine, saw the subject matter of anthropology as expansive; it embraced all human action. In defining ‘anthropological’ collections in his Presidential address to Section H of the BAAS, he stated that they should include:

...all that is in not only the old British Museum but the South Kensington [Victoria and Albert] Museum and the National Gallery. The notion of an anthropology which considers savages and pre-historic people as apart from the rest of mankind may, in the limitations of human powers, have certain conveniences, but it is utterly unscientific and loses sight of the great value of the study in tracing the gradual growth of our complex systems and customs from the primitive ways of our progenitors (1890:9).

By the 1890s, however, the rise of other social ‘sciences’ had, to a large extent focused anthropology on the study of ‘the primitive’. Anthropological narratives were dominated by accounts which sought to relate what were perceived to be the different races of ‘man’ within a globalising cultural and biological evolutionary framework. Thus the common goal of much of anthropological research at this time was to understand the relationships between different cultural groups; for example their origins, and their history of interactions. The approaches used included the comparative study of different groups’ anatomy, language, myths, religion, and objects.

Within such narratives Australian Aborigines were assigned a particular role, based on perceived ‘primitiveness’. Whilst there was debate about the exact relationship between them and the pristine state of ‘natural man’ – for example about whether Aborigines both culturally and anatomically represented a degenerate or an earlier stage of humanity – descriptions of Australian Aboriginal people and their objects were repeatedly used to illustrate a ‘savage’ state of living humanity. For example the esteemed philologist Friedrich Max Müller wrote:

If we hold that the human race forms but one species, we cannot, of course, admit that the ancestors even of the most savage tribes, say of the Australians, came into
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the world one day later than the ancestors of the Greeks, or that they passed through fewer revolutions than their more favoured brethren. (Müller 1892:784).

An example of how such attitudes influenced the interpretation of material culture is contained in the later writings of the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor. At this time Tylor held the readership in anthropology at Oxford, and was one of the most prominent figures within the discipline (Stocking 1987). During the early 1890s, he contributed numerous papers to both the Anthropological Institute and Section H (anthropology) of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Amongst these were a number specifically focused on the interpretation of Tasmanian Aboriginal material culture (1894a; 1894b; 18991). In such papers Tylor used Tasmanian Aboriginal stone artefacts to support his evolutionary framework. He concluded that the technology of the Tasmanians showed that:

The condition of modern savages illustrates the condition of ancient stone age peoples, representatives of a stage of culture at once early in date and low in degree (1894a:152).

Despite the implications of such perjorative conclusions, Tylor’s use of objects did reflect a transition in the way anthropologists used anthropological collections. At the beginning of the period the discipline was still emerging from its antiquarian origins; by the 1890s, however, some of the leading practitioners in Britain were keen to distinguish ‘scientific’ ethnological collections from those of the earlier antiquarian age. As the noted Egyptologist W.M. Flinders Petrie stated in an address to BAAS:

The evil traditions of a ‘collection of curiosities’ still brood over our materials; and until we face the fact that for study the most common things are generally more important than the rare ones, anthropology must remain much as chemistry would if restricted to the study of pretty colours and sweet scents’ (1896:820).

1 In his paper to the 1898 BAAS meeting Tylor extended his analysis to stone artefacts from Western Australia. In his 1893 Presidential Address to the Anthropological Institute, Tylor also made a passing comment on the perceived extinction of the Tasmanian Aborigines (1893:376). John Mulvaney also makes the important point that Tylor’s initial interpretation was based on a single artefact (1964 :40).
Similarly, Charles Hercules Read, who at that time was the curator responsible for the British Museum’s anthropological collections, wrote:

The science [of anthropology] is new, and ... it is only within the last few years that such collections have been made on scientific lines, instead of being governed only by the attractive character or rarity of the object (1900a:866).

This move away from focusing on the aesthetic qualities of objects was accompanied by an approach that interpreted collections of objects as having the potential to constitute objective facts. For example, in 1894, W.H. Flower was able to authoritatively state:

One of the most potent means of registering facts, and making them available for future study and reference, is to be found in actual collections of tangible objects. (1895:764).

The emphasis here was on developing a scientific approach to the study of objects, through their classification and arrangement so as to reveal underlying relationships.

At this time both skeletal and soft tissue remains of indigenous peoples were also treated as legitimate objects for anthropological study. Stocking has noted that in the early 1890s physical anthropology had become a dominant theme in the discipline (1999:104). The prominence of Alexander Macalister, the Professor of Anatomy at Cambridge between 1883 and 1919, in the Anthropological Institute and BAAS reflects this. He held the position as BAAS President in 1892, and as Anthropological Institute President in 1893 and 1894. In particular he and his Cambridge colleague William Duckworth presented a number of papers on various aspects of the anatomy of Australian Aboriginal people (Duckworth 1894; 1895; 1898; 1902; Macalister 1893b; 1898). Such analyses were generally aimed at refining the perceived racial types based on skeletal measurements and exploring the possibility of further subdividing the Australian types (Macalister 1894:401). The work of measuring and comparing such material was similar to the techniques applied to anthropological objects. Macalister wrote:
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we should regard the skull not as a whole complete in itself, nor as a crystalline geometric solid, nor as an invariable structure, but as a marvellously plastic part of the human frame, whose form depends on the cooperation of influences, the respective share of which in moulding the head are capable of qualitative if not of quantitative analysis (Macalister 1893a:890).

Macalister’s paper then sought to establish a common method to be used in measuring and analysing skulls. In illustrating his paper he continually used the example of different aspects of Australian Aboriginal skulls. Implicit in such work was the notion that the skulls of Australian Aboriginal lay at one end of a morphological development sequence, with the skull of the ‘average Englishman’ located at the other end.

As well as being the subject of many papers, skeletal material was also frequently exhibited at meetings of the Anthropological Institute. For example in May 1893 C. Dudley Cooper ‘... exhibited the skull of an aboriginal Australian’, and similarly in 1894, Duckworth exhibited ‘Australian (Queensland) skulls from tree burials’ (Anthropological Institute, 1895:285).

Thus, collections of ‘cultural objects’ and collections of skeletal remains were used in both text and display to demonstrate what were perceived to be the different development stages of humanity. Such interpretations assumed that the perceived complexity of material culture forms was directly related to the cultural complexity of different groups. The noted ethnologist Augustus Pitt Rivers expressed this in the following way.

The one great feature which it is desirable to emphasise in connection with the exhibition of archaeological and ethnological specimens is evolution. To impress upon the mind the continuity and historical sequence of the arts of life is, without doubt, one of the most important lessons to be inculcated (1889:825).

The most renowned application of such an approach to objects was the schema which Pitt Rivers developed through curating his own extensive anthropological collections. This schema continued to be used when the bulk of these collections were given to the University of Oxford in 1884 (Chapman 1985). Objects on display were arranged according to a classification system
based on the form and perceived function of the objects. As the curator of the museum, Henry Balfour, described it:

the primary basis of classification which is adopted, and which distinguishes it from other kindred Museums, is one akin to that employed in the arrangement of most Natural History Museums, the objects being grouped according to their, as it were, morphological affinities and resemblances, all objects of like form and function being brought into groups, which again are sub-divided into smaller groups, into genera and species, as one might almost say (Balfour 1897:51).

Here Balfour has made the link to natural history explicit. Balfour also went further to suggest the purpose of such an arrangement.

by arranging the specimens in each group in progressive series, that is by commencing with those objects which appear to be the most primitive and generalised of their class, and leading gradually up to the higher and more specialised forms, the developmental history of the higher forms may be, at anyrate [sic] suggestively, illustrated, and material be supplied for the study of the growth of culture (Balfour 1897:52).

The physical distance of British museums from Australia, the place where Aboriginal objects were created and used, meant that the technique of relating objects, using only their form and a broad understanding of their function, and ignoring the details of their social context, was one well suited to curation and display of Australian objects.

As a result of the interest of the discipline in collections of anthropological objects, the role of anthropological museums and collections was one of the themes often discussed in the anthropological forums during the period between 1890 and 1914. For example at the 1890 BAAS meeting John Evans, the curator of the Ashmolean Museum, noted:

Not only have the books and periodicals that treat ethnology multiplied in all European languages, but the number of museums that have been formed with the express purpose of illustrating the manners and customs of the lower races of mankind has also largely increased [my emphasis] (1891:967).

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Four years later W.H. Flower similarly noted that:

The anthropological museums of this country, as well as elsewhere, are all of recent growth, and they are making good progress with steadily accelerating speed (1895:764).

The growth in British anthropological museums and collections was also matched by a broader public interest beyond simply specialist anthropologists. Indeed, C.H. Read noted that at the British Museum, the anthropological collections were the next most popular after the Egyptian mummies (1901:17).

Another factor encouraging the growth of anthropological collections was the belief that as didactic devices, the display of objects was viewed as being more efficacious than simply displaying illustrations. As John Evans noted:

... the student of the development of human civilisation has now the actual weapons, implements, utensils, dress and other appliances of most of the known savage peoples ready at hand for examination, and no longer trusts to the often imperfect representations given in books of travel (1891: 967).

Perhaps in response to the increase in collections, figures such as Pitt Rivers stressed that there was a need not just to accumulate larger and larger collections but for such collections to be presented.

[a museum] should be something more than a store, it should have some backbone in it. It should be in itself a means of conveying knowledge, and not a mere repository of objects from which knowledge can be culled by those who know where to look for it. A national museum, created and maintained at the public expense, should be available for public instruction, and not solely a place of reference for savants. (Pitt Rivers 1889:825).

Despite such optimism for the didactic potential of collections of objects and the support of leading anthropological figures for the growth of collections, the results of the 1898 Cambridge expedition to the Torres Strait were to transform the discipline and shift the focus away from objects (Kuklick 1994). The expedition was led by A.C. Haddon, who had been trained as a naturalist. He brought together a multi-disciplinary team, with many of the participants going on to become leaders in their respective fields. The team comprised the
experimental psychologist W.H.R. Rivers; Charles Seligman, a specialist in tropical diseases; the physicians William Dougall and Charles Myers; Sidney Ray, a self-taught linguist; and Haddon’s student Anthony Wilkins who served as the expedition’s photographer (Herle & Rouse 1998b:1). The seven members of the expedition returned to Britain in 1899 and presented preliminary papers to Section H of BAAS in the same year. Rivers and Myers presented three more papers in 1901.

This was the first occasion where a systematic program of anthropological research had been undertaken by British scholars in the field. Up to this point British theorists such as E.B. Tylor,2 J.G. Frazer and Andrew Lang had had little personal experience of fieldwork. Instead they relied on information provided by correspondents in the different colonies, who sent back descriptions, objects and responses to questionnaires. As Cambridge Torres Strait Expedition participants such as W.H.R. Rivers and A.C. Haddon took their experience of anthropological fieldwork back to the discipline in Britain, theories began to change. Interpretations of material culture also changed. The complexities of the social role and life of objects became apparent, and as a result the shortcomings of the evolutionary theories of material culture became apparent. Diffusion of explanations for different cultural forms became an alternative to the shortcomings of evolutionary explanations.

These changes were also accompanied by a more general shift in the focus of the discipline away from the study of objects. By the early twentieth century, the view of what material culture was understood to represent, had been transformed – to the extent that W.H.R. Rivers was able to state:

that in distinguishing between the effects of mere contact and the intermixture of peoples, material objects are the least trustworthy of all the constituents of culture (Rivers 1912:496).

Here Rivers was not so much criticising the study of objects, but the assumption that formal and distributional studies of objects could reveal, in an unproblematic way, information about cultural diffusion.

2Although Stocking notes that Tylor had spent a year travelling in America 1856, including accompanying the antiquarian Henry Christy on a four month trip in Mexico (Stocking, 1987:157).
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By the second decade of the twentieth century the focus of anthropology had moved away from the study of objects. Under the influence of the functionalist orientations of Radcliffe-Brown’s and Malinowski’s research, the discipline moved to focus on the study of cultural practices. An outcome of this move away from objects and of the increasing numbers of dedicated positions in British Universities was that the position of authority within the discipline began to move away from the museums towards the universities. This decentring of the role of objects in the construction of anthropological knowledge heralded the beginnings of professionalism within the discipline, and a subsequent reduction in the role and influence of the amateur.

For a critical period at the end of the nineteenth century, museums were thus crucial to the production of anthropological discourses. During this period the study of anthropology was only beginning to have a presence in British universities;³ for example, the first teaching position dedicated to anthropology was created in 1884 with Edward Burnett Tylor’s appointment as Reader in Anthropology at Oxford. The next academic appointment dedicated to anthropology was not made until the early 1890s;⁴ the production and dissemination of anthropological knowledge therefore largely lay outside the universities. The two major forums in which this activity took place were the regular meetings of the Anthropological Institute, and Section H (Anthropology) of the Annual meetings of BAAS.⁵

The Anthropological Institute⁶

The Anthropological Institute had been formed in 1871 from the amalgamation of the older Ethnological Society, established in 1843, and the Anthropology Society of London, established in 1863. David Van Keuren has described how James Hunt established the Anthropology Society of London in opposition to

³ The need for dedicated university positions was a recurring theme in the presidential addresses of both BAAS and the AI during this period. For example see (Read, 1901:15).
⁴ A.C. Haddon began teaching ethnology and sociology at Cambridge in 1895, although he did not acquire a permanent lectureship until 1900 (Stocking Jr., 1999:107; van Keuren, 1982:250)
⁵ Although I describe each of these separately, they were not independent of each other. Many of the same people held administrative positions in each of them, and published papers in both of them.
⁶ In 1907 the Anthropological Institute changed its name to the Royal Anthropological Institute.
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the established Ethnological Society (1982). During the 1860s and 1870s these two organisations had fierce battles over the intellectual basis of the subject (Stocking 1971). Although epistemological differences over theories of human origins were a major reason for the conflict, Van Keuren also notes that there were political differences as well, with the Tory orientation of the Anthropology Society of London contrasting with the predominantly liberal views of the Ethnological Society (1982:60-1).

By the 1890s the Anthropological Institute had developed into a prestigious London based learned society which met every two or three weeks to hear papers and partake in discussions on various anthropological topics. Exhibitions of objects were a regular feature. The journal of the Institute described how such exhibitions were an integral part of the format of the meetings. It noted:

Specimens are exhibited, and coffee served at 8.00 pm; Reading of Papers commences at 8.30. (Inside cover of JAI Vol XXVII No3).

In his 1905 Presidential Address to the Institute, the curator Henry Balfour described the advantages of displaying objects for generating discussion.

I am convinced that the exhibition of actual objects, whether as illustrations to a formal paper, or as nuclei around which informal discussions may develop, has a stimulating effect in developing a keen interest in ethnology. The specimens have the advantage of being more convincing than pictures, and of remaining in view throughout the evening, leaving a lasting impression, as contrasted with the staccato and ephemeral impression derived from rapidly changing lantern slides (1905:13-14).

Encouraging the exhibition of objects at the meetings also allowed members to participate in the anthropological discourses in ways which were more immediate and less formal than the preparation of written papers. It was within such a forum that Australian Aboriginal topics were regularly discussed. For example an Anthropological Institute meeting in March 1898 consisted of three presentations involving Aboriginal themes, two of which
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involved the exhibition of objects or representations of objects. It was recorded that:

The President introduced the Hon. David W. Carnegie who had lately returned from an exploration in Western Australia, and who proceeded to describe a large collection of ethnological objects which he had brought home. ... A discussion ensued, carried on by Mr Edge-Partington, Mr C.H. Read and Mr R.B. Holt.  
(Anthropological Institute 1899a:19).

Carnegie’s presentation included an exhibition of a Western Australian collection. At this same meeting, there was also a display of ‘a very interesting series of photographs of Australian Dilly Baskets sent by Mr Robert Etheridge, of the Australian Museum, Sydney’ (Anthropological Institute 1899a:19). It was noted that ‘Many of these objects were highly ornate, and offered curious illustrations of aboriginal decorative art’.  

As well as illustrating the way in which Australian Aboriginal themes were incorporated within the anthropological discourse of the day, both Carnegie’s exhibition of objects and Etheridge’s photographs point to how the display of objects, or representations of objects, played an important role in developing and contributing to discourses about Australian Aboriginal themes. The account of the meeting also shows the interest of both Charles H. Read and James Edge-Partington11 such Australian material. Both of these figures were closely associated with the British Museum’s ethnographic department.

7 The exhibition of Australian Aboriginal artefacts and skeletal remains at anthropological meetings dates back to at least 1844. Professor Owen exhibited a skull from South Australia ‘... as an example of the habit of the tribe to convert that part of the human body into a vessel for holding and carrying water’ (BAAS, 1845:77-78).
8 Carnegie was the recently returned Western Australian Government surveyor gold.
9 From a report of the meeting in Nature, March 31 1898, No 1483, Vol 57: 526...
11 James Edge Partington (1854-1930) was an important figure amongst the British ethnographic collecting community. Although not a curator, for many years he worked as a supernumerary within the British Museum with A.W. Franks and C.H. Read. He was also an active member of the AI.
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The British Association for the Advancement of Science

The second major forum within which discussions of anthropology took place in Britain during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS). The format of the BAAS annual meetings was to present a series of papers in concurrent sessions classified into the different branches of ‘science’. For example at its first meeting, held at York in 1831, papers were organised into ten separate sections of mathematics, optics, acoustics, magnetism-electricity, chemistry, meteorology, geography-geology, zoology-anatomy-physiology, botany, and the arts. During the nineteenth century these sections changed in response to changes in the conceptualisation of knowledge. Subjects continually merged and split. The changing location of anthropology is an example of this. It was originally placed with the natural sciences between 1841 and 1850, then placed with geography between 1851 and 1868, and then moved back to the natural sciences between 1869 and 1883 – before attaining recognition as an independent disciplinary section in 1884. These changes indicate the changes in what was considered to be the defining content and methodology of ‘anthropology’.

BAAS differed from the Anthropological Institute in that each annual BAAS meeting was held in a different location in Britain, with occasional meetings held in other parts of the British Empire, such as Montreal in 1884, Toronto in 1897, South Africa in 1905, and Australia in 1914. The shifting location of each meeting allowed for access by audiences outside of London, and on occasions, outside of Britain. It also expanded the range of people presenting papers.

Another outcome of the changing location of the annual meetings was a greater variety of interests and themes being put forward due to changes in the organisational committee for each year. Often a proportion of the papers presented at meetings would focus on the region in which it was being held, for example at Cardiff in 1891 papers included Dr Phene’s paper on ancient Welsh customs and Seward’s paper on the archaeology of Glamorganshire.

12 During this period there was a change in the name of the discipline from ethnology to anthropology. This mirrored the changes in the Ethnology Society and the Anthropological Institute (Stocking, 1971).
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Such a structure also made it more difficult for any particular group to directly control the material and interpretations presented. In this it differed from the organisation of other societies concerned with anthropology such as the Anthropological Institute. By contrast, Van Keuren has described how there was a high continuity in the membership of the Anthropological Institute Council during the period from 1873 to 1913 (1982:99).

The first papers presented at BAAS which focused on Australian Aboriginal material were given at the 1846 meeting in Southampton. These were H.B. Davies’ On the Tasmanians and Mrs Short’s On the Inhabitants of Port Essington (BAAS 1847:117). Although only the titles of these two papers were published, their titles suggest that like other early papers, they focused on surface aspects of Aboriginal culture, or simply served to fill in the gaps about different groups from different regions, like Thomson’s Observations of some Aboriginal tribes of New Holland (referred to in BAAS 1851) and Townsend’s Notes on the Australians (referred to in BAAS 1851). Early papers also focused on physical anthropology and were particularly directed to understanding the relationship between Aboriginal people and Europeans, for example (Corbett 1857; Huxley 1866; Wake 1870a and Wake 1870b). Early references to Aboriginal people also occurred as asides in papers primarily reporting the results of expeditions, for example (Austin 1856; Sturt 1856 and Wilson 1858).

Beginning in the 1870s there was a transition in the content of papers concerning Australian Aboriginal topics. A number of papers began to speculate about the internal dynamics of Aboriginal culture. The most prominent example of this was the volume of papers presented that focused on aspects of Aboriginal religious life and particularly on the theme of totemism, for example (Tylor 1873; Wake 1887; Fawcett 1890; Tylor 1891; Gomme 1907; Haddon 1911; Golderweisser 1911; Graebner 1911; Webster 1911; Waxweiler 1911 and Brown 1914).

Within both BAAS and the Anthropological Institute, a number of museum curators were influential. In the absence of university positions, museums provided some of the few paid positions relating to anthropology. Thus a number of the people holding prominent positions in British anthropology at the turn of the century were curators of British museums. For example, in 1900
curators comprised 31% of the membership of the Anthropological Institute Council (van Keuren 1982:164). In particular, between 1899 and 1905, the curators Alfred Court Haddon, Charles Hercules Read, and Henry Balfour all held the position of presidency of the Anthropological Institute and presidency of Section H of BAAS at different times. The positions provided these curators with a platform from which they could promote the ethnological study, collection and display of objects as an important part of anthropological research. In their roles as curators, each of these figures also engaged with collectors of Aboriginal objects. What sorts of topics and approaches did they promote whilst holding influential positions in the discipline?

A.C. Haddon made major contributions to anthropology through his leadership of the Cambridge Torres Strait Expedition. However he was also an important figure through his involvement with the Anthropological Institute and BAAS. He was appointed as a Fellow of the Anthropological Institute in 1889; and served as its President in 1902 and 1903. He served as President of BAAS Section H in 1902 and 1905. He also had significant involvement with numerous British museums. During the 1880s he had also been a part of the BAAS committee reporting on provincial museums in Britain. During his period as Professor of Zoology at the Royal College of Science, Dublin, Haddon was assistant naturalist to the Dublin Museum of Science and Art. He also served as an advisory curator at the Horniman Museum between 1902 and 1915 and acted as Deputy Curator at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology several times (Herle 1998a).

Haddon saw the collection and research of anthropological objects as being an important part of anthropology, particularly in their capacity to educate. In his Anthropological Institute Presidential Address of 1902, he wrote definitively:

The means for the advancement of the science of anthropology fall under the following headings: 1. The collection of information in the field; 2. The publication of such information; 3. The collection of specimens; 4. The preservation of specimens; 5. The publication of museum specimens; 6. The instruction of students; 7. Independent investigation of collected material (Haddon 1902:8).
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An example of the importance he placed on collections is contained in his Presidential Address to the 1905 BAAS meeting, held in South Africa. In what he termed ‘a general view of the anthropological situation in South Africa’ (1906:522-3), his priorities for future research in South Africa included studying ‘... the significance of the form and function of objects and the symbolism (if there is any) of the decorative art (1906:525).

For example, reflecting the broad notion of the time, Haddon also saw collecting as part of a broader project of salvaging cultures’ ‘data’. Haddon articulated this paradigm, which at that time underlay much anthropological work, when he stated:

In sober earnestness I appeal to all those who are interested in the history and character of man, whether they be theologians, historians, sociologists, psychologists, or anthropologists, to face the plain fact that the only available data for the solution of many problems of the highest interest are daily slipping beyond recovery (Haddon 1903b:752).

Similarly, in 1905 Haddon again drew on the notion of cultural ‘salvage’. He wrote:

... our first and immediate duty is to save for science the data that are vanishing; this should be the watchword of the present day (1906:524).

As well as his intellectual interest in material culture, Haddon’s interest and involvement in museum issues is demonstrated in the changes that he oversaw at the Horniman Museum during his role as Advisor Curator. Important amongst these was the modernisation of what had been an antiquarian museum. This involved establishing a systematic catalogue of the existing collection, guidelines for the selection of new acquisitions, and structuring the exhibition of its collections along evolutionary lines. The museum’s library was also upgraded, with emphasis placed on acquiring contemporary scientific journals and standard reference works. Such changes flowed from his belief that the primary role of the museum was to educate the public. There were three strands to Haddon’s vision. These were to provide public access to modern collections, modern literature, and modern scientific interpretations of different aspects of the world via public lectures.
Another important figure was Charles Hercules Read (1857-1929). Read had been appointed as an assistant in the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum in 1880. He succeeded A.W. Franks as Keeper of the Department in 1896. Although he did not undertake any fieldwork or produce any major anthropological text during his career, he was influential in the anthropological community. He was appointed a Fellow of the Anthropological Institute in 1875, and served as its President for three years between 1899 and 1901 and then later between 1917 and 1919 (1900b; 1901). He also served as President of BAAS Section H in 1899 (1900a). Throughout his career, his major focus was the promotion of anthropological collecting and museums.

Implicit throughout his 1900 Presidential paper to the Anthropological Institute is what he saw as the important role of ethnographic collections within anthropology. For example his review of the work done in anthropology during the year includes a description of the major ethnographic collections acquired by the British Museum, the Cambridge University museums, and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Even within the format of the regular Anthropological Institute meetings, Read promoted a role for ethnographic collecting, stating that one of the ways in which the Institute's Fellows could 'add considerably to the interest of the evening meetings' was by '... exhibiting specimens, and providing a small note' (1900b:10).

Read first proposed the concept of an Imperial Bureau of Ethnology, modeled on the similar American institution, at the 1896 BAAS meeting in Liverpool (1897:928), and raised it again in his 1899 address to BAAS (1900a). He saw such body as being necessary to oversee and coordinate the results of ethnological research and collecting being undertaken throughout the British Empire, as well as anthropological teaching within Britain.

In 1900 Read also promoted the need in Britain for a national Museum of Anthropology. He linked the urgency for its creation to a need to assert the position of the Empire, stating that until such a museum was created '... we shall never take the scientific position to which our empire is entitled' (Read 1900b:13). In encouraging a greater government commitment to
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anthropological museums, Read also saw them as having a wider role beyond science:

The value of such museums is by no means confined to the scientific inquirer, but they may equally be made to serve the purpose of the trader and the public at large (1900a:865).

In questioning the British government’s commitment to museums, as opposed to the German support, he asked rhetorically:

Where, if not in England, should be found the completest collections of all the races of the Empire? (1900a:864-5)

A third British curator who was influential in the anthropological community was Henry Balfour (1863-1939), the curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum from 1891 until 1939. During this time he served as President of Section H, BAAS in 1904 and Anthropological Institute President during 1903 and 1904 (1904; 1905). Balfour, together with W.B. Spencer, had assisted with the setting up of the Pitt Rivers collection in 1884. He continued his involvement with the Pitt Rivers Museum, working as E.B. Tylor’s assistant, until he was appointed as curator in 1891. He served in this position until his death in 1939. Thus Balfour was the mainstay of the Pitt Rivers Museum from 1891 to 1939, which at that time was the largest, specifically ethnographic museum in Britain. In this role Balfour was in a position to influence collectors. His publications were often described different aspects of Pitt River’s evolutionary system of object arrangement, which was used in the Pitt Rivers Museum (1897).

Through his positions at BAAS and the Anthropological Institute, Balfour frequently promoted the study of objects, and the importance of anthropological museums. For example, in his 1903 Presidential Address to the Anthropological Institute, Balfour discussed suggested the problem of smaller museums in Britain seeking to represent anthropological themes. He suggested that rather than organising their collections geographically, there museums should specialise on collecting all the variants of particular cultural forms (1904).
People such as Haddon, Read and Balfour were amongst the key curators involved in British museums acquiring collections of Australian Aboriginal objects.

**Aboriginal objects and the British anthropological world**

In the first half of this chapter, I have outlined the anthropological forums within which interpretations of anthropological objects, particularly Australian Aboriginal objects, took place. I have also reviewed the different intellectual and organisational roles played by three prominent curators, Read, Haddon and Balfour, in promoting the study of such objects as an essential part of anthropology. I now turn to consider the specific interplay between these structures and accounts of Aboriginal objects. That is, the ways in which these structures influenced the presentation of Australian Aboriginal objects, and vice versa. I argue that a number of the themes evident in the sorts of material and the style of its presentation, encouraged an interest within Britain museums in collecting Aboriginal anthropological material.

Many of the papers presented to the Anthropological Institute and at Section H of BAAS during the 1890s which drew on Australian Aboriginal topics consisted of descriptions of particular objects, cultural practices, or lists of indigenous words. Among such papers were a large number by two Australian-based authors, R.H. Mathews and Robert Etheridge Jnr.

Mathews, a retired surveyor, was a member of numerous anthropological and scientific societies in Australia, the United States and Europe and published profusely; during the period between 1890 and 1914 he presented fifteen papers to the Anthropological Institute (1895; 1896a; 1896b; 1896c; 1896d; 1897; 1898a; 1898b; 1903; 1904; 1907; 1908a; 1908b; 1911; 1912). His papers contained very little explicit theorising, often conveying information he had collected from correspondents in Australia. Despite, or perhaps as a result of, the quantity of his publications, Mathews’ work was criticized by some of his peers.

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13 For example Emile Clement, one of the two collectors profiled later in this thesis, published a vocabulary of the Guallama people from northwest Australia in the Anthropological Institute’s *Journal* (1899).
contemporaries. For example in a letter to the Queensland-based anthropologist Walter E. Roth, Baldwin Spencer wrote disparagingly:

By the by, do you ever come across the papers of a man named R.H. Mathews. Mostly his work I think is got from other people but he has published mainly in the RS of NSW an intermediate series of papers dealing almost exclusively with the class names and marriages of tribes galore. He has a most remarkable faculty of mixing up the classes and is a perfect fraud which when in Sydney I had the pleasure of telling him ... Howitt and myself have agreed to ignore him and I am glad to see that you do the same.\textsuperscript{14}

As well as indicating his disapproval of Mathews' work, Spencer's comments about strategies for responding to Mathews reveal the close-knit nature of the anthropological community in Australia at this time. Indeed, in the same letter to Roth, Spencer boasted of the control which he, Gillen, Howitt and Roth exerted over the production of ideas about Australian Aborigines. He wrote:

He [Howitt] deals mainly with the SE Australian tribes and up into the centre as far north as Lake Eyre. You take the NE and Gillen and myself the central and northern tribes so that between the four of us half of Australia is pretty well worked out.\textsuperscript{15}

Another frequent contributor of papers to British anthropological publications was Robert Etheridge Jnr., the curator at the Australian Museum. In addition to Etheridge’s photographic exhibition of basketry at the Anthropological Institute discussed earlier, Etheridge presented a series of six papers to the Anthropological Institute (1894a; 1894b; 1894c; 1895; 1896; 1897).\textsuperscript{16} These papers were frequently about particular types of objects, such as the ‘drummung shield’ (1897) or ‘an unusual form of rush basket’ (1894a). In 1894 the president of the Anthropological Institute referred to Etheridge’s work as contributing to ‘technological and aesthetic anthropology’ (Macalister 1894:403). Etheridge’s papers were predominantly descriptions, and contained little explicit interpretation or theorizing.

\textsuperscript{14} Letter from W.B. Spencer to W.E. Roth 30/1/1903; Box 1A, Letter #13, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
\textsuperscript{15} Letter from W.B. Spencer to W.E. Roth 30/1/1903; Box 1A, Letter #13, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
\textsuperscript{16} Versions of two of these papers were also presented at the 1893 BAAS meeting (Etheridge 1894d; 1894e).
A.W. Howitt was another Australian-based writer whose work appeared frequently during this period in British anthropological forums. Howitt’s first major anthropological work had been his collaboration with Lorimer Fison which resulted in their influential analysis of Aboriginal kinship, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai: Group-marriage and relationship and marriage by elopement* (1880). In researching and writing this book Howitt and Fison were directly influenced by the evolutionary ideas promoted by the American anthropologist Lewis Morgan, and acted as his correspondents (Mulvaney 1987:64-66). After Morgan’s death in 1881, Howitt became a correspondent of the doyen of British anthropology, E.B. Tylor. Howitt’s research culminated in the publication of his major work *The Native Tribes of South-east Australia* (1904a). After its publication Howitt became involved in extensive debates over the interpretation of the book in *Folk-lore*, the journal of the Folk-lore Society, with figures such as Andrew Lang the noted folklorist and anthropologist.

In addition to these Australian based authors, it is also apparent that a number of papers describing different aspects of Aboriginal society, although presented by British-based authors, relied on information provided by Australian residents. An example of this is the way in which N.W. Thomas’s paper on Australian watercraft draws on communications from A.W. Howitt (1905:57). A published note from J.G. Frazer, one of the prominent British anthropological theorists of the time, illustrates the mechanics of how he obtained such information (1895). In this note he introduced a series of responses to his questionnaire which he obtained from seven Australian correspondents, including Samuel Gason, Lindsay Crauford, manager of Victoria River Downs station, Paul Foelshe, a Police Inspector at Darwin, and the infamous central Australian police trooper, W.H. Willshire. Frazer’s questionnaire had been distributed by Prof E.C. Stirling, a prominent ethnologist in Adelaide, to residents throughout northern Australia.

Thus many of the papers discussed above were the product of a relationship between a field collector and an Australian or British-based, metropolitan

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17 See Mulvaney's biography of Spencer for a description of Willshire's controversial presence in central Australia. (Mulvaney, 1985) For an interesting, alternative assessment of Willshire see (Stapleton, 1992).
synthesist or theorist. For example, it is apparent that the bulk of Etheridge’s papers were compiled using information provided by a number of Australian correspondents, including the collector Harry Stockdale.\textsuperscript{18} Similarly, as noted by Spencer above, Mathews drew on a network of Australian correspondents for much of the information contained in his numerous papers.\textsuperscript{19} In a sense Mathews operated as something of an Australian-based version of an ‘armchair’ anthropologist, similar to Tylor and Fraser. This was a methodology that had been used by a number of other Australian anthropological writers up to this time, such as Robert Brough Smyth (1878) and E.M. Curr (1886).

Over the last decade literature, there has been extensive debate (within the history and philosophy of science) about the nature of the relationship between scientists based at the centre of the Empire, and their correspondents located in the colonies (Kohlstedt 1991; Lucas \textit{et al.} 1994; MacLeod 1987; Newland 1991). Much of this work has been in response to the model of colonial science proposed by George Basalla, in which he described colonial science as being ‘dependent science’ (1967:613). A strong theme has been the rejection of the model of colonial correspondents as field collectors, who simply supplied objects, specimens and descriptions to metropolitan synthesists and theorists for interpretation. Indeed, a comment by one of R.H. Mathews’ correspondents shows how the relationship between field collector and metropolitan synthesist was not necessarily a subservient one. The central Australian collector R.T. Maurice commented:

\begin{quote}
Have written pages of blacks information to a man called Mathews ... who appears interested in the Australian Aboriginals. His questions to say the least are somewhat funny but then so are many of the town-bred investigators.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

The issue of what have been termed ‘centre-periphery relationships’ has also recently been raised in regard to the relationship between Frank Gillen and Baldwin Spencer, whose description of the Aranda had an enormous impact

\textsuperscript{18} Stockdale was a Sydney based collector, and is associated with a major collection of Australian Aboriginal objects held by the Pitt Rivers Museum.
\textsuperscript{19} Mathews correspondents included such people as Daisy Bates, Carl Strehlow, Bradshaw – Gillen’s successor at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station, and Ernest Cowle.
\textsuperscript{20} Letter from R.T. Maurice to Charles Winnecke, 20 July 1900 quoted in (Jones, 1995:79).
within British anthropology at the turn of the century – as discussed below. Based on an analysis of Gillen’s letters to Spencer during the period of their fieldwork and publications, Howard Morphy – in an approach similar to that developed by Roy MacLeod in relation to the development of colonial science (1987) – has critiqued those anthropological histories, such as Kuper’s (1988), which have interpreted Spencer and Gillen as simply being passive gatherers of information for the British-based synthesists such as Tylor and Fraser (Morphy 1997:25-28). The intellectual contributions of the Alice Springs-based Gillen has been even further subordinated by his portrayal as being ‘... positioned at the end of a chain of subordination in which the metropolitan theorists were linked to the data gatherers in the field’ (Morphy 1997:25). By contrast, Morphy argues that interpreting Spencer’s and Gillen’s work as having been determined by Frazer, ignores their contribution to the ‘development of a recognisably modern anthropology’. Indeed, he argues that Spencer’s and Gillen’s ethnographies have a ‘more modern feel to them’ than either the more celebrated fieldwork achievements of Haddon’s Torres Strait research, or W.E. Roth’s research in northwest Queensland (Morphy 1997:41).21

The correspondence between Gillen and Spencer is rare in that it shows their working through of ideas about Aranda culture, and the interplay between Gillen, Spencer and Frazer as they tried to ‘make sense’ of their observations within the framework of the anthropological ideas of the time. There are few such records of the process by which anthropological accounts are acquired and constructed. Generally, the focus is on the end product. Similarly, the circumstances in which anthropological objects were collected from indigenous people are rarely recorded. Instead, the emphasis is put on the finished collection, and the meaning of the objects is fixed and outside of the context of their acquisition.

I return to this issue of the relationship between the field and the metropolis in Chapter 7, when I explore the relationship between Henry Hillier, an Australian-based collector, and London-based museum curators.

21 Morphy’s reappraisal of the significance of Spencer’s and Gillen’s work has received some criticism, with Diane Austin-Boos arguing that his analysis of Spencer and Gillen ignores the important contribution of other, non-British, non-evolutionary anthropologists such as Carl Strehlow (1999:215).
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Totemism

Having examined the sorts of people writing and the sources on which they drew, I now turn to the major intellectual framework within Britain which Australian Aboriginal material was most readily drawn into.

The paradigm which dominated British anthropology up until the end of the first decade of the twentieth century was evolutionary anthropology. As already discussed, within this paradigm Australian Aboriginal material was used to illustrate the lower end of a perceived evolutionary spectrum composed of ascending cultural and anatomical stages (Bowler 1989). Relating to this paradigm, one of the major focuses of evolutionary anthropology was the origin and dynamics of ‘primitive’ religion. As theorists, such as E.B. Tylor sought to describe the different stages through which religions and spiritual beliefs had passed, much attention was given to the nature and dynamics of ‘totemism’ – which had been first described in 1869 in McLennan’s article ‘the worship of animals and plants’ (1869a; 1869b) and was the subject of a book by J.G. Frazer in 1887 (1887). Cultural descriptions and objects from central Australia were central to the debates about totemism at this time (Stocking Jr. 1999:96).

By the 1900s this debate was well represented in papers presented at Section H of BAAS, the Anthropological Institute and the Folk-lore Society, much of it initiated by the voluminous writings and comments of Andrew Lang (Hiatt 1996:100-107). Many of Lang’s papers were comments seeking to put new information into the context of his theory, to which other writers frequently responded. Indeed, the debate between Howitt, a correspondent of Tylor’s, and Lang became so voluminous in Folk-Lore that in 1907 the editor stated that ‘this correspondence must now close.’

The debate in Britain drew on two significant Australian ethnographic texts. These were Spencer’s and Gillen’s The native tribes of central Australia (1899a) and their The northern tribes of central Australia (1904). These two Australian works were the most influential in British anthropology during this period. Spencer, an Oxford trained naturalist, had come out to Australia in 1887 to take up the newly created position of Professor of Zoology at Melbourne
Figure 2.1: Cover of Andrew Lang’s Secret of the Totem (1905), showing stylised tjuringa based on depictions in Spencer and Gillen (1899)
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University. As a part of his studies at Oxford, Spencer had gained familiarity with current anthropological theories, collections of objects, and prominent workers in Britain. For example, he had attended lectures by E.B. Tylor, and had assisted Tylor with the transfer of the Pitt Rivers collection to its new museum building (Chapman 1985). Spencer was to further develop his interests in anthropology as a result of his participation in the 1894 Horn Expedition to central Australia. It was during this expedition – on which Spencer served as the zoologist – that he first met and established a friendship with Frank Gillen, who at that time had been the officer in charge of the telegraph station at Alice Springs for two years. At this time Spencer also met a number of other central Australian figures, such as P. Byrne of the Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station and Ernest Cowle of the Illamurta Police Station, and J.F. Field – all of whom became correspondents and collectors for Spencer.

During the process of editing the Reports of the Horn expedition,22 the relationship between Spencer and Gillen grew and led to the two undertaking a major field project amongst the Aranda people in the summer of 1896-97. In 1899 they published the results of their research in *The native tribes of central Australia* (1899a). In writing the work, Spencer and Gillen saw themselves as intellectual descendants of Howitt. They dedicated their 1899 work to A.W. Howitt and Lorimer Fison who they described as having ‘laid the foundation of our knowledge of Australian anthropology’ (1899a:iv).

Morphy has made a strong claim for the enduring importance of Spencer’s and Gillen’s work, noting that:

> The key concepts and themes that subsequently became associated with Aboriginal religion - the network of ancestral tracks that intersect the landscape, the distribution of rights in sacred knowledge, the locality-based nature of much ritual practice, the complex relationship between totemism (or sacred knowledge) and social groups, and perhaps the most significant concept of all, the Dreamtime - were all established in Spencer’s and Gillen’s writings (1997:37).

22 A remark by Ernest Cowle suggests that this was a somewhat arduous task. He wrote: ‘as you say, it is a pity a few chapters can’t be added on the relationship of your experiences with the other members during compilation.’ (E.C. Cowle to W.B. Spencer, 5/11/1895, Pitt Rivers Museum Archive).
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What is important here is the way in which Spencer’s and Gillen’s detailed descriptions of the ceremonial life of the Aranda people, deemed to be typical of a society low on the evolutionary scale, provided new information on which to draw in debates about totemism and the origins of religion. The respect and frequency with which British authors referred to the work demonstrates the interest of the British anthropological world in their books, and more generally in anthropological constructions of Australian Aboriginal culture. For example, F.W. Rudler, President of the Anthropological Institute in 1899, noted the ‘exceptional merit’ of the work, adding:

Mr Gillen’s observations and Professor Spencer’s scientific deductions have combined to produce, in my opinion, one of the most valuable works which have lately found their way to the library of the anthropologist (1899:322).

This interest is also indicated by the way in which Spencer was given the opportunity to present an introduction to *The native tribes of central Australia* immediately before its publication, at a specially arranged meeting of the Anthropological Institute (1899b). Also important here is the way in which his introduction was framed by contributions by both E.B. Tylor and J.G. Frazer, Spencer’s and Gillen’s two mentors in the British anthropological world (Frazer 1899; Spencer & Gillen 1899b:280).23 As Frazer wrote:

I desire to bear my testimony to the extreme importance of the new anthropological facts collected by Professor Spencer and his colleague Mr Gillen among the natives of Central Australia. It has been my privilege to read their forthcoming work in proof, and I cannot but regard it as one of the most valuable contributions ever made to the early history of mankind (Frazer 1899:281).

British interest in Spencer’s and Gillen’s work was also maintained with their subsequent research. For example in his Presidential address to the Anthropological Institute in January 1903 A.C. Haddon drew attention to Spencer’s and Gillen’s 1901 fieldwork. He noted:

‘We have heard from private sources that this expedition has met with great success (Haddon 1903a:19).

23 This arrangement can also be read as an attempt to frame or control the reception of Spencer’s and Gillen’s work. As Morphy notes, it is apparent that Spencer changed the preface of their 1899 work to more clearly reflect the evolutionary line promoted by Frazer (1997:36-7).
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However other reports of their second research trip also shows how British interest in their research went well beyond an objective ‘scientific’ interest. An example of this in relation to the collection of anthropological objects is conveyed in the language and metaphors used by Spencer in a letter written in the field to James Edge-Partington of the British Museum, which was subsequently published by the Anthropological Institute in 1901.

At Alice Springs we got hold of some good things, and the British Museum shall certainly be remembered when we get back ... The loot which we got during the past few days, and which is now lying in a heap close to where I am writing would make your mouth water (W.B. Spencer to J. Edge-Partington (Spencer 1901)).

Spencer’s description of objects as ‘loot’ and his acquisitive, almost sensual, tone of phrase gives a contrasting impression to that of the objective scientist at work. The fact that the letter was published suggests that the evocative image conveyed by Spencer was one considered to be of interest to the broader anthropological community, and therefore represents an endorsement of such non-rational views of the experience of fieldwork, and a particular relationship to Aboriginal people and their objects.

Tjurungas

Within their work, Spencer and Gillen gave considerable attention to a particular type of object, the tjurunga. As previously described, the Anthropological Institute held a special meeting in December 1898, at which Baldwin Spencer presented a paper on his and Gillen’s forthcoming book. His address was described as concerning ‘the Native Tribes of, with special reference to their totemic Systems ... amply illustrated with a series of photographs and lantern slides’ (Anthropological Institute 1899b). Although in his paper Spencer made no explicit reference to tjurungas, E.B. Tylor noted in the published discussion which followed the paper, that Spencer’s ‘... interpretation of the Aranda totems as resulting from soul-transmission carried on through sacred objects is not only intelligible, but is perhaps the only clearly formulated scheme of totemism yet described ...’ (Spencer & Gillen 1899b:280). It was in such comments that a linkage was made between totemism and a
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particular type of Aboriginal object. Similarly, E.C. Stirling had earlier written in the records of the Horn expedition:

I have come to the conclusion, mainly through a consideration of these ceremonial objects, that the totemistic idea is fundamentally present, inasmuch as certain animals or other objects of nature appear to stand in some special relationship to individuals or groups of individuals, and the idea seems to come into play in the ceremonies to which the objects are attached (1996:79).

Such comments at this time, about the association between totemism and *tjurungas*, helped generate great interest and competition on the part of museums to acquire examples of these objects. Chris Anderson has described these objects as:

... shaped stone or wooden slabs, usually incised, and are found over most of Central Australia and in the area referred to loosely as the Western Desert culture complex region. They are a kind of title deed to land and are representations of an individual’s personal and family group relationship with the Dreaming, the creative force of Aboriginal religion and life. ... They were and are considered to be the most powerful and hence dangerous of objects in Aboriginal culture (Anderson 1995b:98).

In addition to their connection with totemism, the subject of extensive debate within British anthropology at the beginning of this century, *tjurungas* had other qualities which enhanced their attractiveness to collectors and museums. These were their ambiguity of meaning and ownership, their secrecy and their power.24 Here I examine how these qualities impacted on collectors by reviewing the language of early encounters with these objects.

