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Excavating MacGregor: reconnecting a nineteenth century collection from Papua New Guinea

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Theory versus practice in the duplicate selections from the British New Guinea Official collection

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Reconstructing the concepts and methods used to select objects from the British New Guinea Official collection at the Queensland Museum for exchange with other museums exposes intriguing differences between theory and practice that shed light on how ethnographic material was valued at this specific time and place. The large scale of the Official collection coupled with a lack of storage space had a major effect on how Charles de Vis, curator at the Queensland Museum, identified supposedly 'duplicate' material for distribution to the British Museum, the Queensland Museum and two additional museums in the Australian colonies. Although his relationships with curators at two of the museums probably had a minor influence on his selections, the bulk of the objects was chosen from categories with the largest number of specimens. Multiple copies of undecorated forms that de Vis had registered sequentially were also targeted, especially in cases where the original uses by the source communities were obscure to the curator. Although the concept of 'uniqueness,' probably influenced by concepts derived from biological taxonomy, guided how de Vis made his choices, the logistical demands of curating such a large collection had the most impact on the duplicate selection.

❑ William MacGregor, Queensland Museum, duplicates, Charles de Vis, specimen exchange

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As part of his responsibilities as Administrator and later Lieutenant Governor of British New Guinea (BNG) between 1888–1898, Sir William MacGregor assembled a vast and highly varied collection of nearly 11 000 cultural objects, which he intended would remain intact for the use and enjoyment of the descendants of their original owners.[1] MacGregor's view was not shared by some contemporary museum professionals who saw the Official collection as containing much superfluous material that could be repurposed to obtain objects not present in their collections. Not long after the first shipment of artefacts arrived at the Queensland Museum (QM) in October 1892, the Curator, Charles de Vis, began agitating for some items to be released so they could be used as 'duplicates': i.e. for use as a kind of currency to use in exchange for additional specimens (chiefly biological) not already in the museum's collections (Quinnell 2000: 89–91). Motivated by a passion for describing the natural world in taxonomic terms, de Vis was constantly seeking ways to expand the diversity of the holdings of the museum. Although he had no formal training in biology during his degree at Cambridge University in the U.K., de Vis was offered the job as curator at the Queensland Museum because the Trustees were impressed by his enthusiasm for and knowledge of natural history as exhibited by the numerous articles he wrote in a weekly newspaper. During his career as Curator and later Director of the Queensland Museum, de Vis wrote 130 articles, largely in the field of vertebrate taxonomy (including palaeontology), where he has been characterised as an extreme 'splitter.' According to Gilbert (2006: 2), 'articles on birds, fish, reptiles, batrachians and marsupials, and accounts of his palaeontological explorations poured from his pen,' but only 22 per cent of the species he identified are still valid today (Ingram 1990: 2; Gilbert 2006).

By requesting that some of the Official collection be converted into duplicates, de Vis was responding both to practical considerations in terms of the lack of space in the New Guinea Gallery at the Queensland Museum as well as the existence of a lively international exchange network among museums, each seeking to enhance the breadth of their collections by brokering material which they considered as surplus to their needs. In the late nineteenth century, museums had 'an encyclopedic [*sic*] orientation' that created a desire 'to have one of everything' (Nichols 2021: 121). Since it was not possible for a single institution to mount multiple collecting expeditions across the globe, museums actively sought other means to acquire collections from regions not well represented in their holdings. Rather than make direct purchases, curators with limited funds often obtained the desired material by exchange with other institutions (e.g. Philp 2011; 2021; Ville et al. 2020). Through this process both museums offered items considered non-essential for their respective collections (e.g. Walsh 2002; Nichols 2016). Objects chosen for exchange were treated as 'surplus' to the collection largely because they were treated as to be copies of other items already held at the museum. These items, widely termed 'duplicates,' were used as a kind of currency to enable the 'purchase' of different kinds of things that were not already in the collection or, as argued by Walsh (2002), could also be used to strengthen political ties with certain countries or repay favours. In the recipient venue they would become valued specimens because they helped the museum meet its goal of obtaining a comprehensive collection (e.g. Nichols 2016; 2021).