The first published accounts of *tjurungas* dated to the 1870s, with their first description published in 1879, in German, by Richard Shomburgk, then

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24 These qualities also make any contemporary discussion of these objects problematic. These objects were and remain objects of great power. Subsequently here I do not focus on the objects themselves, but rather on the social and intellectual spaces which surrounded them. Although as Les Hiatt has noted, it is not just the objects but the spaces around them which are charged with meaning and ambiguity. He notes that each *tjurunga*:

... is kept in a secret space, whose holiness spreads beyond its confines to the area around it ... (Hiatt 1996:108).
director of the Adelaide botanical gardens (Jones 1995:70). In 1891 Louis Schulze, a missionary working at Hermannsburg, published an account of Aboriginal religion, in which he described the tjurunga as being a ceremony, and tjurunga arknana as being objects which he translated as ‘festival plates’ (1890-91:242). Importantly, he stressed the secrecy surrounding these objects. He wrote:

They pretend that that these tjurunga arknana were altjira - that is, were not made - but I suspect, as they occasionally give some to white people, that the old men and sorcerers make them themselves. They also present some occasionally to the young men, and initiate them gradually into the whole secret meaning (1890-91:242).

This was to be feature of many accounts of these objects. Whilst the specific meaning of these objects remained allusive to European observers, their power, the ways in which Aboriginal people concealed them, and their reluctance to provide any information about their locations, their origins, or their significance, were frequently highlighted. For example, in the account of the 1894 Horn Expedition, edited by Spencer and published in 1896, Gillen made the following remarks about the value of these objects to indigenous people and the difficulty he had in acquiring them. He wrote:

These stones are greatly valued by the natives, and it is difficult to procure specimens (1996:179).

Gillen also described something of the secret and restricted nature of the social practices within which these objects were embedded. He wrote:

...certain churini are ... intimately associated with various sacred ceremonies such as the two above described, which are only performed by members of such sub-divisions, the later being evidently connected with the idea of a totem and the churini may be described as symbolic of the latter [rain-making ceremony] (1996:180).

E.C. Stirling, the Horn Expedition’s anthropologist, summarized them as:

... objects of mystery and concealment ... that ... [have] some kind of connection with important rites and ceremonies (1996:76).
Chapter 2 – Aboriginal objects and the British anthropological world

Later, he speculated about their meaning and origins, but like Gillen found the most prominent feature about the objects was the reluctance amongst Aboriginal people to reveal their knowledge about them. He wrote:

... the stones, appear to be handed down as heirlooms, some, at any rate, are of undoubted age, though others are as undoubtedly of recent manufacture. They are reluctantly spoken of and parted with, and it was exceedingly difficult to extract any information concerning their significance or application (1996:78).

Within Britain the first report of Spencer’s and Gillen’s work appeared in the Anthropological Institute Journal in 1898, with the publication of an extract from *The Australasian*. One of the focuses of this extract concerned ‘totem and churinya’. The account stated:

Each man has his own *churinya*, which is apparently looked on as another embodiment of himself, and yet at the same time it possesses a mysterious sacred significance. The women and children are not allowed to look at it... The churinyas are not kept by the blacks to whom they belong, but they are carefully hidden is some definite locality by one or two of the old men, each totem having its own particular set of such stations (Anon 1898:133).

Again, this report highlighted the ‘mystery’ and ‘sacredness’ of the *tjurunga*. Further discussion of the significance and meaning of these objects appeared soon after Spencer’s and Gillen’s much anticipated 1899 publication. Here, the very first sentence of their account of *tjurungas* made clear their power.

Churinga is the name given by the Arunta natives to certain sacred objects which, on penalty of death or very severe punishment, such as blinding by means of a fire stick, are never allowed to be seen by women or uninitiated men (1899a:128).

In both their 1899 and 1904 publications, the *tjurunga* is given a greater prominence than any other Aboriginal material culture object. For example in the 1899 work a whole chapter is devoted to ‘the churinga or bull roarers of the Arunta and other tribes’, while all other objects are lumped into the second last chapter ‘clothing, weapons, implements, decorative art’. Similarly in their

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25 An account of the churinga is also included in this chapter.
1904 publication, there are separate chapters on 'churinga and allied objects', 'weapons and implements', clothing and ornaments' and 'decorative art'.

Thus these objects were drawn into the major theoretical debate which existed in British anthropology at this time, regarding totemism and the origins and interpretation of 'primitive' religion. Based on Spencer's and Gillen's work, tjurungas were seen to be linked to the various totems of the Aranda people. It was the accessibility of this publication which enabled tjurungas to be used in the vigorous debate about the origins of religion – particularly the nature of Aboriginal religion – which was occurring in the British anthropological community at that time.

This debate also made frequent reference to the tjurunga as an object. For example, the works of Lang and Fraser use the interpretation of tjurungas. As well as its role in interpretations of the origins of religion, the tjurunga as an object took on an iconographic role associated with notions of 'Aboriginality' and 'primitiveness'. As shown in Figure 2.1, Lang used stylised tjurunga designs based on the illustrations contained in Spencer's and Gillen's works as part of the cover design of two of his books, Magic and religion (1901) and The secret of the totem (1905).

_Selling tjurungas_

So far in this chapter I have outlined the interplay between British anthropological institutions and Australian descriptions of and texts about Australian Aboriginal themes, particularly those relating to Aboriginal objects. This interplay also impacted on anthropological museums which sought to reflect the prominent theoretical trends within the discipline in the content of their collections. This provided an opportunity for collectors and dealers of Australian Aboriginal objects to market collections of tjurungas – for example, in 1910 Sarah Hillier, Henry Hillier's mother, sold a collection of Aboriginal objects which her son had collected – to the Horniman Museum in London for the substantial sum of ten pounds.26 About this collection she wrote:

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26 These objects had been collected by her son Henry Hillier, who at that time was living at the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission in central Australia. As I discuss in Chapter 5, he had earlier
...The natives are of the Aranda tribe. Being familiar with the dialect, [Henry Hillier] has been able to obtain from them these specimens, with the native names and descriptions. The approach to the [Hermannsburg] Lutheran Mission Station where he is, is a very unfrequented one, a desert of about 90 miles has to be crossed to get there after the railway. The mails are sent on by camels, so that it is an expensive journey and not frequented by collectors. Also the natives do not bring their treasures out, excepting to those who can converse with them. I mention so much to show that this collection is unique.27

In this short description, Sarah Hillier outlined the features of the collection which she used to substantiate its cost. These were the uniqueness of the collection, and the value of the objects to the Aranda Aboriginal people from whom they had been collected. The value of the collection was further enhanced by Hillier providing the indigenous name of each object and a description of its use. In this regard they contrasted with many tjurungas which had been stolen from caches, and therefore had little or no provenance or interpretation of the meanings of their designs (Jones 1995). By highlighting the isolation of Hermannsburg, Hillier implied the objects were largely unaffected by European influence, and were therefore authentically 'Aboriginal'. Stressing the remoteness of the mission station also made clear the high cost of getting the material to England, and therefore legitimated the high prices sought from the museums.

In providing such a extensive description of the context of the material and the collector, Hillier's mother's correspondence with the Horniman Museum indicated that she was aware of the value of this type of material and was able to add to its value by stressing the circumstances in which it was collected.

However beyond these specific qualities of her son's collection, which I discuss in later chapters, Sarah Hillier was also tapping into the wider interest in Aboriginal objects which was current amongst British museums at that time. Hillier's correspondence with British museums shows that tjurungas were the most sought after type of object. The value that the museums placed on these

sold similar collections of Aboriginal objects to the British Museum, the Royal Museum of Scotland and the Cambridge University Museum.

27 Letter from S.J. Hillier to H. Harrison 2/1910, Horniman Museum, Ethnography Department Historical File.
objects is also reflected in the high prices they were willing to pay, relative to those paid for other types of anthropological objects from the same region. For example, in relation to the Hillier collection, the Horniman Museum paid an average of a little over 22 shillings for each tjurunga compared with an average of 3 shillings and ninepence for all other types of Australian Aboriginal objects. Similarly the Royal Museum of Scotland paid an average of 25 shillings for each tjurunga whilst other objects it purchased from Sarah Hillier cost an average of 6 shillings and fourpence.

The awareness of museums of the distinction between stone and wooden tjurungas is reflected in the substantially different prices they paid for examples of these objects. For example the Royal Museum of Scotland paid 5 pounds and 10 shillings for three stone tjurungas and 2 pounds for three wooden tjurungas.

A price list sent to the Cambridge Museum by Sarah Hillier in 1910 illustrates the pricing structure she used in her correspondence with UK museums. Curators were offered individual objects, or sets of objects arranged in different pricing bands, with wooden tjurungas separated from stone tjurungas. Table 2.1 shows that wooden tjurungas ranged in price from three pence up to 2 pounds and 5 shillings, while stone tjurungas ranged from 10 shillings up to 4 pounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stone tjurungas</th>
<th>Set A of 6</th>
<th>Set B of 4</th>
<th>Set C of 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost range</td>
<td>10s to £4</td>
<td>£1 to £1.10s</td>
<td>£1 to £1.10s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cost</td>
<td>£1.17s.6d</td>
<td>£1.5s.3d</td>
<td>£1.3s.9d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wooden tjurungas</th>
<th>Set A of 14</th>
<th>Set B of 11</th>
<th>Set C of 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost range</td>
<td>5d to £2.5s</td>
<td>5d to £1.15s</td>
<td>3d to £1.5s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cost</td>
<td>£1.0s.1d</td>
<td>16s.11d</td>
<td>14s.4d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high economic value placed on these objects by non-Aboriginal people and institutions has carried through to the present. In 1992 Carl Strehlow's
grandson reportedly attempted to sell a collection of approximately 300 such objects for an average of $23,000 each (Pannell 1995:109).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the production of British anthropological discourses about material culture, within the broader anthropological world at the turn of the century. My study has revealed the connection between the broader interest of the anthropological discipline in 'ethnological' material culture, and the interest of museums in Aboriginal objects. Section H of BAAS and the Anthropological Institute were both part of the intellectual forums within which interpretations of these objects were developed. These two arenas were the major sites for the presentation of anthropological information about Aboriginal Australian themes in Britain, and substantially contributed to the structures within which meanings about Aboriginal objects were generated.

I argue that the interest by British museums in Aboriginal objects arose from the intersection between two themes in British anthropology which occurred during the period 1890-1914. Firstly there was increased interest within the discipline in anthropological material culture generally; in particular, this was promoted by key museum-based anthropologists such as C.H. Read, A.C. Haddon and H. Balfour, who were keen to establish the importance of museum collections to the development of anthropology. Secondly, there were a number of events occurring within the Australian region at this time, culminating in the work of Spencer and Gillen, which attracted the attention of the British anthropological world. In the next chapter I move to examine the range of museums acquiring Aboriginal objects, and the different ways in which they engaged with collectors.
Chapter 3 – Museums, and the guidance of collectors

In 1896 William Fitzgerald reflected in The Strand Magazine on what he considered to be the uninspired nature of London’s major museums.

It may be taken as a general rule that museums are fearfully dull places ... and yet if instead of miserable little labels, the articles on show only had their histories writ large, that he who ran might read, what an earnest pilgrimage would commence towards grimy Bloomsbury and airy South Kensington! (Fitzgerald 1896:62).

Fitzgerald’s impressions of dullness, belie the complex changes occurring within the British museum world during the second half of the nineteenth century, a world with which collectors of Australian Aboriginal objects were engaging.

In this chapter I examine the range of museums in Britain which were acquiring collections of Aboriginal objects, and explore the ways in which they engaged with the collectors of these objects. In the second part I examine the influence of guides, distributed by museums, on the collectors of Aboriginal objects. I address the question of whether their role was one of instruction, or whether it was one of substantiating the important relationship between museum and collector.
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

The world of museums

George Stocking has referred to the end of the nineteenth century as being the 'great period' for anthropological museums throughout the world (1985:8). Within Britain, the second half of the nineteenth century was a period characterised by a dramatic increase in the numbers of museums, and is associated with a move from museums being privately owned and run to becoming publicly funded and patronised cultural institutions. As I noted in Chapter 3, it was also a time when museums acted as a major institutional base within the emerging discipline of anthropology. More broadly than this, museums were intimately involved in major changes occurring within British society. Together with libraries and art galleries, museums were seen to have the potential to contribute to broader reforms of society through the education of the working classes (Bennett 1997). A prominent writer on museums, Thomas Greenwood made this quality of museums explicit when he linked their establishment to the reduction of crime.

[Museums and Free Libraries] ... are calculated to take a high place in the educating of the people in the duties and privileges of citizenship ... There is unmistakable proof that crime is decreasing, and this may be largely attributed to the presence, in many of the larger towns, of the institutions for which I am pleading (Greenwood 1888:viii).

Associated with attempts at such change was a push amongst the leading figures within the museological world, such as Sir William Henry Flower,1 to encourage all museums to focus on education and research. This was also a response to the focus and condition of museums earlier in the century, when they had often been privately run, and their collections and displays guided by other factors. The naturalist Charles Waterton, for example, described his frustration at the neglected state of natural history displays within museums when compared to the grandeur of their external architectural edifices.

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1 Flower served as the Director of the BM(NH) from 1883 to 1898.
...when a committee of gentlemen is chosen to form a museum, their attention to the outer parts of the building seems to know no bounds; whilst the ornamenting of the interior (which, by the way, out to be considered as the very marrow and essence of the establishment) is left to chance. Thus, the members tell the public that they will be thankful for private donations. They often deposit specimens of their own in the museum; and authorise their curator to pick up what he can, at different public sales. The lavish expenditure on the outside of the temple, and parsimony with regard to the internal decorations, is giving, as it were, too much to the body, and too little to the soul (Waterton 1838:298-299).

Similarly, in 1904, David Murray, an advocate of museums as didactic and research institutions, criticised this earlier period in which he saw aesthetic considerations as distracting from the ‘instructive’ role of the museum:

There was ... a great temptation to make museums attractive to the vulgar rather than useful to the learned. Exhibits were, however, often badly placed, and were nearly always arranged in relation to their accidental and not to their distinguishing features. Things were disposed according to size, like pipes in an organ; and the two sides of a room had to balance, so that the most incongruous objects were often placed alongside of each other; an armadillo beside an ostrich egg; a cocoa nut beside a stone swan; a bird of paradise beside a remora. ... The object in view was to create surprise rather than to afford instruction (Murray 1904:206-8).

However it was not just a matter of reforming the displays in museums. The behaviour of museum visitors continued to frustrate the best endeavours of museum reformers to develop museums as didactic institutions. For example well into the twentieth century, the non-learning behaviour of museum visitors remained a problem in British museums. Thus in 1923, the Director of the Royal Scottish Museum wrote:

The crowd on Sunday afternoons, which varies according to the condition of the weather, is composed very largely of young persons of both sexes. Among these,

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2 See also Daston & Park (1998) for a discussion of the earlier origins of the representation of the aesthetic.
in the earlier part of the year the behaviour was not at all that could be desired. Groups of young men and girls instead of looking at the exhibits in the cases were beginning to treat the galleries as places for promenading, especially on the first place of the main hall and occasionally interfering with one another in passing. A slight increase in the number of those on patrol duty and the immediate suppression of any approach to rowdiness has brought about a marked improvement in the behaviour of the Sunday crowds (Annual Report by the Director of the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, 1922-3).

Attempts to translate such ideas about museums becoming institutions for education and research led to the establishment of a British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) committee to investigate the state of British museums outside of the national museums in London, or what they termed ‘provincial’ museums. The 1887 report of this committee provides a snapshot of the state of museums across the UK at that time (Ball et al. 1888). Based largely on responses to a questionnaire, the report gives information about the contents of museums, dividing the collections into geological, zoological, botanical, archaeological and anthropological categories.

The survey also gives an indication of the level of representation of anthropological objects in provincial museums at that time. It was reported that whilst 38% of provincial museums held anthropological material, in terms of raw numbers of objects, only 2.5% or 56,000 of the 2.21 million objects held by provincial museums, were classified as anthropological. Although details of the extent of Australian Aboriginal holdings were not included in the survey, based on my research of such collections in a range of British museums, they would have been only been a small fraction of this 2.5%. Of course the quantity of a museum’s holdings cannot be equated with the visual impact of this material on the museum visitor; for example a coal sample does not have the same impact as a head-dress. Nor does it necessarily reflect what visitors saw, or the proportions of anthropological and non-anthropological material on display.

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3 Interestingly, museums such as the Dublin, Edinburgh and Cardiff museums which have all become important ‘national’ museums were at that time considered to be ‘provincial’.
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

The Report also classified the contents of each museum into 'local' and 'general' collections. The information about local collections was sought in order to establish to what extent provincial museums were focusing on their local environments. Such an orientation was one which the Committee concluded was appropriate for free to the public 'rate-supported' provincial museums with limited resources. They envisaged a matrix of different types of museums, with national museums at one end and provincial museums at the other. The Committee saw that the appropriate role of a national museum was to:

... represent the history and present condition of the world and its inhabitants in an epitomised form, illustrating all the salient points and filling in the details of a few selected periods and types. (Ball et al. 1889:125).

By contrast, the role of the provincial museum was to 'be a fully illustrated monograph of its own district' (Ball et al. 1889:126).

In prefacing the suggested role for such museums, the Report of the Committee used an imperious tone to highlight the 'unsystematic manner' in which provincial museums had acquired objects. It stated:

Provincial museums have made their collections hitherto in a very unsystematic manner, by donation or purchase as opportunities occurred. In order that the scientific statistics of the country may be thoroughly investigated and made known as quickly as possible, a much more business like system of collection should be adopted. (Ball et al. 1889:130).

Implicit within such criticisms of museums being 'unsystematic' was the notion that museums, and the processes by which objects were acquired, could be, and should be, 'scientific'. Bound up with this notion was the idea, discussed earlier, that museums should be directed towards research and education. The Committee was explicit about how these ideas should be translated into the collections and displays of provincial museums. In relation to archaeological displays, the Report presented the following model.
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

Starting with the earliest relics of man discovered in the district, the series of examples of his work and habits should be continued even to the current date, particular attention being devoted to any local peculiarities. The changes which have taken place from age to age in his tools, his clothing, his architecture, pottery, ornaments, coinage, weapons, &c., as illustrated by purely local specimens, will be of utmost interest and importance; and the whole local series should be supplemented by a few examples of corresponding dates from various other parts of the world placed in a parallel arrangement for easy comparison [my emphasis] (Ball et al. 1889:129-130).

The changes suggested by the BAAS Committee had a number of potential impacts on the collection of Australian material. Firstly, the focus on objects from the local area implied that Aboriginal objects would be outside the interests of most local museums. Exceptions to this were the use of non-local material to illustrate comparisons, for example the use of Aboriginal stone artefacts to compare with the archaeology of the local area. A second use was as illustrative of the activities of local figures who had travelled out to Australia. More generally, the move to a research and educative role for museums meant that they needed more contextual information about objects; information and examples of different stages of production, not just the aesthetically pleasing objects. The Committee encouraged museums to place more emphasis developing a critical approach to acquisition, rather than simply passive receiving donations.

Types of museums and their engagement with collectors

As well as providing an insight into the changes which were occurring within the British museum world during the second half of the nineteenth century, the 1887 BAAS survey also gives an indication of the range of museums outside London which potentially held Aboriginal objects. Many such museums hold important collections of Aboriginal objects today (Cooper 1989). In Table 3.1, I present the sample of the British museums in which I have undertaken research regarding the holdings of Aboriginal objects. Based on differences in their history, their scale and their principal specialisation, these museums can be divided into four major types. These can be defined as local, university,
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

national, and a fourth category of what I have termed ‘regional-national’. This last category comprised the larger, non-English metropolitan museums in Edinburgh and Dublin which the 1888 BAAS Report described as ‘Museums of Science and Art on a large scale, supported by Government’ (Ball et al. 1889:124). These have since gone on to become national museums in their own right as the Royal Museum of Scotland and the National Museum of Ireland, (formerly known respectively as the Museums of Science and Art, Edinburgh and Dublin).

Table 3.1: The four major museum ‘types’ sampled as part of this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Museum type</th>
<th>Museum location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial museums</td>
<td>Brighton Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bristol Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forfar Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horniman Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ipswich Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kelvingrove Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Montrose Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perth Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional - national</td>
<td>Royal Museum of Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>museums</td>
<td>National Museum of Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National museums</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Museum of Economic Botany, Kew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University museums</td>
<td>Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hunterian Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marischal College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pitt Rivers Museum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these types of museums had different ways of acquiring Australian Aboriginal objects. The BAAS survey showed that the smaller provincial museums holding anthropological material, usually as part of their generalist collections, were often solely supported by local scientific societies or municipal rates (Ball et al. 1888). Such museums tended to be passive recipients of small collections or individual objects. The objects were often derived from local residents who had returned to Britain from Australia, or
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

were heirlooms donated by relatives of the collector. In Scotland there was something a tradition for colonists returning home from Australia to donate objects they had brought back. An early example of this phenomenon is the way in which the museum of the Inverness-based Northern Institute for the Promotion of Science and Literature sought ‘donations of ancient relics, and specimens in every class of natural history’. It suggested that:

To Highlanders abroad it will afford a permanent and agreeable medium for expressing their attachment to their native country. ⁴

In relation to Aboriginal objects, an example of such passive collecting is the offer Mrs Trevor Thomas’ made to the Cardiff Museum in 1915. She wrote:

I have a rather curious collection of Australian weapons collected and brought home by my father ... about 60 years ago. As I am moving into a smaller house, and they took up some room to arrange properly, I have been thinking of presenting most of them to the Welsh Museum... ⁵

In such situations museum curators were not in a position to direct the collecting: they could only select from what was available. They also had little ability to influence the type of contextual information received with the objects. Obviously there were exceptions to this trend of provincial museums only be passive collectors. For example, as I discuss in Chapter 6, Emile Clement sold a number of Aboriginal objects to provincial museums. However, based on my research, such acquisitions were the exception rather than the rule.

The regional-national museums were better resourced than the other provincial museums. In their collections and displays, they had a greater mandate to exhibit material from around the world, not just to represent a local area. Reflecting this, both the Dublin and Edinburgh museums had major ethnographic collections. The support of the London Science and Art Department also gave these museums a greater ability to actively purchase

⁴Printed Circular dated 1st June, 1825, copy held in the Archives of the Perth Museum Scotland.
⁵ Letter from Mrs Trevor Thomas to the National Museum of Wales 6/7/1915, Horniman Museum Historical File.
objects rather than to passively rely on donations. The records of the Royal Museum of Scotland show that they were active in the ethnographic artefact market – for example in 1909 they purchased a collection of central Australian material collected by P.M. Byrne, the Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station Operator and correspondent of W. Baldwin Spencer, which had been sold by the London dealer Gerrard & Sons. However, to some extent these museums were under the control of London-based Science and Art Department. The Dublin Museum of Science and Art had to get London approval to acquire collection of Bronze age material from Emile Clement in 1883.\(^6\)

The complex political history of the British Isles ensured that whilst the BAAS survey could describe museums such as Edinburgh as ‘provincial’, in fact it was seen by some Scottish people as the ‘national’ museum, and therefore received some ‘national’ collections from collectors with a Scottish heritage, in preference to the British Museum. For example the majority of Robert Christison’s important Aboriginal collection from Queensland was donated to the Scottish Museum of Antiquities in 1902 and 1905,\(^7\) whilst only a smaller collection was presented to the British Museum in 1904.\(^8\)

The third major category of museums acquiring Aboriginal material at the turn of the century were a number of university museums. These include Oxford University’s Pitt Rivers museum, the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Marischal College Anthropology Museum, and the anthropological collections of Glasgow University’s Hunterian Museum. Their scholarly settings meant that these museums had a focus, at least in theory, on research and teaching.

Although many of these museums had few funds with which to purchase objects, they were able to use their strong links with their Alma Mater to assist in the growth of their collections. At times this lead them to form correspondence

\(^6\) Letter from G.A. Duncombe of the Science & Art Department, London to the Director, Dublin Science and Art Museum 12/12/1883 - Ref No 55131/83; National Museum of Ireland Archive 409/M.


\(^8\) British Museum Ethnographic Collection 1904/10-2(1-20).
relationships with collectors, for example the voluminous correspondence relationship between Anatole von Hügel of the Cambridge Museum and an Adelaide doctor R.H. Marten. At times such relationships could lead to divided loyalties. For example, in 1907 E.C. Stirling, an Australian born graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Director of the South Australian Museum, responded to Anatole to von Hügel’s drive to raise funds for the construction of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, by raising money for a British museum, in Adelaide.\(^9\)

As relationships between curators and collectors were frequently occurring at or before the time of acquisition of objects, curators were able to try to influence the sorts of material obtained. This was done both directly - through requests for specific types of objects – or through advice about appropriate collecting practices.

The final category of British museums which were acquiring Aboriginal objects were the national museums. As discussed above, these London based museums had a much broader scope than the other types of British museums, with a goal to ‘represent the history and present condition of the world and its inhabitants in an epitomised form’ (Ball et al. 1889:125). The primary national museum in Britain was the British Museum. In the range of material it contained and the ways in which it obtained it, the British Museum was something of a metaphor for the empire. That is, it acquired objects from all of the colonies, often using the labour of colonial officials.

Despite the scale of the museum’s overall collecting scope, ethnography was not its the highest collecting priority. Indeed, throughout much of museum’s history, the placement of ethnography with the structure of the museum has been problematic. Table 3.2 shows the changes in the department responsible for the ethnographic collections. Further to this, within the ethnography section objects from other regions such as Africa, the Pacific have usually been accorded a higher priority than the collection of Aboriginal objects. This was partly the result of uninformed notions of Aboriginal material culture, which I discussed in the previous Chapter.

Table 3.2: Administrative location of ethnography within the British Museum

1807-1860: Department of Antiquities
1860-1860: Oriental Antiquities
1866-1921: British & Medieval Antiquities
1921-1933: Ceramics & Ethnography
1933-1946: Oriental Antiquities & Ethnography
1946-1970: Ethnography
1998 - Department of Ethnography

As well as acquiring objects via the methods used by other types of museums, the size of the British Museum allowed it to actively acquire objects by organising collecting and scientific expeditions. An example of this in relation to anthropological objects were Emil Torday’s collecting expeditions in West Africa on behalf of the British Museum (Mack 1990; 1998).

Although on occasions sponsored natural history collectors in Australia brought back ethnographic objects acquired as a subsidiary activity, for example the British Museum of Natural History (BM(NH)) expedition to northern Australia, led by Captain George Wilkins in the 1920s (1929), British museums rarely undertook or sponsored such ethnographic collecting in Australia. This contrasted with way in which the Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg employed Amalie Dietrich to collect ethnographic and natural history objects in Queensland on its behalf (Sumner 1993). It appears that the collection of Australian material was a lower priority than the acquisition of objects from Africa.

In lieu of such direct involvement in field collecting, British Museum staff such as C.H. Read sought to develop relationships with field collectors from whom they acquired Aboriginal objects, and from whom further collections might be obtained. As well as such direct relationships, the national museums contributed to, and distributed, guides for helping and encouraging collecting of both anthropological and natural history objects. In the following section I
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

explore the origin of such guides and their impacts on collectors of Aboriginal objects.

Collecting guides

Although British museums were rarely in a position to undertake or sponsor collecting expeditions in Australia, they did try to influence the sorts of material made available, through attempting to guide the activities of potential collectors. One prominent method which museums used was to distribute published guidebooks containing ‘instructions’ and ‘hints’ as to the best collecting methods. Such guides were often written by museum staff and sent to collectors in the field. Two particularly prominent guides were Notes and queries on anthropology published by the Anthropological Institute, and the Handbook of instructions for collectors prepared by staff of the Natural History Museum. Copies of these guides were given to the collectors Henry Hillier and Emile Clement, whose activities I discuss in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Whilst the latter book was principally about natural history, it also addressed the issue of collecting indigenous information about specimens and in this way had the capacity to impact on the collectors’ relationship with Aboriginal people. Both of these guides were distributed by British museums to collectors of ethnographic material in Australia.

The genealogy of these types of guides dates back to the late seventeenth century, when British travellers and amateur collectors located in non-metropolitan Britain played an important role in obtaining natural history material initially for metropolitan naturalists, and later for museums (Allen 1994; Secord 1994).

By the nineteenth century the issue of how best to preserve natural history specimens and how to communicate such knowledge to field collectors had arisen. Responding to this need, naturalists such as Charles Waterton began to publish particular methods of specimen preparation (Waterton 1838). By the end of the nineteenth century, the dissemination of such advice had become more formalised, with museums and learned societies producing books and pamphlets aimed at advising and instructing enthusiasts, amateurs and
travellers interested in collecting natural history specimens and anthropological objects.

A way of doing

For natural history museums, the guides served to both direct collectors towards the types of material they were interested in acquiring, and also to provide advice about standardised techniques for preparing these specimens. For metropolitan anthropologists and museums, in order to generate material which could be used comparatively there arose a need to standardise the methods of collecting cultural knowledge and objects. In relation to anthropological guides, the technique used was to present a conceptual framework which classified all the different aspects of a culture, and into which information about each class could be placed. As Notes and queries on anthropology was intended to be used in encounters with indigenous peoples throughout the world, its framework needed to be capable of being overlaid on cultures from any part of the world. It formed a universalising framework, allowing comparison across cultures.

A way of seeing

Such guides therefore formalised a particular way of seeing and interpreting the world. In doing so they shared similarities with instructive guides prepared for travellers, such as the British Admiralty’s Manual of scientific enquiry (Herschel 1974), and the Royal Geographical Society’s Hints to travellers (Freshfield & Wharton 1893). Such manuals were intended to serve as didactic devices, teaching the traveller to ‘see’ in particular ways. Nowhere is this made more explicit than the title of the British Museum’s How to observe in archaeology: Suggestions for travellers in the Near and Middle East (Hill 1920). The authors of the guides attempted this by either explicitly or implicitly setting out frameworks for interpreting the objects, and the field contexts of the objects. They all had a common focus on providing the viewer and the collector with a framework for understanding and ordering the new. Withers has described the issuing of such guides and the activities which they encouraged as very
much part of the colonial project of 'putting the world in place' (Withers 1995:143). As Joan-Pau Rubiés has noted:

The idea of teaching travellers what to observe in an analytical way in fact addressed the concept of method, crucial to the transition from rhetoric to science in the Renaissance. Methods were not just techniques, ways of doing things, but also a specific and explicit part of the educational and scientific project. (1996:140)

Similarly, the purpose of the 1892 edition of Notes and queries on anthropology, as expressed by its editors, was both to present a methodology for interpreting cultural difference, and ensure that the information obtained was in a format which could be used by the British anthropological synthesists such as E.B. Tylor, discussed in Chapter 2. In the preface of Notes and queries on anthropology, John Garson and C.H. Read wrote:

The object of the work is to promote accurate anthropological observation on the part of travellers, and to enable those who are not anthropologists themselves to supply the information which is wanted for the scientific study of anthropology at home (Garson & Read 1892:v).

A further attribute of such guides was that in addition to privileging science in general — in the case of those guides associated with the British Museum, such as the Handbook of instructions for collectors, and the 1892 edition of Notes and Queries on anthropology — they served to mark the British Museum as the principal site of science in the world. For example, regarding collections sent to the BM(NH), the Handbook of instructions for collectors noted:

If addressed “To the Director of the British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W.,” the cases will not be opened by the British Customs officers, but sent on at once under seal [author’s emphasis] (BM(NH) 1906:138)

Implicit in such directions was the notion that collecting on behalf of the BM(NH) was a privileged and prestigious activity, one above the concerns of customs officers. Similarly the involvement of the British Museum curator C.H. Read as co-editor of the 1892 edition of Notes and queries on anthropology
also illustrates the place of authority the British Museum had in anthropology at the end of the nineteenth century. In his introduction to the ‘ethnography’ half of Notes and queries on anthropology, Read explicitly locates the British Museum as being one of the sources of authoritative information about ethnology. He states:

Should he [the traveller] possess no such knowledge [of ethnology], he would do well to put himself in communication with the authorities of the British Museum, or the Museums at Oxford or Cambridge, or any other centre where ethnology is studied. (1892a:88)

I now turn to examine in more detail these two particular guides, the Handbook of instructions for collectors, and Notes and Queries on anthropology. These are the two guides most directly related to the collection of objects, and they were used by the two collectors of Aboriginal objects, whom I profile in the following chapters.

**Handbook of instructions for collectors**

The BM(NH)’s curator of mammals, Michael Oldfield Thomas, began distributing his Directions for preparing small mammal skins to collectors in the early 1890s. Similar guides were also produced by staff in different departments of the Museum. In 1902 these were collectively published by the BM(NH) as the Handbook of instructions for collectors, which was intended to assist collectors to obtain material for the BM(NH), and to show them ‘... the approved manner in which the various objects referred to should be treated’ (BM(NH) 1906:iii-iv). Various versions of these guides continued to be published separately into the 1970s.

The 1906 edition of the Handbook of instructions for collectors consisted of advice ranging from the preservation and sexing of birds, to instructions for collecting reptiles, insects, spiders, centipedes, molluscs, plants, fossils and minerals. Although the majority of its content consists of technical advice about the preparation of natural history specimens, it does contain glimpses of an implicit acknowledgment of how the collection of such specimens could occur
in a cross-cultural context involving indigenous people with their own independent knowledges of the collected material. For example in relation to the collection of ‘reptiles, batrachians and fishes’ it notes:

It is most important that every specimen should bear an indication of the place, date, and circumstance under which it was collected, as well as the native name, if it can be ascertained (BM(NH) 1906:49).

However whilst the existence of such knowledge was acknowledged, little value was placed on. For example the 1906 guide was openly sceptical of the veracity of such information. It stated:

In hot countries where streams and ponds are liable to dry up, many fishes are compelled to temporarily breath air, or travel considerable distances overland, or fall into a state of torpidity. Observations on such habits, which are verified by the traveller himself, are of incomparably greater value than what one learns by hearsay from the natives (BM(NH) 1906:48).

Thus even though there was little explicitly stated in the BM(NH) guide about the collector’s relationships with indigenous people, where it was acknowledged it was belittled, and indigenous knowledge of natural history not valued. My research of the Hillier’s and Clement’s collections in the BM(NH), which I discuss in later chapters, shows that where collectors obtained indigenous knowledge about specimens and sent it to the museum, this ‘non-scientific’ information has been separated and kept within the archive as a historical feature, rather than an integral aspect of the ‘scientific’ description specimen. I return to this issue in Chapter 9. I move now to consider how these issues played out in guides which were explicitly concerned with the collection of information and objects from indigenous peoples.
Anthropological guides

At the end of the nineteenth century, the primary anthropological guidebook within Britain and its colonies was *Notes and queries on anthropology*. It was first published in 1874, with further editions published in 1892, 1899, 1912, 1929 and 1951. Its purpose and format was directly descended from the 1841 BAAS questionnaire, *Queries respecting the human race to be addressed to travellers and others*. This questionnaire had been compiled by a committee led by James Pritchard and Thomas Hodgkin, and consisted of a series of 89 questions ‘for the use of travellers and others, with a view to procure Information respecting the different races of Men, and more especially of those which are in an uncivilised state’ (BAAS 1840:89). It was the first published attempt by a British organisation aimed at obtaining consistent information from ‘travellers and others’ about indigenous people in different parts of the world, which could then be used by scholars in Britain. Anthropological guides such as *Notes and queries* and the earlier BAAS *Queries* differed from the natural history ‘instructions’ in that they were more explicit in the way that collected information was to be organised around a particular classification system of human action. They presented the reader with a particular method for describing culture.

The impetus for the BAAS guide had been James Pritchard’s paper ‘On the extinction of the human races’ delivered to the 1839 BAAS meeting in Birmingham. In his history of the development of the anthropological discipline, and its relationship to Australia, Les Hiatt (1996:6) has described how the humanitarianism of some of the early prominent figures in anthropology, such as Pritchard and Hodgkin, were influenced by Quaker concepts of ‘human unity’ and the humanitarian concerns of the Aborigines’ Protection Society. Implicit in Pritchard’s paper was the notion that ‘races’ were disappearing and that it was imperative to the science of ethnology to

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10 Urry notes that the edition published in 1899 was substantially a reprint of the 1892 edition (1993:24).
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

obtain descriptions of ‘races’. For example, drawing on Pritchard’s paper, the preface to the 1840 BAAS Queries noted:

...the irretrievable loss which science must sustain, if so large a portion of the human race, counting by tribes instead of individuals, is suffered to perish, before many interesting questions of a psychological and philological character, as well as many historical facts in relation to them, have been investigated. (BAAS 1841:447).

This was an early manifestation of the ‘cultural salvage’ paradigm underlying much anthropological research in the second half of the nineteenth century, which I discussed in Chapter 2. Some fifty years later, in the introduction to the 1892 Notes and Queries on anthropology its editors described a similar context within which they saw anthropological enquiry taking place. They wrote:

The rapid extermination of savages at the present time, and the rapidity with which they are being reduced to the standard of European manners, renders it of urgent importance to correct these sources of error as soon as possible (Gason and Read 1892:v).

As well as the humanitarian intentions described above, the reports about composing the questions to be included in the BAAS Queries make it clear that it was also intended that they should serve ‘scientific’ ends. One of the compilers noted:

It is perhaps not too much to anticipate, that ... the diffusion of these Queries may not only serve the too-much neglected cause of the science of Ethnography, but indirectly promote a benevolent interest in some of the feeble and perishing branches of the human family (Hodgkin 1843:53).

Such humanitarian and scientific concerns did not obviate a nationalistic aspect to the British intellectual interest in obtaining anthropological descriptions. For example, the Report of the Committee stated:
Britain, in her extensive colonial possessions and commerce, and in the number and intelligence of her Naval Officers, possesses unrivalled facilities for the elucidation of the whole subject; and it would be a stain on her character, as well as a loss to humanity, were she to allow herself to be left behind by other nations in this enquiry (BAAS 1842:332).

Guides about anthropological material were not only directed at those living outside the British metropolis. Between the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were increasing numbers of British-based enthusiasts and dealers who collected de-contextualised anthropological objects within Britain. For such collectors a different sort of guide was available, one which presented a different set of influences and which did not model a relationship between collector and indigenous people. Two examples of this type of guide are James Edge-Partington’s ethnographic albums (1969) and Leopold Montague’s Weapons and implements of savage races (Australasia, Oceania, and Africa) (1921). The audiences for both these guides differed from the intended one for Notes and Queries’ ‘travellers’. They were primarily aimed at British-based collectors, who were rarely in a position to directly collect from the original makers of such objects, but rather obtain them from other collectors, dealers and auction sales.

In 1890, James Edge-Partington, an English ethnographic collector published the first part of his Album of the weapons, tools, ornaments, articles of dress of the natives of the Pacific Islands - drawn and described from examples in public and private collections in England. A second part followed in 1892 and a third and final part, drawing on Australasian public and private collections, was published in 1898. The focus of the work was on providing detailed line drawings of objects, to assist the collector in ‘... determining the locality and use of some of the objects in his collection’ (Edge-Partington 1969:Preface). Although privately circulated, many museums took up copies and by the time the final part was published the ‘Albums’ had become a work of reference.

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11 This pictorial guide was based on a review of the contents of ethnographic collections of the British Museum, Bristol Museum and private collections of people such as the Heape Collection, the Edge-Partington collection and C.L. Higgins.
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

In 1921 Leopold Montague published his book *Weapons and implements of savage races* (*Australasia, Oceania, and Africa*). This work was more popularist than Edge-Partington’s, and had originally published in the mass circulation fortnightly *Bazaar, Exchange and Mart*. It was comprised of a description of object types from different regions, and concluded with Montague’s ‘hints to collectors’ about displaying and preserving the objects, including how best to attach objects to walls for display, cleaning techniques, labelling, and how to group objects for the best display. The book constituted a manual aimed at British amateur ethnographic collectors. Discussion of Australian Aboriginal objects is restricted to ‘clubs, spears, spearthrowers, the weet-weet, boomerangs, spears, shields, axes, message sticks, and a brief mention of churingas (1921). Montague’s book contained no discussion of objects such as netting, and decorative objects. In presenting such content the book substantiated the received wisdom that collectors without anthropological training tended to focus on war and male objects. This was both the result of popular representations of Aborigines as ‘savages’, and lack of cultural contact.

Montague’s guide appeared more than twenty years after Edge-Partington’s work. By that time anthropology as a discipline had moved on from the simple ‘show and tell’ exhibitions which had characterised meetings of the Anthropological Institute in the mid - late nineteenth century. By 1921, although material culture had become unfashionable as a subject for professional anthropologists, Montague’s book clearly shows that there was a fashion for collecting ethnographic objects amongst British amateurs at that time.

*Notes and queries on anthropology*

For those people ‘travelling’ beyond Britain to ‘anthropological’ locations, the first edition of *Notes and queries on anthropology* was published by the newly established Anthropological Institute in 1874, more than twenty years after the publication of the last edition of the BAAS Queries was published. A

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12 The Anthropological Institute was formed in 1871 partly as an attempt at resolving the many years of epistemological conflict that had occurred between members of the Ethnological Society of London and the Anthropological Society of London (Stocking 1987).
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

Further five editions of *Notes and queries* were published between 1892 and 1950. Here I am interested in the three editions published in 1874, 1892 and 1912. In their authorship and ideas, these three editions provide a stratigraphic record of the theoretical and methodological changes occurring within the discipline of anthropology at the turn of the century (Urry 1993).

The first edition in 1874 was prepared under the editorship of Colonel Lane Fox, (later to become A.H.L.F. Pitt Rivers). It reflects the strong influence of figures such as E.B. Tylor, John Evans, and John Lubbock, all of whom, as I discussed in Chapter 2, were amongst the pre-eminent anthropologists in Britain in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

A second edition was published in 1892, under the editorship of J.G. Garson and C.H. Read. Although it had new editors, the bulk of the guide remained substantially the same as the first edition. The three most represented authors were E.B. Tylor (eighteen sections), A.H. Pitt Rivers (nine sections), C.H. Read (seven sections), John Evans (seven sections), A.W. Franks (five sections) and Francis Galton (five sections). Of these Tylor, Lane Fox (Pitt Rivers), Franks and Galton had also been major contributors to the 1874 edition (Urry 1993:21). The majority of the guide’s contributors had not undertaken research in the field, and had colonial correspondents on whom they relied for new anthropological ‘facts’.

The 1892 edition was something of transitional volume. Whilst the contribution of Read represented some lessening of the influence of Tylor and the other major figures of the 1870s, the book was still under their shadow. James Urry argues that the authorship of this edition preceded the era of the professional anthropologist.

The Tylorian era was ending; men like Tylor, Pitt Rivers and Lubbock were to be replaced gradually by men trained in the natural sciences. These people, like A.C. Haddon, C.G. Seligman and W.H.R. Rivers, brought to anthropology a new sense of importance in the collection of data with an emphasis on problems of methodology and research (Urry 1993:27).
NOW READY.

Notes and Queries on Anthropology.

THIRD EDITION.

Edited for the British Association for the Advancement of Science, by J. G. GARSON, M.D., and CHARLES H. READ, F.S.A. Published by the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 3, Hanover Square, London, W., price 5s. (to Members of the British Association, and Fellows of the Anthropological Institute, on personal application at the Institute, 3s. 6d.).

Figure 3.1: Advertisment for the 1899 edition of Notes and queries on anthropology (private collection).
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

The 1912 edition of *Notes and Queries on anthropology* represented a generational change in its authorship, structure and content. It was, as Urry has observed, a move away from Tylorian anthropology (1993:29), and was the first edition in which the content and structure was dominated by anthropologists who had had experience of undertaking fieldwork. The committee responsible for the revised edition included most of those who had been involved in the 1898 Cambridge University Expedition to the Torres Strait Islands, such as A.C. Haddon, and W.H. Rivers (Urry 1993:29). Informed by their fieldwork experiences, the work particularly promoted Rivers’ ideas about the importance of methodology. It focused more on the complexities of the relationship between indigenous ‘informants’ and anthropologists, and stressed the need for the use of explicit methodology, learning the local language and careful recording techniques (Urry 1993:30). It included a large section on sociology, a reduced emphasis on physical anthropology, and the removal of the sections on archaeology. Urry notes that:

Rivers’ advice on the interrelationship of the different aspects of social life hint[ed] of the functionalism to come (Urry 1993:30).

Here Urry is alluding to the radical shift within anthropology towards functionalism associated with the figures of Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, which began in the second decade of the twentieth century (Stocking Jr 1984a). An important part of the new functionalist paradigm was a move away from the study of objects towards a focus on social structure.

**The structure and contents of Notes and queries on anthropology**

The 1892 edition of *Notes and queries on anthropology* is a substantial volume of 242 pages, divided into two parts. The first of these, edited by J.G. Garson, was titled ‘anthropography’ and focused on physical anthropology. It comprised 38 sections and took up 88 pages. The second, and more substantial part of the volume, titled ‘ethnography’, was edited by C.H. Read. It was this part which was directly relevant to collectors of ethnographic objects. The ethnography part of the book consisted of 77 sections, each contributed by a different author. The arrangement of the sections in the 1892 edition followed the structure of
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the 1874 edition, and a contemporary readings of its content does not give an impression of the editors having had an overriding conception of how the different cultural elements singled out in the guide were linked, such as was to come with the 1912 (post-Torres Strait Expedition) edition. The 1892 structure appears to reflect more the result of each author having written a section(s) about their particular topic(s) of interest.

The structure within each section consisted of either simply a listing of questions, or the presentation of a background to the topic which often explained the importance of obtaining further information relating to a particular topic. An example of the style of these entries is provided by Pitt Rivers in his entry on ‘hunting’. He stated:

It is generally admitted that all races have passed through a stage of existence in which they were dependent on hunting almost entirely for their food. The hunting practices of savages are therefore of great interest in tracing the origin of customs and institutions which may have survived in a more advanced state of culture. (1892:193)

The 1892 Notes and queries also contained a separate section offering specific advice on compiling ‘ethnological collections’. This advice, written by C.H. Read, outlined the types of objects and the contextual information about them which museums desired. He wrote:

It is of importance to obtain from natives any portable specimens of their handiwork, tools, weapons, dress, ornaments, fetishes, &c., and, where possible, the native descriptions of the objects, whether the tools, for example, are for any special work, &c. (1892b:232).

In anticipation of those situations where some desired objects could not be obtained, Read advised of an alternative collection strategy. He wrote:

Models should be secured, where the originals cannot be obtained or are too large for transport, eg. canoes, houses &c. (1892b:232).
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

In seeking to obtain as representative a collection as possible, he noted the need to acquire all the different stages in the production and use of an object, and all the manifestations of its constituent parts. He advised:

Not only are the finished objects worth collecting, but also the raw material used in their manufacture, where this has any special character, as grasses for plaiting, dyes or paints used in staining, gums for fixing arrow or spear-points. (1892b:232).

Read concluded by emphasising the importance of collectors remaining scientific in their approach, by collecting all types of objects, not just those with aesthetic impact. He stated:

The commonest things in use are generally the most valuable from an ethnological point of view, though masterpieces of native art are of artistic value, and therefore should not be despised. (Read 1892b:232).

While only a single section of the guide was specifically concerned ‘ethnographic collecting’, the instructions and advice contained in other sections potentially affected the relationships which collectors following the guide would have had with indigenous people. The overall tone of these was set by Read in his introduction to the Ethnography part of the guide, where he wrote dismissively:

It is almost impossible to make the savage in the lower stages of culture understand why the questions are asked and from the limited range of his vocabulary or ideas it is often nearly as difficult to put the question before him in such a way that he can comprehend it (Read 1892a:87).

Many of the other sections also implicitly conveyed directions about how to engage with indigenous people. For example E.B. Tylor’s began his section on ‘religion and fetishes’ by stating:

It is often a matter of difficulty to obtain precise information as to the religion of an uncivilized people, who conceal their doctrines for fear of ridicule, and will
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

purposefully put the inquirer off the track. *After long and friendly intercourse*, however, a clue may generally be obtained; and when something is known, it serves as a means of raising further questions [my emphasis] (1892).

Here Tylor acknowledges the intrusive nature of anthropological enquiry, and suggests a method of overcoming the resistance of indigenous people to provide the information which ‘science’ required. Similarly, in the section on ‘initiatory ceremonies’ C.H. Read described how the observer could overcome the unco-operativeness of the indigenous subject.

Where the [initiatory] ceremonies are performed in secret, it will obviously be difficult to obtain a full account, or to witness them, but much insight into their purpose may be gained by *judicious and persistent enquiry* [my emphasis] (1892c:160).

An outcome of teaching such a ‘scientific’ way of seeing the world, one which put a higher priority on the gathering of information than the respect of indigenous cultural practices, was to obscure the complexities of the relationship between the collector and indigenous people. In doing so they authorised a particular relationship between collector and indigenous people, one which prioritized scientific knowledge above indigenous boundaries. As evidenced in Read’s introduction quoted above, the intrusive nature of the act of gathering of information was justified by asserting that that the ‘savage in the lower stages of culture’ was beyond comprehending the importance of such activity (1892:193).

Turning to the questions themselves, these were often long, complex, and sought highly detailed and specific information. They were also presented in a very dense style, one which may have discouraged the reader and would appear to have been quite difficult to use in the field. For example, Pitt River’s section on ‘weapons’ begins:

*Weapons* - Describe minutely all the varieties of their war weapons. 44. Are the same weapons used in war and the chase, or as tools? 44a. Are their weapons home made or made by other tribes? if the latter, do they make any alteration before using them? 45. Describe their defensive armour, and its capabilities for
defending the body. 46. Are special weapons used by particular tribes? 47. Do the weapons vary in the same tribe? And what have been their varieties in times past? 48. Do they use the amentum, the throwing stick, or any other means of accelerating the flight of the javelin? 48a. Are the spears provided with a spud at the butt? and for what reason? (1892:189).

The following extract from the same section provides a feel for the level of detail of instructions provided by some parts of the Notes and queries.

If the natives can be induced to shoot at a target, the distance of each shot from the point aimed at should be measured, added, and divided by the number of shots. The figure of merit obtained by this means would enable a comparison to be made with the shooting of other races conducted under similar conditions. If no measure is at hand, tie a knot in a string for each shot, and divide the string into as many equal parts as there were shots fired. A target composed of grass bands covered with paper might be used, not less than 6 feet in diameter. Misses should be scored with a deviation of 4 feet; distances, 50, 100, 150, and 200 paces of 30 inches. (Pitt Rivers 1892:190).

Given the detail and volume of the questions and instructions contained in Notes and queries, an obvious question arises as to its effectiveness in eliciting anthropological descriptions and collections of objects. Urry suggests that the extensive distribution of the guide throughout the colonies is demonstrative of its influence. He further suggests that:

Many of the papers contributed to the journal of the [Anthropological] Institute over the next few years clearly reflect the influence of N & Q (1993:22).

However, I argue that such a conclusion is not valid for Australian anthropology. For example, despite Pitt Rivers detailed methodology for research of weapons (described above), an inspection of the literature shows that no research on this topic was undertaken in Australia (Cundy 1989). Indeed, apart from a small number of cases, a review of what was published about Australia at that time suggests that there was very little information gathered which followed the methodology or the specific questions set out in the Notes and queries on anthropology. Perhaps this is a reflection of the difficulty
for any fieldworker in obtaining all the information sought by the included questions. It also appears that questionnaires distributed by British based people such as J.G. Frazer were more productive in generating Australian Aboriginal cultural descriptions than Notes and queries on anthropology (Frazer 1895). This suggests that Australians interested in anthropology were seeking not so much a methodology, but an ongoing correspondence relationship.

This raises the obvious question of what role Notes and queries played in the acquisition of information about Aboriginal people, and more particularly what influence it had on collectors of Aboriginal objects. It is clear that at the end of the nineteenth century, Notes and queries on anthropology was an authoritative publication within the Anglo-anthropological world. As discussed above, its different sections were written by many of the leaders in the British anthropological world at the time, with C.H. Read, one of the editors of the 1892 edition, being a curator in the British Museum’s ethnographic department. Its status was further enhanced through having been published by the Anthropological Institute. The 1892 edition was also important because Read’s involvement strongly suggests that the view of culture which Notes and queries on anthropology presents can be considered as the one employed by the British Museum at the time. Given its status, an obvious question is what impact did Notes and queries on anthropology have on the way in which those collectors who possessed a copy viewed and collected Australian Aboriginal culture? In particular, can its influence be observed within the contents of the collections they acquired? An opportunity to explore this issue is available in the collections of Aboriginal objects acquired by Emile Clement.

The influence of Notes and queries on anthropology on a collector

In September 1896 C.H. Read, who at that time was responsible for the British Museum’s ethnographic collections, sent Emile Clement a copy of the 1892

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13 It is not surprising that those in involved in the 1899 Cambridge expedition to the Torres Strait, the first major British anthropological expedition, rewrote Notes and Queries, giving it a definite structure.
14 I discuss this issue further in Chapter 7, in terms of H.J. Hillier’s relationships with curators.
edition of *Notes and queries on anthropology*. This occurred soon after Clement had sold the British Museum a substantial collection of Aboriginal anthropological objects he had brought back from his first trip to Western Australia. Read sent the guide in response to Clement’s offer to collect more material for the museum during his impending second trip to Western Australia. Read wrote:

I send by post a little manual that will give you hints of what to observe and how to work.\(^{15}\)

In response to Read’s gift Clement replied:

Allow me to thank you for the book you kindly sent me and which will prove of great use to me. I had no idea there was anything like it published.\(^{16}\)

As I will describe in more detail in Chapter 6, during the 1890s Clement made a number of trips to the northwest region of Western Australia, from which he brought back substantial numbers of Aboriginal objects and natural history specimens which he sold to British and European museums. The existing information about the timing of his collecting and subsequent sales to museums is precise enough to differentiate between those objects which were acquired before Clement had received *Notes and queries* and those objects he sold and donated to museums immediately after he had the guide. The two collections which he sold to museums in 1896 before receiving the guidebook are held by the Royal Museum of Scotland and the British Museum. The seven collections he sold in 1898, after returning from his second trip, are held by the Leiden Rijksmuseum, the National Museum of Ireland, the Royal Museum of Scotland, the Kew Museum of Economic Botany, the Pitt Rivers Museum, the British Museum, and the Hamburg Museum. The existence of this data invites a comparison to determine whether a difference, possibly relating to Clement’s possession of *Notes and queries*, is evident in these two assemblages of objects.

\(^{15}\) Letter from C.H. Read to E. Clement 30/9/1896, Archives of the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum.

\(^{16}\) Letter from E. Clement to C.H. Read 1/10/1896, Archives of the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum.
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In order not to add yet another interpretive layer over the collections, for example in terms of which objects are alike and which are different, I have used an existing classification of one of Clement’s collections. This is the system which J.G. Schmeltz used to describe the Clement collection held by the Leiden Rijksmuseum (Schmeltz 1904). The nine classes were: war; dress and ornament; food etc.; worshipping of the dead etc.; means of government etc.; fishing and hunting; music, dancing, arts etc.; agriculture etc.; handicrafts.

As the Leiden Museum’s large collection of 193 objects contains examples of almost all of the different types of objects which Clement was selling to other museums it is possible – using the same classificatory system as that used by Schmeltz – to firstly combine, and then compare the contents of the collections held in other museums.

It is of course problematic comparing different museum collections, which even though associated with the same collector, have been collected at different times, in different places, and from different people. That is, one runs the risk of ignoring the influence of the different contexts in which collection took place – something for which I strongly argue for in this thesis. As I have demonstrated in other research, our understandings of what a collection represents can change according to the depth of our knowledge about the history of the formation and curation of a collection (Coates 1989). However at a broad level a number of trends are evident in comparing the contents of Clement’s collections.

Firstly, there was a dramatic increase in the overall numbers of objects which Clement sold to museums. He sold 88 objects in 1896 and approximately 560 in 1898. Secondly, the contents of the 1898 collections (after Clement had received Notes and queries) included all the categories of objects present in the 1896 collections as well as two others, those Schmeltz terms ‘agriculture’ and ‘handicrafts’. Thirdly, in the 1898 collections there was a substantial increase in the representation of the ‘music, dancing, arts’ category. The only category relatively more represented in the 1896 collections were ‘weapons’, however this is more the result of the higher numbers of ‘non-weapon’ objects in the 1898 collection.
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Clement's 1898 collections are obviously larger, and contain a broader representation of object types. However the link between this pattern and his possessing a copy on Notes and queries is less clear. Indeed, in aspects of Clement's collecting which are directly addressed by the guide there are no dramatic changes between the pre- and post- Notes and queries collections. For example, receiving the book did not result in Clement generating extensive contextual notes about the objects. Although he published a description of Aboriginal culture in 1904, this article does not reflect the structure of Notes and queries. I therefore suggest that rather than Notes and queries on anthropology having a direct influence on the way in which Clement collected, it was only one component in expanding Clement's awareness of the diversity of material of interest to British curators, and in particular to C.H. Read.

In this chapter I have moved from the broader intellectual milieu of British anthropology examined in the previous chapter, to focus specifically on the range of British museums which were collecting Aboriginal objects at the end of the nineteenth century, and the sorts of ways they engaged with collectors of these objects. In the second part of the chapter I have discussed the role of collecting guides in forming and encouraging the collection of Australian Aboriginal material at the turn of the century. Such guides were intended to served a number of ends. Firstly, they can be interpreted as an attempt by British 'scientific authorities' in both anthropology and natural history to structure a particular way of looking at the landscape of the outlying colonies. Defining and describing a standardised approach to different cultural and landscape elements allowed comparisons to be made between sets of data collected from different parts of the world, and to generate theories and explanations beyond the particular. At another level, their use was a way of imposing the intellectual authority of the centre on those operating at the scientific edges, in the colonies. By providing handbooks to assist in the collection of objects, both for anthropology and natural history, those individuals and institutions at the centre of the scientific world attempted to influence the structure of the way in which material was collected and the interpretations given to it.

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However, what such guides were intended to do and what they actually achieved, and the role they played in the activities of collectors, are very different things. Emile Clement's comment that the guide 'will prove of great use to me' raises a number of important questions for our understanding of the influence of *Notes and queries on anthropology* on collectors of Australian Aboriginal objects. His response raises the issue of in what way did Clement expect *Notes and queries* to be 'of great use' to him? Did he anticipate that it would provide him with a useful methodology for collecting? Did it provide him with an inventory of the types of material desired by museums? The analysis I present early in this chapter shows that neither of these are strongly reflected in his collections.

Instead of looking for a direct relationship between the contents of the guide and the contents of Clement's collections, and at the style of his collecting and engagement with Aboriginal people, I suggest it is more valuable to interpret Clement's comments about 'usefulness' in the context of the act of his receiving the guide as being a signifier of his engagement with the British anthropological world. As well as being instructive guides, I suggest that for both museums and curators *Notes and queries on anthropology*, and other such museum issued guides, were commodities in themselves, which were given and exchanged for collections sent, or about to be sent. Their distribution helped establish and maintain relationships of reciprocity between museums and the network of collectors throughout the world, upon which the continued growth of their collections were reliant. In being used in such a manner, it was not only what they contained which was significant, rather was it represented. Such guides were generally acquired by collectors via their relationships with curators, and the act of giving was caught up in a complex web of interactions. It was tied to one person from whom one had acquired it, and what this signified. Thus I argue that whilst at one level the dialogue between Read and Clement suggests that it is the book which 'will prove of great use' to Clement on the basis of a review of his engagement with museums in Britain and Europe of far more use to Clement is the relationship which the book signifies.
Chapter 3 - Museums, and the guidance of collectors

This discussion of museums and the ways in which they attempted to influence the behaviours of collectors has ended with the way in which the collector created his own relationships. In the following four chapters it is the world of the collector to which I turn.
Chapter 4 – A brief disquisition on collecting

W.H. Flower offered the following advice about collecting.

The value of making a collection of any kind of specimens about which you wish to know something is that you are forced to spend time and thought over them, to look at them, carefully to prepare them and compare them, to arrange and name them (Flower 1898:65-66).

Flower’s advice can also be applied to analysing how we have come to understand the activities of collectors. In this second sondage of four chapters, I move from an examination of the British world of anthropology and museums, to ‘spend time and thought’ over the activities of two collectors, H.J. Hillier and Emile Clement. These collectors each acquired Australian Aboriginal artefacts and botanical and zoological specimens from different parts of Australia. In this short chapter I preface my accounts of Hillier and Clement by exploring one recent discourse of anthropological collecting.

One of the ways in which researchers have interpreted the range of anthropological objects present in museums has been to describe them implicitly or explicitly according to a categorisation of the collector who acquired them, for example explorers, missionaries, settlers, colonial officials, and anthropologists (Bouquet 1996; Jones 1996). Nicholas Thomas has employed such categories in his attempt to tease out the impact of different types of colonial relationships on the acquisition of indigenous objects by Europeans in the Pacific (1991:126). An important part of Thomas’s study is a
discussion of the complex ways in which indigenous objects, and depictions of them, were used by European missionaries, and the implications of this for understanding museum collections which are a product of such colonial relationships (1991:151-162). This approach is of particular relevance for interpreting the museum collections of Henry Hillier, which were formed whilst Hillier was employed as a teacher at Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, the two Lutheran mission stations in central Australia.

Thomas's study shows how the collection and display of particular indigenous objects by missionaries in the Pacific was tied to their attempts to change indigenous societies through conversion to Christianity.

The mission was not merely to change religion, to substitute Christianity for paganism, ... customs which were barbaric or inconsistent with Christian life were to be abolished (Thomas 1991:152).

One type of object, 'idols', was a focus of much missionary interest. Thomas describes two major ways in which this type of object, and the act of its collection by missionaries, contributed to the missions' evangelical goals. Firstly, the existence of idols among indigenous people was taken to be evidence of their heathen state, and hence their need for conversion. Secondly, the act of indigenous people giving up their idols to the missionaries was equated with the missionary having successfully negotiated the replacement of their 'heathen' beliefs through conversion to Christianity. Accounts and illustrations of such acts were featured in mission material written for European audiences, which Thomas interprets as demonstrating the 'transformation' of the natives (1991:155).

For places such as Fiji and Samoa, where idols were not present, missionaries collected and displayed objects associated with other aspects of 'savagery'. These included weapons such as spears and clubs, and objects supposedly associated with cannibalism. Again, Thomas suggests that missionary authorities used collections of such objects to show both indigenous peoples'
Chapter 4 - A brief disquisition on collecting

'barbaric past', and how relinquishment of such objects by indigenous peoples was evidence of the success of their conversion (1991:156-157).

As well as identifying those aspects of indigenous society which missionaries considered needed changing, it was also important to identify to European supporters of the missionary work that there were aspects of indigenous society which were considered worth encouraging. This included the production of artefacts such as 'baskets, cloth, pottery, and wood carvings' (1991:157-8).

Richard Eves has extended Thomas's work, showing how missionaries were involved in a complex process of reshaping many aspects of indigenous culture, including material culture, through discouraging some aspects of social life whilst encouraging and elaborating others (Eves 1996).

Thomas's work (1991; 1992) is attractive in that he has clearly identified patterns in the way missionaries and mission authorities used different types of indigenous objects for a variety of reasons directly linked to the mission project. However Thomas does not suggest that the patterns he has identified are the only uses that objects collected by missionaries were put to, and it is important to note that the existence of such patterns does not remove the possibility of missionaries collecting for other reasons. Indeed, it is clear from subsequent work by other writers that there were other factors influencing the contents of missionary collections. In her analysis of the museum collections acquired by the Presbyterian missionary H.A. Robertson from Vanuatu, Barbara Lawson (1994a; 1994b) finds that his collecting was not determined by the factors identified by Thomas:

There is no apparent emphasis on the accoutrements of 'heathenism' ('fetishes' and 'idols'), 'savagery' (weapons and evidence of cannibal practices), readiness for missionary instruction (objects of expert craftsmanship highlighting 'native' ingenuity and intelligence), or other kinds of objects typically used to encourage mission fund-raising (1994a:21-22).
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Untangling the extent to which the collecting activities of missionaries were prescribed by their evangelical work has become the grounds for some recent debate (Rubel & Rosman 1996; 1998; Eves 1998). In trying to account for such differences in the contents of collections acquired by missionaries, some writers have implicitly suggested that missionary collectors could operate as ‘missionary’ or ‘anthropologist’. Paula Rubel and Abraham Rosman in their account of the collecting activities of another Pacific missionary, George Brown, suggest that his ‘intellectual curiosity’ took him beyond ‘stereotyped beliefs’ (Rubel & Rosman 1996:60). They conclude that Brown:

was truly a natural historian of the Pacific recording information and collecting floral and faunal specimens. But more importantly for us, his collecting of ethnographic artifacts and data and his ethnological theorizing brought him within the sphere of anthropology as the discipline was developing in the 19th century (1996:67).

In this interpretation of Brown’s collecting activities, Rubel and Rosman have drawn on two of the meanings of natural history. That is ‘natural history’ as a category of object, and secondly ‘natural history’ as a systematic method of collecting, guided by notions of ‘scientific inquiry’. Eves (1998) has singled out the latter for criticism, suggesting that interpreting Brown’s collecting as reflective of his being a natural historian/anthropologist dilutes the role of his evangelical agenda as a missionary. He stresses that Rubel and Rosman’s.

...attempt to read Brown as a scientist and adventurer underestimates the important part played by material culture in missionary discourse ... [that Brown was] ... primarily a missionary and that his collecting was an adjunct to this project (Eves 1998:49).

In taking this position Eves has explicitly posited a dichotomy between ‘missionary’ and ‘anthropologist’.

Anthropological works, while also often a constituent of a colonialist strategy, are of a different order. Rather than seeking to reconstruct the societies they are
confronted with, anthropologists seek to document them as an intellectual exercise that is sufficient in itself (Eves 1998:52).

This dichotomy appears to ignore the entanglement of anthropological and missionary knowledges and activities at the turn of the century. Missionaries were amongst the small number of people who were living for extended periods in 'ethnographic' situations with indigenous peoples, and thus in a position to undertake 'fieldwork'. Such a dichotomy also carries an acceptance of the category 'missionary' as an unproblematic and transferable category. That is, that all missionaries are the same, having the same outcomes on their collecting. My analysis in Chapter 8 of collecting at the Lutheran missions at Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, where Hillier lived and work, demonstrates the complexity of the 'missionary' category. It shows how each of these mission stations consisted of a community of Europeans, with a range of backgrounds and occupations, all involved in different ways with the evangelical project of the mission, and many of whom were involved in the collection of anthropological and natural history objects.

Jeanne Cannizzo (1998) has suggested two other interpretations for the collection of 'natural history' material. In her account of Walter Currie, a Canadian missionary working in Central African at the end of the nineteenth century, she compares his collecting to that of the earlier explorer David Livingstone:

Livingstone and Currie both included natural history specimens with cultural artefacts. However, the Canadian missionary, with no particular scientific interests nor government support for investigating potential colonial enterprises, collected many fewer specimens and product samples (1998:156).

Here she alludes to their natural history collecting as arising out of both a scientific interest, and — acting as an agent of the state in locating potentially exploitable natural resources. One museum in England was established especially for such material; the Museum of Economic Botany at Kew Gardens was established to collect examples of the economic or cultural use of botanical

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material. The concept of 'usefulness' underlay these collections; they were part of the inventory of the products of the Empire.

Whilst there is no doubt that the broader context of a collector, such as their occupation, is influential, I suggest that such emphasis on whether particular collectors were acting as 'missionaries' or 'anthropologists' overshadows another crucial aspect of the collecting process. If, as an alternative, collecting is conceptualised as cultural performance, then an important factor becomes the audience – or intended audience – of a collection. This is an approach implicit in Nicholas Thomas's work on missionaries, where he identifies a crucial factor influencing the sorts of objects they collected as being their role as part of mission propaganda, which was related to the intended audience of the objects (Thomas 1991, 1992). Similarly, Richard Eves in his interpretation of George Brown (1998), focuses on how the material was directed towards missionary goals. The commonality of these purposes was that they were directed at a particular audience in Europe. What was influencing their collections was not so much whether in collecting they were being missionaries or anthropologists, but what the objects were being used for after collection. I suggest that there is a difference between an audience composed of potential mission supporters and the audience of a public museum.

I want to expand this approach by exploring the question of what the impact of a different audience was on the collected material. I suggest that other audiences may have resulted in a different range of objects being represented. The particular audience I will focus on throughout this thesis, is the museum. For example, Barbara Lawson's analysis of the collections from missionary Robertson, in contrast with the patterns identified by Thomas (1992), is based on the collections he donated to the Redpath Museum, a natural history museum. Similarly, George Brown, the focus of Rubel and Rosman's analysis, gave two collections to the Australian Museum. Arthur Smith's account of Joseph Annard's collections describes how it was acquired by David Boyle, the Director of the Normal School in Toronto at the end of the nineteenth century (Smith 1997:96). That is, collectors selected different material for different audiences.
Chapter 4 - A brief disquisition on collecting

I argue that while existing work on the relationship between missionaries and collecting is useful, an exclusive focus on identifying a direct link between the missionaries' evangelical goals and their collecting glosses over the complexities, the ambiguities and the contradictions inherent in the collecting process. As historian Klaus Neumann has noted, it is exploration of these 'cracks and contradictions of the colonial project' which can generate new insights into the complexities of colonial processes, such as collecting (1997:140).

In contrast to work which focuses on the relationship between the collector and indigenous peoples, other strands of research have focused on the relationship between individual collectors and 'their' objects. Such research examines collecting in general, that is, it does not explore how the collector's relationships with these objects are affected by differences in the types of objects they are collecting. In doing so, such approaches represent a further stage in the decontextualisation and recontextualisation of the anthropological object.

Susan Pearce, one of the writers who has been at the forefront of the renaissance of research on museums and collecting, has suggested that most objects in museums are a product of three modes of collecting. Collections arise out of three different types of relationships with their collectors, with differences between these modes having an effect on the type of material, its level of documentation, and its potential uses within the museum (Pearce 1991; 1992). Pearce stresses the role of the individual in the formation of collections, in contrast to Thomas's (1991) emphasis on the role of the socially and historically defined group in the determining the content and context of acquisition of material acquired. Pearce describes her three modes as souvenir collecting, fetishistic collecting, and systematic collecting (1992:69). These categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive (1991:151). Pearce suggests that differences between these modes have an effect on the type of material, its level of documentation, and its potential uses within the museum (1991; 1992).
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The first mode identified by Pearce is collections as ‘souvenirs’. The primary value of souvenir objects, and the basis for their classification, is their association with a particular person or event. This category encompasses material such as ‘personalia’ and ‘memorabilia’. Pearce uses the examples of children’s toys and hunting trophies (1992:69). Pearce suggests that in general the value of these objects declines with the decline in the significance of the person or event with which they are associated. In defining the meaning and the life of the souvenir in relation to the individual, Pearce, informed by the work of Susan Stewart (1984), views objects as enabling the collector to make sense of the world, by marking particular events in such a way as to embody both the personal scale and the larger scale. For example Pearce writes:

[souvenirs] help to reduce a large and complex experience, like the Somme or the Western Desert, to a smaller and simpler scale of which one human can make some sense (1992:72).

Such objects are also romantic in their role of constructing a continuous, seamless past, not ‘fractured, confused and rootless, but on the contrary, suffused with grace and significance’ (Pearce 1992:72). She concludes that such objects.

...relate to the construction of a romantically integrated personal self, in which the objects are subordinated into a secondary role, and it is this which makes them, all too frequently, so depressing to curate and to display’ (Pearce 1992:73).

Such a negative view of the museum value of such ‘souvenirs’ appears to be a result of the curator not being able to identify with the meaning and/or event of which the souvenir is emblematic. However there are differences when the souvenir category is applied to anthropological material. When such objects are displayed, as well as their more limited meanings as romantic personal souvenirs, these objects have a more general meaning for the European observer. They are artefacts which are emblematic of a generalised representation of a different culture.
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Pearce constructs her second mode, fetishistic collecting, in opposition to souvenir collecting. Unlike souvenirs, where experiences of particular events or people are embodied within an object, fetishistic collecting occurs where the action of collecting gives meaning to the collector. She writes:

The whole process is a deployment of the possessive self, a strategy of desire, and this is part of the reason why this mode of collecting is described as fetishistic (Pearce 1992:81).

In terms of its effects on the contents of collections, Pearce characterises fetishistic collecting as a strategy of trying to maximise the number of samples of objects (1992:81).

...the intention is to acquire more and more of the same kinds of pieces (Pearce 1991:143).

The third mode Pearce describes is termed systematic collecting, and is distinct from both souvenir and fetishistic objects. She suggests that the formation of such collections is guided by underlying principles of organisation:

Systematic collections depend upon principles of organization, which are perceived to have external reality beyond the specific material under consideration, and which are held to derive from general principles deduced from the broad mass of kindred material through the operation of observation and reason (Pearce 1991:149).

In constructing the systematic mode of acquisition, Pearce has implicitly drawn on the notion that systematic collecting is a more scientific and objective technique, and therefore results in a more representative, and thus ‘better’ collection of objects.

There are a number of problems inherent in Pearce’s ‘modes of acquisition’. Pearce suggests that a dichotomy exists between souvenir/fetish collecting. In contrast to her characterisation of systematic collecting as being a public
activity, Pearce views fetishistic collections as private (1991:146). However such an interpretation would not be held by those within the communities of such collectors, such as those of stamp collectors. Only the viewer outside these communities interpret their activities as private and hidden. Additionally, those outside of such communities are not aware of, and do not understand, the meanings being ascribed upon the objects by the participants, and on this basis may define the observed behaviour as being fetishistic. If you do not understand the collecting practice that you are looking at, you may ascribe fetishistic qualities to the collection. It is a category easily ascribed as a result of misunderstanding on the part of an outside observer. Pearce's emphasis in systematic collecting is on classification (1991:149). However I would suggest that classification is present in most types of collecting, including those Pearce describes as resulting from a fetishistic collecting relationship.

Pearce's model is an attempt to describe the relationship between the collector and the collected material, whereas Thomas focuses on the relationship between the colonial collector and the indigenous people from whom objects were obtained, and the outcomes of this relationship on the collected material. Whereas Pearce privileges the collector, Thomas highlights the context within which the object is collected. The way in which Pearce privileges the collector, by equating all types of collected objects, highlights a broader problem with such approaches. Such models, through their focus on the relationship between collector and objects, when applied to anthropological collecting removes the agency of the indigenous maker and user of the objects. The model implies that the collectors, predominantly European, acquired material from an 'open field', in a similar fashion to the notion of the artist painting on a blank canvas. It is the collector's creative choices which determine the contents of the final collection. Such a model is derived from the characteristics of other types of collecting. For example, writing of the activities of a book collector, Roger Cardinal notes: 'in a shop, a given book remains in a sense neutral so long as it is open to anyone to pick it out' (Cardinal 1994:68). Another example of this is the image of the naturalist collecting specimens from the field. Johannes Fabian has described this stereotype in the following terms:
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Semantically, collecting has an aura of innocence - just picking up things that are there for the picking. As collecting, the acquisition of objects evokes the leisurely pursuits of connoisseurs on the one hand, and the disciplined filling-in of taxonomic pigeon holes carried out by naturalists on the other. The latter, apart from advertising its scientific legitimacy, also suggests epistemic analogies between gathering specimens from "nature" and assembling tokens of culture. How much there is wrong with this analogy has been the object of many a critical disquisition in anthropology. What is considered less often is the fact that, in the situations we are looking at, both kinds of collecting were always mediated by, among others, political and economic relations (Fabian 1998:88).

As Fabian has identified, such a 'neutral field model' results in the depiction of the object as being 'neutral', and is implicit in many popular understandings of natural history and anthropological collections. As discussed in Chapter 3, it is also implicit in the interpretive framework promoted within guides such as Notes and queries.

Reflecting on his experience of collecting anthropological objects for the British Museum in the 1980s, curator Michael O'Hanlon noted:

I did not find myself a free agent, assembling a collection according to my own whim. I discovered that my collecting was constrained by local processes and rules, with the upshot that the collection I made married in its own structure local social organisation (O'Hanlon 1993:55).

I argue that application of Pearce's model of collecting results in interpretations which ignore the agency of Aboriginal people in the collecting process, and assigns them a generic role.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how a frequent approach to interpreting anthropological collecting is to place collectors in particular categories, based on their occupation or reason for being at the place of collection. Whilst this is
an effective way of ordering the complexity of individuals involved in getting such objects into museums, its application has a number of effects on the way in which collecting and its context is interpreted. My analysis of the way in which the ‘missionary’ category has been used in the literature shows how it can devalue the agency of the individual collector, and the indigenous context from which objects were obtained. It also appears that within the literature energy has been expended on debating which particular category a collector best fits into, rather than addressing the extent to which assumptions about the motives for, and context of, collection associated with each category reflect the circumstances and actions of the particular collector. That is, the argument becomes one about what a particular collector was - ‘missionary’ or ‘anthropologist’ - rather than critiquing the categorisation per se.

Susan Pearce presents an alternative to interpreting collecting in terms of collector categories, suggesting that collecting can be divided into a series of modes, based on differences in the relationships of the collector to their objects. Again, whilst the model serves to organise a disparate assemblage of objects, collecting contexts and relationships, when applied to anthropological collections it becomes problematic. A focus on the collector-object relationship removes indigenous agency in the collecting process.

An alternative to Pearce’s model is one which acknowledges the agency of all three agents in the collection process: the curator, the collector and indigenous people. It also needs to acknowledge the colonial context in which collecting occurs, and the specificity of the place in which it occurs. A model of collecting also needs to be set against the background of other exchanges occurring at that place, and the significance of collecting to all three agents. As a stage in progressing towards such a model, I present in the following three chapters, an analysis of two collectors, and examine the complexities, ambiguities and contradictions displayed both in their collecting practices and in their relationships with British curators.
Chapter 5 – Henry Hillier:
Collector on a mission

The Field Museum in Chicago holds a small collection of Australian Aboriginal objects from Hermannsburg in central Australia, which it acquired from the prominent British ‘armchair’ collector, Captain A.W.F. Fuller. Part of the documentation of this collection is a transcript of an interview with Fuller, in which he describes the role of Henry Hillier, who collected the objects, as follows:

After [Hillier] had Christianized the natives, they gave up these things to him.
Hillier made notes of them and sent them back to obtain money for his mission.\(^1\)

Fuller implies a direct and straightforward relationship between indigenous people accepting Christianity and Hillier’s acquisition of these objects. In many respects, however, the account is incorrect. Apart from the erroneous depiction of Hillier as a missionary, rather than a mission employee, the account suggests that the sale of the objects was simply a way of sustaining the mission enterprise.\(^2\)

\(^1\)From an interview with Captain A.W.F. Fuller conducted by R.W. Force, relating to object FC 101, 28 February 1958, transcript held by the Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History. Fuller, a London-based collector acquired a collection from Hillier’s mother during the early part of this century, a collection that was subsequently acquired by the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. See Force & Force (1971).

\(^2\)Other errors include the description of the Lutheran mission at Hermannsburg as a Catholic mission; and a later statement by Fuller that Hillier had ‘died out there’ (from an interview with Captain A.W.F. Fuller conducted by R.W. Force, relating to object FC 196, 5 March 1958, transcript held by the Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History).
Chapter 5 – Henry Hillier: Collector on a mission

There are two aspects of this narrative which I raise in this chapter. The first is the way in which the misrepresentation of Hillier as a missionary acts to give a context for his collections. This is an example of a broader process whereby museums and researchers have placed collectors into occupational categories. I examine the way in which real and imagined accounts of collectors’ lives are constructed and used by museums. Fuller’s narrative invokes two categories of collector. Hillier is cast as the altruistic missionary collector. However, Fuller suggests another category of collector, that of the entrepreneurial collector-dealer. I discuss this model in the next chapter, in relation to Emile Clement. Despite the prominence of such collectors in the accession books of museums, little has been written about them and the ways in which they marketed objects. In exploring these two aspects I move from the broader-scale study of British museums presented in the previous chapter, to focus on the little-known life stories of these two collectors, and the way in which the complexity of their lives do not fit such simplistic categories.

Henry James Hillier (1875-1958) was born in Ramsgate, England, into a middle class English family. The son of James Thomas Hillier (1827-1888), a general practitioner, and Sarah Jane (1836-1923), Henry had three siblings. His twin brother, William Thomas Hillier, with whom he kept in close contact

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3The representation of Hillier as a missionary is continued in the description of the Hillier collection held by the British Museum, where it is described in their Register as ‘Purchased from Mrs Hillier, St Albans (collected by Rev Hillier)’.

4In the introduction to his book A theory of the formation of animals, Harry’s brother William wrote:

...the absence of a bibliography and the entire disregard of contemporary views have no more significance than that they indicate the inability of the writer to deal with such matters (Hillier 1932:iv).

A similarly humble view permeates many of H.J. Hillier’s letters, and may explain his reluctance to publish anything of his experiences in central Australia. For example, responding to curator Anatole von Hügel’s suggestion that he write something for the Anthropological Institute Hillier replied:

I have never thought of sending any notes to the Anthropological Society because all I know of the tribe is from working with the Revd J.G. Reuther, the head missionary and I would not care to encroach on his work. (Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 26/2/1906, CUMAA Archive).

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throughout his life, went on to become an esteemed pathologist in Birmingham. He had a younger sister, and a brother who lived in southern Africa. Hillier's immediate family had an influence on his collecting. His father was a member of the London Society of Antiquities, and was involved in the English antiquarian community. Hillier acknowledged his influence when he wrote:

my Father ... was a well known archaeologist in East Kent and he taught us all to take interest in such pursuits.

Hillier's mother was also a strong figure in his life. As well as financially supporting him during his early years in Australia, she became involved in selling his collections to museums and private collectors in England. Both his twin brother and his sister helped Hillier establish correspondence relationships with curators at the British Museum of Natural History and Kew Gardens.

Hillier left school at the age of fifteen due to his poor health. His English doctor suggested that, to ease his consumptive condition, he go to a warmer climate – either to the Kalahari Desert in South Africa or to the deserts of Australia. Accordingly in the early 1890s, aged in his late teens, Hillier travelled alone from England to Australia. By 1893 he had journeyed to the Killalpaninna mission station east of Lake Eyre, in what is now northern South Australia. At that time Killalpaninna was the only Christian community located in inland Australia. Although initially intending to stay for only a few months, with the financial support of his mother in England he ended up

5Von Hügel wrote: 'Your father's name was well known to me, though I had not the pleasure of meeting him' (Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 19/3/1909, von Hügel Letterbook Vol 17: 106-7, CUMAA Archive).
6Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 23/9/1908, Box 92 OA5/1/5, CUMAA Archive.
7One of the subjects which Hillier did study at school was German, a skill which he would have been able to put to good use amongst the predominantly German speaking staff of the Lutheran missions.
8Extract from an interview with Captain A.W.F. Fuller conducted by R.W. Force, relating to object FC 101, 28 February 1958, transcript held by the Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History.
spending thirteen years at Killalpaninna.\(^9\) For the first ten years Hillier appears to have been a guest at the station, occasionally assisting with station stock work and other mission tasks.\(^{10}\) During this time Hillier would have been exposed to the interests of many of the mission staff in different aspects of anthropology and natural history.

In 1902, after the departure of Otto Seibert, Hillier became the Killalpaninna mission’s English teacher. Here he worked under the supervision of the head missionary Johann Georg Reuther (1861-1914). His annual salary was set at £37 rising to £40 in the second year, with free board provided. It was also in 1902 that Hillier first began to correspond with a museum curator. He sent mammal specimens to Michael Rogers Oldfield Thomas (1858-1929), a curator at the BM(NH), requested collecting equipment in exchange. The significance of this relationship is discussed in my analysis of Hillier’s relationship with British curators, presented in Chapter 7.

In early 1905, twelve years after first arriving at the mission, Hillier informed the Adelaide-based Lutheran Mission Committee that he wanted to leave Killalpaninna, both to visit his elderly mother in England and because he felt his students at Killalpaninna were growing too old to teach.\(^{11}\) Hillier returned to England in mid-1905, expressing an interest in working with another Mission Society.\(^{12}\) In September of that year Ludwig Kaibel, the head of the Lutheran Missionary Committee wrote to Hillier in England, asking him to return to South Australia to take up a new position as teacher at the Hermannsburg Mission, 120 kilometres west of Alice Springs, under the missionary Carl Strehlow.\(^{13}\) Hillier knew Strehlow from when they had both


\(^{10}\)Unfortunately there are very few records of Hillier’s activities before he became a teacher.

\(^{11}\)By this time the number of Aboriginal children at the mission had declined. Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 3/1/1905 Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.

\(^{12}\)Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 3/1/1905 Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.

\(^{13}\)In 1894 Carl Strehlow had transferred from the Killalpaninna mission station up to
been at Killalpaninna, and he accepted this offer on the condition that his role would augment the teaching work of Strehlow and that an additional missionary would be appointed. Before returning to Australia, Hillier contacted curatorial staff at the Kew Gardens, the BM(NH) and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. He clearly saw his return to Australia as an opportunity to provide these institutions with anthropological and natural history objects.

In early 1906 Hillier returned to Adelaide, from where he travelled to Hermannsburg. Between 1906 and 1910 he worked at the Hermannsburg Mission on the Finke River, under the supervision of Strehlow, teaching Aboriginal children and the Strehlow children for an annual salary of £50. Whilst at Hermannsburg, Hillier expanded both the range of natural history and anthropological material he was collecting and the museums and curators for whom he collected.

By 1908 it was apparent that Strehlow and his family would soon be leaving Hermannsburg for an extended break in Germany. Fearing that in Strehlow’s absence he would become the defacto missionary and head of the station, Hillier informed the Mission Committee of his intention to resign if a replacement for Strehlow were not appointed well before his departure for Germany, as well as the long-promised additional missionary. Hillier rejected suggestions that he could act as a missionary, stating:

Hermannsburg.

14Despite this arrangement, during Hillier’s employment at Hermannsburg (1906-1910) only one missionary was appointed - the effects of this understaffing was one of Hillier’s reasons for leaving the Mission. (H.J. Hillier to L Kaibel 13/9/1909 FRM file 16C4/5 Hillier Correspondence 1906-1910, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide).

15Hillier maintained a close relationship with the Strehlow family throughout his life. He corresponded with them while they were in Germany from 1910 to 1912, sending gifts to his godson, T.G.H. (Ted) Strehlow. After Carl Strehlow’s death in 1922 he offered Frieda financial assistance with bringing up the children. Hillier continued to correspond with T.G.H. Strehlow until near the end of his life.

Chapter 5 – Henry Hillier: Collector on a mission

I certainly cannot do so as I maintain that a man must have some theological training before he is able to address and teach others from the Scriptures ...¹⁷

Despite this rejection, the Mission Committee was keen to keep Hillier involved in Lutheran mission activities, even offering him the position as manager of the by now declining Killalpaninna mission. However, in September 1909 Hillier formally resigned from his position at Hermannsburg, leaving the station at the end of May 1910.

Hillier remained in Australia after leaving the mission. Initially he stayed with friends in Adelaide, including an extended period with the Reuther family. Eventually he found work as a station hand on a number of properties in South Australia. In 1916 he took up the position as inaugural Secretary to the Anglican Bishop of Willochra, whose Diocese was based in Gladstone and took in the whole of northern South Australia. As part of his duties he served as the Diocesan Secretary on the Australian Board of Missions. Hillier held his position at the Willochra Diocese until 1927, when he moved to Western Australia and ran his own farm near Kojonup in southwest Western Australia for many years. In 1935, aged sixty, Hillier married Lilian Trego-Williams of Adelaide. He returned to live in Adelaide shortly before his death in 1958.

Hillier’s personality comes through in the style of his letters. He was often humble about his achievements and abilities. His occasional references to not having completing school suggest that he may have seen this as something of a barrier. His lack of training in a profession contrasted with the achievements of his father, twin and other brother, all of whom had professions. His letters also contain occasional glimpses of a dry, deprecating sense of humour. Something of this comes across in the following:

when you are writing to me again please edify me as to the empty places in my life. Can you mean to imply my state of celibacy? If so I may state it is only such thru’ force of circumstances. Many and various are the arguments levelled against

me in favour of the married state, by all my friends here, I think some of them
may inwardly envy my independent position seeing I am the only (white)
bachelor on the whole station here.\textsuperscript{18}

you would be surprised what a docile animal the teacher is for the most part,
although when roused is rather more 'intemperate', but I always was like a sheep:
stupefied and very harmless (except for my tongue).\textsuperscript{19}

Hillier is recorded as being something of an artist. As well as the watercolours
he made of Reuther's collection of toads and other Diyari material culture,\textsuperscript{20} he
was renowned for the illuminated addresses which he sent out on birthdays
(Scherer 1966:305). He also drew detailed drawings and watercolours of the
insects and other natural history specimens he acquired. Together with
Reuther he produced the large map of the Diyari and Wankanguru totemic
landscape surrounding the mission (Hercus & Potezny 1990).

Throughout his life, Hillier was interested in natural history and anthropology.
When leaving Hermannsburg he made clear his intention to carry on
collecting.

Where ever I go in Australia next I could still send you any small specimens by
post in tubes or bottles and so when I get my baggage down in the south from
here I will pack your box of tubes up and despatch it.\textsuperscript{21}

For example in 1939,\textsuperscript{22} well after he had left Killalpaninha and Hermannsburg,
he submitted an article to the Illustrated London News, and in his letters to his

\textsuperscript{18}Letter from H.J. Hillier to L Kaibel 4/6/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-
1905, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{19}Letter from H.J. Hillier to L Kaibel 21/7/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-
1905, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{20}There are two sets of these known to exist. One is held by the South Australian Museum and
the other by the Strehlow Research Centre in Alice Springs. This second set was previously
held by Hillier's godson, T.G.H. Strehlow.
\textsuperscript{21}H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 26/4/1910, BM(NH) Archives DF252, WT Calman
Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{22}Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 9/9/1939. Correspondence held by the Strehlow
Research Centre, Alice Springs.
godson, Ted Strehlow, he occasionally described interesting animals he had come across. During his life as a farmer he also continued to occasionally send natural history specimens overseas, for example in 1932 he mentions sending Western Australian frogs to Professor Wood-Jones in Hawaii. In relation to anthropology, he refers to having read articles by Donald Thomson, and in 1922 he requested Carl Strehlow send him artefacts from Hermannsburg for a missionary exhibition in South Australia. He later describes visiting the anthropological exhibits at the museum in Adelaide, and meeting the Director H.M. Hale as well as Norman Tindale. His letters also show that he was familiar with the published work of Spencer and Gillen, and the scientific reports of the 1894 Horn Scientific Expedition. Hillier also took a close interest in the anthropological research of his godson, Ted Strehlow, offering him assistance and advice. In 1932 her wrote:

I am sending you a little book [Notes and Queries] which I have had for years on Anthropology which may, I think be useful to you and if Spencer and Gillen's first work on the Aranda etc would be useful to you (called 'the Native tribes of Central Australia') I could send it to you. It is a very heavy (in weight) book, also there are many mistakes in it because Gillen was postmaster at Alice springs (not Stuart which you will have found out is the township) and he could not speak Aranda.

His letters show that he remained interested in the missionaries and Aboriginal people he had known at the Hermannsburg station. Even long after he had left the area he would instruct Ted Strehlow to pass on his greetings to any of the Aboriginal people he had known there. For example in 1942 he wrote:

23Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 7/4/1932. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
24Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 19/9/1938. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
25Letter from H.J. Hillier to C. Strehlow 29/3/1922. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
26Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 25/6/1933. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
27Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 7/4/1932. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
please tell old Moses any other old boys who remember me that I remember them
and pray for them. 28

Teaching, landscape and collection

Hillier’s experiences of teaching and his interest in landscape were two
twisted aspects of his life at the two missions which impacted on his
collecting practices. Despite the fact that Hillier had already been living at
Killalpaninna for nine years, it was not until he took up a teaching role there
that he forged relationships with curators and museums in Britain.
Conversely, these relationships ceased soon after he gave up his final teaching
position at Hermannsburg. 29 I argue that Hillier’s role as teacher was a
significant contextual factor within which his collecting occurred.

Hillier’s duties at Killalpaninna consisted of teaching the Aboriginal children
(in English) for three hours each morning except Saturdays. 30 A remark by his
friend Ludwig Kaibel, also the head of the Mission Committee, soon after
Hillier’s appointment suggests that his life as a teacher contrasted somewhat
with his earlier life at Killalpaninna:

But oh dear boy, where is your liberty now! It is gone; no more roaming about at
your own free will, but the stern call of duty required obedience. Alas for poor
Harry 31

Initially there were twelve Aboriginal students at the school, learning
arithmetic, 32 writing, reading, and dictation such as ‘the cow was lying down

28 Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 29/4/1942. Correspondence held by the Strehlow
Research Centre, Alice Springs.
29 It may be that Hillier’s appointment as teacher changed his previous style of life at
Killalpaninna. The requirement of being present at the mission settlement each day to teach
may have given Hillier a greater opportunity to collect and curate objects.
30 Letter from H.J. Hillier to L Kaibel 8/4/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-
1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
31 Letter from Kaibel to H.J. Hillier 3/4/1902, Killalpaninna Correspondence, p.357, Lutheran
Archive, Adelaide.
when I saw her’ and ‘be quiet and good always.’ The head of the mission, Johannes G. Reuther, would take the school for a further hour and a half twice a week, teaching religious instruction. Although Hillier professed to ‘not know a single note of music’, by 1904 he had also started teaching hymns and playing the harmonium ‘with one finger’. Alexander Yaschenko, a Russian naturalist who visited the mission in 1903, described what school life was like for both students and Hillier:

The Killalpaninna school-house was of two rooms divided by a corridor. On the right was the white colony’s schoolroom, on the left - that of the natives. The room in which the blacks studied was quite a spacious one, with three windows and a door in its four walls. Faded green curtains hung at the windows to keep out the bright sunlight, and directly facing the door stood a teacher’s high desk. There were several rows of benches, all very simple and time-worn...

Hillier went up to the building with me, opened it by turning a removable doorhandle, let the [Aboriginal] pupils in and entered himself. There were both young and adult pupils ... All took their places, males on the right and females on the left. Hillier said a prayer in English and the lesson began. First came a dictation.... Next came the pronouncing of those erroneous spelled words, again letter by letter .... Hillier then gave a dictation to the younger set, writing on the blackboard everything that was new to them. All this time, the pupils followed the lesson quite attentively, though indeed I observed no special love of learning: one had the impression that the business was viewed as inevitable “daily labour”... All conversation was English, which all understood and in which all could freely respond (Barratt 1985:50-51).

32Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 21/5/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
33Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 21/7/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
34Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 22/9/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
35Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 3/2/1904, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
Geography was the subject, more than any other taught by Hillier, which was most closely aligned with his collecting activities. In one of his early reports, Hillier stated that ‘the students now know the continents, the oceans, and the countries in north and south America and Australia’.\textsuperscript{36} Despite the Mission Committee declining his request for a wall map of the world,\textsuperscript{37} Hillier continued teaching geography, suggesting it was one of the few topics which both teacher and students embraced with enthusiasm:

There is no progress to report as we have simply been going over all back work with the exception of Geography. The children now knowing the continents, colours of people inhabiting same. Countries of Europe and Asia, American and Australian States \textit{and capitals} of all countries and states except those of America. All the oceans and chief seas of the world also rivers of Australia and Asia.\textsuperscript{38}

On occasions, the interests of both teacher and student lead Hillier to take this subject outside the classroom. For example, Hillier described taking the students out on field trips to the mission outstations at Etadunna and Kopperamanna.\textsuperscript{39} It is apparent from his descriptions that there were other similar excursions, which included Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents of Killalpaninna. A component of these excursions was the active exploration of the landscape through catching fauna and sampling and identifying flora. It is likely that the experience of these excursions also encouraged Aboriginal residents to act as collectors for Hillier by bringing him faunal and floral specimens. It is this interest in exploring the landscape at Killalpaninna which I want to explore further here.

The Russian naturalist Alexander Iashchenko described the activities which took place on a number of field trips he undertook in the vicinity of the mission

\textsuperscript{36}Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 29/2/1904, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{37}Teaching report 2/8/1904, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{38}Teaching Report 3/1/1905, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{39}Teaching Report 3/6/1904, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
during his visit to Killalpaninna in 1903. His account affirms that the interest in the surrounding landscape and natural history was shared by both European and Aboriginal people at Killalpaninna. He wrote:

I took a most interesting walk through the country around the mission station. After breakfast, I set off in company with Reuther himself and quite a large group. All told there were ten of us: Reuther and I, three natives ... and five of Reuther's sons... I took along my camera, binoculars, and spirit-jar. Reuther carried a stick and some cartridges, the old man carried a gun, the others provisions and water, and the children - light boomerangs ... We went over to the far side of the [Coopers] creek itself and onto sandhills in which grew clumps of grass. ... These hillocks were the refuge of many creatures, including the kangaroo-rat, mice, lizards, scorpions, spiders, myriapods, and beetles. I began harvesting my collection. (Barratt 1985:36-7).

Iashchenko's account documents how such expeditions provided an arena in which to collect, or 'harvest' the landscape for indigenous and European 'collectors'. It is apparent that for the Europeans such collection was guided by indigenous peoples' knowledge of the landscape and their skill at gathering.

Our experienced guides had only to glance at a burrow in the sand or anywhere else and could instantly say to whom the burrow belonged and whether or not it was occupied. And if I expressed any wish to acquire the occupant for my collection, they would immediately set to digging. (Barratt 1985:37).

Iashchenko's descriptions also show how Hillier shared such interests in the landscape, and how such interests created an arena for engaging with Aboriginal people. For example Iashchenko describes a field trip he took with Hillier. He wrote:

I went on another little outing in the vicinity, this time in [Hillier's] company. We took sandwiches and waterbags, as we were heading into an arid area. With us came the grey-haired native ... and two other Aboriginals ... Two black children also tagged along. ... The Aboriginals, who were carrying our things, keenly
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examined every bush and hillock, so I was soon the possessor of various eggs and, when I wanted them also, of fledglings. (Barratt 1985:43).

Even earlier, in 1900, Erhard Eymann, a visiting German ethnographer and naturalist had recorded Hillier’s knowledge of the landscape when he noted:

The Englishman, Mr Hillier, told me that opossums occur here rarely. Lizards and snakes however, occur frequently (Courto 1996:267).

The following observations by Iashchenko demonstrate the enthusiasm with which the Aboriginal residents of Killalpaninna shared their knowledge of the landscape with Hillier and other Europeans at the station.

The Aboriginals ... started to dig or, rather, tear up the roots of trees ... they wanted to show me how they had provided themselves with drinking water in times past when living or passing through this arid area. They had tried to show me already, actually, but the chosen bush had been old and sick and little water had been collected. This in their opinion, was insufficiently convincing as a demonstration, so this time they dug up several metres of root, which held plenty of water (Barratt 1985:44).

Occasionally we came across the structures of termites. They had the look of tree stumps or small flat-topped islands, washed around. ... Johann said that the Aboriginals ate termite “queens”, which were “very tasty”. We continued on our way home by the same hillocks with valleys between ... as we walked, Johann told me about plants, eg those I picked, and talked about rich grass, as full of moisture as a morning rose, when I trampled some underfoot. The roots of certain plants, something like our own plantain, had tubers that could easily be pulled out of the ground (Barratt 1985:45).

For Europeans, such exploration of landscape was frequently linked to collecting specimens for preservation. Indeed Iashchenko’s account shows that at Killalpaninna Hillier was collecting and curating both natural history and
anthropological objects, and that he was keen to exchange these objects with other collectors:

...I called on Hillier ... and he showed me animal remains that he had dug up, as well as lizards, foetuses, and insects, promising to present me with some for our Academy (Barratt 1985:36).

As gifts, I received ... from Hillier various little [stone] pieces - points for making designs with (Barratt 1985:42).

Collecting natural history material was an activity familiar to both Europeans (mission staff and expeditioners) and the Aboriginal people. However it is clear the collected material had a very different value and uses for the two groups - for example Hillier records his continual struggles to stop the Diyari collectors at Killalpaninna from eating the mammal specimens they had obtained for him.

I have not yet be[en] able to obtain a female (adult) [bandicoot] as the blacks, who catch or dig out the animals for me invariably cheat me by cooking and eating the adult ones, as they are considered a luxury (by the natives).40

Iashchenko reflected the irony of such contrasting values when he wrote:

The natives still eat these local rootcrops with gusto. Johann pulled me up some of the potato-like tubers and I (of course), preserved them in spirits (Barratt 1985:45).

However, despite these differences, such expeditions brought Europeans, such as Hillier, and Aboriginal residents together. The exploration of the landscape became an arena for exchange of knowledge across cultures.

40Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 7/8/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-151.
Collecting and the transition from Killalpaninna to Hermannsburg

It is clear from the descriptions of the visiting scientists Eyßmann and Isaschenko that Hillier formed and curated personal collections of both natural history specimens and anthropological objects whilst at Killalpaninna. However it is one thing to collect objects; it is quite another for these objects to end up as part of a museum collection in Britain. It was not until Hillier had returned from England and moved to Hermannsburg in 1905 that his collections were taken up in any significant way by British museums. Certainly, no anthropological material collected by Hillier was obtained by British museums prior to his move to Hermannsburg.

Hillier's time in England in 1905 and his subsequent move from Killalpaninna to Hermannsburg were crucial to the expansion of his relationships with curators from a variety of museums in Britain, beyond those with whom he had been corresponding while at Killalpaninna. Hillier initiated these new relationships using introductions from Oldfield Thomas, an established correspondent, and through family friends such as Mr Lang through whom he made contact with von Hügel of the Cambridge Museum. I discuss the details of these correspondence relationships more fully in Chapter 7. Associated with these relationships was an increase in the number of objects collected by him which moved from Australia to Britain.

A second factor which influenced Hillier to increase the quantity of material he was sending to museums was the difference in his experience of life at Hermannsburg as compared with Killalpaninna. Although both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg were under the control of the same Lutheran Mission Committee during the periods of Hillier's employment, they were dramatically different in terms of the mission style operating there, the degree of their isolation, and the differing responses of Aboriginal people within the area in which they were located. There are many explanations for such differences, including: the different histories of engagement at each place; different personnel; the different histories of the different Aboriginal groups; and differences in the relationships between mission staff and surrounding
European residents. It is not my intention to explain each of these differences here, rather to examine their role in influencing how Hillier acquired objects and subsequently sent them back to Britain.

From his correspondence, one gains the impression that Hillier was much happier at Killalpaninna than at Hermannsburg. At Hermannsburg mission under Strehlow’s supervision, there appears to have been a much more authoritarian regime which Hillier, as teacher, was a part of and which influenced the ways in which he thought about the people there. It was a style which contrasted with the practices at Killalpaninna under the supervision of Reuther.\textsuperscript{41} The contrast between his experiences at Killalpaninna and at Hermannsburg is most strongly reflected in his views of the children at the two missions. His initial attitude to the students at Killalpaninna, whilst incorporating some of the stereotyped attitudes prevalent at the time, clearly acknowledged their scholastic achievements. He wrote:

\begin{quote}
I must say that I think I can be satisfied with the work the children do on the whole; and one must constantly bear in mind that the blacks have not the capacity of a white for storing knowledge and I may also say I am very pleased with the desire to learn which is shown by most of my pupils.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

In contrast, after just seven months at Hermannsburg, Hillier’s impressions of his Aboriginal students had deteriorated to the point where he stated:

\begin{quote}
should I ever “be able to educate them to become habitually” clean I should certainly have accomplished much, as would a man who taught animals not to do what is inherent to them, have accomplished much.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{41}Christine Stevens has noted that Wolfgang Reidel, Reuther’s successor, introduced a similarly harsh regime to Killalpaninna, including corporal punishment of Aboriginal children (1994:175).
\textsuperscript{42}Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 22/9/1902, Bethesda Box 8 - Hillier Correspondence 1899-1905, Lutheran Archive, Adelaide.
\textsuperscript{43}Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 12/1/1907, FRM file 16C4/5 Hillier Correspondence 1906-1910, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
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Hillier also made frequent comments about the ‘misbehaviour’ of the Aboriginal children and their need for discipline. As the mission teacher, Hillier was involved in the enforcement of authority. An indication of how such authority was enforced is contained in a remark made by Hillier, soon after he had left Hermannsburg, about the new head of the mission:

I presume you know that my predecessor carefully instructed the blacks here that whites were not allowed to punish a blackfellow for wrong doing. Well! Owing to this foolish lead I have had a certain amount of trouble ever since I arrived here, at least with the bigger boys.44

From what I have heard of Mr Beisel, he appears to be the right kind of man. Anyway he is strict and will not suffer any nonsense. Inkinjä, I heard, mutinied against his authority but Beisel gave him “the father of a thrashing” as the Irish say and again the next day in school.45

As well as such explicit measures, Hillier also supervised children outside his teaching duties, directing them in prison-like activities:

Every afternoon (about 2pm) I make all the school boys46 come together and set them to do some little job such as raking stones up or shovelling a bank of sand away or removing rubbish and burying same etc etc, this keeps them on the Station a little and keeps them out of mischief to a certain extent.47

These activities echo those practices employed in Pacific missions which were directed at imposing order through the control of the body (Eves 1996).

45Letter from H.J. Hillier to C. Strehlow 1/12/1910, Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
46In the afternoons Hillier supervised the Aboriginal boys while Mrs Strehlow supervised the girls.
47Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 23/7/1906, FRM file 16C4/5 Hillier Correspondence 1906-1910, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
Another aspect of the authoritarian policy in place at Hermannsburg was the practice of locking Aboriginal children up each night. Initially this practice was for the girls but was later extended to the boys as well.

[The new home for the boys has been finished so they are locked in every night] ... which effectively prevents them wandering about and getting up to mischief on moonlight nights as we had reason to think was the case sometimes. 48

Although his letters suggest that he found the situation difficult, Hillier did form personal relationships with students and soon after he left, he received letters from some of the Aboriginal children he had taught at Hermannsburg. 49

Descriptions by Eymann and Jaschenko give an impression of a less relaxed relationship between mission staff and the Aboriginal residents at Hermannsburg (Barratt 1985; Courto 1996). For example, at Killalpaninna, Aboriginal people were employed for wages rather than rations as was the case in Hermannsburg. Such factors appear to have led to a less divided establishment at Killalpaninna. The differences between the two stations related to Killalpaninna not simply being a mission, but also a commercial cattle and sheep station. The personal style of Reuther also seems to have engendered more affectionate relationships between European mission staff and the Aboriginal people of the district. Hillier’s time at Killalpaninna also coincided with good environmental – and subsequently economic – conditions.

There were also differences in Hillier’s relationships with the personnel of the two missions. He had a close relationship with the Reuther family, and had something of an avuncular relationship with the older superintendent of the mission, J.G. Reuther. This probably reflects the age at which he arrived at Killalpaninna. He was only a youthful seventeen or eighteen when he first arrived at Killalpaninna, so the twelve years he spent there in many ways was

49Letter from H.J. Hillier to C. Strehlow 13/11/1910, Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
the period in which he grew up. By the time he arrived at Hermannsburg Hillier was thirty one. His letters and reports give the reader an impression of Hermannsburg as a less diverse community than Killalpaninna. Strehlow appears to have been a more singular figure of authority as head of the mission when compared to Reuther at Killalpaninna.

Killalpaninna was obviously a popular place for scientific expeditions to visit. The way in which the Russian naturalist Iashchenko was referred to Killalpaninna by the scientific authorities in Adelaide suggests that Killalpaninna was considered the appropriate and accessible place to visit for anyone interested in central Australian natural history and anthropology (Barratt 1985:20). Eydmann’s rich descriptions of life at Killalpaninna in 1900 convey the interest of many of the Europeans and Aboriginal people in trading anthropological objects (Courto 1996). As I discuss in Chapter 8, such visits reflected and encouraged a strong intellectual interest in the landscape of central Australia amongst the European residents at Killalpaninna. The head of the mission, J.G. Reuther, was also a collector of natural history material. Given the close relationship between Reuther and Hillier, it is probable that Hillier’s interest in natural history was encouraged by Reuther. As I will discuss in Chapter 7, it is also possible that Reuther’s role at Killalpaninna as the definitive authority on anthropological matters discouraged Hillier from collecting there.

By contrast, Hermannsburg was far more isolated than Killalpaninna. The station was further from Adelaide, and did not have the same range of scientific visitors during Hillier’s time there. There was possibly not the same level of intellectual excitement that he had experienced at Killalpaninna. In his correspondence with museums he continually stressed the remoteness of the station. This served both to stress the authenticity of the collected material through equating remotesness with a measure of the cultural purity of the material, and a reflection of his own sense of remoteness/isolation.

In addition, I argue that Hillier’s sense of isolation, both physical and intellectual, provided a motivation for Hillier to send his collections of natural
history and anthropological objects to British museums. The difference between the intellectual ambience and physical location of Hermannsburg, as compared with Killalpaninna, led Hillier to seek intellectual community from afar through his relationship with the museums and their curators. The lubricant of these relationships were the artefacts which Hillier supplied to the museums.

Conclusion

This review of Hillier's life clearly shows that his collecting activities do not fit with the collector category of missionary, as suggested in Fuller's account. At no stage did Hillier's collecting relate to evangelical issues. What is revealed, however, is the complex way in which the collection of anthropological and natural history objects was entangled in a number of dimensions of Hillier's life. For Hillier, collecting served as a way of engaging with both the central Australian landscapes and with Aboriginal people at the two missions.

This review has also shown that there were differences in Hillier's collection of anthropological objects as opposed to natural history objects. An explanation of these differences requires an investigation of Hillier's relationships with different curators in both anthropological and natural history museums.

Much of the explanation for Hillier's collecting is specific to his unique circumstances as a peripatetic Englishman making sense of both an indigenous and Germanic landscape at each of the two missions where he worked. In order to identify those features of his collecting and his engagement with curators which arose out of the structural context within which his collecting occurred, a comparative examination of another collector of Aboriginal anthropological and natural history material is required. In the following chapter I explore the life and activities of a very different sort of collector, Emile Clement.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement:
An entrepreneurial collector

Collections of over 1600 Australian Aboriginal objects derived from Emile Clement’s activities between 1896 and 1928 are held in more than thirty museums throughout Britain, Europe and the USA (Appendix 3). In addition a number of British and European natural history museums hold collections of Australian zoological and botanical material which they acquired from him (Appendix 4). The objects in these collections are predominantly from Western Australia, and the vast majority were sold by Clement, rather than donated. In many museums particularly smaller ones, the Clement material forms a substantial component of their total holdings of Australian Aboriginal material. Clement also published two papers relating to his fieldwork experiences in Western Australia, a vocabulary of the Gualluma Aboriginal people from near Roebourne (Clement 1899), and an anthropological description of the use and manufacture of many of the objects in the collections he had sold to museums (1904).\(^1\) His work is also referred to in various articles, for example (Balfour 1903; Brown 1912). Despite this, until now little has been known of Clement’s life or his methods and motivations for collecting such objects.

Following my description in Chapter 5 of Hillier as a collector, I present here a biographical context for Emile Clement. I also use details of his engagement with curators to explore some of the more general issues involved in getting collections of Australian Aboriginal objects into British museums.

\(^1\) There is also a possibility that Clement contributed the newspaper article from the *Northern Public Opinion*, which was reprinted in 1898 in the *JAI* 27:136
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

Dr Emile Louis Bruno Clement was born in Silesia, Prussia, in 1843 or 1844. His father was a major in the Artillery. Although little is known of his early life in Germany, it appears likely that Clement obtained a Doctorate in Germany. By 1870, at the age of twenty six, Clement was teaching natural philosophy and chemistry at Bramham College, in Yorkshire. Whilst there he published a school chemistry text (1870). In January 1873 Clement married Emily Elizabeth Allen nee Morgan, a twenty eight year old widower and daughter of Thomas Morgan, a farmer, in Llangeler, Wales. They had their first child, Adolphe Emile, in November of the same year, by which time the family was living in London. Emile and Emily went on to have a further six children during the next ten years. Their frequent movements within and between England and Germany during this time may have been related to changes in Clement’s teaching jobs.

Between 1874 and 1875 Clement worked as an assistant schoolmaster at Allston College in Preston Lancashire. By 1877 he had returned to the south of England, living near London until at least 1881. After this he appears to have spent time in Germany with his family, his two youngest children being born there between 1882 and 1884. Clement’s activities in Germany during this period were probably related to acquiring collections of Bronze Age material. Between 1877 and 1883 Clement sold major collections of such material to British museums for substantial sums, for example in 1877 the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art purchased a collection of 119 objects for £80.

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2 It has not as yet been possible to determine exactly where Clement obtained his doctorate, as at that time it was not necessary to submit a dissertation. However, my extensive research strongly suggests that his degree was not obtained from a British university.

3 These were Emily Minna Clement (1875-1954), Ethel Sylvester nee Clement (1877-1965), Elfrida Jerusha Rede [Reide] nee Clement (1879-?), Emile Gustav Clement (1881-1941), Lloyd Morgan Clement (1882 - ?), and Helen Rose Clement (1883 - ?).

4 Alston, Lancashire is located 5.5 miles northeast of Preston. Alston College was a private school, established in about 1854 by Rev Thomas Abbott Peters, a minister of the Free Church of England. The College was principally an independent school for boys (Till 1993:140-4). In an 1882 account of the college, Peters refers to Clement as a past Assistant Master at the college, and as having co-run the school for a twelve month period during 1874-75 (Lancashire Records Office DDT5 Box 29).

5 Although it is probable that Clement also sold similar collections to German museums, I have not yet been able locate these.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

Clement’s letters to museum curators indicate that some, if not all, of these collections had been personally excavated by him in Silesia. For example in a letter accompanying the collection purchased by the Reading Museum in 1885, he gave a detailed account about an excavation he had undertaken there the year before.\(^6\) It is quite possible that his Doctorate related to similar work. During this time he also published a geology textbook (1882). By 1885 he had returned to England and was living in Yateley, near Reading, apparently teaching in a cramming school for applicants to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst.

Although little else is known of Clement’s activities during the late 1880s, we do know that by 1895 his interests had turned to Australia. He made at least three trips to Western Australia during which he acquired large collections of Aboriginal objects and natural history specimens (Appendices 3 & 4). From newspaper reports it appears that his primary reason for going to Australia was to assess the potential for establishing a gold mine in the region around Roebourne, which at that time was the centre of the rapidly expanding Pilbara goldfield. He first arrived in Roebourne in mid-1895 where his presence in the area was apparently something of an event. A local newspaper reported that:

\[\text{Dr Clement and party, recent arrivals from England, who set out on a prospeacting expedition a few weeks since, have pegged off and applied for occupancy of 50 acres of ground at Towranna' (Northern Public Opinion 27/7/1895: 2).}\]

After establishing this mining lease, Clement went back to England in mid-1896. However, he had returned to Roebourne by November of the same year. His quick return was at the request of the Towranna Gold Mines of W.A. Ltd., the company on whose behalf Clement had taken up the lease at Towranna. As reported at an 1899 shareholders meeting in London, Clement was

\[\text{A transcript of this account is contained in Appendix 6.}\]

\[\text{Towranna, or Toweranna as it is now known, is located just north of the Sherlock River, 60 miles northeast of Roebourne.}\]

\[\text{116}\]
prevailed upon to ‘sort out’ the management of the mine.\textsuperscript{8} He remained in the northwest region for about eighteen months until mid 1898.\textsuperscript{9}

Clement returned to the region for a third time in the following June. On this occasion he represented another English mining group, the Lydia Exploration Syndicate. Whilst in the northwest he established a number of new mining leases on the Lower Nickol field, eight miles northwest of Roebourne. Clement again returned to England in mid 1900.\textsuperscript{10} Although it was reported in the local press that: ‘Dr. Clements [sic] ... expects to return with a larger battery, which is much needed’,\textsuperscript{11} he did not return. By the turn of the century many of the region’s various goldfields were in decline, including the Towranna mine first established by Clement. Indeed, in early 1901, on the occasion of the last crushing of ore from the Towranna mine, the local paper wrote:

This crushing, we are sorry to say, is the last which the Towranna Company is likely to have, the mine having been closed down last Saturday. After his first inspection of the mine, some four or five months ago, Mr. Field [the mine manager] came to the conclusion that the property had been over rated... (\textit{Northern Public Opinion} 22/2/1901: 2).

Only three years before, in relation to this mining lease, Clement had stated to a shareholders meeting in London that ‘there [is] enough quartz on the field to supply not only a 10-head battery, but a 20-head battery for many years to come.’ (\textit{The Financial Times} 19/8/1898:5).

During part of the time Clement spent in Western Australia he was accompanied by his son, Adolphe Clement. Little is known of Adolphe,

\textsuperscript{8} \textit{The Financial Times} 19/8/1898:5.
\textsuperscript{9} Letter from E. Clement to E.B. Poulton, 29/11/1898, E.B. Poulton MSS Series, Oxford University Museum Library. Clement had initially intended to spend eighteen months in the region (Letter from E. Clement to C.H. Read 29/9/1896, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum).
\textsuperscript{10} Letter from E. Clement to Basel Museum 13/7/1900, Basel Museum collection No V. 19.1900; and letter from E. Clement to Leiden Rijkssherbarium 7/7/1900, Rijkssherbarium, Leiden.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Northern Public Opinion} 23/2/1900:2.
although he had also travelled to the goldfields in British Columbia\textsuperscript{12}, and managed the mine at Towranna up until 1899. A letter from Emile Clement to the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden, indicates that Adolphe was also involved in Emile’s collecting activities. Emile wrote:

\ldots\ I heard just now from my son that he will reach England on the 28\textsuperscript{th} of this month, with a large collection of ethnographical objects from the ‘hinterland’ of the same district...\textsuperscript{13}

Throughout his residence in the region Clement’s activities were frequently reported in the local press. For example his return in June 1899 was heralded with the headline:

Return of Dr. Clement - That well-known scientist and mining man Dr. E. Clement returned to the Nor’-West by the steamer Albany after an absence in the old country of about twelve months. (\textit{Northern Public Opinion} 3/6/1899:2).

It appears that his scientific credentials led to him being something of a savant in the northwest region. At a number of important civic occasions in Roebourne, such as a banquet held to honour the visit of the renowned explorer A.F. Calvert and at the departure of the district’s deputy magistrate Mr Roe, Clement was called upon to toast ‘the press’\textsuperscript{14}. It also appears that Clement was a man of some wit. His address at Mr Roe’s departure was discussed in the press at some length:

‘A high flight of fancy’ - Dr Clement in proposing the toast of the “Press” at Mr Roe’s farewell, indulged in a strange stretch of imagination. He glided off into a discourse on the remarkable progress being made in all branches of science and went so far as to predict that before his own sun sets science will have come to such a state of perfection that he would not be surprised to read the startling announcement in the paper that an express train had arrived from the confines of

\textsuperscript{12} A brief account of his experiences during his three month long visit was published in the \textit{Northern Public Opinion} 17/11/1899:2.
\textsuperscript{14} See \textit{Northern Public Opinion} 21/12/1895:2 and \textit{Northern Public Opinion} 6/2/1897:2.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

Hades, bringing the departed souls of motley lawyers, mining experts, and even newspaper editors. The seemingly earnestness with which the doctor expressed himself, at first struck the company with awe, but as he proceeded the ludicity of the proposition dawned upon them, and the apprehension of the doctor’s prophesy turning out true quickly dissolved. (*Northern Public Opinion* 6/2/1897: 2).

Clement’s views on the British perception of the mining industry were also highly regarded in the Roebourne district; on one occasion the lead story in the *Northern Public Opinion* began:

It is not often we have an opportunity of hearing, direct from a reliable source, the standing our Northern goldfields, occupy in London, and owning to this fact the few curt observations made by Dr Clement will be all the more appreciated. (*Northern Public Opinion* 28/11/1896:2).

His involvement in collecting anthropological and natural history objects was also apparently well known, as the press eagerly reported:

The native weapons and collections of Nor’West moths which the doctor took to England with him were landed in splendid condition, and excited many econiums from savants. (*Northern Public Opinion* 3/6/1899:2).

From the style in which Clement’s activities were reported, it is apparent that he encouraged such interest, by keeping the press informed of his activities. For example during the second half of 1899 the local newspaper regularly described Clement’s plans for an ore stamper battery he had acquired:

Dr Clement informs us that he is undecided as to where he will erect his two head stamper battery, but at present he favours either the new find near the Lower Nickol, or Weerianna. (*Northern Public Opinion* 23/9/1899: 2).

Dr Clements [sic] informs us that the Lydia Syndicate’s two head stamper battery is working smoothly and well. ... some of the specimens, which were brought into town by Dr Clements, are studded with coarse and fine gold, and assay up to 50 ozs. per ton. Dr Clements intends to proceed to England shortly, and expects
to return with a larger battery, which is much needed. *(Northern Public Opinion 23/2/1900: 2).*

As can be seen from the above extract, Clement was able to use such reporting, and his perceived scientific background, to promote the potential of the various mining ventures he was associated with, none of which had a long life. This practice of building up confidence and trust in his ventures was similar to the techniques he employed when corresponding with, and negotiating sales of objects to, curators.

Of Clement’s attitude to Aboriginal people, we know something from his contribution to a debate in the British press in 1899. At this time the London press had raised allegations that two Western Australian J.P.s convicted of cruelty to Aboriginal people in the northwest region had been treated with inappropriate leniency by the Western Australian authorities. The *St James Gazette* of London published a number of editorials and questioned whether such evidence suggested a more systemic violence on the part of settlers towards Aboriginal people in Western Australia. The issue provoked a number of letters to the newspaper. As one reader put it:

>This matter is worthy of the attention of every Englishman who has the prosperity of the Empire at heart. If we are to continue as a great colonizing Power, it can only be by a strict adherence to the principles of equity and justice.\(^7\)

The letters included one from Clement\(^6\) responding to a letter from Charles Slaughter which criticised the practice of indenturing Aboriginal labourers as being ‘worse than slavery.’\(^7\) Clement suggested that Slaughter’s views were naive, and resulted from him having visited only those Aboriginal people living near the major towns. He dismissed the views of such people by arguing:

\(^7\) "Worse than slavery": The testimony of a West Australian official - *St James’s Gazette* 30/3/1899.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

[Slaughter's] observations were limited to the Camps of Roebourne and Cossack, where the lazy good-for-nothing black population congregated...

By contrast, in supporting the indenturing system, Clement put forward his own experiences in the region, stating:

I have had black servants, and speak from experience. I visited every native camp within a hundred miles of Roebourne, and asked hundreds of blacks how they liked the life on the stations, and in only one single instance a man complained. This black had been a chief, and he asked me to tell the Queen, on my return to England, that the white-fellow had taken away his land, that he could no longer hunt the kangaroo, and bustard at his own sweet will; that he had plenty of waterholes, plenty of meat, plenty of "gins" (wives) before the white man came; but that now he was a shepherd at a station. (St James's Gazette 6/4/1899:4).

Clement continued sarcastically:

And a very fat and sleek shepherd he looked, and his three wives and numerous children well nourished and merry (St James's Gazette 6/4/1899:4).

Such views and language show clearly that Clement was not aligned with the humanitarianism developing amongst the British press and some Western Australian clergy.

There are few details known of Clement's life after he returned to England in 1900 and up to the 1920s. Despite this, there are occasional glimpses of him which suggest something of the complexity of his life. For example we know that soon after his return from Australia he published two children's books, Naughty Eric and other stories from giant, witch, and fairyland (1902a), and Doctor Frog and other fairy stories (1902b). How should we make sense of these in terms of his life as a collector?

18 Neither of these works have explicit Aboriginal themes.
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By the 1920s Clement’s interests returned to selling anthropological material to museums. This coincided with his move to Hove, near Brighton. Clement died on 7 August 1928, aged 84. He continued to be involved in anthropological collecting and dealing up to the time of his death, with his son Emile concluding a transaction after he died.¹⁹ Emile and Emily Clement are buried together in Hove Cemetery. Their epitaph reads:

In loving memory of my darling husband and children’s deeply mourned father
Emile Louis Bruno Clement PhD who fell asleep August 4th 1928 aged 84 years.
Not lost, but gone before. Also Emily Elizabeth Clement, dearly beloved wife and
mother who passed away April 24th, aged 85 years.

Clement’s anthropological collecting

There are two distinct phases to Clement’s involvement with collecting and selling Australian Aboriginal anthropological objects to museums (Table 6.1). The first phase took place between 1895 and 1900, during which he dealt almost exclusively in Western Australian material. The map published by Clement of the area from which he collected (1904), copies of which he had earlier distributed to museums, indicates that during his three trips to the northwest region, he travelled and collected within an area up to 400kms east of Roebourne, on the northwest coast of Western Australia. Such a geographic focus was unlike other ethnographic dealers operating in England. The catalogues of dealers such as Webster and Oldman show that they offered only small quantities of Australian Aboriginal anthropological material (Oldman 1975; Webster 1911). Clement also differed from other dealers in that while he focused on anthropological material, his provision of anatomical, botanical, entomological and zoological collections from the same area meant that he was offering something of a profile of the ‘natural history’ of a particular region.

Some twenty years after he had completed selling the bulk of objects brought back from his third trip to Western Australia, he again began to sell

¹⁹ Letter from E. Clement Jnr to G Maynard 29/9/1928.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Type of material</th>
<th>No of objects</th>
<th>how acquired</th>
<th>cost</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

|        | British Museum                                   | ethnographic     | 50            | purchase     | £12.00|
|        | Royal Museum of Scotland                         | ethnographic     | 38            | purchase     | £8.08 |
|        | **Total**                                        |                  |               |              | **£20.08.0** |

|        | Kew Economic Botany Museum                       | ethnographic?    | 18'           | purchase     | ?     |
| 1898   | Hamburg Museum                                   | ethnographic     | 100           | purchase     | ?     |
| 1898   | Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden             | ethnographic     | 104           | purchase     | £10.00|
| 1898   | Museum of Science and Art, Dublin                | ethnographic     | 72            | purchase     | £12.04.6 |
| 1898   | British Museum                                   | ethnographic     | 24            | donation     | -     |
| 1898   | Royal Museum of Scotland                         | ethnographic     | 85            | purchase     | £14.10.6 |
| 1898   | Pitt Rivers Museum                               | ethnographic     | 2             | purchase     | £0.15.0 |
| 1898   | Pitt Rivers Museum                               | ethnographic     | 114           | purchase     | £11.00.0 |
| 1898   | Museum of Science and Art, Dublin                | economic         | 38'           | purchase     | £3.16.0 |
| 1898   | British Museum (Natural History)                 | entomological    | ?             | purchase     | approx |
|        | Richmond Museum (Natural History)                |                  | ?             |              | £11.00.0 |
| 1898   | **Total**                                        |                  |               |              | **£68.06.0** |

| 1900   | Pitt Rivers Museum                               | ethnographic     | 8             | donation     | -     |
| 1900   | Moscow State University Museum                   | ethnographic     | 47            | purchase     | ?     |
| 1900   | Basel Museum                                     | ethnographic     | 68            | purchase     | ?     |
| 1900   | Royal botanical Garden, Kew                      | botanical        | 700           | purchase     | £14.00.0 |
| 1900   | Rijksheeruim, Leiden                             | botanical        | ?             | ?            | ?     |
|        | **Total**                                        |                  |               |              | **£14.00.0** |

| 1901   | Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden             | ethnographic     | 89            | purchase     | £14.0.0 |
| 1901   | Pitt Rivers Museum                               | ethnographic     | 16            | purchase     | £5.00.0 |
| 1901   | Bristol Museum                                   | ethnographic     | 25            | purchase     | £8.08.0 |
|        | **Total**                                        |                  |               |              | **£27.08.0** |

| 1909   | Glasgow Museum                                   | ethnographic     | 38            | purchase     | approx |
|        | Brighton Museum                                  | ethnographic     | 23            | purchase     | approx |
|        | **Total**                                        |                  |               |              | **£25.06.11** |

| 1912   | Berlin Botanic Museum                            | Botanical        | 16?           | ?            | ?     |

¹Eight of these objects were transferred to the British Museum in 1960. These are not part of the collection of ten ethnographic objects still held by Kew Museum of Economic Botany.
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<tr>
<td>1928 ⁴</td>
<td>Hunterian Museum, Glasgow</td>
<td>ethnographic</td>
<td>186²</td>
<td>purchase</td>
<td>&gt;£40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 ²</td>
<td>Göttingen Museum</td>
<td>ethnographic</td>
<td>37+</td>
<td>purchase</td>
<td>£24.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 ²</td>
<td>Ipswich Museum</td>
<td>ethnographic</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>purchase</td>
<td>£8.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 ²</td>
<td>Geneva Museum</td>
<td>ethnographic</td>
<td>22?</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&gt;£165.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1953  | Royal Museum of Scotland                         | ethnographic      | 1             |              | ¹⁰       |

²Verzeichnis der 1924 erworben':
Clement, E. Hove (Sussex) England: ethnographika. Nordwestaustraliens (106) kl[auf](kauf=purchased)
(Jahrbuch de Städtischen Museums fur Volkenkunde zu Leipzig, Band 9 1922-1925, p100).
¹Donated by Dr F Sarasin, probably purchased earlier by him from Clement.
¹¹Material purchased by Halifax Museum in 1927, now in Manchester Museum.
⁵Artefacts from Melanesia.
⁶Donated by Dr F Sarasin, probably purchased earlier by him from Clement.
⁶Artefact from Polynesia.
⁴E Clements sold a number of Australian objects to the Hunterian Museum in the years 1923-1928. As it is not certain which objects were bought in which years, they have been catalogued together under 1928' (Hunterian 'E' Register, p104)
⁶Acquired in the 'E' Register in 1928.
¹⁰Transferred from the disposal of the Wellcome Museum.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

anthropological material to museums in Britain and Europe. In this second phase of anthropological collecting, which took place between 1920 and 1928, Clement again sold collections of mainly Western Australian Aboriginal material, but also offered some Pacific material. For example in April 1928 he offered the Hunterian Museum a collection of Samoan and Papuan objects which had been collected by a Mrs Hawker, a missionary, and in June 1928 he offered a similar collection he had purchased from Rev J.W. Hills.20 During this second phase Clement was dealing with a different range of museums from those in the first phase. In Britain they tended to be regional museums, such as the Ipswich Museum and the Bankfield Museum in Halifax, rather than larger museums such as the British Museum and the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, whilst in Europe he distributed to a larger range of German and Swiss museums, such as those in Bremen, Dresden, Göttingen, and Geneva. One explanation for this change is that his sales in the 1890s may have saturated the market amongst the larger British museums.

The objects involved in this second phase had not been collected by Clement in person, but were sent to him by people living in north-west Australia, and it does not appear that Clement visited Australia again. In a letter to the Hunterian Museum21 Clement mentions a Mr Kruger as his contact in Roebourne. William Kruger, described variously as a Roebourne councillor, hairdresser and store keeper,22 had been a Roebourne resident since at least 1895, the time of Clement’s first collecting trip to Western Australia. The later collections tend to be smaller in size, which is most likely a reflection of Clement not having been the field-collector as he had been for the collections he sold in the 1890s.

21 Letter from E. Clement to the Hunterian Museum 20/9/1926, Special Collections, Museum Records 56/44, Glasgow University Library.
22 West Australian Post Office Directories 1895/6, 1897, 1899.
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I argue that a major change between the first and second phases of Clement's collecting activities was that Clement had shifted from being an entrepreneurial field collector to being a English based dealer.

Interpreting Clement

The diversity and complexity of Clement's life complicates the task of interpreting his collecting activities and understanding the circumstances of how the objects he sold to museums were acquired. Clement left no direct descriptions of the circumstances of his collecting. Those museums holding Clement material have little detailed knowledge of who he was, nor often of the existence of similar collections held in other museums. Although a substantial quantity of correspondence from him is held by museums, only two letters were actually written from the field. Unlike Henry Hillier, the collector I discuss in Chapter 6, little is known of Clement's circumstances at the time he acquired his extensive anthropological and natural history collections in Western Australia. This lack of information about the way in which Clement acquired objects from Aboriginal people means that no simple category of field-collector can been ascribed to him – unlike the way in which Hillier has been ascribed as being a 'missionary'. In such a vacuum, differing accounts of Clement have developed. For example, a catalogue from the sale of his deceased estate reads in part:

A catalogue of several important ethnographical collections of curios including one of the late Captain Clements, formed in New Guinea, South Seas, Australia, New Zealand, China, Thibet [sic], Africa, Santa Cruz, Marquesas etc (1929 Catalogue of Stevens's Sale No 14407/8).

As well as the misspelling of his name, the description of Clement as a 'captain' erroneously suggests that he had military or maritime associations. It may conjure up images of the objects as trophies. Whilst such an impression may have enhanced the allure of his collections to potential buyers, it is not borne out by what we do know of Clement's life.

STEVEN'S AUCTION ROOMS LTD.

(AEstablished 1788.)

A CATALOGUE
OF
SEVERAL IMPORTANT
Ethnographical Collections
of Curios

INCLUDING
One of the Late Captain Clements, formed in New Guinea,
South Seas, Australia, New Zealand, China, Thibet, Africa,
Santa Cruz, Marquessas, etc.,

ALSO
Gold Ornaments from India, Ivories, Cloisonné, Greek,
Roman, Egyptian, and Oriental Bronzes, Cut Glass, China,
Enamels, Tapestries, etc.

ALSO
Modern and Antique Furniture, Carpets, Rugs, etc.,
Several lots of Lace, Morland and Bartolozzi Prints,
Aquatints, Medical Books and MSS., etc.

WHICH WILL BE SOLD BY AUCTION ON
Tues. & Wed., Jan. 22nd & 23rd, 1929
at ONE o'clock precisely.

At their Great Room,
38 King Street, Covent Garden, and 15/16 Floral Street,

On view day prior and mornings of sale till 12 noon. Catalogues on application
to the Auctioneers.
Established 1788.

Rogers, Smith & Duppies, Printers, Regent House, 99 King'sway, W.C.2; and Forrest Hill, S.E.33.

Figure 6.1: Cover of the Stevens's auction catalogue of Emile Clement's estate. The annotations show that this particular copy was used by Mr Stow, one of the buyers for the Wellcome Museum. (Catalogue held by the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, Library).
Clement variously described himself as a ‘gentleman’ (1873),\textsuperscript{23} (1875),\textsuperscript{24} (1877),\textsuperscript{25} a ‘lecturer in natural philosophy’ (1873),\textsuperscript{26} a Doctor of Philosophy (1879),\textsuperscript{27} (1881)\textsuperscript{28} a teacher of chemistry (1881),\textsuperscript{29} and a Doctor of Science (1928).\textsuperscript{30} As described previously, he was also an author of children’s books. Historians who have confronted isolated parts of such Clement’s complex life, have thrown a multitude of nets over him, in a sense ‘collecting’ him at different moments of his life, their resulting accounts usually reflecting their research interests. For example a botanical historian was able write definitively that ‘... Dr Clement was a botanical collector residing in W.A. around 1910’.\textsuperscript{31} Whilst such descriptions are accurate in themselves, they only reveal and acknowledge a part of Clement’s life. It as though each museum and researcher has only seen a segment of Clement’s collecting and life – that part which they are interested in.

Most relevant to this discussion is the way in which information about Clement’s role in the formation of these collections is further hidden through his having sold rather than donated the material to each museum.\textsuperscript{32} Anne Secord, writing of early nineteenth century natural history collectors and their relationship with their metropolitan patrons, notes that collecting for profit was seen as being antithetical to the aims and methods of ‘science’ (Secord 1994:394). Such an attitude may explain why in general, museums at that time kept little information about the people from whom they purchased objects. This was in contrast to the information kept about the donors of objects, where

\textsuperscript{23} Marriage certificate of Emily and Emile Clement.
\textsuperscript{24} Emily Minna Clement’s Birth Certificate.
\textsuperscript{25} Ethel Clement’s Birth Certificate.
\textsuperscript{26} Ardelupe Emile Clement’s Birth Certificate.
\textsuperscript{27} Elfrida Jerusha Rede [Reide] \emph{nee} Clement’s Birth Certificate.
\textsuperscript{28} Emile Gustave Clement’s Birth Certificate
\textsuperscript{29} 1881 UK Census.
\textsuperscript{30} Emile Clement’s Death Certificate.
\textsuperscript{31} Unpublished note from database of Australian botanical history, compiled by J.H. Willis. Archived at the National Herbarium, Melbourne.
\textsuperscript{32} Clement was not only supplying museums with Aboriginal objects; for example his correspondence refers to his selling Australian Aboriginal material to the prominent collector James Edge-Partington (C.H. Read to E. Clement 30/9/1896, Letterbook 1896, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum ).
a common result of donating material was the ‘immortalisation’ of a philanthropist’s name in connection with the donated collection.\textsuperscript{33}

Whilst Clement does not fit into a particular field collector category, his sale of over 1600 Aboriginal anthropological objects to over thirty museums in Britain and Europe during a thirty year period suggests that he might have been perceived by curators as a dealer. The subject of dealers is a vastly under-theorized area. Study of entrepreneurial figures such as Clement is important because any analysis which focuses only on the professional anthropologists and on institution-based collectors ignores the major contribution of the entrepreneur to museum collections. Clement was rare amongst dealers in that he focused almost exclusively on Australian Aboriginal material. As I described earlier, other contemporary dealers in Britain, such as Webster and Oldman, were more interested in Pacific or African material, with Australian material constituting only a very small proportion of their business. Clement was also rare in that during his first stage of selling, he had personally collected the material during at least three trips to Western Australia. The majority of his letters relate to his selling anthropological collections from his home in England; it is the techniques he employed which I explore further here.

Selling techniques

The bulk of Clement’s letters to museums date to those periods when he was back in England between 1896 and 1902, the period immediately after he had returned to England from Western Australia in 1900, and during the 1920s, when he was receiving objects from his Western Australian agent(s). Therefore Clement’s letters principally provide an insight into the techniques he used to ‘market’ his collections whilst in Britain, rather than information about his

\textsuperscript{33}The relationship between a person after whom a museum collection is ‘named’ and the formation of that collection may not be straight forward. They may not have been the collector in the field. Elsewhere I demonstrated how the John Forrest Collection of Western Australian Aboriginal objects, rather than having been collected by the prominent Australian explorer, bureaucrat, and politician, John Forrest, was actually collected by police in different parts of Western Australia, with Forrest simply acting as a Perth based broker on behalf of the Museum of Victoria (Coates 1989).
techniques in the field. They therefore contrast with the nature of the correspondence between Henry Hillier and museum curators which, as I discuss in Chapter 7, were largely written from the field, and many of which were concerned with collecting techniques. From Clement’s letters it is apparent that the process of selling collections of objects to museums contrasted with the process of donating such material. Different forces were at play in each of these types of transactions. When buying objects from a dealer, the museum was no longer simply a passive receiver of objects. As well as stressing the importance of such collections, and their value for money, the seller needed to convince the museum of the authenticity of the material which they were being offered. Directly related to this was the need for the seller to convince the museum of their own veracity. This was at a time when there was a growing awareness of the quantity of faked anthropological objects being circulated amongst museums and collectors. For example Peter Gathercole (1978) has described frequent cases of Maori artefacts being faked between 1890-1930. As many of Clement’s sales were to museum curators with whom he had had no previous contact, in order to successfully sell anthropological collections in such an environment, someone such as Clement had to create a sense of trust.

The relationship between such issues of accuracy, authenticity, and trust is clearly evident in Clement’s correspondence as he tried to demonstrate and develop these qualities in his dealings with various museums, in relation to both the earlier archaeological and later anthropological collections.

_Selling archaeological collections (1877-1886)_

As described earlier in this chapter, during the 1870s and 1880s Clement was involved in the excavation of Bronze Age archaeological sites in Silesia. He sold objects from these sites to a number of British museums, including the British Museum (1877), the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art (1877), the Reading Museum (1885), the Oxford University Museum\(^{34}\) (1886) and the

\(^{34}\) Now held in the Ashmolean Museum.
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Cardiff Museum\textsuperscript{35} (1886). In addition he made approaches to the Dublin Museum of Science and Art\textsuperscript{36} (1883) and possibly the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. From this distribution, Clement appears to have focused on ‘national’ museums during the pre-Australian phase of his collecting and dealing. There are hints that he may also have been operating on an international scale, as a letter from the Trustees of the Australian Museum in 1886 declined Clement’s offer of ‘ancient pottery’.\textsuperscript{37}

There are many continuities between Clement’s involvement in selling archaeological antiquities and his later anthropological dealing. As I discussed in previous chapters, the lineage of both people and ideas involved in the production of ‘new’ anthropological knowledge at the turn of the century, substantially drew on the ‘old’ discipline of archaeology. Therefore the museum staff with whom Clement corresponded in relation to the Aboriginal material were often also responsible for their museum’s archaeological collections. C.H. Read of the British Museum made this link explicit when writing about the potential purchase of an anthropological collection from Clement:

\begin{quote}
I have secured a good lot of West Australian things from a Dr Clement who formerly dealt in prehistoric matters\textsuperscript{38}
\end{quote}

Read was validating the worth of the anthropological material purchased from Clement by referring to his earlier career in selling archaeological material. Therefore in order to understand Clement’s mode of engagement with museums relating to Aboriginal objects, we need to understand something of the way he sold these Bronze Age objects. The surviving correspondence related to these transactions illustrates the ways in which Clement marketed these collections. Four features stand out.

\textsuperscript{35} Now held in the National Museum of Wales.
\textsuperscript{36} Despite my research of the museum archives and registers it remains unclear whether the Dublin Museum eventually purchased a collection.
\textsuperscript{37} Letter from S. Sinclair to E. Clement 20/12/1886, Australian Museum Archives.
\textsuperscript{38} Letter from C.H. Read to J. Lubbock 25/8/1896, Letterbook 1896, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum.
Firstly, he was able to authenticate the objects and himself through demonstrating his knowledge of the broader discipline by occasionally contextualising his objects in the archaeological discourse of the day. In doing so he also referred to his connection to well known figures in the discipline. For example, in relation to the collection offered to the Dublin Museum, Clement referred to the work of prominent figures Dr A.Voss and Adolph Bastian.\textsuperscript{39}

I may also mention that some of the larger cinerary urns have that particular hole in the bottom which the great Berlin archaeologist Dr Voss, and Dr Bastian consider to have been expressly used as a passage for the soul. Others follow more and more this opinion, but I, being perhaps more prosaic, believe this to be a hole for draining off the ashes and bones, as I found after a rainy day the urns without this hole [got] very wet and "messy".\textsuperscript{40}

An article-come-advertisement published in Clement’s local London newspaper in 1879 (Figure 6.2) operated in a similar way, linking Clement to A.W. Franks of the British Museum, George Rolleston of the Oxford University Museum and Rudolf Virchow the renowned Berlin archaeologist and pathologist.

A second feature of Clement’s sales techniques was the way in which he drew upon competition between museums for objects in order to enhance his sales. For example during the course of negotiating a sale with the Dublin Museum of Art and Science in 1883, Clement stated:

\begin{quote}
I am willing to take £45 for the whole collection of bronze ornaments, stone implements etc … Considering that Prof Archer of Edinburgh paid me £80 for an inferior and more broken collection, I hope you will not consider it too dear\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{39} Adolf Bastian (1826-1905), a German ethnologist was the founder of the Berlin Ethnological Museum
\textsuperscript{40} Letter from E. Clement to Dublin Museum 5/8/1883, National Museum of Ireland Archive 409/M.
\textsuperscript{41} Letter from E. Clement to Dublin Museum 5/8/1883, National Museum of Ireland Archive
EXTRACT FROM THE

"RICHMOND AND TWICKENHAM TIMES"

In reference to the Pre-Historic Pottery, to be sold by
Auction, on Wednesday next, September 3rd, 1879.

An Archaeological Puzzle.—It may be interesting to
archaeologists in Richmond and its neighbourhood to know
that the largest collection in England of Pre-Historic Pottery
of the early bronze period is in Richmond in the possession
of Mr. E. Clement, late of Richmond, who excavated every
vessel manu propria. The cinerary urns are of exceptional
magnitude and beauty, and the food and drinking vessels
are of all shapes and sizes. A double urn, the object of
which is altogether hypothetical, is a unique specimen of
such early pottery. In a chieftain’s urn Mr. Clement found
flint knives, bronze rings, fibula, &c., coated with a beautiful
aetna nobilis. Professor Franks, of the British Museum,
believes these interesting specimens to be 2,500 years old,
whilst Professor Rolleston, of Oxford University Museum,
who also came down to see them, dates them from the be-
ginning of the Christian Era. To complete this scientific
discrepancy, we may mention that Professor Virchow, of
Berlin, supposes them to be 1,000 years older than Professor
Franks even. Quis habet pulchrum.

We are glad to inform our scientific readers that Mr.
Clement will kindly show his collection to any lady or gen-
tleman interested in this subject on Monday and Wednesday
on presentation of their card.

Figure 6.2: Newspaper clipping describing Clement’s Bronze Age archaeological
collections. This clipping accompanied a collection he sold to the Reading
Museum in 1885. (Reading Museum Historical Files)
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Here he was also making clear the economic value of the collection which he was offering the Dublin Museum. Similarly, when writing to Anatole von Hügel of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in 1889, he stated:

I have a Keltic Double Urn and a few other well preserved urns, food and drinking vessels of the Early Bronze Period for sale. Mr Francks of the British Museum, the Curators of Oxford University Museum, Reading, and Cardiff Museums as well as the Heads of the Science and Arts Departments of Edinburgh and Dublin have bought similar vessels of me a few years ago. This is my last Double Urn which I excavated manu propriare[?] in Silesia, Prussia and am willing to sell it for the same price as Mr Franks offered me of his own free will for the one I sold to him, viz: £5.0.0. The other vessels, of course, I am willing to part with for a very much lower price.40

The way in which he presented such information allowed him to use his previous sales to promote the worth of his collections. In another example, when referring to a particular type of urn, Clement wrote to von Hügel:

There are only four others of these in Great Britain - all of them were found by myself. One is in Oxford, Prof. Rolleston bought of me - and in Edinburgh, Dublin, and British Museum the others. The one in the British Museum is very beautiful, of black clay and straight line ornamentation. Prof. Francks [sic] bought it of me a few years ago, together with a number of ‘toys’ of the Keltic period.44

A third feature of his sales technique was to provide detailed interpretations of the objects. For example, when selling a collection to the Reading Museum in 1885, he provided a detailed description of the site from which the objects were excavated, as well as descriptions of the uses of many of the objects (Appendix

409/M.
42 A rough translation is ‘with my own hands’.
43 Letter from E. Clement to A. von Hügel 8/6/1889, von Hügel Letterbook, CUMAA Archive.
6). This further authenticated the collection by stressing that he had personally excavated the material, rather than simply being a secondary collector.

Finally, in attempting to sell objects sight unseen, he provided drawings of the objects with details of their size and features. For example in 1883 he sent to the Dublin Museum:

> drawings of my collection of cinerary urns, bronze remains etc, and hope they may give you a fair idea of the shape and ornamentation of the vessels ... you will see that some are very large, exceeding a yard in circumference. Sheet 10 contains the reproduction of toys, among which you will find some very pretty things of rather diminutive dimensions. 45

Clement was to use many of these same features in the methods he employed to sell his collections of Australian Aboriginal and natural history material from Western Australia more than ten years later.

**Selling anthropological and natural history collections (1896-1928)**

Clement’s first sale of Aboriginal material occurred in August 1896 when the British Museum used the Christy Fund to purchase a collection of 50 Aboriginal objects from Western Australia for the sum of twelve pounds. His only other transaction at this time was the sale of a similar collection of 38 objects to the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art. By July 1898 Clement had returned to Britain from his second Australian trip, bringing with him a much larger amount of anthropological material, as well as substantial entomological, and botanical collections and a small number of other zoological specimens.

The natural history material he sold to the BM(NH), the Oxford University Museum, and the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (Appendix 4). He also sold

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45 Letter from E. Clement to Dublin Museum 5/8/1883, National Museum of Ireland Archive 409/M.
a collection of examples of Aboriginal botanical foods to the Kew museum of Economic Botany.

In selling his anthropological collections Clement would emphasise their authenticity, rarity and value. To establish the authenticity of the material he provided indigenous names for objects, and the 'tribal' names of the group from whom he obtained the material. For example in a letter to the Basel Museum he stressed that 'every object is precisely described with district and name and negro tribe'.

After returning from his third trip to Western Australia, Clement was able to further authenticate his collections by offering museums a map of the areas in which he had travelled and collected, and showing the distribution of the different Aboriginal groups within the region.

The collection of Australian objects has been posted to your address today... from the small sketch you will be able to see where everything comes from. Each specimen carries its indigenous name and place of origin. These are totally reliable since I have lived in NW Australia for five years and speak the Gnalluma dialect quite well.

This map had apparently been made at the request of the British Museum prior to July 1900 and was later included in his 1904 Leiden publication. Such maps also provided the museums with a more refined geographical context for the collections they were purchasing.

As I described in Chapter 1, Clement also sought opportunities to have the physicality (and aesthetics) of the objects impact on the curators. He often did this by offering to provide the objects to museums on consignment 'I will send you a selection on approval'. Another way of doing this was to provide

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47 Letter from E. Clement to Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde 27/10/1898, Museum für Völkerkunde.
49 Letter from E. Clement to Anatole von Hügel 25/8/1898, von Hügel Letterbook, CUMAA
Figure 6.3: Sketch map of the areas in which Clement collected, and which he provided to various museums. (Museum für Völkerkunde, Basel)
Figure 6.4 Clement's map of Aboriginal 'tribal' areas in the region surrounding Roebourne.
(Published in Internationales Archive für Ethnographie, Leiden 1904)
Figure 6.5: Sketch by Clement of paperbark water carrier. This sketch was sent to the Hunterian Museum during the 1920's. (Glasow University Library, Special Collection, Museum Records #56)
Figure 6.6: Sketch by Clement of spindle with hair string. This sketch was sent to the Hunterian Museum during the 1920's. (Glasgow University Library, Special Collection, Museum Records #56)
Figure 6.7: Sketch by Clement of a Western Australian shield. This sketch was sent to the Hunterian Museum during the 1920’s. (Glasow University Library, Special Collection, Museum Records #56)
Plate 6.1: Clement photograph sold to the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1898. Captioned by Clement: 'Natives of Sherlock R. NW Australia. Decked for corrobory'
drawings of the objects. This was a technique which he used more frequently during the 1920s, for example he wrote to the Hunterian Museum:

I enclose sketches of 6 large churingas of the Pidungu Tribe near Derby NW Australia ... I have also 14 others, smaller and some too elaborately carved to be easily sketched.\(^{50}\)

Further supporting his collections of objects, Clement also sold photographs of Aboriginal people from the North-west region to a number of museums.\(^{51}\) As well as being objects in themselves, he used these photographs to provide information about the social context for some of the objects he sold. For example a list he sent to the Pitt Rivers Museum includes a description of a ‘Turra - for corroboree carried in hand, vi de Photo 1898’.\(^{52}\) These prints are only a remnant of the total of those taken by Clement, as, according to his correspondence, a large proportion of the eighty photographs he had taken, and many of his entomological specimens, were destroyed in a major cyclone in April 1898.\(^{53}\)

The combination of anthropology objects, natural history specimens, maps, and photographs meant that in essence Emile Clement was offering to museums a ‘package’ of a region. I discuss the way in which European collectors in Australia compiled such multifaceted cultural packages in Chapter 8.

**Clement’s correspondence with curators**

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\(^{50}\) Letter from E. Clement to Hunterian Museum 17/4/1925, Glasgow University Library, Special Collection Museum Records 56/26.

\(^{51}\) Copies of these photographs are held by the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Linden Museum, Stuttgart, the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, and the National Museum of Ireland.

\(^{52}\) From documentation of Pitt Rivers Museum Collection 1898.75.

\(^{53}\) Letter from E. Clement to E.B. Poulton 29/11/1898, Oxford University Museum Library, E.B. Poulton MSS Series. During this cyclone nearly fifteen and a half inches of rain were recorded at Roebourne and the WA Government Astronomer published an account in Nature (Nature 23/6/1898: p178).
During his career as a collector, Clement corresponded with the curators of most major British museums. He also corresponded with many German museums, as well as museums in Russia, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. The majority of this correspondence related to the sale of anthropological material. In selling his collections Clement was quick to establish and make use of contacts with people prominent in the museum world. For example, as I described in Chapter 3, in 1896 soon after returning from his first trip to Western Australia, and at the time of selling his first collection to the British Museum, Clement sought advice from C.H. Read, the Curator at the British Museum and President of the Anthropoligical Institute. He enquired about what he could do in northwest Australia 'to further the interests of Anthropology'.

54 His other letters also often refer to correspondence with prominent figures in the anthropological world, such the Oxford anthropologist E.B. Tylor and Henry Balfour of the Pitt Rivers Museum. Unfortunately nothing of these letters survives, although Balfour in a letter to W.B. Spencer sought information about Clement. He wrote:

I have just received a lot of things from a certain E. Clement who travelled in W and NW Australia up country. He brought back a large collection. Do you know of him?

Although there is no record of Spencer’s response to Balfour’s query, from the amount of material which Balfour subsequently acquired from Clement, he apparently suggested nothing to Balfour to dissuade him of the veracity of Clement and his collections. Indeed, by 1903 Balfour had publicly endorsed Clement in the following account:

The spear head made with such skill by natives of N.W. Australia from broken glass bottles, telegraph insulators, and the like, have long been familiar in museums and private collections, and need no description here ... Being very

54 Letter from E. Clement to C.H. Read 29/9/1896, BM Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities.
55 Letter from H. Balfour to W.B. Spencer 28/9/1898, Spencer-Balfour Correspondence, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
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anxious myself to ascertain the methods employed [to manufacture these spearheads] I asked Dr E. Clement, who has travelled much in Western Australia and made extensive collections, to find out how the work is done and also to bring me home the tools employed. Dr Clement, to whom I am much indebted, readily responded and secured for me the tools ... from a native who was using them, together with a spear-head made from these very tools from a piece of glass bottle (Balfour 1903).

Clement made extensive use of Balfour’s endorsement in his transactions with other museums. For example, when first writing to the curator of the Bristol Museum in 1901, Clement assured him that:

Mr H Balfour of the University Museum, Oxford will testify to the genuineness of my collection.\(^{56}\)

Similarly when first corresponding with the staff of the Hunterian Museum, Clement stated:

H. Balfour Esq, Curator of the Oxford University Museum knows me personally and he will tell you that the numerous articles I supplied to his museum, not only Australian curios but Prehistoric urns and natural history specimens have given every satisfaction.\(^{57}\)

Clement’s use of such endorsements to develop relationships with British curators was also necessary as he did not use forums such as the Anthropological Institute to network with curators. Despite his interests and activities in anthropology, his relationships with influential curators such as Balfour, and the publication of a vocabulary in the *Anthropological Institute Journal*, he was not a Fellow of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. Similarly his earlier interest in geology and experience on the Pilbara goldfields was not reflected in membership of the Geological Society of

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\(^{56}\) Letter from E. Clement to Bristol Museum 24/6/1901, Bristol Museum, Ref HFN178.

\(^{57}\) Letter from E. Clement to Hunterian Museum 10/9/1923, Glasgow University Library, Special Collections, Museum Records 56/13.
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London. Clement was, however, interested in contact with similar societies in Europe, as his request for information from J.D. Schmeltz shows:

May I ask if you have in Leiden an Anthropological or similar Scientific Society of which I could become a member. I am a [correspondent] of the Leipzig University Museum and should like to enter one or two other Scientific Societies to which I would contribute now and then a paper on the subject, if so desired.  

One explanation for Clement’s interest in being affiliated with continental societies rather than British societies may lie in his German origins.

Competition between museums

Another feature of Clement’s anthropological sales was his exploitation of the competition between museums. Often when Clement was introducing himself to a new museum, he would refer to other museums which had previously acquired material from him; in an introductory letter to the Basel museum he mentioned that the British Museum, Oxford Museum, and museums in Edinburgh, Dublin, Leiden, Berlin, Leipzig, Hamburg, Stuttgart had all purchased material from him. This had the effect of both demonstrating the worth of his collections and making the new museum aware of the gap in its collections when compared to other anthropological museums. At the turn of the century there was a great deal of competition between such museums, particularly between the British and German museums (Coates 1992), but this competition between different intellectual and cultural traditions was part of the wider competition between these two colonial powers. Clement, with links to both nations, was in a position to capitalize on such competition.

Such techniques were not exclusive to Clement. The exchange in 1910 between von Hügel of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology and the

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58 Letter from E. Clement to Schmeltz 3/10/1900, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden archief 32.
59 Letter from E. Clement to Basel Museum 13/1900 - from documentation with Collection No V.19.1900.
mother of the collector Henry Hillier, which I discussed in Chapter 5, shows that as well as the competition between British and German museums, there was also competition between different British Museums.

The veracity of Clement

Given the emphasis which Clement placed on the authenticity of his collections, the accuracy of the information he was providing becomes important. If we look at Clement’s published writings, we find that on a number of occasions his peers found his work to be less than accurate. In 1882 Clement wrote optimistically in relation to his chemistry text, ‘I feel confident that this little work will be found of great use to both masters and pupils’ (Clement 1882:3). However the work was not received with universal acclaim. A review of the time noted:

> We are sorry that we cannot endorse the opinion expressed by the author of this work in his preface that it ‘will be found of great use to both masters and pupils’: its errors, both of omission and commission, are so numerous that any utility which such a work might otherwise possess appears to us to be entirely destroyed.

The review concluded scathingly:

> Many more such examples might be given, but we think enough has been said to show that the work can scarcely be recommended as a safe guide to either students or teachers (London Geological Society Magazine 1882:475-6).

Clement also published two articles on anthropological themes. In 1899 he published *Vocabulary of the Gualluma tribe inhabiting the plains between the Yule and the Fortescue Rivers* (1899). Four years later he published an article titled *Ethnographic notes on the Western-Australian Aborigines*. This work was an anthropological description and included his map of the distribution of eight Aboriginal ‘tribes’ within the northwest region of WA. These were the *Maratunia*, the *Gnalluma*, the *Ingibandi*, the *Pitungu*, the *Kaierra*, the *Gnalla*, the
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

Gnama, and the Balgu. The veracity of the different Aboriginal groups which Clement identified as living in the area and which he used to provenance the objects in his collections remained problematic. A.R. Brown, after conducting fieldwork amongst Aboriginal people in the area in 1910, was highly critical of Clement’s anthropological writing. He stated bluntly:

The information in the article of Dr Clement is quite unreliable and contains numerous examples of carelessness and inaccuracy (Brown 1912:143; 1913:34).

The veracity of his work is further brought into question by the way in which he had earlier confused the names of four moieties near Toweranna as being four tribes. He wrote to C.H. Read:

I have ascertained that there are four tribes living within a radius of 200 miles around here. The Banniger, Burrong, Currimurang, [and] Ballerie.

As well as the questionable veracity of his published works, some of the claims Clement made in his correspondence about his role in the acquisition of the objects need to be treated with caution. For example nine years after he had returned from his apparently final trip to Western Australia, Clement would occasionally state in letters to curators that he had ‘just returned’ from Western Australia.

I returned a few months ago from N.W. Australia and brought with me a good collection of Native Implements from that district.

Similarly in 1927, by which time Clement was eighty four years old, he wrote to the Ipswich Museum stating:

60 Thieberger [, 1993 #517] has reclassified the languages of the area and gives the following names for the these language groups: Martuthunira (Clement’s Maratunia), the Ngartluma (Gnalluma), the Yindjibarndi (Ingibandi), the Pidungu, the Kariyarra (Kaierra), the Ngarla (Gnall), the Nyamal (Gnmo), and the Palyku (Balgu).
61 Letter from Clement to C.H. Read 15/3/1897, CUMAA Archive.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

Having lately returned from North West Australia with a very fine collection of Native Weapons, Implements and Ornaments I am writing to ask if you would care to acquire some of the objects for your Museum at a very reasonable cost.\textsuperscript{63}

Despite such claims there remains no corroborating information about such trips. There is no doubt for the early collections that he was in the northwest, however the reliability of the information that resulted from his experiences in the northwest, such as the map, the description of ‘tribal’ affiliations and the Aboriginal vocabularies which he published, are questionable. Doubts about the general veracity of Clement’s information also arise from the way in which he often gave the impression that the collections he was selling in the 1920s had been personally collected by him, thus increasing their value above those obtainable from dealers. He was also somewhat elusive in his letters about why he was in northwest Australia. Throughout his correspondence he gave the impression he was in Western Australia as a ‘scientific’ collector; he never mentioned his interest in gold prospecting. He may have feared that knowledge of such activities would devalue the potential value of his anthropological and natural history collections. In addition, many of his ventures such as his unproductive mining assessments, the poor reception of his geology text, and Radcliffe-Brown’s dismissal of the worth of his anthropology were less than the successes he would have liked. In summary Clement comes across as something of an opportunistic and marginal figure.

Conclusion

Museum collections acquired from collectors with limited biographical information, such as Hillier and Clement, can be made to articulate many stories. Late in his life, responding to a suggestion that he write his autobiography, Hillier wrote:

\textsuperscript{63} Letter from E. Clement to Ipswich Museum 6/6/1927, Ipswich Museum Archive.
Chapter 6 – Emile Clement: An entrepreneurial collector

You suggest that I should write my reminiscences of the interior when I retire. Mr Barrett\textsuperscript{64} also has often urged me to do this but I do not feel any ability in that direction.\textsuperscript{65}

In the absence of Hillier’s own account others have been constructed. For the majority of museum anthropological collections little is known of their European collectors. In such a vacuum collectors can be reduced to broad categories such as missionary, scientist, and tourist. Such categories carry with them a whole series of assumptions. Of particular relevance to my argument is the way in which, in the absence of specific information about individual collectors, museums and researchers inscribe particular sorts of relations between collector and objects on the basis of such categories. There is a tendency to simplify collectors as acting from scientific or commercial interest. Such a process can serve to ‘write out’ much of the ‘unscientific’, the irrational aspects of the process by which the objects end up in the museum. The accounts of Hillier and Clement destabilise such orthodox approaches, with categories merging into each other and breaking down.

In this and the previous chapter I have used the stories of two collectors to look at some of the stages involved in the process of transferring and translating objects from their field contexts into the context of the museum. Whilst I am not suggesting that Hillier and Clement are necessarily representative of all collectors, their relationships with museums serve as devices for exploring the complexities that lie behind the collections of Aboriginal material held in museums.

In summary, Clement’s correspondence with curators was primarily concerned with legitimating the value of his collections; in the next chapter, I will show that Hillier’s correspondence was much more about an exchange of specimens, a relationship in which the receipt by the museum of his specimens carried

\textsuperscript{64} Charles Barrett was H.J. Hillier’s brother-in-law.

\textsuperscript{65} Letter from H.J. Hillier to T.G.H. Strehlow 27/5/1945. Correspondence held by the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.
obligations on the part of the museum to continue to engage with Hillier about the material.
Chapter 7 — Relationships between a field collector and metropolitan curators

I begin this chapter with a story of a central Australian hunt for an *apus*, or shield shrimp. Many of the characteristics of this dialogue between collector and curator are consistently present in Henry Hillier’s correspondence with various BM(NH) curators. The story began in 1907 when Hillier sent an assortment of natural history specimens from central Australia to William Calman in London. At that time Calman was the BM(NH) curator responsible for crustacea. Hillier apologised to Calman for what he perceived as the poor quality of the collection, admitting that ‘I do not exactly know what the term crustaceans¹ includes ... please tell me just what kinds of beasts you would wish me to try and get and I will endeavour to send you a better lot’.²

Unfortunately, as was often the case, some of the specimens sent by Hillier were damaged in transit, and Calman replied noting that ‘the Apus has got somewhat crushed by the heavy crayfishes’, and suggested that in future Hillier should put small specimens ‘in glass tubes, or in tubes of stiff paper’.³ He also identified the apus as appearing ‘to be *Apus australiensis* of Spencer and Hall’.⁴ Hillier quickly agreed to follow Calman’s preparation advice, but further enquired:

¹Five ‘Crustacea were classified by Linnaeus in 1758 as wingless insects, as were scorpions, spiders, woodlice and centipedes.’ (Slearn, 1981:192).
² Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 28/8/1907, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
³ Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 31/10/1907 BM(NH) Archive DF252 W.T. Calman Correspondence.
⁴ This is a reference to the description of the apus published by Baldwin Spencer and Hall in the Horn Expedition Zoological volume, (Spencer, 1896).
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What on earth is an Apus? I am not a scientific man myself, kindly give me the common or garden names if any and the scientific too if you don’t mind, as I should like to know them. As I was a weed, and a consumptive at that, I was not very long at School and only learnt Latin six or seven years and for the life of me I don’t know what kind of a wild beast an apus is and I have no means of finding out here. ... I have just remembered that I sent an animal somewhat resembling a type of trilobite or relation of one thus [sketch] can this be the apus?\(^5\)

Two months later Calman replied that the:

Apus, like many other interesting beasts, has no common name, and the derivation of its technical name, as usual, does not help much, for I am told that in Greek it means ‘without foot’ and the chief peculiarity of the animal is that it has more feet than any other Crustacean! However, you are quite right in identifying it as the ‘trilobite-like animal’ and indeed it is probably the nearest thing to a Trilobite now living.\(^6\)

Calman followed up on Hillier’s interest in the apus by requesting that Hillier send him samples of dried mud from the bottom of waterholes, from which he hoped to extract some apuses. He wrote:

It is often possible to hatch out Estherias, Apus &c. in an aquarium and I should like to try the experiment.\(^7\)

Obtaining such samples was however, not a straightforward task. Displaying his characteristic self-deprecating wit, Hillier replied that:

Being a poor pedagogue on a Mission Station I am more or less tied down, anchored I might say, and indeed an anchorite\(^8\) also, but I will try and remember

\(^5\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 15/1/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
\(^6\) Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 9/3/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
\(^7\) Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 9/3/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
\(^8\) Hillier’s illusion here to being a religious recluse further reveals his playful sense of humour.
to get you some common or garden mud from dried up waterholes in different localities around.\textsuperscript{9}

Throughout the process of obtaining viable samples for this ‘experiment’, Hillier deferred to Calman’s scientific expertise. For example he sought advice about the best sort of locations to take samples, and the best method of preserving samples.

Is there any particular depth at which to take the mud of dried waterholes for you or shall I take surface mud, and can I pack a little in match boxes and send you two or three at a time carefully labelled? Or how is the best way?\textsuperscript{10}

Some seven months after Calman’s original request, Hillier sent the first of a series of sediment samples, all carefully numbered and labelled. He wrote:

No 1 is from a waterhole in Ellery Creek ... No 2 is from a hole where a stockyard has recently been erected and No 3 from a deep little hole in a very steep gully in the hills close to this Station (called the Krickauff Range). I mention these names in case you should be successful in hatching out a few api (or is it apodes), or even a half-caste diprododon or two and wished for more of the same sand ... Hoping you will be successful in hatching several kinds of interesting beasts.\textsuperscript{11}

Despite the enthusiasm of collector and curator, Calman was not successful in his initial attempts to hatch out the shrimps. However in noting these disappointing, Calman also implied to Hillier that the experiment would be ongoing.

I have put [the samples] ‘under cultivation’ but so far, without any result, and I fear that they will prove to be barren of Crustacean life. I am sorry to have put

\textsuperscript{9} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 1/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{10} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 1/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{11} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 14/10/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
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...you to so much trouble over the matter, but it is evident that we have not yet struck the proper method.\textsuperscript{12}

Calman’s use of the inclusive ‘we’ conveyed an impression that both collector and curator were collaborators in a scientific experiment. Their collaborative work also reinforced the relationship, and they exchanged regular letters regarding the experiment. Their exchange of letters, and the dispatch of sediment samples from different locations surrounding the station, continued until Hillier left the Hermannsburg mission in 1910. Even his final letter to Calman included more sediment samples and some hatched apus specimens.

No 10 contains the young apusses ... We had big rains here about two months ago and consequently a big flood down the Finke ... so I have been able to get you some more sand from a small hole (now dry) which a month ago contained hundreds of apuses and I hope you may be able to hatch some therefore out of this sand. It should I imagine contain hundreds or thousands of eggs.\textsuperscript{13}

Embedded within these exchanges between Hillier and Calman are many of the features which characterised Hillier’s correspondence with other natural history curators. As well as his eloquent depiction of his isolation, we see the negotiation of knowledge between the two correspondents. At the same time that Hillier was seeking Calman’s advice and knowledge, he was providing information about the local environment. In the following sections I explore this in more detail.

Corresponding from the field

As I described in Chapter 5, going back to an earlier time, Henry Hillier had first arrived at the Killalpaninness mission in 1893. Although he began corresponding with the BM(NH) only in 1902, he had been collecting central

\textsuperscript{12} Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 24/3/1909, BM(NH) Archive DF252 W.T. Calman Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{13} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 26/4/1910, BM(NH) Archive DF252 W.T. Claman Correspondence.
Australian natural history for at least seven years before this. Hillier's initial correspondence with the BM(NH) began after his brother William had shown Michael Rogers Oldfield Thomas (1858-1929), the Keeper of Mammalia at the BM(NH), a marsupial mole which Hillier had collected. Oldfield Thomas subsequently gave William Hillier a copy of his *Directions for preparing small mammal skins* to send to his brother, with the request that Henry collect some more specimens for Thomas' department of the museum. In his first letter to Oldfield Thomas, Henry Hillier acknowledged this gift and agreed to collect for Thomas, on the condition that the BM(NH) cover the expenses of collecting, including the cost of obtaining collecting boxes and postage.

Oldfield Thomas remained Hillier's sole correspondent at the BM(NH) until he left Killalpaninna in 1905 and returned to England. After he had accepted the teaching position at the Hermannsburg Mission Station, and before he returned to Australia, Hillier visited the BM(NH). During this visit he met a number of staff from different sections of the museum. As well as Oldfield Thomas, he met Arthur Smith Woodward (1864-1944) of the Geology Section and the entomologist Charles Owen Waterhouse (1843-1917) to whom he presented a collection from Killalpaninna. His correspondence suggests that he also met Georges Albert Boulenger (1858-1937) of the Reptile and Fish Section and

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14 In 1902 Hillier described having taken a small collection of insects from Killalpaninna back to England in 1895. See letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/1/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-149.
15 Thomas had been appointed as a second class assistant at the BM(NH) in 1876 (Stearn, 1981:169)
16 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/1/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-149.
17 Hillier had earlier written to Oldfield Thomas: 'If all goes well I shall be leaving here in a month's time and after short stays in the south of Australia and Africa, reach England about July and when I am home I shall certainly take the pleasure of calling on you personally.' (Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 28/2/1905, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/11 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1905-134).
18 See letter from H.J. Hillier to A.S. Woodward, Keeper in the Palaeontology Section (23/7/1906 BM(NH) Palaeontology Archive DF100/41 1906 G-R p85). This visit is recorded by the annotations Hillier made to the museum's atlas of South Australia in which he indicated to museum staff the likely location of diprotodon bones near Lake Eyre. Hillier most likely gained this information from having accompanied the geologist Prof J.W. Gregory during his fieldwork around Killalpaninna in 1901-1902 (Gregory 1906).
19 'When I saw you at the Museum in (about August) 1905 you spoke of carbolized saw-dust if I remember rightly.' (H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 23/8/1907, BM(NH) Archive Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/51: 1905-7 (A-J)). See also H.J. Hillier to C.E. Fagan ??/??/1906 [sic] [letter received by BM(NH) 22/10/1906, BM(NH) Archive Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF200/51: 1905-7 (A-J)].
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William Thomas Calman (1871-1952) of the Crustacean Section. As a result of these meetings, Hillier was encouraged to expand his collecting at the new Hermannsburg residence to natural history material other than the mammals which he had previously sent Thomas from Killalpanina. Whilst in England, Hillier also initiated relationships with two other British museums, the Kew Museum and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Immediately before leaving for Australia he sent a central Australian botanical collection to the Kew Museum, and offered to collect more if they desired,\(^{20}\) and in January 1906 he presented three ethnographic objects to Anatole von Hügel of the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, via a Mr Lang, an intermediary, who was an optometrist.\(^{21}\) This gift established a relationship between Hillier and von Hügel. Hillier later made use of this when selling the Cambridge Museum, via von Hügel, extensive ethnographic collections acquired from Hermannsburg.

A number of factors (which follow) made Hillier attractive as a correspondent and collector for British museums of both natural history and anthropology.

By the end of the nineteenth century, authority within the natural sciences was largely located within institutions such as museums. This signalled a move away from an earlier pattern in which scientific knowledge, particularly relating to natural history, had been constructed by independent scholars. The historian David Allen has linked this change to the rise of professionalism in the natural sciences, with museums providing some of the first paid positions as taxonomists (1994). One result of this change for natural history was that the sites of knowledge and scientific authority became more removed, in terms of physical space, from the location of the specimens. In anthropology, by contrast, the location of the field had always been remote from the location of anthropological authority. In such an environment there were a number of features which made a collector such as Hillier – operating in central Australia – a valuable and desirable resource for British museums in the fields of anthropology and natural history.

\(^{20}\)See H.J. Hillier to the Director of Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew 7/1/1906 [sic] RBGK Archives.
\(^{21}\)See Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 16/1/1906, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
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The end of the nineteenth century was a period of enormous growth for museums, a growth partly linked to the dynamics of empire. Thomas Richards (1993) has described how at this time there was something of an ‘information explosion’ occurring in London, the centre of the British Empire – enormous amounts of information, in the form of texts and objects about every aspect of the empire were being sent back to London and stored in national cultural repositories, such as the British Museum and the British Library. These materials were accumulating at a far greater rate than it was possible to comprehend, and Richards suggests that it was more important to acquire and possess such material, rather than to ‘understand’ it through processes such as description and classification (1993:3-4. One effect of this phenomenon was to generate a drive to accumulate ever more material, such as the central Australian natural history objects offered by Hillier.

Developments in the technology of communication and transport at this time also meant that the ‘periphery’ of the British scientific realm had extended from provincial Britain to outlying parts of the British colonies. In some ways the map of colonial science had been reshaped so that the location of the periphery moved from the Orkney Isles to locations such as central Australia (Withers 1995). Thus Hillier, corresponding from Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, was able to engage with the broader colonial project of collecting and classifying the world. Reflecting this, the relations between Australian collectors, such as Hillier, and staff of the BM(NH) at the end of the nineteenth century are comparable to those which existed between field collectors and naturalists within the British Isles at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Secord 1994).

The intense intellectual interest in the anthropology of central Australia at that time, discussed in Chapter 2, also led to British anthropology curators competing for collections of Aranda ethnographic objects, such as those offered by Hillier. The exchange between Anatole von Hügel of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology and Hillier’s mother, Sarah Hillier, clearly illustrates such competition. After earlier offering von Hügel a choice from a list of churingas, she wrote:
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It was with much regret that I was unable to comply with your request as to the stone tjuringas from South Australia; now however that the British Museum have made their selection I am sending you on approval all those that are left.\textsuperscript{22}

Von Hügel replied tersely:

I am sorry you took the trouble to send me the remainder of the stones. After the British Museum and etc had their pick it is not even worth while to open the box so I herewith return it.\textsuperscript{23}

As well as the competition between different British ethnographic museums, there was competition between Britain and other colonial powers particularly Germany, to have munificently funded museums containing a rich array of objects. Within the British intellectual community it was frequently held that British museums were lagging behind similar German institutions. For example in 1899 a British commentator reflecting in \textit{Nature} on the imminent enlargement of the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde wrote ‘the projected improvements threaten to leave us in a position of inferiority positively humiliating’\textsuperscript{24}. The desire on the part of British museums for Australian Aboriginal ethnographic material was part of this competition.

Both of the places where Hillier collected were Lutheran mission stations, and many of the staff had strong cultural allegiances to Germany. Indeed, missionaries such as Carl Strehlow and Oskar Liebler were selling ethnographic collections to German museums. Hillier’s letters clearly state that this was a reason for him to approach British museums with his collections. Nationalistic competition also extended beyond ethnographic objects to the collection of natural history material. Even in his very first letter to a museum, Hillier evoked a sense of nationalism as one of the reasons for collecting for the BM(NH). He stated:

\textsuperscript{22} Letter from S.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 14/1/1910, von Hügel Correspondence CUMAA Archives.
\textsuperscript{23} Letter from A. von Hügel to S.J. Hillier 15/1/1910, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
\textsuperscript{24} ‘Ethnographical Museums’ \textit{Nature} 14/12/1899 No 1572, Vol 61 Page 154-5.
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I am quite content to present any few specimens I can obtain to the British Museum being a National Museum, and I being English, I prefer to do so.25

The following two sections I examine the correspondence between Hillier and the various curatorial staff to whom he sent natural history and anthropological material. By seeing what both curators and Hillier wanted from their relationship, I reveal the complexity of the exchange between collector and museum, and show how it involved the transmission of specimens, equipment, and ideas.

Natural history collecting

From both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, the obvious offerings from Hillier offered to natural history curators were natural history specimens. In connection with these he wrote more than forty five letters to various curators at the BM(NH). On one occasion he described Killalpaninna as ‘a fair field ... from a collecting point of view’.26 The material he collected whilst working at the two missions included marsupial moles, bandicoots, native rats, kangaroos, echidnas, marsupial rats, freshwater snails, spiders, crayfish, apuses, cicadas, moths, butterflies, wasps, fossils and seeds. Initially the curators accepted the indiscriminate range of specimens offered by Hillier. Later, as they ordered and classified the material they had acquired from him and other Australian collectors, they increasingly sought particular specimens. Such directed collecting was intended to fill gaps in their collections, to show different stages of the life cycle of specimens, and to clarify the taxonomic relationships between the material Hillier had sent and their ever-expanding existing collections. For example William Calman wrote:

The Crayfishes [sent by Hillier] I have named, following the Report of the Horn Expedition, as Cherans b scaratus, but I doubt very much whether they are really

26 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O Thomas 6/1/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-149.
the same species as we have under that name from New South Wales &c. It will
only be possible to settle this question however, when we have a much larger
series of specimens to enable the range of variation to be determined. Therefore I
shall be very glad if you can send me any more specimens.27

Similarly a curator from the fossil section wrote:

We have just received through W.T. Hillier and Mr Meade Waldo,28 10 fossils very
kindly forwarded by you. ... These fossils indicate the outcrop of a rock of Silurian
age, but they are clearly weathered specimens just picked up off the surface. It
would no doubt be fairly easy to obtain more, and, considering the interest of the
find, we shall be very glad if you could arrange ... to make a definite search for
further specimens and to send them to us. Any observations on the nature of the
rock and its mode of occurrence would add to their value.29

It is clear that Aboriginal people assisted Hillier in acquiring many of these
natural history objects. For example while at Killalpaninna he wrote:

I have been offering 1/- a head for (adult) large animals and 6d a head for (adult)
small ones on your behalf.30

Similarly at Hermannsburg he described commissioning Aboriginal collectors,
although he paid his collectors with ‘sweets’ – a reflection of this mission’s
policy of not paying Aboriginal people in cash. He wrote:

I do not gather the insects myself but give a few sweets to the black children here
who bring them to me, that is why it takes me such a long time to get many.31

27 Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 31/10/1907, BM(NH) Archive DF 252 W.T. Calman
Correspondence.
28 This is most likely a reference to Geoffrey Meade-Waldo (1884-1916), a curator in the
BM(NH) Department of Entomology.
29 Letter from Assistant Keeper in the Geological Department, BM(NH) to H.J. Hillier
30 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 1/12/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/9 Oldfield
Thomas Correspondence 1903-136.
31 Letter from H.J. Hillier to CO Waterhouse 5/3/1909, BM(NH) Archive Keeper of Zoology
Correspondence DF2000/52: 1907-8 (K-Y).
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Hillier was not only using the labour of Aboriginal people to collect these specimens, but he was reliant on it. He wrote to Calman that

'I left it too late to get the cray-fishes for you, as the blacks here tell me they cannot get them in the cold weather'.

His letters also show that it was not only the labour of Aboriginal people on which he relied, but in many instances their knowledge of the 'natural history' of the collected specimens. By natural history, I mean their knowledge of the behaviour, life cycles and seasonality of the different species he was sending to curators. An example of Hillier's reliance is contained in a letter to the BM(NH) entomologist Charles Waterhouse.

With regard to the larvae of some of the cicadas, I have some in spirit, of one species only, the blacks tell me that it is the "mother" as they call them of one of the large kinds and they seem quite certain of them.

From the outset of his correspondence with BM(NH) curators, Hillier had made his access to such indigenous knowledge a feature of his collections. For example, in his first letter to Oldfield Thomas he wrote:

[Killalpaninna] ... being a Mission Station for the Dieri tribe of blacks, I can always furnish the native names accurately, as I understand the language a little.

He continued to provide such contextual information with the material he sent from Hermannsburg. In a 1909 letter he described an accompanying parcel as containing:

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32 Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 1/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
33 Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 28/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF 200/52 Keeper of Zoology Correspondence: 1907-8 (K-Y).
34 The ways in which collectors such as Hillier and Clement collected indigenous information about natural history material has echoes in the way modern botanists and zoologists working in central Australia are re-collecting indigenous knowledge of these ecosystems, see for example (Braithwaite, 1995).
35 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/1/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-149.

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two good specimens of *Luta* or *Putara* the Aranda names for a kind of kangaroo not common here.\textsuperscript{36}

Although none of the curators explicitly requested such information, in providing it he was following the suggestions contained in the BM(NH)'s *Handbook of instructions for collectors* (discussed in Chapter 3). Whilst Hillier used and disseminated the Aboriginal names of species, he was suspicious of the accuracy of Aboriginal understanding of the natural history of different species, and the interactions between different species.

[Aboriginal accounts] are not very reliable so I will try and get some more [of this species] this coming summer (alive) and keep some of them till the full grown beast emerges.\textsuperscript{37}

Clearly Hillier did not necessarily accept their accounts, however in the absence of a European 'scientific' account of the material, he often used the indigenous knowledge.

Another feature revealed in Hillier's letters is the existence of a network among white central Australian residents who were exchanging natural history material. For example, Hillier wrote:

I have enclosed, in a tube, two or three ants which were given me by a friend who got them at Tennants [sic] Creek, two or three hundred miles NE of here.\textsuperscript{38}

I have a friend north of Charlotte Waters trying to get me a few marsupial moles this winter and if I get any sent to me I will try and send you one.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{36} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/12/1909, BM(NH) Archive DF 2232 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1911-82.

\textsuperscript{37} Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 28/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF 200/52, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence: 190-87 (K-Y).

\textsuperscript{38} Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 28/7/1908, BM(NH) Archive Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/52: 1907-8 (K-Y).

\textsuperscript{39} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 15/5/1911, BM(NH) Archive DF 232 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence.
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On occasions the desire of curators for particular specimens led them to try to use Hillier as an intermediatory to engage with other such collectors (and often their knowledge of these other collectors had come from Hillier). A curator in the geology department requested:

we shall be very glad if you could arrange with Mr Coulthard, or any one else, to make a definite search for further specimens and to send them to us.40

Despite the frequency of the letters between Hillier and curators, at any one time there was often a gap in understanding between what curators wanted and what Hillier provided. A major factor here was the geographical isolation of both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, which were very remote from cities. Sending and receiving mail was a slow process. At Killalpaninna mail was delivered from Adelaide only every three weeks.41 At Hermannsburg deliveries were even less frequent: mail travelled firstly by camel or packhorse to Charlotte Waters, and then by post to Adelaide. Parcels could be sent only twice a year and, because they had to go by camel, were frequently damaged en route. Hillier complained once that:

everything gets very much knocked about in the camel and horse pack bags and besides this we have to pay 1/- per lb for every parcel over 1lb in weight this side of Charlotte Waters, because we are beyond the 'pale' of the parcel post.42

Another factor which directly affected the potential availability of natural history specimens was the extreme and variable environmental conditions at the two stations. These included drought at Killalpaninna:

Owing to the continued drought which has now raged more or less severely for the last seven years in this desert region, all marsupials or other small mammals are very scarce.43

41 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 28/8/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence.
42 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 23/7/1906, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/12 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1906-161-2.
and flooding at Hermannsburg:

I also send a few poor specimens of land and water shells, which have all been washed down by flood water in the Finke Creek.\textsuperscript{44}

Despite the geographic isolation of the Hermannsburg mission, natural history collecting was affected by the impact of European introduced species such as mice. On one occasion Hillier noted:

This was an excellent specimen but we had a plague of mice here last summer and they ruined it and eat [sic] the ears of some mice that I had prepared for you and took their skulls also.\textsuperscript{45}

As discussed previously, Hillier relied on Aboriginal collectors. This has its own problems. For example, the cultural practices of the Aboriginal collectors, who were used to collecting animals as a source of food, sometimes resulted in specimens being treated differently to the methods laid down by museum staff. Hillier reported on one occasion that:

I regret that ... [the skull] of the male echidna got broken at the point in the process of killing. The blacks ... kill the echidnas by two stretching the limbs out, a prickly job that, and hitting the beast smartly once or twice on the under side of the throat.\textsuperscript{46}

We can also speculate that cultural practices affected the ability of particular collectors to acquire particular species at different times of the year.

\textsuperscript{43} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 13/3/1903, BM(NH) Archive DF232/9 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1903-137.
\textsuperscript{44} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 14/10/1908, BM(NH) Archive DF252/4 Crustacea Section Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{45} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/12/1909, BM(NH) Archive DF 232 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1911-82.
\textsuperscript{46} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/12/1909 BM(NH) Archive DF 232 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1911-82.
The second part of the exchange relationship consisted of what Hillier explicitly wanted from the BM(NH) curators with whom he was engaged in correspondence, and their differing responses. Hillier wanted four main things. Firstly (from his very first letter to Oldfield Thomas in 1902) he sought reimbursement of the costs he expected to incur in buying collecting equipment such as traps and boxes. Hillier also sought repayment of the costs in getting specimens from central Australia to England. Posting specimens from Killalpaninna and particularly Hermannsburg was not only lengthy, but also a complex and expensive process. At one stage Hillier wrote:

My collecting for different departments of the B.M. has cost me nearly £2 and being a poor man I can ill afford this.\(^\text{47}\)

At no stage does it appear that Hillier sought payment for the natural history specimens _per se_. This was in direct contrast to his collection of anthropological objects.

Secondly, Hillier’s isolation from Adelaide, the nearest major urban centre, led him to request specialised collecting and specimen preparation equipment directly from curators. This included mammal traps, labels, scissors, rulers, forceps, wool,\(^\text{48}\) boxes,\(^\text{49}\) creosote,\(^\text{50}\) and butterfly nets.\(^\text{51}\) At one point he wrote from Hermannsburg:

I cannot obtain any creosote.\(^\text{52}\) The nearest “store” or shop is about 100 miles away and there is no communication even there. The next is about 150 but I could

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48 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 23/7/1906, BM(NH) Archive DF 232/12 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1906-161-2.
49 Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.E. Fagan 1906, BM(NH) Archive, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/51: 1905-7 (A-J). [no date, received BM(NH) 22/10/1906].
52 Creosote was used as a mould retardant.
not get creosote at either place I am sure. Adelaide is the best place to get such things and that is 1000 miles but connected by post, altho' not parcel-post yet.\textsuperscript{53}

Thus in one sense, Hillier's isolation from Adelaide drew him closer to the BM(NH). Curators were well aware of the potential value of a loyal collector living in central Australia and, in response to his requests, they continually provided Hillier with an extensive array of collecting and preparation equipment. By 1906 the museum had provided:

\begin{itemize}
\item 1902 a few tools, soap[?], and labels for small specimens - value about 12/-;
\item Feb 1906 a small insect collecting outfit - value 14/-;
\item Aug 1906 18 traps, some wire and labels for mammals - value about 15/-, and a small wooden box fitted with glass tubes containing spirit - value £1.\textsuperscript{54}
\end{itemize}

As well as standard collecting equipment, on one occasion when the equipment supplied by the museum was not effective for the local conditions, Hillier asked that a collecting device of his own design be supplied. The museum had Hillier's design manufactured in London. This suite of objects, related to collecting constituted a flow of European material culture into central Australia and challenges the stereotyped image of material culture flowing out of the centre.

Thirdly, Hillier sought technical advice from curators about the preparation of specimens. This ranged from general advice about the correct mixture of chemicals used in preserving\textsuperscript{55} to advice about preserving, preparing, and packing a diversity of specimens from large moths\textsuperscript{56} to diprotodons.\textsuperscript{57} Much of the correspondence from curators consists of responses to his queries

\textsuperscript{54} Note [Ref 2881/86], attached to letter from H.J. Hillier to C.E. Fagan 1906, BM(NH) Archive, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/51: 1905-7 (A-J). [no date, received BM(NH) 22/10/1906].
\textsuperscript{55} Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 30/6/1908, BM(NH) Archive, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/52: 1907-8 (K-Y)
\textsuperscript{56} Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.E. Fagan 1906, BM(NH) Archive, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF 200/51: 1905-7 (A-J). [no date, received BM(NH) 22/10/1906].
\textsuperscript{57} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A.S. Woodward 10/12/1906, BM(NH) Palaeontology Department Archive, DF100/41: 1906 (G-R) p. 87.
regarding technical advice about specimen preparation. At a general level, Oldfield Thomas and Charles Waterhouse\(^{58}\) sent Hillier the collecting guides published by the BM(NH), such as those described in Chapter 3. Curators also provided Hillier with advice specifically about the particular species he was collecting, or about his particular circumstances. For example Waterhouse wrote:

> With regard to larvae. They are not much use unless one knows what they are, but one should be glad of any that you have reared or know what they are. They preserve fairly well in spirit, but lose their colours. A 2% soln. of formalin keeps the colours for a long time, but not permanently. I would send you some if you [would] like to try. The best way is to inflate the stems over a spirit lamp, but this requires equipment which you probably do not possess.\(^{59}\)

In responding to Hillier, the BM(NH) curators could draw on their knowledge gained from correspondence with other colonial collectors. For example Waterhouse advised Hillier that creosote was a more effective mould retardant than carbolic acid. He further noted that:

> Dr Graham in W. Africa kept his insects in beautiful condition by painting the whole of the insides of his storeboxes with this creosote.\(^{60}\)

Fourthly, at a more intellectual level, Hillier was keen to obtain from curators ‘scientific’ information about the objects he was sending the museum. He particularly wanted the scientific names of specimens after they had been identified and classified:

> I hope also it is not troubling you too much to ask you to give me the scientific name of each specimen.\(^{61}\)

\(^{58}\) Letter from C.O. Waterhouse to H.J. Hillier 14/5/1907, BM(NH) Archive, DF 302/1 p392.
\(^{59}\) Letter from C.O. Waterhouse to H.J. Hillier 14/3/1907, BM(NH) Archive, DF 302/1 p349.
\(^{60}\) Letter from C.O. Waterhouse to H.J. Hillier 13/5/1907, BM(NH) Archive DF 302/1 Letterbook Jan 1905-Dec 1907.
Curators generally provided this information in the form of lists of names of the identified species. They indicated where new species were identified in the collections he sent, as he hoped they would.

I send you with this a further list of your insects, many of them are not named in our collection and some no doubt will prove to be new species.\textsuperscript{62}

Curators also sent Hillier copies of any published description of new species that he had collected. Oldfield Thomas, for example, sent his description of the *Sminthopsis crassicaudata centralis* (fat-tailed dunnart) type-specimen.\textsuperscript{63}

His interests in natural history went beyond simply obtaining the names of the specimens he was sending. His questions reflect a broad interest in the landscape, and the interconnections between its different parts. For example he asked the entomologist Charles Waterhouse:

Do grasshoppers etc change their colours considerably according to plants etc., I mean, that I believe several species that I have sent you and which I have numbered differently are very likely the same as other specimens but have developed green and other colours so as to harmonize better with their surroundings which are naturally greener since the bounteous rains we have had lately.\textsuperscript{64}

On more than one occasion Hillier explicitly linked his desire for such information to wanting to learn more about the natural history of his locales.

any such information is of value to me as altho' ignorant of Nat Hist I am pleased to learn what I can, as it is a fascinating subject.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{62} Letter from C.O. Waterhouse to H.J. Hillier 18/5/1910.
\textsuperscript{63} See letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 13/3/1903, BM(NH) Archive DF 2332/9, Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1903-137.
\textsuperscript{64} Letter from H.J. Hillier to C.O. Waterhouse 9/3/1908, BM(NH) Archive, Keeper of Zoology Correspondence DF200/52:1907-8 (K-Y).
\textsuperscript{65} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 7/8/1902, BM(NH) Archive DF232/88, Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-151.
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An important element of such learning was linking the carefully numbered specimens he had sent to England to their newly ascribed scientific names and descriptions that resulted from their classification by the museum taxonomists.

I should be much obliged if you will have a list made for me of the corresponding scientific names so that I can learn a little about them.\textsuperscript{66}

As the relationship between Hillier and the various curators continued, it is apparent that his knowledge of natural history increased. He refers to the scientific Latin names of species, and shows his familiarity with scientific accounts of the central Australia fauna. In 1910 he wrote:

Male and female are alike to all appearances. It is the \textit{Phloguis[?] crassipes} according to the Horn Expedition \textit{Narrative} p134 and 135 vide. I could also send some specimens of \textit{Nephile eremiana} a largish spider which spins a strong web between trees in mulga (acacia aneura) scrub and which is very common here.\textsuperscript{67}

Occasionally specimens which Hillier had were named after him. In 1905 Oldfield Thomas published a description of a small marsupial nocturnal mammal, \textit{Phascogale hillier}\textsuperscript{68} (1905:427). In 1907 the entomologist W.L. Distant published descriptions of two cicadas which had been donated by Hillier, including one named as \textit{Macrotristria hillieri} (1907). In 1910 Distant also published descriptions of \textit{Hilliera acuminata} and \textit{Sciocoris hermannsi} (1910). In 1910 the malacologist Edgar Smith published a description of a land snail named \textit{Thersites hillieri} (1910). The practice of incorporating the name of the collector into the name of a new species was a standard procedure. It was a way for the museum to acknowledge the contribution of collectors such as Hillier, but it was a practice Hillier was not keen on. In relation to the cicada named after him, he wrote:


\textsuperscript{67} Letter from H.J. Hillier to W.T. Calman 26/4/1910, BM(NH) Archive DF252, W.T. Calman Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{68} This species, commonly known as the mulgara, is now classified as \textit{Dasycercus hillieri} (Walton 1988).
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Thank you for the honour you have done me in naming a specimen of cicada after me and another after this mission station. May I however point out that it is quite possible, and probably even probable, that these species are known to scientific men in this state as a Mr Field of Tennant's Creek (an overland telegraph station to the north east of here) has sent about 500 specimens altogether I believe to Dr EC Stirling of the Adelaide Muse. Please do not hesitate, if they are already named, to expunge my name in connection with them, as altho' I appreciate the honour you have done me I am not very fond of having them named after me. 69

Whilst the correspondence between Hillier and the curators was one of exchange, it was not without tension. As well as his discomfort at having his name celebrated in the naming of specimens, Hillier at times wrote of the dissatisfaction with the response of some curators. Each curator had a discrete correspondence with Hillier, on behalf his own department. However, Hillier apparently viewed the museum as a single entity, and assumed that there would be communication between its different divisions. On occasions this lead to his frustration at the different responses from different curators with whom he was corresponding. It is clear that he expected certain things in exchange for the specimens he sent. One of his primary desires was information about the material he was sending. When he thought this was not forthcoming he would complain or threaten to withhold further material.

The way I look at things is this if the insects are not worth the naming (and a list of these names sent also to me) and postage then I don't see that they are worth sending at all. I am very pleased to collect for you and Dr Calman because you both have always sent me the names and some particulars and all collecting material etc, but I am getting rather tired of such rather discourteous treatment from the other departments. 70

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Curators were quick to respond to such problems. C.O. Waterhouse wrote:

With regard to naming specimens, as I said in my letter of June last, we cannot undertake to name them all. It is against our regulations, but not only that, we have not the time or the men to do it. Many of your Orthoptera appear to be new to our collection, but [to] work them out would require much time, and a specialist and we have no one.\textsuperscript{71}

At one stage Hillier’s dissatisfaction and the mounting cost of sending his collections to England led him to consider giving up collecting.

I am seriously considering thinking of giving up collecting because of the cost as I collect for four or five departments of the museum and the cost mounts up.\textsuperscript{72}

Hillier was also unhappy when the names he was provided with did not tally with his records of what he had sent:

several of the insects I sent [CO Waterhouse] were classed and named quite differently and some numbers I had not even sent etc and such information is quite useless to me and not really worth the trouble and expense of collecting and sending.\textsuperscript{73}

Such dissatisfaction with the response of British curators and museums to Australian-based correspondents and collectors was not unique to Hillier. In 1925 Frederick Wood Jones, a noted anatomist from Adelaide, wrote to Oldfield Thomas expressing a similar attitude.

I don’t mind telling you frankly that I am profoundly tired of sending material to English institutions. When in Cocos I sent hundredweights of corals to the B.M. - and in reply got a letter from a clerk asking me for a complete set of postage stamps of the islands! Nothing whatever was ever done with the specimens. I got

\textsuperscript{71} Letter from C.O. Waterhouse to H.J. Hillier 20/5/1909, BM(NH) Archives DF302/2:202-203.
\textsuperscript{73} Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 21/4/1910, BM(NH) Archives DF232/16, Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1910-84.
them back after my return to England and in response to a request gave them to the Smithsonian - the result a splendid volume on the corals of Cocos-Keeling.\textsuperscript{74}

Despite such tensions, after Hillier had advised the Museum staff that he was leaving the Hermannsburg mission and offered to return the collecting equipment, their response was to hope that Hillier would remain an ongoing collector and correspondent.

I am sorry to hear you are to be leaving your present station, as I do not think we have by any means exhausted its zoological interest. ... If there is any prospect of your continuing to collect for us you might keep the box of tubes by you, or hand it on to any one who would do so. If not you might send back any specimens you have for us in it.\textsuperscript{75}

**Anthropological collecting**

Five museums hold ethnographic collections associated with Henry Hillier. Most of these acquisitions took place between 1908 and 1911, but the first occurred in 1906, when Hillier donated three objects to the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (CUMAE). This was Hillier's first involvement with British anthropological museums. It was then three years before any further transactions. The CUMAE and the Australian Museum each purchased large collections directly from Hillier in 1909\textsuperscript{76} and 1910 respectively. His other collections were sold by his mother, Sarah, who from 1909 took over the marketing of his objects in Britain. The British Museum purchased collections in June 1908, and the Horniman Museum and the Royal Museum of Scotland purchased collections in 1910 and 1911 respectively. Sarah Hillier also sold some of the objects acquired by her son to

\textsuperscript{74} Letter from F.W. Jones to O. Thomas 25/1/1925, BM(NH) Archives DF232, Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1910-84. At this time F.W. Jones held the chair in anatomy at the University of Adelaide, and was an active researcher in zoology and anthropology.

\textsuperscript{75} Letter from W.T. Calman to H.J. Hillier 5/2/1910, BM(NH) Archive, DF252, W.T. Calman Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{76} Although the CUMAE purchased this collection directly from H.H. Hillier, the museum arranged for Hillier to send it via an Australian-based collector who corresponded with von Hügel, Dr R.H. Marten, an Adelaide G.P. In the CUMAA Register the collection has been misleadingly titled the 'Hillier-Martin Collection'}
prominent British private collectors. This includes a collection she sold to Captain A.W.F. Fuller in 1909,77 and at least one object sold to James Edge-Partington.78 Appendix 1 contains a list of all known anthropological collections associated with Hillier held by museums.

Unfortunately only correspondence relating to the ethnographic collections held by the CUMAE, the Horniman Museum and the Australian Museum has survived. Interestingly, these letters reveal that Henry Hillier had a very different relationship with curators of ethnographic museums to that which he had with natural history curators.

Hillier’s first involvement with British anthropological museums was his donation of three objects to Anatole von Hügel, the curator of the CUMAE, in January 1906. Hillier presented the small collection to von Hügel via a mutual friend, Mr Lang.79 Responding to von Hügel’s thanks, Hillier offered to collect more.

It is quite possible that I may be able to send you some implements, ornaments, etc and shall be happy to do so.80

At this time Hillier also provided von Hügel with his Hermannsburg address ‘should you wish to write to me on any subject’.81 This episode, which occurred after he had returned to England from Killalpaninna, and immediately before he returned to Australia to take up his new position at the Hermannsburg mission, served to introduce Hillier to von Hügel. It had the sense of opening a relationship, one in which either party could engage the other about his areas of interest, experience and/or expertise. Von Hügel was keen to develop this collecting opportunity and also to develop Hillier’s

77 Alfred Walter Francis Fuller (1882-1961), whose father was the Honorary Curator of Chichester Museum, was a prominent private ethnographic collector at this time. A substantial part of his collection was acquired by the Field Museum in Chicago, including twenty five objects associated with H.J. Hillier.
78 The Pitt Rivers Museum holds this object which it acquired in 1913 from Edge-Partington.
79 Mr Lang was an optometrist, and not the noted folklorist Andrew Lang.
80 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 26/2/1906, CUMAA Archives.
81 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 26/2/1906, CUMAA Archives.
anthropological interests. In relation to Hillier’s ‘notes on the natives’\textsuperscript{82} he asked:

\begin{quote}
Have you thought of sending them to the Anthropological Institution?\textsuperscript{83}
\end{quote}

The style of this engagement, with Hillier donating material and his interest in becoming a correspondent, echoes his earlier pattern of donating of natural history objects to curators such as Oldfield Thomas.

Once Hillier arrived at Hermannsburg, however, the tone of his correspondence with von Hügel changed. Despite von Hügel’s encouragement to disseminate and publish notes about his experiences at Hermannsburg, Hillier’s letters from this time on were largely concerned with the sale of objects, rather than with ongoing intellectual exchange. Similarly his letters to Robert Etheridge Jnr, the curator at the Australian Museum, solely concern the sale of his collection. This contrasts with his correspondence relating to the natural history material, which took place over eight years and involved many shipments of specimens. Hillier’s engagement with the anthropological community was further reduced when, from 1909, his mother, Sarah, took over the sale of his collections in Britain.

The manner in which Hillier offered to collect anthropological material implied that this was a more commercial arrangement than the exploratory nature which characterised his natural history collecting. For example in 1908 he wrote to von Hügel, offering to ‘supply you twice a year with a collection’.\textsuperscript{84} He was also selling the objects from this point on, again contrasting with his practice with natural history specimens. For von Hügel, he initially set the price at 2/6 each object. A year later he was to write:

\begin{quote}
With regards to sending you another consignment of objects I cannot consent to do so at the same price of 2/6 each I fear. The German museums give Mr
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{82} Letter from A. von Hügel 16/1/1906, von Hügel Correspondence, CUMAA Archives.  
\textsuperscript{83} Letter from A. von Hügel 16/1/1906, von Hügel Correspondence, CUMAA Archives.  
\textsuperscript{84} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 2/6/1908, CUMAA Archives.
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Strehlow, through Freiherr von Leonhardi [of the Frankfurt Museum] an average of 8/- to 10/- each and I must get all my expenses paid in future.\(^{85}\)

Although he had earlier justified the necessity of charging for the objects by stating that 'one cannot procure anything for nothing even from these more or less unsophisticated blacks',\(^{86}\) his letters clearly show that the (increased) price also related to the market rate of such objects. For natural history material he collected, he only sought reimbursement of the costs in getting the specimens back to England. Hillier’s transactions with the Australian Museum, which occurred in 1910 after he had resigned from the Hermannsburg mission, were similarly transactions much more about economic gain than a way of entering into an intellectual dialogue with curators. They also revealed his knowledge of the market that existed for such objects in England.\(^{87}\) He wrote:

I am informed that a West Australian wooden Tjuringa is sold for £2 by dealers in the Old Country - but of course I do not ask half that. I suppose about 7/6 - 8/- would be a very fair price.\(^{88}\)

Such discussions of price and other techniques used by Hillier show that he was actively marketing his collections by using a number of other sales devices which in Chapter 5 I described Emile Clement as using. For example, in his letters to the Australian Museum, Hillier authenticated and enhanced the value of his collections by referring to his earlier sale of a similar collection to von Hügel.\(^{89}\) He also made clear the rarity of the objects. He stated: 'I may also point out that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain specimens even here as you doubtless know'.\(^{90}\) Throughout all his selling he stressed that his collections came with contextual information about the use, manufacture and Aboriginal name of each object. As he wrote to von Hügel:

\(^{85}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.
\(^{86}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 2/6/1908, CUMAA Archives.
\(^{87}\) He had most likely obtained this information from his mother.
\(^{88}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to the Director of the Australian Museum 7/12/1909, Australian Museum Correspondence 1910:H1.
\(^{89}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to the Director of the Australian Museum 7/12/1909, Australian Museum Correspondence 1910:H1.
\(^{90}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to the Director of the Australian Museum 7/12/1909, Australian Museum Correspondence 1910:H1.
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I will certainly be careful to label each specimen of native manufacture that I send you and will append what notes I can on same and the native name of each.91

Further, Hillier stressed the quality of the documentation of the collection, in particular each object's Aranda name and the explanation of 'the significance of all the various marks on the Churinga'.92 His description of the phonetic method he used to translate Aranda into English as being commensurate with 'the method advocated by the Anthropological Institute'93 served to show his familiarity with standard anthropological methods, and therefore to suggest the veracity of his collection. Indeed von Hügel was so impressed with the list which preceded the arrival of the collection that he wrote:

I do not think that this first consignment of one hundred specimens could be better chosen, and the full information, with native names, phonetically spelt, might well serve as a model to other collectors.94

In describing the collections he made at Hermannsburg Hillier also explicitly related them to the work of Spencer and Gillen which, as I discussed in Chapter 2, was prominent within the anthropological world at that time. For example in his first letter to Etheridge of the Australian Museum, Hillier offered an ethnographic collection consisting of:

Tjurungas (churingas of Spencer and Gillen) both stone and wood specimens, about fifty in number, arm and neck bands, dishes, so-called aprons, head-ornaments and weapons.95

In a similar vein he had earlier written to von Hügel stating:

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91 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 23/9/1908, CUMAA Archives.
92 Letter from H.J. Hillier to the Director of the Australian Museum 7/12/1909, Australian Museum Correspondence 1910:H1.
94 Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 11/1/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
95 Letter from H.J. Hillier to Etheridge Jnr. 7/12/1909, Australian Museum Correspondence 1910:H1.
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I presume you might possibly be glad of the chance to obtain a few of the totem-stones, ornaments, tools etc from this district ... of the Aranda (or Arunta of Spencer and Gillen) in Central Australia.96

As I discussed in Chapter 2, these references to Spencer and Gillen and the prominence he gave to ‘totem stones’ and tjurungas served to relate the objects he was offering to the prominent debates about the origins and dynamics of totemism published in the anthropological literature of the day. It was a way of enhancing both their intellectual and commercial value.

Curators such as Anatole von Hügel offered a somewhat contradictory response to such offers. At one level he did not seek to influence what Hillier collected on his behalf. For example, he wrote to Hillier:

I think I told you how deficient we are in any series of Australian manufactures which means we will be very grateful practically for anything and everything...97

However in other correspondence von Hügel carefully described some of the specific types of objects he wanted for the Cambridge Museum. He wrote:

We shall be glad to obtain ... any [Aranda] charms, totem stones, bull-roarers (especially carved examples), ornaments, stone implements (hafted and unhafted), spearthrowers, clubs, boomerangs (old examples), shields, bowls and etc ... The museum is poor in personal male and female ornaments.98

Such a detailed request suggests that von Hügel held preconceived notions about the type of objects he was interested in acquiring. For example after receiving from Hillier a list of the objects he was sending, von Hügel added further types of objects which he wanted to obtain:

96 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 2/6/1908, CUMAA Archives.
97 Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 19/3/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
98 Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 28/7/1908, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
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In your list I do not notice any stone implements or message sticks, and only comparatively few personal ornaments. Very likely they may not be procurable among your people. How about necklaces of animal's teeth, tools for carving, (set with stone chips or kangaroo teeth). .... Would it be possible to obtain a skull showing the mutilation of the incisor teeth? Skulls - any skulls would be acceptable. Any surgical (initiation) knives or instruments? Charms? 99

Von Hügel was also explicit in not wanting any 'recently made things or things showing European influence'. This was one of the strongest concerns mentioned by him. For example when he received the collection, von Hügel was to some extent disappointed by the number of wooden churingas as opposed to stone ones. He wrote:

The objects are very interesting and useful to us, but I am sorry that so many of the churingas are of such recent manufacture, for though from the pictorial point of view they are interesting, from the collectors point of view they are of considerably less value than really old specimens which have been in use. We should indeed have been more pleased with a smaller number of examples if they were old specimens, than the large array of recently fashioned ones. But please understand that we are most grateful for the trouble you have taken and the collection enriched by the careful catalogue you have sent is a most interesting addition to the museum.100

Von Hügel's desire here for 'really old' objects arose from the salvage paradigm which underlay much of British anthropology at that time. As discussed in Chapter 2, this evolutionary notion held that the culture of Europeans was more developed than the culture of non-European peoples, and that European colonial expansion inevitably led to the destruction of the culture of non-European peoples. The goal of anthropology then was to collect, or salvage, information and objects relating to pre-contact times. Such objects were seen to be more anthropologically authentic, and therefore of more interest and value to anthropological museums. Von Hügel's desire for

99 Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 11/1/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
100 Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 3/11/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
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‘old’ objects may also have been a response to the circulation of fake ethnographic material within Britain at that time (Gathercole 1978).

Von Hügel also requested ‘photographic portraits of the natives ... [which] ... show characteristics of men and women and different ages - such as scars, tooth mutilations’\textsuperscript{101} as well as images to ‘show the objects you are shipping us, in actual use!’\textsuperscript{102} Unfortunately Hillier was not able to supply such images.

Photography, I regret to say, is too expensive a hobby for me to take up and so I fear I shall [not] be able to send you any photographs of our natives - unless I can obtain some taken by other people here.\textsuperscript{103}

From his letters to curators, there is no doubt that Hillier had a knowledge of the prominence of Aranda culture in the anthropological literature of the time. This is demonstrated in the extensive comments he made to von Hügel about the relative veracity of the work of Gillen, Spencer and Strehlow.

With regard to your post-script concerning Mr Strehlow ... being a better linguist and observer than Spencer and Gillen were - There is no doubt about the Missionary being an excellent linguist. We all here have had to learn to speak the Aranda language and therefore I can say (also) from my personal knowledge of Aranda that Gillen knew very little of the language himself. He certainly has a few words in his books, mostly names you will observe, which he could obtain by asking the blacks in that abominable pidgin English which he in common with most whites use to the natives. Many of these names are quite wrong and if we ask the natives what such and such a word of Gillen’s means they cannot guess it always sometimes they can however. \textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{101} Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 28/7/1908, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
\textsuperscript{102} Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 11/1/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
\textsuperscript{103} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 23/9/1908, CUMAA Archives.
\textsuperscript{104} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.
Hillier’s professed knowledge of the Aranda language, even though provided in the context of defending Strehlow and criticising Gillen, led von Hügel to again suggest that Hillier publish something of his own. He wrote:

All you say about Spencer and Gillen is very interesting and explains much. You should write out at length all you know about the natives and submit it to the Anthropological Institute for publication in their journal or in ‘Man’ (their other publication). I should if you like be glad to edit the ms - see it through the press for you.\(^{105}\)

Von Hügel’s offer was an opportunity for Hillier to engage with the discipline. I interpret Hillier’s decline to publish such an account as a refusal to engage with the anthropological community in such a direct and public way. Such a response, one which contrasted with his interaction with natural history curators, where he frequently asked for information, and their ‘scientific’ response to the material he was sending, requires explanation. In order to understand it we need to examine a number of contextual factors which were at play in Hillier’s engagement with anthropological objects at Hermannsburg.

It is necessary to place Hillier’s anthropological collecting within the context of his earlier involvement with the collection of natural history material. That is, Hillier’s contribution to British museums’ holdings of Aboriginal material came at least six years after his correspondence with and provision of natural history specimens to various departments of the BM(NH).

At both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, Hillier’s supervisors were actively engaged in anthropological research. At Killalpaninna the missionary Johann Reuther collected anthropological material and was compiling his (still unpublished) thirteen volume work on the ethnography of the Dieri people. In the case of Hermannsburg, Hillier’s supervisor, the missionary Carl Strehlow, was writing extensively about the Aranda in German. In the company of such serious researchers, and given Hillier’s junior status to both these missionaries, I suggest that Hillier probably did not feel free, perhaps even felt intimidated.

\(^{105}\) Letter from A. von Hügel to H.J. Hillier 3/11/1909, von Hügel Letterbooks CUMAA Archives.
to pursue anthropological research. The territorial nature of anthropological research at the time would have exacerbated the situation. Soon after his arrival at Hermannsburg, Hillier implied this when he responded to von Hügel’s invitation to write some anthropological notes for publication by the Anthropological Institute, by stating:

all I know of the tribe is from working with Revd J.G. Reuther, the head missionary and I would not care to encroach on his work.\textsuperscript{106}

An additional factor at Hermannsburg was the professional and personal animosity which existed between Strehlow and Baldwin Spencer during the period Hillier worked there (Mulvaney & Calaby 1985:391-5). It appears that Strehlow and Spencer never met, but this tension was played out in the anthropological literature and government policy of the period. John Mulvaney, Spencer’s biographer, has speculated that:

They possibly drew mental caricatures of each other, Spencer visualizing a narrow-minded bigot who obliterated native religious life, while Strehlow must have seen Spencer as a dangerous athiestical scientist set on obstructing Christian teaching (1985:125).

In 1899 Spencer and Gillen had published their ground breaking work on the Aranda people (1899a). This work, published in English, was the seminal theoretical anthropological work of the time done in Australia and became highly influential, particularly within the Anglo-anthropological world. Strehlow, who had lived at the mission since 1894, began publishing his own account, in Germany, of the Aranda and Loritja people in 1907. His account contrasted with the evolutionary accounts of Spencer and Gillen, and resulted in a personal and intellectual clash between Strehlow and Spencer.

Hillier was caught literally in the middle of this, as is occasionally reflected in his correspondence with von Hügel. For example in a letter to von Hügel he wrote at length about the published criticism of Strehlow’s anthropological work. In defence of Strehlow he wrote:

\textsuperscript{106} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 26/2/1906, CUMAA Archives.
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In some other criticism [in Man] I saw the writer says that Mr Strehlow’s informants are dressed in clothing which shows that they are more or less civilized while Gillen’s photos show most of the natives in their natural state. This is easily explained when one knows that Alice Springs where Gillen was is a little bush township and consequently all the natives wear some sort of ragged clothes and that they took these off to be photographed possibly, but they generally do take off their rags at a corroboree.

Mr Strehlow knows about four thousand words in Aranda alone and is a good classical scholar as well and Gillen knows very few, some of these wrong and no one could call him a scholar I suppose.  

At one point he wrote baldly that ‘Some of [Gillen’s] notes as given in the Report of the Horn expedition on Anthropology are far from correct.’ He continued:

Gillen was here once not while I was here but I have heard of his visit and as reported to me he used to ask the natives in this way. “What name you call'em this one” or “Suppose him go along Duaapara place (native word meaning a certain ceremony) what him make” or such like “bad language”. I don’t think he knew more of the Aranda language than this.

Professor Spencer being a trained ethnologist would naturally be a better observer than Mr Strehlow in many ways, but would still be at a great disadvantage in not being able to speak Aranda. … Of course Spencer and Gillen’s accounts of the circumcision and subincision ceremonies will stand good as Mr Strehlow being a missionary does not countenance or go to see such and cannot speak as an eyewitness, on the other hand as these all the ceremonies are performed at night Gillen must have had them re-enacted in daylight to get the photographs.  

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107 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.  
108 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.  
109 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.  
110 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.
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Thus Hillier did engage in the anthropological debates to the extent of commenting on the relative veracity of the work of Spencer and Gillen and Strehlow. However, he did not offer his own views on Aboriginal society or engage with museum curators in the same way that he did with the natural history material. The way in which his mother took over the sale of his ethnographic collections in Britain also supports the view that he withdrew from the anthropological community. In such a highly charged intellectual environment, I suggest that Hillier was only prepared to supply ethnographic objects to museums as a commercial transaction. That is, he was not interested in an intellectual engagement with ethnographic curators and potentially becoming implicated in these conflicts. This was in contrast to his interests in natural history collecting.

Thirdly, nationalistic competition between Britain and Germany was manifesting in a number of ways which affected Hillier. At Hermannsburg, Hillier was an Englishman working under Strehlow, a German, on what was perceived to be a German mission. The conflict between Strehlow and Spencer had nationalistic overtones, which were informed by larger world events which ultimately culminated in World War 1. There was also nationalistic competition between British and other museums, particularly in the acquisition of objects. As I described previously, German museums were the focus of this competition. Hillier found himself in a difficult situation: he had personal loyalties to Strehlow as a friend and colleague, but he had national loyalties to Britain. Despite his support for Strehlow, Hillier’s observation that ethnographic objects were being sent to German museums was one of the reasons he stated for sending material to British museums. He wrote to von Hügel:

A German gentleman in this district has been supplying the Frankfurt (am Main) Museum authorities and has sent them large quantities of fine specimens of totem stones, ornaments etc and they renumerate him handsomely for them and it seems a great pity that some of our English Museums should not have the chance to
obtain specimens of these things too, as they will certainly be quite unprocurable in a few year's time.\textsuperscript{111}

Similarly, in a letter to von Hügel, his mother wrote of Hillier:

He is glad for me to dispose of the articles to English, or at least British Museums
... [in preference to] ... foreign ones.\textsuperscript{112}

**Interpreting Hillier's correspondence**

The relationship between Hillier and his English-based museum correspondents is similar to those which the literature exploring the development of colonial science has grappled with. At many levels work focusing on the formation of science helps in understanding the collection of both natural history and anthropological objects, since anthropology at the turn of the century was very much seen by those involved as a ‘scientific’ endeavour. Much literature has developed from George Basalla’s early attempt to model the formation of scientific practice in its colonial context (1967), in which he described the relationship between science at the edges and centre of empire. His model, when applied to Australian-based collectors at the end of the nineteenth century, describes them as subserviently providing the raw data for the scientific authority (museum) located at the centre, which would then provide the interpretation and explanatory frameworks for the collected material. As discussed in Chapter 2, a major criticism of Basalla’s model has been that such a model by casting the colonial collector as being in an harmonious, but subservient, relationship with the metropolitan museum, with the collector being satisfied in the knowledge of contributing to the assembly of the colonial taxonomic inventory (Inkster 1985; MacLeod 1987), denies the agency of the collector.

\textsuperscript{111} Letter from H.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 2/6/1908, CUMAA Archives. Hillier’s description here of a ‘German gentleman’ was a discrete reference to Strehlow.
\textsuperscript{112} Letter from S.J. Hillier to A. von Hügel 11/10/1909, von Hügel Correspondence CUMAA Archives.
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Indeed when a particular relationship is examined, such as that existing between Hillier and British curators, it is revealed as a complex negotiated relationship involving the exchange of objects and ideas, with obligations on both sides. In order for such a relationship to continue both participants needed to fulfil expectations of the other. In the case of Hillier, his correspondence with museum curators additionally shows that this relationship was far more complex, changing over time as he became frustrated at the response (or lack there of) that he received from various curators. Hillier’s discomfort at having new species named in his honour also challenges the behaviours predicted by Basalla’s model (1967:614).

Previous interpretations of Hillier’s collecting, based on a more limited range of historical sources, have implicitly adopted a similar model to Basalla’s in suggesting that his collecting occurred only after meetings with scientific visitors to Killalpaninna. For example, Glynn Barratt, in his description of Jaschenko’s meeting with Hillier at Killalpaninna after July 1903, suggested that:

The Russian’s visit to Killalpaninna, moreover, certainly stretched Hillyer’s [sic] scientific horizon, arousing interests in entomology and in ethnography alike. Within a few months of that visit, at all events, the Englishman was corresponding with half a dozen foreign anthropologists about the Dieri and Aranda, and had donated a significant collection of artefacts from the Hermannsburg area to Cambridge University’s Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (1995).

However a more detailed investigation of Hillier’s life and his extensive correspondence reveals that it would be incorrect to think that it was only through his correspondence with museums and the occasional visit of a scientist to Killalpaninna, that Hillier acquired any scientific knowledge. Although Hillier’s poor health had not allowed him to complete his schooling, his letters make clear that before he began corresponding with museums in 1902 he had a technical knowledge of natural history, including methods of specimen preparation. For example he wrote to Thomas:
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The mode of skinning described in your directions is almost precisely the same as that which is familiar to me and which method was also advocated by Waterton if I am not mistaken.\(^{113}\)

It is also clear that in addition to his correspondence with curators, Hillier engaged with the scientific world through reading scientific papers and books in natural history and anthropology. At different times in his letters to curators, he refers to having read *Man*, the Reports of the Horn Expedition, and Spencer's and Gillen's publications. From his father, who was involved in the Royal Society of Antiquities, he gained a knowledge of archaeological issues such as stone tool classification. For Hillier, corresponding with curators in British natural history and anthropological museums provided another opportunity to engage with the scientific world, although in the case of anthropology this was not an option he took up. It was also a way of overcoming the isolation of life in central Australia. As one of the few English-born residents at Killalpaninna and at Hermannsburg, Hillier's isolation was both geographical and cultural.

Comparing Clement and Hillier's relationships with curators

There are a number of major differences evident in the correspondence that Clement and Hillier each had with museum staff. Firstly, the majority of Hillier's letters are written from Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, from the place he was collecting. This contrasts with Clement's letters, the bulk of which were written from England, after he had returned from each of his three trips to Australia. Collectors had a very different sort of relationship with curators, depending on whether they were still in the field. This location, field or Britain, had obvious impacts on the ability of museum staff to provide advice, and attempt to guide collecting practices. In the non-field relationships, there was less opportunity for there to be a negotiated relationship; that is there was less opportunity for toing and froing. The relationship became more of a financial transaction.

\(^{113}\) Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 6/1/1902, BM(NH) Archives DF232/8 Oldfield Thomas Correspondence 1902-149. At this time Charles Waterton was a recognised authority on the preparation of natural history specimens (1838).
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Secondly, within Hillier’s correspondence there is a major difference between his relationship with natural history curators and his relationship with anthropological curators. His natural history correspondence represents an open engagement with curators, as he sought to engage with scientific discourse and practice. His engagement with anthropological curators was more problematic. Whilst at one level he displayed interest in, and an awareness of, the anthropological work of Strehlow, Spencer and Gillen, he also displayed a reluctance to personally contribute to anthropological discourses, for example via the opportunities offered by von Hügel. The entrance of Hillier’s mother into his relationships with curators further clouds the image, as she appears to have been much more concerned with commercialising his collecting than an interest in anthropology.

Overall, Clement’s relationships with curators were much more about legitimating the value of his collections, whereas Hillier’s correspondence was much more about exchanging specimens for knowledge and equipment as part of an involvement in a scientific community. Much more of an exchange relationship, where the receipt by the museum of his specimens carried obligations on the part of the museum to continue to engage with him about the material.

The lives and correspondence of Hillier and Clement clearly demonstrate the complexity of collectors’ engagements with museums and curators. They also demonstrate the inability of models based on collector categories to accommodate the richness of these engagements. Such models also fail to incorporate the influence of the place of collection on the collecting process. In the following chapter, using the examples of the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg Mission stations in central Australia, I explore how the place of collection, both in terms of its historical and cultural context impinges on an understanding of the collection of anthropological and natural history objects.
Chapter 8 – Complexities at the place of collection

In the preceding chapters I have considered the influence of the relationship between collector and museum on the collection of objects. In this chapter, the third and final sondage, I move to consider the influence of the place of collection on the act of collecting. In order to do this I look in detail at two Australian locations, Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, where the involvement of European and Aboriginal people in the collection of ethnographic and natural history objects has been documented. I sketch the complex social relations which existed between Aboriginal people and Europeans at each of these places, and the way in which the collection of such objects was embedded within such relationships.

These places were more than just the locations where H.J. Hillier collected; both the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg missions have an important place in the history of Aboriginal-European relations and in the history of anthropology in Australia.

Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg mission stations

Killalpaninna was the first mission established in inland South Australia, in 1867 (Figure 8.1). It was established in the country of the Diyari and Wankangurru Aboriginal people, east of Lake Eyre, and the accounts of Diyari Aboriginal society, which mission staff and their correspondents recorded
Figure 8.1: Location of the Killalpaninna, Kopperamanna and ‘santuary’.
(Horne and Aiston 1924)
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during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were valuable to the emerging discipline of anthropology (Stevens 1994:203). Examples of this are J.G. Reuther’s thirteen volumes of detailed cultural descriptions (1981), and the work of the missionary Otto Siebert, who both alone (1910) and through his collaborations with A.W. Howitt (1902;1904) produced important accounts of Diyari stories and ceremonies. A number of different collections were made at Killalpaninna, some of these collections have gone on to have an important role in the development of Australian anthropology. For example, the small sculptures known as toas, collected by Killalpaninna missionary J.G. Reuther,1 have become a focus for recent academic debate about issues of authenticity (Jones & Sutton 1986; Taylor 1988) and the operation of Aboriginal art systems (Morphy 1977).

The Hermannsburg mission, first established 130 kilometres west of Alice Springs in 1875 (Figure 8.2), was one of the foci for the production of European knowledge about the Aranda people and their culture. It was where the missionary Carl Strehlow wrote his seminal work on Aranda and Loritja society (1907; 1908; 1910; 1911; 1913; 1915; 1920). Together with the work of Spencer and Gillen (1899a; 1904), Strehlow’s writings on material culture and religion informed debate – particularly in Germany – about the nature of Aranda society. International debates about the origins and meaning of totemism also drew substantially on his work (Hiatt 1996). By this means aspects of the culture of the Aranda people became representative of all Australian Aboriginal culture. Hence the adoption of Spencer’s and Gillen’s description of the Aranda ‘Dreamtime’ to explain all Aboriginal religion – a concept still much debated (Morphy 1996; Wolfe 1991; 1999). As I discussed in Chapter 2, these debates also fostered a demand by British museums and private collectors for tjurungas, the artefacts most closely linked with totemism. As I described in Chapter 5, H.J. Hillier collected ethnographic and natural history artefacts while working as a teacher at each of these two inland Lutheran mission stations.

1Although Philip Jones has hinted that Hillier may have had a role in the production of the toas (Jones 1992:138), I have not found any evidence for this.
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The Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg mission stations were both established with the support of German-based Lutheran mission societies. The purpose of these societies or seminaries was to train people to assist in the evangelical work of the Lutheran Church throughout the world. They were linked to the revival of pietism within Protestant churches throughout Europe and Britain in the late eighteenth century, and a perception of the ‘need’ of the heathen populations in many European colonies to be converted to Christianity (Pech 1994:14). In Germany these seminaries had been established in the early nineteenth century, and by 1910, Lutheran mission societies were supporting nearly 4000 mission stations throughout the world (Tampke 1995:54). The background and training of the mission staff was an important influence on the way in which the missions were run.

Both the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg missions initially drew on the support of the Hermannsburg Mission Society (HMS), with later support being provided by the Neuendettelsauer Mission Society (NMS). Despite both being associated with the Lutheran Church, each of these societies had a different orientation. The HMS initially focused on providing staff specifically for overseas missions which were directed at converting the ‘heathens’, as distinct from providing ordained pastors for overseas churches. By contrast, the principal focus of the NMS was on training people for work within the established church, with the supply of staff for mission stations only a subsidiary purpose (Pech 1994:25-26).

The HMS trained both missionaries and ‘kolonists’. The mission stations aimed to produce an income through raising stock and growing crops (Hartwig 1965). Missionaries were trained to be responsible for the spiritual component of a mission. The ‘kolonists’, suitable Christian men, were trained to establish the station as a self-sufficient enterprise and be responsible for its

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2 Similar British-based mission societies active at this time included the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Church Mission Society and the London Mission Society. Hillier’s proposal to seek employment after leaving Killalpaninna ‘in some Mission Society, preferably the SPG or CM Society’ suggests that the work of these organisations was similar to that undertaken by the Lutheran mission societies. (Letter from H.J. Hillier to L. Kaibel 3/1/1905, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide).
day-to-day running, while also as assisting the missionaries with minor church duties (Tampke 1995:56). In practice the distinction between the two roles sometimes became blurred. For example, after 1894 Hermann Vogelsang, an HMS trained ‘kolonist’ regularly led services at Kopperamanna, a major outstation on the Killalpaninna mission (Stevens 1994:137).

The ambiguities regarding the different duties and responsibilities of the missionaries and the ‘kolonists’ occasionally resulted in conflict at the mission stations, with the ‘kolonists’ pushing for the missionaries to be more involved with the economic affairs of the stations (Stevens 1994:65; Tampke 1995:61). This highlights a tension in the driving force of the missions between their need for financial viability and their ultimate evangelical purpose. As I discuss later in this chapter, such ambiguity about the direction of the mission – spiritual or economic – also had repercussions for the relations with other European settlers in the vicinity of the mission.

It was HMS policy that missionaries should be married as soon as possible and live with their families on the mission. In many cases marriages for the missionaries and kolonists were facilitated by the HMS sending suitable Lutheran women out from Germany. These marriages were intended to act as a demonstration of a Christian lifestyle to the indigenous people at the mission. Although not accorded the same importance as male missionaries in the historical records of the mission stations, such women were crucial to mission activities, their responsibilities extending to teaching domestic skills to the Aboriginal women. This was a feature common to many Protestant missions at that time, with European women considered to have more of an affinity with indigenous women than the male missionaries. Drawing on her research of missions in Africa, Deborah Kirkwood has noted:

It seemed important to missionaries ... that indigenous women should be taught traditional Western domestic skills, including cooking, sewing and laundry and this was another task that it was thought could best be undertaken by missionary women (Kirkwood 1993:27).
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She also noted that as well as teaching indigenous women such ‘productive’ skills, contact with missionary women was also considered to enhance the success of converting them to Christianity (Kirkwood 1993:27).

The German-trained missionaries sent out to Australia generally had had no prior experience of missionary work. The HMS focused on selecting men from peasant and artisan backgrounds; the first missionaries at Hermannsburg, A.H. Kempe and W.F. Schwarz, were a blacksmith and a baker respectively (Tampke 1995:55). This meant that the HMS missionaries generally had no formal education in scientific subjects such as natural history or anthropology.

The techniques used to convert the Aboriginal people to Christianity at both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg were broadly similar. These were to establish a self-sustaining community, which would provide the Aboriginal people with an example of the spiritual and material benefits of converting to a Christian lifestyle. The emphasis was on bringing Aboriginal people into the mission community, rather than the missionary living as a part of the Aboriginal community. Despite changes in the mission society sponsoring each mission station, these techniques remained substantially unchanged. Differences between the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg mission staffs’ attitude towards Aboriginal people was more the product of differences between individual missionaries, rather than the influence of the missionary societies.

From the missionaries’ perspective there were two separate tasks regarding the Aboriginal people who lived near the mission stations; firstly to attract them to the station, and then to keep them as part of the mission community, thus preventing them from being re-exposed to ‘pagan’ Aboriginal beliefs (Hartwig 1965:502-3).

The harsh environmental conditions experienced at both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg meant that fluctuations in weather, such as prolonged drought, had a major and variable effect on the activities of the mission. It particularly affected their relationship with the local Aboriginal community, as one of the
Chapter 8 – Complexities at the place of collection

principal methods used to attract Aboriginal people to the mission stations was through the distribution of government rations. These rations consisted of goods such as flour, sugar, tea, tobacco, axes, tomahawks and clothing. In times of drought, Aboriginal people made greater use of such rations, as there was less food available from other sources. This situation was exacerbated by the detrimental impact of introduced fauna such as rabbits and cattle on the availability of traditional foods.\(^3\)

Although mission staff used rations to attract Aboriginal people to the mission stations, on a number of occasions missionaries at Killalpaninna discontinued distributing rations to Diyari people during periods of extended drought, in order to maintain supplies for the mission’s European staff. There are many complexities involved in the distribution of rations (Rowse 1998), and I will discuss some of these later in relation to Killalpaninna acting as a place of exchange between Aboriginal people and the missionaries.

The two missions operated under a complex system of administration, with much of the responsibility for the management of each mission lying with the Missionary Committee based in Bethany, Adelaide, whilst responsibility for training and appointing senior staff was held by the mission societies in Germany (Stevens 1994:72). The effects of this long line of authority were exacerbated by the requirement that almost every decision regarding the day-to-day station activities had to be referred back to the Mission Committee. This structure of authority has been identified as one of the major elements in the ‘failure’ of the missions (Radford 1992:69). In many cases, particularly issues relating to staffing, the Committee referred authority back to the Mission Society in Germany (eg L. Kaibel to H.J. Hillier 10/6/1909). Chris Anderson

\(^3\) For example in the 1920s, Pat Byrne described to W.B. Spencer the changes to the country around the Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station. He wrote:

> During the years since you last saw it, there have been many changes in this country. The rabbits have supplanted the marsupials, and the indigenous plants are gradually giving way to injurious kinds of herbage. (P. Byrne to W.B. Spencer 25/7/19217 [sic]. Pitt Rivers Museum Archives).

\(^4\) An incidental outcome of this hierarchical administrative structure has been the creation of a detailed archival record of the operation of the missions.
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has also identified this feature as a major factor in the failure of a similar Lutheran mission at Bloomfield River, in Queensland (1988:326).

Both the Killalpaninna and the Hermannsburg missions were initially established in co-operation with the Hermannsburg Mission Society, and then taken over by the Immanuel Synod (IS) in collaboration with the Neuendettelsauer Mission Society. There was much contact between the two missions, with staff from Hermannsburg visiting the Killalpaninna station on the way to and from Adelaide. This contact intensified after 1894 when both missions came under the control of the IS. Despite the interaction and cross-over in staff between the two missions, both the available published histories and an analysis of Hillier’s correspondence shows that the relationship between Aboriginal people and the Europeans resident at the two Lutheran mission stations were very different. Each had different specific histories involving different Aboriginal groups, differing degrees of isolation from other European settlements, different personnel and different histories of relations with surrounding European settlers.

Killalpaninna mission station

The Lutheran Church in South Australia had existed as two independent synods, which by the 1860s had evolved into the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia (ELSA) and the Immanuel Synod (IS). In 1866 these two synods came together to establish an inland mission, leading to a group consisting of missionaries Johann F. Goessling, Ernst Homann and colonist Hermann H. Vogelsang setting out from Tanunda for Cooper’s Creek in October 1866. Independently, a party of Moravian missionaries had left Adelaide in July 1866 to establish a mission in the same area. Both parties sought to establish a mission in a place where Aboriginal people were known to congregate. At that time the Cooper’s Creek region had gained public prominence as the location where the Bourke and Wills Expedition ended tragically in 1861, and through

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5 The three major sources I have drawn upon for this account of the Killalpaninna mission are the works of (Jones & Sutton 1986; Scherer 1966; and Stevens 1994).
the rescue and recovery expeditions, one of which was led there by A.W. Howitt in the early 1860s.

The Lutherans had intended to establish a mission at Lake Hope, however they received advice on-route from Sub-Protector Butfield, that a much larger number of Aboriginal people lived at Lake Kopperamanna. The Moravians, who had earlier arrived at Lake Hope, were also planning to move to Kopperamanna. After meeting at Lake Hope, the Lutherans and Moravians agreed that the Moravians would establish a mission at Kopperamanna, while the Lutherans would settle nearby, some ten miles east at Lake Killalpaninna.

At this time there was open conflict between the Aboriginal people and the European pastoralists in the area. It may be that to Aboriginal people in the region, the arrival of the missionaries with their flocks of sheep, wagons and plans for staying, did not initially appear to be any different from their prior experience of European practices of taking their land. An 1867 report by the district Sub-Protector noted:

These children of the desert fear further encroachments upon their territory. They are jealous for their heritage, and cannot distinguish between the motives of the Missionaries and those of ordinary settlers.

Upon their arrival, the missionaries became embroiled in the conflict between Aborigines and settlers, and felt themselves to be endangered. The missionary J.F. Goessling described the arrival of mounted policeman from the nearby Lake Hope as saving them from being attacked by Aboriginal people (quoted in Stevens 1994:53-54).

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4One of the attractions of Lake Hope was the presence of a police station there, the officer in charge being Samuel Gason, who later published an account of the Diyari people in the area (Gason 1874).

5The Moravians soon abandoned their attempt to establish a mission in the region.

6Stevens highlights how the missionaries' rejection of sexual relations with Aboriginal women further alienated them from Diyari people (Stevens 1994:52-3).

7From Sub-Protector Butfield’s Report 10 May 1867; quoted in (Stevens 1994:56).
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The combination of perceived and real threats of conflict with the Diyari people, and the missionaries’ lack of preparation for the harsh climatic conditions they encountered, lead to their first attempt at the establishment of a mission station lasting only five months. In May 1867 the two missionary parties retreated to Bucaltaninna pastoral station, some 50 kilometres south of Killalpaninna.

A second attempt at establishing the mission at Killalpaninna was made at the beginning of 1868. This involved a more sustained attempt at setting up a community at Lake Killalpaninna, consisting of the missionary E. Homann, the kolonists H. Vogelsang, E. Jacob, and W. Koch, their newly arrived wives, children and a domestic servant (Stevens 1994:60). However by the end of 1871, as a result of extended drought, the missionaries again abandoned Killalpaninna and moved 160 kilometres southwest to Mundowdna station. In 1873, in another attempt to establish a mission station, the party moved north to Lake Tankamarinna, some 50 kilometres south of Killalpaninna. A change in ownership of this area led the party to move back to the now abandoned Bucaltaninna station, where they were to stay for five years.

In 1873 the continual difficulties with establishing and maintaining a mission station in such a harsh climate led to ELSA withdrawing from the joint administration of the mission. Instead ELSA decided to focus on establishing what was to become the Hermannsburg mission on the Finke River, west of Alice Springs. The ending of the partnership between ELSA and the IS involved ELSA moving two thirds of the Killalpaninna stock north to Hermannsburg. This change in the management of Killalpaninna was also associated with a change in the source of the missionaries, with staff after 1873 being provided by the NMS. Despite the changes in administration, and pressure from Adelaide to abandon the mission, the kolonists Vogelsang and Jacob continued to run the Killalpaninna station.

It was not until 1878, under the patronage of the IS, that the missionaries left Bucaltaninna and returned to re-establish a mission at Lake Killalpaninna. With this move the mission achieved a degree of stability, with the station
continuing to operate as a Lutheran mission until 1914. Throughout the 1880s the station continued to grow, both as an evangelical centre and as an economic enterprise. By the time of Hillier’s arrival in the 1890s, extensive rain in southwest Queensland had filled Lake Killalpaninna, and under the direction of the missionary J.G. Reuther the mission had developed into a thriving community. By 1899, there were approximately 200 Aboriginal people on the mission (Reuther 1899:55). By this time the mission consisted of the main station at Killalpaninna and outstations at Kopperamanna (maintained by the Vogelsangs) and Etadunna (where the Jacobs lived from 1878-1890) and Blazes Well. Kopperamanna was also important as a major well on the overland route used to transport stock between Queensland to South Australia. The levy charged by the mission to water stock at the Kopperamanna bore became an important source of income for the station.

As well as being an evangelical and economic centre, during the 1900s the mission hosted a number of international scientific visitors. These were the German ethnographer Erhard Eylmann in 1900 (Courto 1991; Courto 1996; Eymann 1908), the Melbourne University professor of geology J.W. Gregory during 1901-1902 (1906), and the Russian ornithologist and naturalist Alexander Iashchenko in 1903 (Solov’ev & Vorontsova 1959). Such visits affirmed the importance of the mission as a location for natural history and ethnographic collecting. Gregory’s account of his visit to Killalpaninna gives an impression of the mission station at that time. He wrote:

The Lutheran mission station of Killalpaninna, on the northern edge of the Cooper Creek timber, is a veritable oasis in the wilderness. It stands on a high sand dune, surrounded on three sides by a lake, shaped like a horse-shoe, once no doubt a bend of the Cooper. The lake, unlike most of the so-called lakes in this country, actually contains some water, or at least some brine. When full, the lake water is fresh, and photographs taken of the mission at such periods show that the situation then is quite picturesque. But at the time of our visit the hills were bleak, bare sand-dunes, and most of the lake had been replaced by a dry clay-flat; so their was little in the scenery to distract attention from the mission and its work. (1906:59-60).
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The staff of the mission consists of two missionaries, Herr Reuther and Herr Siebert, and three assistants, who manage the stock and out stations. The natives on the mission lands number about two hundred, and a more contented and prosperous black population it would be difficult to find. (1906:60).

After Reuther left in 1906, the mission began to fall into decline. Firstly, his replacement, Wolfgang Reidel, was not appointed until 1908. Reidel was a reluctant appointee to the position, and instituted a much stricter style of administration at the mission, contrasting with the rapport which Reuther had established with Aboriginal people and other mission staff. The mission was also was hit by devastating drought. In 1915 the Lutheran church sold the station to Johannes Bogner, who had worked at the station for many years, and Johannes Jaensch, a German farmer. Although they attempted to carry on the work of the mission, their efforts were hit hard by the South Australian government closure of all Lutheran schools in 1917, a result of anti-German feelings during World War One. In 1918 the station was sold to non-Lutherans. Aboriginal people continued to camp at Kopperamanna after the closure of the mission, however by 1920 most of the Aboriginal people living there had moved away, many to camps outside Maree.

Aboriginal life at the Killalpaninna mission

Reuther’s evidence to an 1899 South Australian parliamentary committee, gives an impression of the daily lives of those Diyari and other Aboriginal people living closest to the Killalpaninna mission. He stated:

We keep the children separate, the girls being in one house and the boys in the other, like they would be in an institute. They are under the protection of one missionary when they are in their apartments. They have to rise at a certain time in the morning to learn cooking, prepare themselves for school, and to do any handy work that will prove useful to them. The mission also appoints one English teacher to teach them writing, reading, arithmetic, singing, history, &c (Reuther 1899:53).
The married couples have their own cottages, each of which consists of two rooms. The natives are washed and combed in a way they never experienced in their natural life. The lubras are cooking their meals, mending their clothes, as you will see in the picture, baking their bread, and looking after their children &c. The husband is employed in station work, just in the way that his ability or talent suits him. The old, sick and infirm aborigines, who are mostly unable to do anything, are kept on the station to enjoy a human life in their old age. (Reuther 1899:53).

From this and other accounts of the mission during the 1890s, it appears that there were a number of different ways in which Aboriginal people lived at, and around, the mission. Some Diyari people, mostly children, lived with mission staff in dormitory style accommodation. A further group of people lived more traditionally around the edge of the settlement, this often included the parents of the children in the school. Other groups lived further away from the settlement. The complexity of the relationships between each of these different groups is indicated in an account of the way in which Ben Murray, a man of Diyari descent who worked at the mission, interacted with these peripheral groups. Austin et al describe how:

In the case of the red ochre trade, Ben (Murray) was dealing with the “wurley natives” who lived outside Killalpaninna as a result of a firm decision not to “come in” to the mission for their fortnightly rations. Ben spoke disparagingly of this shifting, independent group which was mostly composed of older people from a variety of language groups, but he was nonetheless related to several of them and would have had specific obligations towards these individuals at least (1988:141).

Such patterning was a feature of indigenous responses to mission settlements beyond Killalpaninna. For example in an innovative study of the archaeological material within, and surrounding, the Manga-Manda Reserve in the Northern Territory, Patricia Davison has identified complex spatial and social relationships between the reserve’s formal spaces such as dormitories, and the bush camps of the different Aboriginal groups surrounding the reserve (1985).
Figure 8.3: Plan of Killalpannina Mission. (Stevens, 1994)
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Reuther’s evidence to the committee also refers to European goods being traded between different Aboriginal groups. The Committee asked:

[Committee] Do the blacks, as a rule, keep the [government provided] blankets?

[Reuther] They exchange them sometimes for other things.

[Committee] Do they sell them and give them away?

[Reuther-] Yes; mostly for weapons.

(Reuther 1899:55).

The existence of such trade demonstrates how the different groups at and around the mission were able to draw on the resources provided by the mission. It hints at the complex exchange relationships in which Aboriginal residents of the mission were embedded. A further complexity to life at the mission arises from the effects of crucial changes to Aboriginal society that were occurring beyond the mission. As Luise Hercus has written how in 1900-1901 there was a final exodus of Wangkangurru people out of the Simpson Desert, joining Aboriginal people in areas under the influence of European settlers (Hercus & Koch 1996:133). A result of this movement was:

a kind of cultural revival in the Lake Eyre Basin. The presence of newcomers who were still so actively singing their own songs led to a new burst of activity in oral traditions: people made songs in their contemporary surroundings. A whole lengthy song cycle was composed in this semi-traditional environment ... it was considered new and exciting and was loved as being communal to all the groups of the eastern Lake Eyre Basin. Parts were in Wangkangurru, parts in Diyari.

(Hercus & Koch 1996:133)

Such internal dynamics within Aboriginal groups at the time of the mission are readily apparent to historians relying on textual sources.

This description of new hybrid cultural forms being developed within the Lake region also has tantalising implications for an alternative explanation for the origin of the toas.
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Hermannsburg mission station

Up to the time of Hillier’s arrival at Hermannsburg in 1906 there had been two periods of missionary occupation of the station. The original Hermannsburg lease was granted to ELSA in 1875, after their withdrawal from the Killalpaninna mission station. The first Hermannsburg Mission Society missionaries, A.H. Kempe and W.F. Schwarz, reached the mission in 1877 after a lengthy and arduous journey from Adelaide (Scherer 1975). They were joined a year later by another missionary, L.G. Schulze, their three German fiancées and three lay helpers. By 1883 there were twenty one European staff and dependents at Hermannsburg, which was set up to be self-sufficient, running both cattle and sheep, 3,000 of which had been brought up from the Killalpaninna mission in the 1870s.

The mission’s initial success in growing crops was halted by a drought which began in 1888 and lasted until 1894. During this period ELSA withdrew from their partnership with the HMS in Germany, which up until then had supplied missionaries.” As a result no new missionaries were sent out from Germany. Poor health and fatigue, partly a result of the drought, lead those missionaries still at Hermannsburg to gradually leave the mission. By 1894 the station had been abandoned by Europeans.

The settlement was visited by members of the Horn Scientific Expedition in mid-1894, after its abandonment by the ELSA missionaries. At this time up to one hundred Aboriginal people had been living at the mission. The members of the Horn expedition did not record favourable impressions of conditions at the Hermannsburg mission. For example E.C. Stirling wrote:

Nowhere on our journey did we see natives so dirty in their habits, so squalid in their mode of life, and so devoid of the usual cheery demeanour as at Hermannsburg (Stirling 1896:40-41).

The reason for the withdrawal of ELSA from its association with the Hermannsburg Mission Society was because of suspected unionist tendencies on the part of the HMS.
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Similarly Baldwin Spencer noted:

The mission at the time of our visit was abandoned, and the whole place more or less in ruins. A few blacks, the remnants of a larger number who were camped about the place when it was opened as a mission station, still remained, living in a squalid state in dirty whirlies (Spencer 1896:111).

As I discussed earlier in Chapter 6, the negative impressions gained by Spencer on this visit were to colour his future views of the mission staff such as Carl Strehlow, and of the legitimacy of all Lutheran mission activities.

The second period of missionary presence in the region began in 1894 with the purchase of the station by the IS. In October 1894 Carl Strehlow moved from the Killalpaninna mission to Hermannsburg. Strehlow remained at the mission for the next twenty eight years, leaving it only on three occasions, before his death in 1922.

The letters of a number of European settlers reveal that an ambivalent relationship existed between the Hermannsburg missionaries and many of the other European residents in the area. There were a number of reasons for this attitude. Firstly, many settlers were suspicious of the motives of Christian missionaries in general, and felt they were ineffectual in ‘reforming’ the Aboriginal people at the mission, and had too liberal an attitude towards them. Pat Byrne of the Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station wrote:

[the way police maintain the law] ... is not an ideal form of rule but is, perhaps, better than that of the mischief making missionary”

Another of Baldwin Spencer’s correspondents, E.C. Cowle, the mounted constable at Illamurta Springs, referred critically to humanitarianism of the mission staff. He wrote:

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\(^{19}\) Letter from P. Byrne to W.B. Spencer 25/7/1921? [sic], Pitt Rivers Museum Archive.

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I confidently expect them [the missionaries] to report me for wattling the deuce
out of two of their blacks for interfering with my protégée?? [sic]\(^{14}\)

For the local European residents it had become convenient to blame the
mission and its staff for the perceived cultural malaise of Aboriginal people in
the region. For example Pat Byrne wrote:

> All the older people have been accustomed to clothes and tobacco, and, now, the
> amount supplied to them is absurdly small. In addition our missionaries
> undermine their authority, and ridicule their traditions, we take from them
> anything that makes life worth living, work them until they can work no longer,
> and then hand them over to the Police, whose main endeavour is to work things
> as cheaply as possible, and thus please a Gov’t that has neither knowledge nor
> conscience. It is a despicable crime.\(^{15}\)

In a similar vein, Baldwin Spencer, who visited the mission in 1894, after it had
been abandoned by the HMS missionaries, dismissed the aims of the mission,
describing them as:

> attempting to teach Aborigine to read and write and quote “scriptures” which he
> cannot understand. If the money spent on this was spent in trying to teach him
> something by means of which he could gain his living it would be far better.\(^{16}\)

Secondly, settlers throughout central Australia were suspicious that the
Lutheran missions was acting as a refuge for Aboriginal people who were
spearing their cattle. Such views were clearly expressed by ‘A Special
Reporter’ in a 1917 Adelaide newspaper article. It stated:

> cattle killing by the blacks is common. The cattlemen place a lot of the blame
> upon the mission station, and it is a common saying among them that ‘where
there is any bother you will finds a mission nigger at the bottom of it.’ He gets

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\(^{14}\) Letter from E.C. Cowle to W.B. Spencer 30/5/1896, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
\(^{15}\) Letter from P. Byrne to W.B. Spencer 16/12? [sic]/1925, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
\(^{16}\) Letter from W.B. Spencer to W.E. Roth 30/1/1903, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
hold of his uncivilized brother and puts him up to all manner of tricks. I am convinced, and the opinion is general up there, that the aborigines question should be dealt with by men who understand human nature, and posses a deep, practical knowledge of the peculiarities and requirements of the blacks. 'Sentimental missionaries' are not suitable for the work. *(The Register 25 June 1917).*

On one occasion E.C. Cowle also cynically referred to the way in which Hermannsburg mission operated as a place of refuge for Aboriginal people. When writing to Baldwin Spencer about Arrabi, one of the Aboriginal men who had assisted the Horn Expedition in 1894, he wrote:

I told you I got him employment in Police at Barrow Creek ... and thought he was out of the way for a time but here he is. ... I fear parts of his anatomy will adorn someone’s shelves (saving [the] presence of missionaries)"

Thirdly, another factor in the poor relations between settlers and missionaries resulted from the focus of Lutheran missions generally, on achieving economic self sufficiency. At times this emphasis of the mission stations made it difficult for surrounding pastoralists to see them as anything other than competitors, rather than having an evangelical focus (Anderson 1988:326).

All of these three factors were enhanced by the mission staff being almost exclusively German, contrasting with the Britishness of most of the European settlers in the district. "E.C. Cowle in one of his letters to Spencer referred to this animosity. He wrote:

I think matters are smooth up the Finke as I was very polite to Mr Strehlow JP who hates the English I believe."'

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17 Letter from E.C. Cowle to W.B. Spencer 19/6/1895, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
18 This is not to suggest that all residents saw themselves as being part of a united English identity; there was much derisory discussion of F.J. Gillen's Irish Catholic heritage within E.C. Cowle's correspondence with Spencer, for example E.C. Cowle to WB Spencer 23/7/1895, Letter # 9, Pitt Rivers Museum Archive.
19 Letter from E.C. Cowle to W.B. Spencer 30/5/1896, Pitt Rivers Museum Archives.
I discussed in Chapter 7 how this xenophobic gulf between mission staff and local European settlers has also been used to explained the antipathy between Spencer and Strehlow, both scholars of Aranda culture (Mulvaney & Calaby 1985; Veit 1991). As Hillier noted, it was ironic that both Strehlow and Spencer had only partial knowledge of the culture which they studied; Spencer had no knowledge of the Arunta language, while Strehlow was unable to attend ceremonies because of what he viewed as their pagan nature.28

Mission staff and collecting

Throughout the history of both the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg mission stations, mission staff collected and published material based on the collection of different aspects of the natural and cultural landscape. By ‘landscape’ I mean the flora, the fauna, geology and the people who made up a particular place, as well as the inter-relations between these different elements, and Aboriginal understandings and accounts of the landscape.

The material produced by the mission staff at both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg included collections of anthropological and natural history objects, published accounts of Diyari and Aranda culture and central Australian botany, and biblical texts translated into Diyari and Aranda. Using the three categories of objects, language, and cultural and landscape descriptions, I will first discuss what was being collected, and then examine some of the reasons for its collection.

Objects

At both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg the collection of artefacts was undertaken by many mission staff. During the eighteen years that he worked as a missionary at Killalpaninna J.G. Reuther was a noted collector of natural history and anthropological objects, to the extent that a plan of the

28 Letter from H.J. Hillier to A von Hügel 24/7/1909, CUMAA Archives.
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Killalpaninna mission includes a separate building designated as Reuther’s museum (Jones & Sutton 1986:33). In 1907 Reuther sold his large collection of over 1300 anthropological objects and natural history material to the South Australian Museum for £400 – ten times Hillier’s annual salary as teacher at Killalpaninna (Jones & Sutton 1986:12-13). The South Australian Museum also holds material acquired by the Adelaide Museum from Ernst Homann, one of the early missionaries at Killalpaninna (Jones 1996:237), while the Frankfurt Museum holds a collection acquired from Otto Seibert, another Killalpaninna missionary (Cooper 1989).

The collection of objects also took place at Hermannsburg. A.H. Kempe and L.G. Schulze, both missionaries at Hermannsburg in the 1870s, actively collected natural history material – providing botanical specimens to Ferdinand Mueller, then Director of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens. In exchange, Mueller identified the material (Schulze 1879-80; Kempe 1881-82) and provided advice and specimens for the station’s proposed cereal crops (Short 1989). The Adelaide Museum also acquired ethnographic objects from Kempe and W.F. Schwarz, another Hermannsburg missionary (Jones 1996:237). Carl Strehlow, who had moved to Hermannsburg from the Killalpaninna mission in 1894, supplied numerous collections of Aboriginal artefacts to German museums such as Frankfurt and Dresden (Cooper 1989). Oscar Leibler, the missionary who replaced Strehlow during his trip back to Germany, collected anthropological material from both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg and sent it to German museums in Munich, Stuttgart and Hamburg (Cooper 1989; Jones & Sutton 1986:133-5). In 1914 the government impounded two separate collections being sent to Germany by Strehlow and Leibler which were later compulsorily acquired by the South Australian Museum.21

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21 An Adelaide newspaper account of Reuther clearly tied his collecting activities to his work as a missionary. It stated:

To enable [Reuther] to come into closer touch with the aborigines he began collecting specimens of native handicraft, and now, at the end of ten years he possesses a museum of considerable value. The Observer 10/2/1906, p28.

22 This seizure was widely reported at the time. For example, the Australian Medical Gazette reported:

Recently 12 packages of native specimens, which the owners had intended shipping to Germany, were inspected at Adelaide by Professor Stirling FRS, under the
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We know of the collecting activities of Reuther and Strehlow through their important contributions to museum collections of natural history and anthropological objects; it is also apparent from the descriptions of one visitor to the Killalpaninna mission that other mission staff were also ‘collecting’ such objects – collections which have not ended up in public museums. A.L. Iaschenko describes receiving artefacts from a number of staff members at the end of his visit to the Killalpaninna mission in 1903:

Hillier gave me a few objects from his own collections, Bogner some baskets of local weaving and a net, and from Ruediger I purchased a necklace. Reuther himself gave me a gift of some crocodile bones (Barratt 1985:48).

Ruediger presented me with a modern spear for killing cattle and a few little pieces characteristic of the Aboriginals’ life (Barratt 1985:52).

The availability of such material from a number of the staff suggests that collection of Aboriginal objects was a common activity among mission staff at that time; that is, there was very much a ‘culture of collecting’ at Killalpaninna. In addition to such collecting by the mission staff, both missions were the focus of collecting by visitors. As well as the activities of Iaschenko mentioned above, both J.W. Gregory and Erhard Eylmann collected material while at Killalpaninna, whilst the members of the 1894 Horn Expedition and Erhard Eylmann had collected material at Hermannsburg (Cooper 1989; Courto 1991; Morton & Mulvaney 1996).

Commonwealth Customs Regulations. Some of the specimens were found to be of great ethnological importance, and, in consequence, the authorities have refused to grant the exportation of 10 of the 12 packages. The contents came from the Lutheran Mission in the interior of South Australia, and it is hoped that the South Australian Museum will be able to secure by purchase these interesting and important relics of a fast-disappearing race. (The Australian Medical Gazette April 11, 1914:328).

Also see Jones for a discussion of this event (Jones 1996:237:250-1).
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Language

It was not only tangible objects which were collected from the Aboriginal people at the two missions; learning of Aboriginal languages by mission staff at both stations was another aspect of cultural collecting. One of the first things the missionaries did at both stations was to begin learning the Diyari or Aranda language. In doing so they were following the instructions of Ludwig Harms, the Superintendent of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society, who saw the development of a writing system understandable to Aboriginal people at the mission, as a priority for successfully communicating Christian values (Stevens 1994:203). The Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg missionaries were also following the practice established by earlier South Australian Lutheran missionaries who had collected and published accounts of the local Aboriginal languages in the Adelaide region, at Port Lincoln and at Encounter Bay, (Meyer 1843; 1846; Schürmann 1844; 1846; 1841; Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840; Wilhelmi 1861; 1870).

Christine Stevens has described how the Killalpaninna missionaries Ernst Homann and Wilhelm Koch learnt the Diyari language as part of their teaching duties (1994:204). In 1870, as a result of this work, the Killalpaninna Missionary Committee published *Nujanujarajinkinixa - Dieri Jaura Jelaribala*. This work consisted of Homann and Koch’s translation of a reading primer, catechism and Bible history into the Diyari language (Stevens 1994:205). Homann also contributed a number of vocabulary lists to anthropological texts of the day (1879:86; 1892:43-44). Similarly at Hermannsburg, two of the three missionaries working there during its administration by the HMS and ELSA published texts on their interpretation of the Aboriginal language used at the mission (Krichauff 1890b), with H. Kempe also publishing a collection of descriptions of vocabularies (Kempe 1890-91).

Language collection at Killalpaninna was not only done by Homann and Koch. Between 1871 and 1873 missionary Carl Schoknecht prepared a Diyari-English dictionary and study of the Diyari grammar (1947a; 1947b). In 1880 the Killalpaninna missionary Johannes Flierl prepared *Christianeli Ngujangujara* -
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Pepa Dieri Jaurani\(^5\) (Stevens 1994:207). He also published a reading primer in Diyari for use in the Killalpaninna mission school (Flierl 1883; Stevens 1994:207). In 1892 Reuther and Strehlow completed Koch’s bible translation (1897; Tampke & Doxford 1990:78). The translation was used by the missionaries as both a spiritual and educative text. In some circumstances the translation also became as an object in itself. For example the transcript of the 1899 South Australian parliamentary enquiry into the Aborigines Bill reveals how Reuther used the published, translated New Testament as physical evidence of the progress of the mission. The transcript reads:

\begin{quote}
[Committee] I notice you have a book with you. Is that the New Testament?

[Reuther] Yes.

[Committee] Is it fully translated into the language of the blacks?

[Reuther] Yes. I did it.

[Committee] You translated it from beginning to end?

[Reuther] Yes.

[Committee] Did you find the language of the aborigines was sufficiently expressive to admit of a complete and proper translation?

[Reuther] Yes. there is a corresponding word in the natives’ language to every one in the New Testament. The chief difficulty in translation was the idiomatic expressions.

[Committee] Is the book appreciated by the blacks?

[Reuther] Yes; they read it in their school.

(Reuther 1899:57)
\end{quote}

Such uses of collected language clearly demonstrates the link between cultural collecting and the evangelical agenda of the missionaries.

Another example of the missionary collection of Aboriginal language, specifically the language of the Aboriginal landscape, is the 1904 map of over 2000 Aboriginal sites within the Killalpaninna landscapedrawn by Hillier in collaboration with Reuther (Hercus & Potezny 1990).

\(^{\text{5}}\) Translated as Epistles and Gospels for Holy Days of the Christian Year.
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Cultural descriptions

In addition to objects and language, staff at both missions also collected descriptions of different aspects of Aboriginal cultural life, and descriptions of the surrounding landscape. Our knowledge of these is partly determined by the degree to which staff made such descriptions public; for example, whether they remained as diaries or were published. Connections to the emerging intellectual community assisted in conveying such information to a wider audience through publication; for example the Hermannsburg missionary A.H. Kempe, who published a number of landscape and cultural descriptions in 1879-80, 1881-82, and 1890-91, was also a Corresponding Member of the Royal Society of South Australia.

The best known descriptions of Aboriginal society around Killalpaninna are those of J.G. Reuther and Otto Seibert. Although the thirteen volumes of Reuther’s manuscript on the Diari remains unpublished, its existence was well known in scientific circles, with visitors to the mission, such as Jaschenko, keen to consult them. He wrote:

I talked about the objects of my journey and obliged Reuther to dig out his notes - notes that unquestionably contain much valuable material. They were in several ledgers. Systematically set forth in them was information regarding the Aboriginals’ way of life, beliefs, legends, language, appellations, and much other material on animals and the natives understanding of them (Barratt 1985:33).

Luise Hercus has noted that the agency of Reuther’s Aboriginal informants is evident within his work. Interpreting Reuther’s descriptions of the relationship between different places and their toas, she states:

On account of the many nicknames used it seems likely that some of the Aboriginal people who spoke to the highly respectable Reuther, could not resist making a few jokes calling Ancestors by either rude or esoteric names (Hercus 1987:65).
Otto Seibert worked at the Killalpaninna mission between 1894 and 1902, mostly as the ‘bush missionary’, travelling around the mission’s outstations. This work gave him the opportunity to record many Diyari stories and ceremonies, some of which he later published (1910). Seibert also collaborated with A.W. Howitt,\(^{a}\) providing him with information about different aspects of Diyari society (1902, 1904). At Hermannsburg too, the missionaries were active in recording anthropological accounts\(^{b}\) of the Aranda and Loritcha people, for example (Krichauff 1890a; 1890b; Schulze 1890-91). Carl Strehlow also published extensive accounts of Aranda and Loritcha culture (1907; 1908; 1910; 1911; 1913; 1915; 1920).

Although for the purpose of analysis I have described the collection of objects, language, and cultural descriptions as three discrete and separate activities, in reality they were very much interrelated practices. Such divisions were not necessarily recognised by the Lutheran collectors, nor by the Aboriginal people involved in the action of collecting. For example, as Hercus and Potezny have shown, there are complex relationships between Reuther’s thirteen volume description of Diyari culture and the class of artefacts known as toas (1990).

The impossibility of collecting

It is easy to lose sight of the impossibility of the project in which mission staff were engaged; to record, represent and ‘salvage’ a ‘culture’ – both in its tangible and intangible parts – through the process of collecting. Whilst this may seem obvious now, in some descriptions of the time the possibilities of collecting were perceived to be almost limitless. This is clearly evoked in N.W. Thomas’s ambitious description of what Spencer and Gillen hoped to achieve during their fieldwork in 1901. Writing in London, the centre of the British colonial enterprise, Thomas noted how:

\(^{a}\)See (Stevens 1994:223-5).
\(^{b}\) In the account of the 1894 Horn Expedition, E.C. Stirling acknowledged that at that time the work of the Lutheran missionaries was among the only available published information about Aboriginal people in central Australia (Stirling 1896).
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Language, history, customs, habits, ceremonies, religions, laws, will all carefully be investigated and noted ... The scientists are taking with them magnificent equipment, which includes a first-class cinematograph, with which they will take pictures of corroborees and secret ceremonies, and also a fine phonograph ... Large impressions will be taken by it, and these will be capable of being multiplied indefinitely on small cylinders. A vast amount of photographic material has been distributed at the various depôts, and with it careful records will be obtained of types, ceremonies, and gatherings of the tribes. Weapons and implements of each race will be procured, and anthropometric records of each section of the black people carefully preserved. Collections of the flora and fauna of the country traversed will be made (Thomas 1901:82).

In relation to the collecting at Killalpaninna, Hercus’s examination of the work of Reuther clearly illustrates the gap between his intention to record the culture of Aboriginal people and the results he achieved. She describes how the old Aboriginal men at the mission were ‘summoned with a “cooee”’ to the ‘unfamiliar surroundings’ of Reuther’s study to answer three questions about each point in the landscape (Hercus & Potezny 1990:147). These questions were:

a. What was the meaning of a place-name?
b. Why was it so called?
c. Who named it? (Hercus & Potezny 1990:147)

Hercus’s interpretation of J.G. Reuther’s writings reveals how this systematic and meticulous method that blinkered Reuther from recording the nuances, the meaningful interconnections between places and stories about places, which he was seeking to document. As Hercus notes:

Aboriginal mythology is not an inventory of site-related facts, it does not explain every feature, it highlights important features. It creates a vision ... looking at the rocky hills near Mt Gason, traditional people with their mind’s eye could see that these were the storm people Coober Pedy arriving from the south. They could
look across to Two Wells and see the hills that are the Goanna Girls, they could glance over to the sandhill near the old bore and see the weeping Swan Woman, lost, and carrying her dead baby. There was more than a vision, there was also music; as traditional people looked at that landscape they could hear the songs that belonged there. (Hercus & Potezny 1990:147).

Summarising Reuther’s meticulous but ultimately incomplete cultural descriptions, Hercus concludes:

- It was all detail; the highlighting, the vision and the music had gone, as had the lively humour of the mythology. (Hercus & Potezny 1990:147).

**Why the mission staff collected**

Thus the missionaries’ interaction with the landscape and their interest in collecting anthropological and natural history objects together with information about their cultural and environmental context, were well established at both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg well before the arrival of Hillier at Killalpaninna in 1894 and at Hermannsburg in 1906. The quantity and diversity of material collected raises the issue of what motives directed their collection. Beyond the reasons associated with any particular individual, collecting was linked to the broader missionary goals of converting Aboriginal people to Christianity, the development of economically self-sufficient mission stations, and the need to demonstrate the evangelical success of the missions to their financial benefactors in Adelaide and Germany. Table 8.1 presents a model of how attempts to attain these goals resulted in a range of collected material.

In his study of the establishment of the Hermannsburg mission, Hartwig described the interest of missionaries in Aboriginal culture as being embedded in an overall plan of ‘salvation’ for the Aboriginal people. He wrote

Investigations into other aspects of Aboriginal culture might incidentally discover habits or principles compatible with a Christian way of life, or lead to an
Table 8.1: Relationship between mission goals and the collecting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission goals</th>
<th>Mission actions</th>
<th>Outcomes related to collecting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• to ‘convert’ the Aboriginal people at Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg by having Christianity incorporated into Aboriginal culture</td>
<td>• to learn language</td>
<td>• translation of bible texts into local languages, used as both a way of teaching reading and to provide a moral message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to learn about Aboriginal culture</td>
<td>• to investigate the economic potential of the landscape around the missions</td>
<td>• publication of Diyari and Aranda vocabularies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to develop an economically self-sufficient mission station</td>
<td>• to display change within Aboriginal community; for example, rejection of paganism, and acceptance of Christianity</td>
<td>• collection of anthropological objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to demonstrate the success of the mission</td>
<td>• display of secret/sacred material given up by Aboriginal people</td>
<td>• publication of cultural descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• baptism of Aboriginal residents</td>
<td>• collection of natural history objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8 – Complexities at the place of collection

important contribution to anthropology, but it was chiefly hoped that they would reveal weak points at which that message could be directed and all elements of Aboriginal life abominable to God (1965:503).

The Killalpaninna missionary J.G. Reuther set out a similar rationale for his focus on Aboriginal culture:

Feeling my way into the mental world of these people, I searched through their legends and the god-and-spirit world of heathendom in an attempt to discover points of contact with the Christian faith and thereby destroy their pagan concepts. Indeed, it cost me much time and labour to become a Diyari to my Diyari people, for in my opinion, a missionary without a thorough knowledge of the language and customs of his people is, in the best instance, like a watch that works without hands [my emphasis] (Reuther quoted in Jones & Sutton 1986:49).

Philip Jones has noted that the collections of objects by Reuther at Killalpaninna and Strehlow at Hermannsburg focused on religious and idolatrous types of objects (1988b:150). Similarities can be drawn with mission collecting in other locations such as Africa (Schildkrout & Keim 1998) and the Pacific, whereby the giving up of those artefacts perceived to have religious significance was equated with people replacing paganism with Christianity (Lawson 1994a:34; Thomas 1991:156-7). Collections of both objects and cultural descriptions, especially those which demonstrated cultural and religious change, as well as illustrations of such artefacts could then be used as evidence of missionary success, thus justifying, and encouraging further support, of for example Lutheran communities in Adelaide and Germany. As discussed in Chapter 4, while such a model appears to work for the collection of ethnographic material, it does not account for the collection of natural history material. However an explanation of the collection of this material lies in the missionaries' drive for self-sufficiency.

Soon after the establishment of both Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg, missionaries began to collect specimens of the natural history of the area in which they resided. This included information about climatic and seasonal
patterns and identifying potentially exploitable botanical species in the vicinity of the stations.* This activity was partly driven by a need to seek out knowledge about the landscape that could be used in making the mission economically self-sufficient. In doing so, the missionaries reflected a broader colonial pattern which underlay much natural history exploration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example the economic rationale which underlay the establishment and growth of ‘scientific’ botanical collections at Kew Gardens detailed by Lucile Brockway (Brockway 1979).

I argue that collection of landscape elements was also less directly related to the goals of the mission, and related to a cultural response to a new landscape by an insular and isolated Germanic cultural group.

The missionaries’ active interest in the central Australian landscapes contrasted with the insular response of the Lutheran communities near Adelaide, which had been established soon after their arrival in South Australia during the late 1830s. A feature of these groups was the extent to which they held onto their Lutheran identity (Lehmann 1981), living and working in communities largely independent of the existing Anglo-settler society. The inward focus of these communities was partly in response to the persecution they were subjected to in Prussia before their migration to South Australia (Schild & Hughes 1996).

An integral part of the Lutheran settlers’ identity was based in the Germanic culture from which they had emigrated. Externally, this identity was displayed by a number of cultural markers including the use of German language, and the use of a material culture which differed from the material culture commonly displayed elsewhere in the South Australian colony. Examples of this were their use of ‘German wagons’, the distinctive architecture of their settlements near Adelaide (see 1851 observation by Gerstäcker quoted in Tampke et al 1990:35-36), and the layout of their farms. Observed by those outside of their community, these features marked the

* Amongst the contextual notes which Hillier provided with the botanical collection he gave to Kew Gardens are descriptions of which specimens were used as stock pasture.
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Lutherans as a distinct cultural group, and in many circumstances served as a source of suspicion to non-Lutheran settlers.

An evocative image of the problems which this insular attitude caused when the Lutherans had to deal with the world beyond their communities were the difficulties encountered when mission staff first set off from the Barossa Valley in 1866 to establish the Killalpaninna mission station. For transport they used wagons which were based on a traditional German design and had a much narrower wheel gauge than those in standard use in northern areas of South Australia (Brauer 1956:226). As a result the wagons could not travel along the ruts in the tracks and had to travel over rougher ground, leading to frequent axle breakage, and longer and more difficult travel.

Attempts at establishing a mission station at Killalpaninna mark the beginnings of a change in the Lutheran missionary response to the landscape. Unlike the settings in which the Lutheran villages near Adelaide had been established, it was not possible to transform the central Australian landscape into one more familiar to them. The Lutheran missionaries, once away from the Lutheran communities of Adelaide, were forced to engage with the surrounding landscape, both to survive and to establish successful mission stations at Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg. The collection of different aspects of nature and Aboriginal culture, discussed above, are a product of this engagement. Thus while the collection of knowledge about, and examples of, landscape elements at one level may appear tangential to the evangelical purpose of the Lutheran missions, it was a fundamental way of locating themselves. It was related to the missionaries trying to achieve economic and therefore evangelical productivity, both of which were considered to be central to the ‘success’ of the two missions. As Chris Anderson has written of a similar Lutheran mission in Queensland:

the basis of the endeavour at Bloomfield was to conquer a recalcitrant nature, which was seen to include both Aborigines and the environment (1988:325).
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Aboriginal people and the European act of collecting

The preceding section examined the meaning of collecting for the European mission staff, both at the Killalpaninna and the Hermannsburg mission stations. It is also important to examine how Aboriginal people engaged with the collecting activities of mission staff. Just as Chapter 7 revealed that the ‘straightforward’ act of museums acquiring objects from collectors was in fact part of a complex system of exchange involving objects, ideas and access to intellectual worlds, the action of Europeans acquiring Aboriginal objects is part of a complex exchange relationship with Aboriginal people. What at one level was simply the transfer of an object from one individual to another, at another level was an action that was imbued with complex layers of meanings for both participants.

Previous accounts of the European collection of indigenous objects have simplified the act of collecting in two ways. Firstly, there has been little recognition of the linkage between European collecting and what Aboriginal people were collecting or acquiring from Europeans. Where the existence of an exchange relationship has been acknowledged, it has often been presented in a very negative sense, with Aboriginal ‘desire’ for European objects interpreted as an indicator of the decline of Aboriginal cultures. Implicit in such interpretations is the idea that the ‘integrity’ of the material culture of a group can be read as an index of the robustness of non-material aspects of a culture. For example in Stirling’s account of the Horn expedition’s visit to the Hermannsburg mission in 1894 he commented on what he saw as the deleterious impact of the mission on the quality of the Aboriginal material culture.

It is unfortunate that with increasing opportunities of association with the whites there is everywhere being manifested amongst the natives in Australia a corresponding degeneracy in the manufacture of their native articles or even in the entire discontinuance of their own handiwork in favour of the products of civilisation, but nowhere was this degeneration more obvious that [sic] at the Mission Station (1896:41).
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In his materialist history of Aboriginal-settler relations in central Australia mediated through the rationing system, Rowse evocatively describes this colonial process, and shows that such pathological descriptions of Aboriginal culture were a way of legitimating the settler enterprise. He writes:

> Europeans believe that it was their own material culture which mediated their relations with Aborigines, and that access to goods which Europeans took for granted rendered Aborigines irrational, helpless and pitiful. Getting their hands on these goods was the small tremor which made Aborigines' civilisation collapse like a house of cards. This account resonates with the settlers' need to validate their enterprise: The settler culture tended to render Aborigines' adaptation to their presence in psychological terms, to explain it as an inordinate hunger, a lack of self-sufficiency (1990:144).

Paradoxically, such perjorative interpretations of the desire for inter-cultural objects were rarely applied to the European desire for Aboriginal objects.

A second simplification in the interpretation of the European act of collecting has arisen from a lack of understanding about the broader context of exchange in which the European collection of Aboriginal objects was embedded; for example, how the collection of objects was linked to the non-material exchanges between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

The involvement of Diyari and Wankangurru people in the collection of ethnographic and natural history specimens by European people based at the Killalpaninna mission offers an opportunity explore both of these important aspects of the collection process. The following analysis reveals how the collection of objects was part of a broader phenomenon of cultural exchange, with the transfer of a physical object being only one element involved. Such an examination of the relations between mission staff and Aboriginal people at the Killalpaninna mission cannot be separated from a discussion of the way the place operated for Aboriginal people prior to the arrival of the missionaries, in
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particular how what was being exchanged fitted with pre-existing Aboriginal networks of exchange.

Thomas has noted how exchange is embedded in the broader historical and political context:

The properties of exchange relations derive from broader cultural structures and premises, from inequalities and asymmetries in rights over people, social groups, and their products - and also from the histories which engender cultural and political transformations of notions and relations (1991:8).

That is, that the specificity of the place had a crucial role in the creation of meaning of social interaction occurring there.

The significance of the Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna landscape to Aboriginal people

Before the arrival of the missionaries in 1867, the region surrounding Lake Killalpaninna and Lake Kopperamanna was a landscape of particular significance to Aboriginal people within the Lake Eyre region (Howitt 1904; McBryde 1987). Three aspects of this significance have been recorded by Europeans: firstly as a place of trade refuge; secondly as a place of redemption; and thirdly as a place of refuge. These attributes framed and influenced Aboriginal people’s responses to the mission, in that many of the features which characterised the missionary-Aboriginal relationship had parallels in pre-missionary life.

Lake Killalpaninna was known to Europeans to be a place of ‘pilgrimage’ and ‘solace’ for Aboriginal people. Herbert Basedow, anthropologist, geologist and medical practitioner, wrote:

Killalpaninna is the ... contracted form of the two words, “killa” and “wulpanna”, which stand for that typical of woman. It is the conviction of the Dieri tribe that when a person, especially one stricken with senility or enfeebled by sickness, at a
certain hour passes from the water of the lake into the open, and is not seen doing so by the women, he is re-born and rejuvenated, or at any rate cured of his decrepitude. In this sense Killa-Wulpanna has from time immemorial been an aboriginal Mecca, to which pilgrims have found their way from far and wide to seek remedy and solace at the great matronal chasm which has such divine powers to impart (Basedow 1929:290-I).

Although we only know of this power of the Killalpaninna landscape from European description, the parallels between such perceptions of the lake and the effects that the missionaries hoped they would have on Aboriginal people's lives cannot be ignored. Basedow's description of the rebirth and rejuvenation of a person through the action of 'pass[ing] from the lake into the open' is also striking for its resonance with what the Killalpaninna missionaries hoped the action of baptising Aboriginal people at the mission would achieve.

The Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna landscape, was also a place of trade. This attribute was a major factor in the selection of Killalpaninna as the location of the Lutheran mission station, as settlers knew it to be adjacent to a place of congregation and exchange for the Aboriginal people in the area. The exchange of commodities between different Aboriginal groups in the Lake Eyre region was a common practice which existed before the arrival of Europeans and continuing into the twentieth century (McBryde 1987). Lake Kopperamanna, near where the Lutheran mission station was established,\(^7\) is one of the places which has been identified as being particularly significant in these pre-European exchange relations. A.W. Howitt, who travelled through the region in 1861-62 as a member of the Burke and Wills search party, and who later corresponded with the Killalpaninna missionary Otto Siebert, wrote:

\(^7\) Although based at Lake Killalpaninna – some ten miles west of Kopperamanna – after its re-establishment in 1878 the Lutheran missionaries undertook evangelical and economic activities within the surrounding area, including the establishment of an outstation near Lake Kopperamanna.
there are also established trade centres at which the tribes meet on certain occasions for a regular barter. One of these old trade centres is Kopramerana\textsuperscript{8} on the Cooper, where the surrounding tribes meet periodically to confer and barter their respective manufactures (1904:715).

Similarly an early missionary, H. Walder,\textsuperscript{7} wrote:

Lake Koprameranna was of special significance, particularly to the Dieri, for it was a major centre of exchange and pay-back for the Lake Eyre tribes. Natives from over a hundred miles in radius meet here [(SAA CSO 625/67) quoted in (Pearce 1980:159)].

Further substantiating the importance of Koprameranna as a major trade and exchange centre, both Howitt (1904) and Horne \textit{et al} (1924:20) linked the origin of Koprameranna’s name to this role. Howitt wrote:

Kopramerama is a mutilation of the true name Kappara-mara, from Kappara meaning ‘hand’, and Mara meaning ‘root’. But Mara also means ‘hair’ of the head, which is connected with the head as the fingers with the hand. The meaning of the name really is, that as the fingers all come together in the ‘root’ of the hand, so do the native tribes come together at Kopramerama to confer together, and especially to exchange their respective articles of barter. Koppermana is, therefore, one of the trade centres for the tribes allied to the Dieri. (Howitt 1904:715)

Acknowledging the role of Koprameranna as being an important Aboriginal place of exchange prior to the establishment of the mission allows a fresh interpretation of how the actions of Europeans associated with the mission may have been interpreted by Aboriginal people at the time. The mission staff were entering into an existing social structure, in which the concept of exchanging objects between groups was not new. We can see the missionaries

\textsuperscript{8}Howitt’s use of the present tense here suggests that Koprameranna was operating as a centre for exchange at the time of his writing in 1904.

\textsuperscript{7}Walder was a member of the 1866 Moravian mission party which preceded the Lutherans in briefly establishing a mission at Lake Koprameranna.
exchanging rations for artefacts and exchanging knowledge of English for knowledge of Diyari. This is not to suggest that there was reciprocity in the exchange relations between Aboriginal people and European missionaries and settlers; as Ross Gibson has put it ‘exchange does not necessarily imply equality’ (1996).

The relationship between collecting and Kopperamanna’s role as a trading centre becomes more complex when we examine the specifics of the Diyari trading ceremonies that were recorded as having taken place there. Howitt (1904) described three instances of bartering, exchange and redistribution of goods being associated with Diyari ceremonies. The first of these was associated with the Yutyunto ceremony, and had an underlying theme of conciliation. It occurred ‘when a blood-feud is settled by barter of goods, so that the feud may be healed, bloodshed be avoided, and people live in peace’ (1904:715). The Killalpaninna missionary Otto Seibert recorded this ceremony as occurring at Kopperamana in 1899, and involved people from ‘Killalpaninna, Kopperamanna and the surrounding country’ (Howitt 1904:328). A second instance of exchange was associated with the Kani-nura ceremony. Howitt described this as occurring when:

a blackfellow is going a distance from home, either to another of the Dieri hordes, or its lesser divisions, or to a neighbouring tribe, some one at his camp becomes his Yutchin. This is done by tieing a string made of human hair or native flax round his neck, to remind him of his promise to bring back presents (Howitt 1904:713).

A third occasion where Howitt describes Diyari people being involved with exchange and barter was in final stage of the Wilyaru ceremony relating to men’s initiation (Howitt 1904:660-1).

Howitt’s and Horne and Aiston’s descriptions of the diversity in the types and origins of the material being exchanged at Kopperamanna reflect the

*George Aiston was a long term European resident of the area east of Lake Eyre. He worked as a policeman at Mungerannie from 1912-1924, before moving to Mulka.
complexity of social relations which culminated in such occasions. Howitt described how:

The Dieri exchange string-tassels ... netted bags, red ochre etc. Tribes from the east bring boomerangs (Kirha), shields (Pirha-mara) and other items made of wood. Those who come from the north bring Piteri and feathers. Those who come from the south and west bring stone slabs (Howitt 1904:328-330).

Horn and Aiston also described the way in which a diverse range of objects from well beyond the Lake Eyre region were traded at Kopperamanna:

Thus Watamunka\(^{31}\) makes kirras or boomerangs, and loaded with these he goes down to Kopperamanna, the long-established barter station. From there he comes back loaded with other kirras for which his have been given. They are better because another man made them. This trait appears in all their barterings. Kopperamanna is the post for barter of the blacks, and has been so as far back as memory goes. Thither from the north the soft-wood shields (murrwarroo), for none of this soft-wood grows amongst the Lake Eyre tribes. Sometimes also a soft-wood pirrha [coolamon] can be found. Here, too, were brought the axe-heads either from Queensland beyond Cloncurry, or from the Coast tribes in the south. For the local stone, though it chips with a sharp edge, cannot be ground and polished. Cane or light-wood for spears came from the far east. All these things were not only bartered for what the Wonkonguru and Dieri produced, such as ochre, hard wood for boomerangs, pirrhas, etc., but they were also exchanged amongst themselves. (Horne & Aiston 1924:34).

Importantly, such exchanges included the movement of both objects and other cultural products such as dance and knowledge. For example Horne and Aiston describe how:

Material goods were not the only traffic that was exchanged. If any of the visitors knew a fresh corroboree, he would be called upon first to train or direct his troupe and afterwards to perform. In this way corroborees are known to have spread

\(^{31}\) A Wankangurru man.
along definite tracks. With the dance passed also the words of the song. As these were handed on from one tribe to another, each with a variation in dialect, gradually the significance of the words vanished until they became simply a string of sounds (Horne & Aiston 1924:21).

There are a number of important points relevant to understanding the European collection of objects to be drawn from these ethnographic accounts. Descriptions clearly show that the practice of trade or exchange of objects and non-material entities occurred at Kopperamanna prior to, and independent of the Europeans. Moreover much of the trade and exchange occurring at Kopperamanna had symbolic importance. It is also evident that such systems often involved trading between groups outside the Diyari, and on occasions incorporated Europeans within these ceremonies. For example Howitt records that Samuel Gason, the Police trooper at Lake Hope, participated in this ceremony:

Mr Gason was frequently the Yutchin of some Dieri man, giving him old wearing apparel, and receiving from him in return carved boomerangs and ornamental articles (1904:713).

Finally, it is clear that at least some of the episodes of exchange enacted at Kopperamanna were linked to the avoidance of conflict between different groups.

The characteristics of exchange within and between Aboriginal exchange at Kopperamanna invite speculation about the ways in which the practice of Europeans collecting Aboriginal objects was interpreted by Aboriginal people.

Two points emerge from this discussion. Firstly, that the establishment of the Lutheran mission in the Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna region, and the ways it related to Aboriginal people, did not represent a complete rupture from Diyari social and cultural practices which existed prior to the arrival of the missionaries. Secondly, that the Diyari people’s experience of Kopperamanna as a place where trade with external groups regularly occurred meant that the
collection by mission staff of cultural and landscape objects from Aboriginal people was not a completely unfamiliar activity. The collection of ethnographic and natural history material by mission staff at Killalpaninja could have been conceived by the Diyari and Wonkangurru people as an extension of an existing exchange relationship with the mission staff. It could easily be fitted into pre-existing practices. The existing pre-European indigenous exchange system was a structure into which the Aboriginal people at the mission were able to incorporate new types of objects obtained from the mission. It is clear that such trade and exchange relationships continued after the arrival of the missionaries, and were flexible enough to incorporate new types of objects derived from the mission:

Some Aborigines continued to produce spears with shafts of mulga wood bound with emu sinew. For points they adapted wool-shear blades, butcher's knives, or simply sharpened the mulga shaft to a point. They also made boomerangs and other weapons, though their manufacture was discouraged by the mission. [Ben Murray\textsuperscript{30} pers. comm., quoted in (Pearce 1980:159-60)].\textsuperscript{30}

The exchange of objects between Aboriginal people and missionaries was a practice established well before Hillier's arrival at Killalpaninja in the 1890s, and continued long after his departure in 1905. Subsequent to the closure of the mission in 1915, the Lutheran community continued to enact the obligations of their exchange relationship with Aboriginal people long after they had moved away the mission:

\textsuperscript{30} Ben Murray was an Aboriginal man who lived and worked at Killalpaninja and Kopperamanna between 1908 and 1916, see (Austin, 1988).

\textsuperscript{30} There are parallels between the flexibility and adaptiveness of the Aboriginal response at Killalpaninja and the way in which the contemporary practices of most Australian State museums have been transformed through engagement with Aboriginal people. This is most apparent in relation to museum collections of secret/sacred material. For example, Chris Anderson has described how there has been a transformation in the South Australian museum's claim over Aboriginal secret/sacred material, with legal ownership giving way to the concept of 'custodianship' (Anderson, 1995b:101). The colonial museum has been transformed to the extent that some Aboriginal people are now using the secret/sacred collections in the South Australian Museum to 'look after' further material (Anderson, 1995b :106).
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Dilly bags, sewn by the Lutheran women at the Point Pass Sewing Circle\textsuperscript{34} [circa 1949], and filled with food gifts, were sent by train to Marree, then travelled with the mailman, Tom Kruse, to the various stations along the Birdsville Track ... Each parcel was labelled with the name of a known ex-Killalpaninna person or one of their children (Stevens 1994:256-7).

'Collecting' by Aboriginal people at Killalpaninna

If the collection of Aboriginal objects by mission staff was part of an exchange relationship, the question then arises about what material was being acquired or collected by the Aboriginal people at the mission in exchange. Firstly we need to identify what objects or qualities Diyari people were ‘collecting’ from the missionaries. A review of the interactions between missionaries and Dieri people at Killalpaninna shows that both tangible and intangible goods were involved in this process.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Killacpaninna} & for Year ending June 30th, 19 \hline
\hline
\textbf{Item No.} & \textbf{Item} & \textbf{Unit} & \textbf{Quantity} & \textbf{Cost} & \textbf{Total} & \textbf{Cost} & \textbf{Total} & \textbf{Cost} & \textbf{Total} \\
\hline
1 & Blankets & 10 & 15.00 & 5.00 & 5.00 & 5.00 & 5.00 & 5.00 & 5.00 \\
2 & Food & 100 & 1.00 & 50.00 & 50.00 & 50.00 & 50.00 & 50.00 & 50.00 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

The most obvious commodity which Aboriginal people ‘collected’ from Europeans were the rations supplied by the South Australian government and distributed by the Killalpaninna missionaries.\textsuperscript{35} They consisted of commodities such as flour, sugar, tea, tobacco, rice, soap, tomahawks, shirts, pannicans and blankets. The extract below shows the ‘cost of stores and other expenses in

\textsuperscript{34} Point Pass was a Lutheran Community located in the Barossa Valley.

\textsuperscript{35} Such rations were also distributed at the Hermannsburg Mission station.
connection with Aborigines Depot at Killalpaninna during the first quarter of 1913."

On occasions there was a direct relationship between the distribution of rations and the collection of ethnographic objects. Jones describes how at the Hermannsburg mission the missionary Carl Strehlow exchanged additional rations, such as flour, tea and sugar, for natural history and ethnographic objects:

A pannikin of flour, a handful of tea and a handful of sugar comprised Strehlow’s basic units of exchange with Aborigines ... [For] a [1908] collection which comprised seventy three tjurunga ..., a shield, thirty one body decorations, twenty lots of seeds and berries with Aranda names, and twenty four reptile specimens, - Strehlow- arrived at a figure of 704 pounds of flour, 184 pounds of sugar and twenty pounds of tea, with a total cost of £11.0.0. (Jones 1996:249).

In his analysis of the way in which the distribution of rations articulated colonial policy and practice in central Australia, Rowse makes a distinction between bartering – such as that occurring at Hermannsburg (described above) – and rationing.

Bartering is ideally a transparent transaction, in that the equivalent value of the things being exchanged is established to the barterers’ mutual satisfaction. Rationing, however, is an issuing of goods for a more complex and ill-defined return (1998:20).

The ‘ill-defined return’ or ambiguity of what was expected from Aboriginal people in exchange for rations meant that they could make sense of rationing in ways not necessarily intended. That is, there was the possibility of Aboriginal people ‘making sense’ of rationing in terms of exchange relationships which occurred at Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna prior to the arrival of the missionaries.

"South Australian Archives GRG 52/25: 1909-1927."
In addition to the distribution of rations, a cash economy had existed at Killalpaninna since the 1890s, which extended to the Aboriginal residents and workers (Stevens 1994:121). At the time of his visit in 1901, Gregory recorded some Aboriginal people as earning up to 15s per week (1906:61). In some years the total wages paid to Aboriginal workers exceeded those paid out to the European workers on the Killalpaninna mission.\footnote{During this period Aboriginal workers at Hermannsburg received clothing and food for work rather than cash wages. The returns for Aboriginal missions (SA Blue Books) show that Hermannsburg was the only mission which did not have a wage economy for Aboriginal people at the mission.} These wages were used to purchase clothes and other goods from the store run by the mission. Ben Murray has recounted how the store worked:

All goods sold [in the stockmen’s clothing store] had to be paid for by Aborigines out of their earnings as stockmen, teamster, shepherds, and kitchen assistants. Younger employed Aborigines received wages of from five to ten shillings a week, however most income was only intermittent and the cost of new clothes was measured in terms of dingo scalps. A pair of moleskins or a pair of Blucher boots cost ten shillings or two dingo scalps; a pair of elastic sided riding boots, Queensland standard, three scalps (Ben Murray quoted in (Pearce 1980:150)).

It is apparent that for the missionaries the importance of such wages was not only in recognition of the work done by Aboriginal labourers, wages were also used as a way of introducing and re-enforcing concepts linked to Protestant ethics, such as ‘work’ and ‘saving’. J.G. Reuther and J.G. Rechner,\footnote{At that time Rechner was the Adelaide based Chairman and Superintendent of the Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg missions.} made this clear in evidence to the 1899 South Australian Parliamentary Committee. The transcript reads:

\begin{quote}
[Committee] You said just now you paid natives for work done?  
[Reuther] Yes.  
[Committee] Do you pay they in the way of giving them clothing, or tobacco, or money?  
[Reuther] Not only do we dress them, we pay them money too.
\end{quote}
Chapter 8 – Complexities at the place of collection

[Committee] Do those on your missionary station spend the money on liquor?
[Reuther] No; they save their money for clothing &c.
[Committee] Have any of them a banking account?
[Reuther] Some of them have.
[Committee] They understand the nature of a banking account?
[Reuther] Yes.

(Reuther 1899:55)

(Rechner) We do pay wages - 3s., 4s., or 5s. per week to help them to keep their homes. They all dine in one room, but for clothes &c., they go to the shop we have there, and if they have a little money over they keep it. It is better to let them have a little in hand, the same as children. For instance, I think it is better to give my boy a little. It teaches him to practise economy, but if he has nothing, as soon as he gained control of some money his only anxiety would be to spend it.

(Rechner 1899:13)

Cash was also occasionally directly exchanged for collected specimens. For example, whilst at Killalpaninna Hillier described offering to pay Aboriginal people for collected natural history objects.39

The last few months, altho’ I have been offering 1/- a head for (adult) large animals and 6d a head for (adult) small ones on your behalf, I have been unable to obtain any single specimen.40

As well as rations and cash, Diyari people also acquired non-tangible assets from the Lutheran missionaries at Killalpaninna. Related to this, Horne and Aiston describe the area to the immediate south of the mission as a place of ‘sanctuary’ for Aboriginal people. They state:

39 In contrast Hillier describes paying children at Hermannsburg in sweets. The absence of monetary payment is most likely related to the absence of a wage economy for Aboriginal people at the mission.
40 Letter from H.J. Hillier to O. Thomas 1/12/1902
South of Killalpaninna ... is a large tract of country where a convicted man is safe as long as he remains there. Parallel with the Cooper, it runs for about ten miles. Then the boundary on each side turns south to take in Etadunna with its well and Blaze's well. ... The sanctuary is, strictly speaking, in Dieri ground, but all tribes alike held this place sacred. Sometimes there fled thither those who feared imprisonment, and they stopped until time had established their cause, but most often the fugitives lived and died in the place (1924:156-7).

Such an association clearly parallels the ways in which Aboriginal people have been documented as using the mission as a place to escape from settler violence (Hercus 1990:158). If this use of the area pre-dated the arrival of the missionaries in the region, then the establishment of the mission in the same area could easily have been understood by Aboriginal people in terms of this 'sanctuary'.

Language was another entity which was exchanged at the mission. During Reuther’s period at Killalpaninna, the lessons in the mission school were taught in both English and Diyari. An outcome of this practice was an exchange of language between the mission staff and the Aboriginal people residing at the mission, with Aboriginal people learning English and missionaries learning Diyari. At the 1899 Inquiry Reuther elaborated on this type of exchange. The transcript reads:

[Committee]  You have two teachers at the mission, I think?
-Reuther-  There are two missionaries besides myself and one English teacher.
[Committee]  You teach them their own language?
[Committee]  Yes, in our religious discourses, and the English teacher instructs the young blacks in the English language. Of course with the old blacks we do not attempt to teach them English, but we like to see the young people grow up in a knowledge of that language.

(Reuther 1899:55)
Conclusion

The Killalpaninna and Hermannsburg missions were the two locations in which the collector H.J. Hillier undertook extensive anthropological and natural history collecting. An overview of the development of these missions shows how Hillier's collecting occurred against the backdrop of the complex history of European-Aboriginal relations in these areas. It is clear that a common response by Europeans new to the area was to collect, and that objects were just one aspect of Aboriginal culture – including language and ecological knowledge – which was 'collected'. In the case of the missionaries, this collecting was linked both to their interest in the new landscape and to the task of religious conversion of Aboriginal people.

It is also clear that the collection of objects by Europeans at Killalpaninna was enmeshed within a broader system of ongoing cultural exchange between Aboriginal people and the Lutheran missionaries, with the placement of the Killalpaninna mission within the Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna landscape having an impact on relations enacted there. Thus it is possible to view the acceptance of rations by Diyari people and their participation in learning English and religion, and their contribution to the European collection of Diyari language, knowledge and objects, as a series of related cultural engagements. These engagements can in turn be viewed as an elaboration of ceremonial interactions that regularly occurred between Aboriginal groups within the Killalpaninna-Kopperamanna landscape before and after the arrival of the missionaries. The collecting by the mission staff and visitors at Killalpaninna was therefore not a total rupture from Diyari cultural practices which existed before the arrival of the Lutheran missionaries. Aspects of the significance of the place to Aboriginal people, prior to the arrival of the missionaries, were commensurate with the actions of the mission in its roles of providing opportunities for 'salvation' and trade. I do not suggest that European collectors of Aboriginal objects would have been perceived by Aboriginal people as simply being new participants within existing pre-European exchange ceremonies. They were clearly a radically new presence in
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the landscape, and obviously European collectors would not have understood the appropriate behaviours which would have been expected in ceremonial episodes of exchange. Nor was there equity, or resolution of Aboriginal people’s expectations of collectors’ obligations in receiving material. However, in the confusion of the colonial encounter there were points of continuity, implicit in the act of collecting, with existing ceremonies and social interactions associated with Kopperamanna.

The arrival of the missionaries at Killalpaninna did not cause no change from past practices of exchange. However, by relating these different ways in which Europeans and Aboriginal people engaged at the mission, Diyari people can be seen to be using the interest of the missionaries in cultural and landscape collecting to actively negotiate their relationship with the mission. Similar circumstances did not operate at all places from which Australian Aboriginal objects were collected: however the Killalpaninna case study illustrates the impact of the complexities inherent in both European and indigenous constructions of the place on the apparently simple act of collecting objects.
Chapter 9 — Conclusion

Peter Raby, begins his account of British scientific travellers of the nineteenth century, by describing the purpose of the British Empire. He writes:

For the English in the nineteenth century, abroad, and especially the Empire and the colonies, existed to bring things back from (1997:2).

Whilst this may have been the attitude of some English curators and museums, it tells only part of the story about how Australian Aboriginal objects have come to be in a variety of British museums. It is a comment made from the colonial centre. It does not acknowledge the complexity of the relationships between collector and curator, and between collector and Aboriginal people, which delivered these collections to British museums, and which are outlined in this thesis. Nor does it reveal the way in which the collection of museum objects in Australia, and their movement to Britain, was part of a broader phenomenon involving both tangible and intangible ‘things’ moving back and forth between these three agents; the curators, the collectors and Aboriginal people. The gap between the moment when objects were collected in the field, and the moment when they arrived in the museum is the space in which the relationships between collectors and curators are enacted and negotiated. It is within this unexplored region that objects, knowledge and other intangible entities were exchanged for a range of both short term and long term ends.

A characteristic of the sondage technique is that while it results in an enhanced understanding of the history of an archaeological site, it can also bring to light additional complexities about that site, ones which were not apparent from the surface, and ones which can only be addressed through further excavation.

There are two such complexities which have become apparent as a result of this research. Firstly, whilst collecting was often characterised by leaders of the
British anthropological world as being ‘scientific’, both in its method and its rationale, it is apparent that other more complex and seemingly contradictory rationales for the acquisition of objects were also articulated within the relationship between curator and collector. These include factors such as the aesthetic appeal of objects, the entrepreneurialism of collectors, and the competition between museums for collections. The second issue is the contradiction between the rhetoric of the anthropological museum seeking to represent indigenous cultures, in all their material forms, and the actuality of curatorial practice. Curatorial analyses divided collections according to criteria developed within Western intellectual traditions, rather their indigenous meanings. Of concern here is the way in which anthropological and natural history material which was linked at the place of collection, has been divided by curatorial and intellectual practices.

Collecting as science?

As well as constituting a particular subject of study, by the end of the nineteenth century the term ‘natural history’ also defined a particular method of inquiry, involving the derivation of knowledge about the world through the collection, measurement, and classification of specimens. In this aspect it has become associated with the notion of a rational, objective ‘scientific’ knowledge. British anthropological museums at this time were also concerned with the collection and classification of objects — those made and used by indigenous peoples. The paradigms guiding their activities drew substantially on those of natural history. It is the transposition by historians of these rational ‘scientific’ values onto the actions of the generic figure of the ‘scientific’ collector which is problematic. Indeed, this thesis has demonstrated that complex, ‘unscientific’ and at times contradictory motives for collecting, what Johannes Fabian has termed the ‘ecstatic’ dimension (1998:80), are evident in a number of places throughout the collecting process. These include the competition between curators to obtain examples of tjurungas, and the acquisitive, almost sensual, reference by Baldwin Spencer, an eminent man of science, to the objects he had collected for museums as ‘loot’ (1901). It is also a quality which Clement played upon in creating opportunities to expose curators to the aesthetic properties of his collections through physical inspection or illustration.
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The result of acknowledging such complexities and contradictions within the collecting process, on the part of both collector and curator, is to unsettle the scientific edifice of collecting. It also destabilises the notion that anthropological collections simply represent the material culture of a particular group of indigenous people. When we realise the degree to which collecting is not determined by the rhetoric of ‘science’, we become much more sceptical about the basis of the divisions which museums, as ‘scientific’ institutions, have imposed on the collected Australian Aboriginal material.

The entanglement of anthropology and natural history

The second complexity which is apparent in the collection process is the link between bodies of anthropological objects and natural history specimens which have been collected from the same place, both of which are imbued with Aboriginal meaning. It is striking that objects, such as those contained in Hillier’s and Clement’s collections, which were obviously linked at the time of their collection in the field, were separated into museum-defined anthropological and natural history categories once they arrived in Britain. As a result they continue to be held in correspondingly different types of museums and museum departments.¹ These categories reflect differences between and within the collecting institutions which acquired the material, and which in many cases continue to hold it, rather than in the material itself. These divisions do not reflect the indigenous classifications which anthropological museums sought to represent.

As described in Chapter 4, previous accounts of collecting have largely ignored this link between natural history and anthropological collections. When it has been noted, it has often taken the form of a brief acknowledgement that a particular collector collected both anthropological and natural history objects (Cannizzo 1998). That is, there is an implicit assumption within the literature that the bases for these categories are self-evident in the material, and that they are fixed, immutable, cross-cultural, and unproblematic. However as Hillier’s

¹ At a more pragmatic level, the division of this material into natural history and anthropological categories, and its subsequent curation within different museums, has served to conceal much material of anthropological interest.
correspondence with curators clearly shows, for the collector in the field such material was intertwined.

There is an apparent contradiction here. Firstly, as discussed in Chapter 3, during the second half of the nineteenth century models of 'scientific' collecting were developed in Britain, such as the one articulated in the 1892 edition of Notes and queries. These models encouraged the collection of a systematic sample of objects representative of those made and used by indigenous people in a particular location. Secondly, as is discussed below, it has been well documented that for Aboriginal people, the whole of the landscape with which they interacted was, and in many cases, is layered with meanings. It might be therefore be expected that a collection such as Hillier's, which encompassed both artefacts and examples of fauna and flora encoded with indigenous meanings, would have been curated and interpreted as a single anthropological collection. However the curatorial practices of the time led to collections being divided and transformed into distinct anthropological and natural history objects. In other words, if the object of anthropological museums was to collect examples of all cultural objects from a particular region such as Australia, and for Aboriginal people the whole of the landscape was(is) in many respects artefactual, how is it that some objects have been defined as non-cultural natural history specimens?

The anthropological/natural history division was, and continues to be, a result of the way in which the modern western intellectual tradition has divided up knowledge about the world into discrete packets such as 'science' and 'art'. Within the natural history category, there has been a further division of the collected material into separate classes, such as entomology and mammalia. In relation to Hillier's collecting, the museum departments of each of these classes curated the collected material differently and engaged in separate correspondence relations with him. Thus Hillier's collections which are held in the ethnographic section of the British Museum are now isolated from those held in numerous departments of the BM(NH).

There is a challenge to develop a framework for interpreting collecting which incorporates such contradictions – one which does not ignore the entanglement of anthropological objects and natural history objects at the place of collection,
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one which acknowledges the perspectives of the different agents involved, and which accounts for the complexity of the colonial engagement between museum and Aboriginal people, through the mediating role of the field collector.

Environment or landscape?

Responding to these complexities and contradictions, and drawing on the material presented in this thesis, I suggest that collections like Hillier’s and Clement’s result from tension between two contrasting views of the place of collection. One is set out in the scientific rationality of the museum, and the other is inherent in the indigenous understanding of place. That is, the tension between a scientific, externally prescribed view of the place of collection as a physical environment, and a perception of the place as a landscape of indigenous meaning and practice. As Gosden et al (1994) and Rowntree (1997) have noted, ‘landscape’ is an ambiguous term. Here I view landscape as a cultural construction, not simply a passive context within which social action occurs (Gosden et al 1994). The collected landscape is one understood by the Aboriginal people, through their knowledge of inter-relationships between places, living things and material culture. Landscape is also a concept which acknowledges the inter-relationships between different features of the landscape, and between people and place. Collections such as those of Hillier and Clement are a product of the mediation between these two differing notions of place the Australian indigenous and the British museum perception of place.

Using the concept of the collected landscape as a way of describing complexities of collecting allows links to be made between material now held in separate anthropological museums and natural history museums. It also allows links to be drawn between the objects held by these institutions and other cultural products which document the response of collectors to their surrounds. These include Clement’s photographs and Hillier’s drawings and watercolours of artefacts and natural history specimens, as well as their writings in published articles and their correspondence with museum curators.
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As shown in Chapter 6, the task of the various departments in natural history museums was to classify and name the material. In doing so the indigenous information was dropped, the name and information about its role in Aboriginal society remaining in the archive. As a result, what were once the interwoven elements of an indigenous landscape became disconnected. The stripped objects were then put into a new global classificatory system, with new meanings and interpretations applied to them. This was very much a colonial process of transposing a global landscape over the pre-existing indigenous one. Thus the Diyari Chooda-chooda becomes transformed into Sminthopsis crassicaudata centralis. The transformation of the anthropological material was perhaps more subtle, through its placement in a comparative framework. I do not suggest that this was necessarily a deliberate process, but resulted from the curatorial practices of the time.

Part of these validating practices involved the museums’ understanding of the context of collection. The relationship between the collector and the collected object which was implicitly constructed by museums was of the objective European collector acquiring natural history material from a domain without people, and acquiring ethnographic material from ‘traditional’ peoples, with the traditional label enhancing the value of the material – ‘uncontaminated’ by emic understandings of the relationship of these objects to the cultural construction of landscape. In summary, for the external scientific gaze of the museum, the place of collection was an entity to collect, remove and organise, thereby erasing the relationships between the different indigenous landscape elements present in the place of collection, and replacing them with the landscape of lists, typologies and catalogues.

By contrast, for Aboriginal people, place was a very different entity. It was not an external phenomenon from which to collect. Each part of the landscape was, and in many places continues to be, charged with meaning. Rhys Jones has evocatively described the way in which for Aboriginal people what western science describe as different ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ features interact as part of the landscape of the Gidjingali people from Arnhem Land (1985; 1991). He argues that ‘Aboriginal conceptions of the landscape involved a seamless integration of natural and cultural factors’ (1991:23). Additionally, as Luise Hercus shows, much of the meaning lay in the relationships between different
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features (1990:147). There were no clear breaks between natural and cultural elements, as required by western knowledge practices.

Given these two contrasting understandings of place, one can ask what sort of a place European collectors saw and tried to collect. Did they see the indigenous landscape sketched by Hercus and Jones? Or did they see it only in terms of the objective external environment promoted by the British scientific and museum world, as in the case of Emile Clement, whose gold-prospecting entrepreneurialism appears to have restricted him to seeing the northwest region simply as a landscape full of exploitable opportunities.

The esteemed geographer C.R. Twidale began an article entitled ‘understanding landscape’ with the following assessment of indigenous peoples’ relationship to landscape.

Certainly the Australian aborigines ... had a keen eye for country, and a profound knowledge of their environments. They felt a need to explain what they saw and knew so intimately. Their “explanations” were simplistic and didactic, and would be considered irrational and unsatisfactory in terms of Western logic and science, but the fact remains that they endeavoured to account for scenery. (Twidale 1986:1).

In this brief passage Twidale alludes to ‘environment’, ‘scenery’, and ‘country’, three very different presentations of place. In many ways these representations describe the three ways in which museums, collectors and Aboriginal people engaged with the place of collection. Collectors confronted by scenery tried to turn it into a scientifically described environment, yet they engaged with it through the assistance of Aboriginal people and their notion of a landscape or ‘country’.

Hercus’s critique of Reuther’s work, discussed in Chapter 8, reveals how the ‘scientific’ framework which guided his meticulous collection of the ‘facts’ about traditional knowledge in the Lake Eyre region, resulted in him obtaining only a partial knowledge of the indigenous landscape. Whilst his systematic technique of asking the same questions of each place delivered an inventory of ‘facts’ about different points in the landscape, its linearity blinkered him from any possibility of fully comprehending the significance of these places to
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Aboriginal people. That is, much of the landscape’s meaning to Aboriginal people lay in the connections between places, rather than in the places themselves. Thus Reuther was unable to collect the music and the vision of these interconnections (Hercus 1990:147).

I interpret Hillier’s and Clement’s collecting activities as the product of the ‘landscapes’ in which they were embedded. The landscape which they sought to represent consisted of the flora, the fauna and the people which made up that place, as well as the inter-relations between the different elements (and Aboriginal knowledge), and therefore consisted of both tangible and intangible elements. These domains of collection were largely accessible to these European collectors through the knowledge and assistance of indigenous people. They relied on their assistance in acquiring natural history specimens, they recorded the Aboriginal economic uses of much of the material and indigenous knowledge of the life cycles of plants and animals, recording indigenous terms for the various types of plants and animals. For anthropological material the involvement of indigenous people is clear, with collectors reliant on indigenous descriptions and attributed meanings of various objects. I am not suggesting that these collectors were deliberately taking a landscape approach to their collecting, but it is the outcome. This is partly because they were accessing the elements of the landscape through Aboriginal people and their knowledge.

Recognising the links between anthropological and natural history material also has implications for our understanding of what constitutes material culture. It is most often associated with the modification of materiality. Through the processes of classifying and naming, both natural history and anthropological material was transformed by museums into material culture. Based on the case studies of the displacement of the indigenous landscape by the colonial landscape, the argument put forward here is that such modification occurs at both the physical and the cognitive level.

Viewing collection as the mediation between two understandings of place acknowledges the complex interactions between curator, collector and Aboriginal people which have resulted in these objects being in British museums. Further, it acknowledges the agency of each of these agents, the
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colonial context in which collecting occurred, and the specificity of the place in which it occurred. It also reconnects bodies of related material which have become disconnected as a result of museum curation. It is a way of linking the collection of what in the eyes of British institutions were separate classes of objects but in the eyes of those who made them and used them were not.

Conclusion

The lists and letters generated by the movements of such objects serve as both a source of information, and a metaphor for the style of engagement between collector and curator, and the engagement between author and research. Hillier’s list, discussed in the introduction, is subversive both for its ability to show the connectedness of central Australia to the colonial metropolis of Adelaide, and its ability to show central Australia as a place into which European objects were traded, rather than simply a place where Aboriginal objects were traded out of. Similarly, my thesis subverts the impression of Australia simply being a place Aboriginal objects move away from. This is only part of the picture. Other ‘objects’ move in different directions; relationships are enacted, in part a reaction to the movement of Aboriginal objects to Britain.

The geographical focus of this thesis began in Britain, the current location of these collections, and ends in Australia, at the point where they were acquired from Aboriginal people. In doing so it problematises the conventional depiction of anthropological collecting as being about objects moving from Australia to Britain. Collection was a part of relationships in which Aboriginal objects were exchanged for other tangible and non-tangible entities such as collecting equipment, and access to scientific circles. The contemporary movement of repatriation of objects from Britain to Australia echoes the power of these relationships to endure, transform and shape contemporary practices.
Appendices
Summary of H.J. Hillier's anthropological collections held by museums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>number of objects</th>
<th>museum</th>
<th>provenance</th>
<th>comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1905</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Arunta</td>
<td>donated via Mr Lang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1908 (accessioned)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
<td>Killalpaninna (83) ? (2)</td>
<td>sold via SJ Hillier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1908 (accessioned)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>sold via SJ Hillier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>Cambridge University Museum of Anthropology &amp; Archaeology</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>sent via Dr RH Marten - £15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circa 1909</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Field Museum</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>bought by Fuller from SJ Hillier, later acquired by the Field Museum in the 1950s as part of the Fuller Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circa Feb 1910</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Horniman Museum</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>sold via SJ Hillier for £10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circa Sept 1910</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Australian Museum</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>sold by HJ Hillier for £40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Royal Museum of Scotland</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>sold via SJ Hillier for £6.14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1911 (accessioned)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
<td>Hermannsburg?</td>
<td>sold via SJ Hillier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1913</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM)</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>purchased from J Edge Partington by the PRM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Summary of natural history material given to BM(NH) by Hillier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access. No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902.9.8</td>
<td>mammalia</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903.5.21</td>
<td>mammalia</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905.232</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905.3.28</td>
<td>mammalia</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905.8.9</td>
<td>mammalia</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905.10.31 [1-59]</td>
<td>reptiles</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906.6.21</td>
<td>mammalia</td>
<td>Killalpaninna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907.10.30 [1-9]</td>
<td><em>hyla gilleni</em></td>
<td>Hermannsburg,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>limnody nastus ornatus</em>?*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>larvae <em>salmowiulgbii</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907.233</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908.133</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908.177</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908.278</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909.95</td>
<td>1 wooden box of insects containing:</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 orthoptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 neuroptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 hymenoptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 rhynchota</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 diptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 coleoptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 lepidoptera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909.125</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909.233</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910.158</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910.5.28 [1-46]</td>
<td>reptiles</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910.254</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911.311</td>
<td>entomological specimens</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Summary of Clement's Western Australian anthropological collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number of objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig</td>
<td>106+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunterian Museum, Glasgow</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford</td>
<td>146 + photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum der Kulturen, Basel</td>
<td>108+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow State University Museum</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Museum, London</td>
<td>822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Museum of Ireland, Dublin</td>
<td>72 + photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horniman Museum, London</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musée d’ethnographie, Geneva</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester Museum 3</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Übersee Museum, Bremen</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Städtisches Museum, Göttingen</td>
<td>37+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum of Economic Botany, Kew</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol Museum</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fowler Museum, Los Angeles</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton Museum</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sammlung für Völkerkunde, St Gallen</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Völkerkunde, Frankfurt</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Dresden</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich Museum</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Museum, London</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hove Library</td>
<td>6^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin</td>
<td>large^5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge</td>
<td>photographs (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linden-Museum, Stuttgart^6</td>
<td>photographs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                                                    | 1662+             |

---

1 These are minimum figures. Objects associated with Clement may also be held in Antwerp and at the Pigorini museum in Rome.

2 This includes the eight objects transferred to the British Museum from Kew in 1960.

3 The objects now in Manchester Museum are part of the collection sold to the Halifax Museum by Clement in 1927. They were purchased by the Manchester Museum in 1955.

4 In July 1920 Clement donated two glass spear heads and four cowrie shells to the Museum of the Hove Library (Minutes of Hove Library Committee p48 DO/A15/5).

5 In a letter (25/8/1898) to Anatole von Hügel, of the Cambridge Museum, Clement wrote - 'Professor von Luschan of the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, also has a large collection from me'. Unfortunately further information about the Berlin holdings of Clement's collections is currently unavailable (Dr M Schindelbeck - Curator, Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin pers com).

6 In a letter to the Basel Museum, 13/7/1900, Clement mentions having previously sold a collection to Count von Linden of the Stuttgart Museum.
### Summary of Clement's Western Australian natural history collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal botanical Gardens, Kew</td>
<td>Botanical specimens c700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural History Museum</td>
<td>entomological, zoological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Collection No 1898.188</strong>¹, consisting of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>485 Heterocera [moths]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 Coleoptera [beetles]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Diptera [mosquitos &amp; flies]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Hymenoptera [ants, bees &amp; wasps etc]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Hymenoptera nests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Neuroptera [nerve-winged &amp; net-winged insects]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All provenanced to Sherlock River, Western Australia, purchased from Dr E Clements, Harwood North Finchley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Collection No 1900.220</strong>² consisting of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>115 dep Phalaeaeoe [?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 dep Rhopalocera [butterflies]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33 Rhynchota (25 Hem, 8 Hom) [beaked insects]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26 Neuroptera [nerve-winged &amp; net-winged insects, dragonflies etc]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Orthoptera [grasshoppers]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Diptera [mosquitos &amp; flies]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Hymenoptera [ants, bees &amp; wasps etc]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Coleoptera [beetles]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All provenanced to Western Australia, 'purchased and collected by Dr Clements'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Twelve specimens³ from West Australia including two new Lizards (Varanus brevicauda and Lygosoma gastrosigma); collected by Dr E Clement; purchased’ . These two species are illustrated in Boulenger (1898).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Oxford University Museum            | entomological specimens             |
| Rijksherbarium, Leiden              | botanical specimens                  |
| Berlin Botanisches Museum           | botanical specimens                  |
| Dublin Museum                        | botanical specimens                  |

¹ Ref: BNHM Zoological Accessions [Register]- Insecta, Vol VI 1894-1900, p260. See also British Museum Annual Returns of Progress & c for Year 1898 [Dept of Zoology - Insecta] p119

² Ref: BNHM Zoological Accessions [Register]- Insecta, Vol VI 1894-1900, p264.

## Summary of Clement's German Bronze Age archaeological collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Museum (1877 10-29.1-22)</td>
<td>found in tombs 300 yards from the River Neisse, Silesia, between Muskau and Forste</td>
<td>22 bowls etc purchased for £5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Museums of Scotland (1877.3.1-119)</td>
<td>near Forste, Silesia</td>
<td>119 objects comprising – 45 cinerary urns, 37 cups, 18 dishes, 7 toy pots, 3 urn covers, 5 jugs, 1 charcoal burner, 1 tazz-shaped vessel, 1 double urn, 1 collection of pin and ring fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin [purchased in 1883]</td>
<td>from near Muskan, Silesia</td>
<td>121 objects purchased for £45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading, purchased on June 26 1885</td>
<td>Found 3 miles N of Muskan, Silesia. The cemetery was located 500 yards from the Neisse River.</td>
<td>a collection of German Bronze Age pottery £20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>from near Muskan, Silesia</td>
<td>5 boxes of sherds &amp; vessels (78 objects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (1886.1514 - 1529)</td>
<td>Gübew, Silesia</td>
<td>'17 vases of unglazed yellowish-brown pottery; and a large flat circular plaque, perhaps the stand or cover of a vessel; and five small fragments of oxidized iron, perhaps of pin of some kind - all from Gübew, Silesia - given by E Clement'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1On 20 July 1934 two objects from this collection (No 248/12 and 248/40) were presented to the museum of the Dept of Geography and Anthropology, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.
TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM CLEMENT ABOUT THE EXCAVATION OF THE COLLECTION OF BRONZE AGE MATERIAL, HELD BY READING MUSEUM

"Statement of Mr Clement relating to the finding of the Celtic pottery in the central division of the large Wall Case (Bronze Period)"

I beg to state the following facts relative to the Prehistoric Pottery excavated by me in August 1884 and now in the Reading Museum.

Three Miles north of Muskau, one of the oldest towns of Silesia (the name of which is derived from the Vendish Musha men and Koroo = toro[?]) and 500 yards from the right bank of the river Neisse is a plateau about 60 feet high, covered with a dense pine forest.

On this plateau, which consists of ferruginous sand of a gritty nature, strewn with boulders, the urns were found from 2 to 3 feet below the surface.

The Cinerary Urn was invariably covered with a dish-like urn - cover (vide margin) but only in very exceptional cases was this cover intact.

From 2 to 5 and even 8 and 10 food and drinking vessels were placed close to the central urn in an upright position: and in one case as many as 22 vessels of all shapes and sizes were standing around the urn.

The central or cinerary urn was invariably from 1/2 to 2/3 filled with calcined human bones: in a few instances, bronze rings, fibulae etc were in the urn mixed with the bones and ashes, but frequently in a molten and misshapen state, so that the object was recognised with great difficulty. Drops of molten bronze were often found adhering to the bones, which left little doubt that the bodies, with the ornaments on, were exposed to the action of fire.

The urns were placed in regular rows, radiating from a common, circular centre and each set 4 feet apart from the other.

The diameter of this circle was 15 feet and on the East side of it were two parallel rows of stone 5 feet apart and 2 feet below the soil. These stone slabs, from 15 to 20 inches long and from 10 to 12 inches broad, still in an upright position but embedded in the soil, were roughly split and formed probably the fencing of a road, 12 yards in length, leading to the circular space which contained no urns or pottery of any kind.

\footnote{This title was added to the letter after it was received by museum. The large wall case refers to where the objects were displayed in the Reading Museum. The letter when inspected in August 1994 was in an envelope titled 'concerning the Silesian Bronze Age Pottery'.}
Urn containing children's bones were surrounded by small vessels, some of which could not have served as domestic utensils, but were probably toys, generally very roughly made and of very coarse clay.

The 26 beads of clay, now in the Reading Museum, were in a children's urn (age about 10 years) and were lying on the top of the ashes and in a position to leave it without doubt, that they were threaded when placed within it, as the beads were lying in a row close to each other.

In no single case were the urns found covered with stone slabs, or surrounded with stones, but sharp chips of flint (many showing the action of fire upon them) were frequently lying by the side of the cinerary urns. In one case, one set of vessels was about 18 inches below the surface and another set 18 inches beneath that. The top urn contained a child's bones.

I was inclined to search on this Plateau for pre-historic remains, because on the other, left bank of the river Neisse, on a similar elevation of ground, I found eight years ago over 200 urns, but of Germanic type and later date.

Yateley Grange
Oct 1885
E Clement
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