With the advantage of hindsight, it has been argued that the method employed by museums around the globe for choosing ethnographic objects as duplicates was influenced by the contemporary emerging field of biological taxonomy in which the classification of things was central to scholarship (e.g. Philp 2011; 2016; 2021; Walsh 2002; Nichols 2018; 2021; Ville et al. 2020). If the museum already possessed an example of a known kind of thing (e.g. a biological species), then it was felt that additional cases were unnecessary 'duplicates' that could be put to better use in obtaining something not already held in its collection. Consequently, multiple specimens of the same biological species became especially valuable commodities for brokering exchanges. In this way museum collections became

'scientific commodities' (Philp 2021: 233) within an international 'exchange industry' (Philp 2011). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during the heyday of exchanges among museums, ethnographic objects were often selected as duplicates in exchange for natural history specimens, which were more highly prized by curators, most of whom had scientific backgrounds with little knowledge or training in the nascent discipline of Anthropology (Philp 2011; Nichols 2016). It is therefore likely that in requesting the release of some objects from the Official collection, de Vis was hoping to acquire natural history specimens not held at the Queensland Museum.

The actual choice of duplicates from cultural collections would not have been straightforward for de Vis, a biologist, because, unlike in the discipline with which he was familiar, a single, well-established and widely accepted classification system for cultural objects did not exist. Although the term 'type' as a substitute for 'species' was widely used in the nineteenth century by scholars working in the fields of Ethnology and Archaeology, the actual practice of classifying objects in a museum setting was generally situational, unlike the established practice in Biology which was based on the universal Linnean classification system (e.g. Nichols 2021). At the time when de Vis was making his selection of duplicates at the Queensland Museum, there were no well accepted classification schemes for material culture from Melanesia available for his use: for example, Haddon's (1900) influential typology for stone clubs was not yet available. Consequently, de Vis had very little prior scholarship concerning the classification of cultural material for British New Guinea to use as the basis for identifying duplicates.

In 1897 de Vis selected 4005 objects he considered to be superfluous to the Official collection from among those that had been registered by that time. Although his intention was that these could be used by the four museums considered to have a financial stake in the Official collection as currency in exchanges with other institutions, very few were ever leveraged in this way (see Torrence et al. 2020) (Table 1).[2] The substantial size of the duplicate collection provides an excellent opportunity for considering if and how de Vis' choices actually conformed with the assumption that duplicates were 'surplus' objects. The classification schemes employed by de Vis when he was registering the objects, together with the specific terms used in the description of the duplicates, are also revealing as a record of how the material culture of the indigenous groups of British New Guinea was conceived and valued by a museum professional in late nineteenth century Australia. Through an examination of the duplicate selection from the material registered in the Official collection, inferences are made about the factors that contributed to the choice of the duplicates. In the end it appears that practical considerations weighed more heavily than theoretical concepts or taxonomies.

TABLE. 1. Comparison of the duplicates selected by curator Charles de Vis with the total Official collection held at the Queensland Museum in 1897.

Category	Official 1897	%	Duplicates	%
TOTALS	**9791**		**4005**	
Arrow	2715	27.7	2269	56.7
Adze/Axe	672	6.9	359	8.9
Ornament, neck	587	6.0	228	5.7
Club	448	4.6	176	4.4
Spear	437	4.5	4	0.1
Spatula, lime	421	4.3	31	0.8
Ornament, arm	308	3.1	139	3.5
Bowl	297	3.0	64	1.6
Belt	228	2.3	88	2.2
Ornament, head	203	2.1	91	2.3
Ornament, ear	200	2.0	45	1.1
Swordclubs	198	2.0	32	0.8
Shield	161	1.6	12	0.3
Ornament, forehead	153	1.6	3	0.1
Raw Material, shell	150	1.5	0	0.0
Raw Material, plant	148	1.5	4	0.1

TABLE. 1. cont. Comparison of the duplicates selected by curator Charles de Vis with the total Official collection held at the Queensland Museum in 1897.

Category	Official 1897	%	Duplicates	%
Canoe ornament	147	1.5	0	0.0
Bag	139	1.4	21	0.5
Drum	118	1.2	29	0.7
Tool	112	1.1	6	0.1
Barkcloth	111	1.1	0	0.0
Bow/bowstring	106	1.1	36	0.9
Pottery/related	101	1.0	2	0.0
Paddle	96	1.0	13	0.3
Clothing, skirt	91	0.9	28	0.7
Raw Material, animal	88	0.9	7	0.2
Charm	87	0.9	7	0.2
Cordage	86	0.9	59	1.5
Mortar	86	0.9	1	0.0
Container, lime	83	0.8	18	0.4
Taro stirrer	68	0.7	0	0.0
Pestle	61	0.6	0	0.0
Wrist guard	60	0.6	29	0.7
Fishing net	57	0.6	22	0.5
Tobacco pipe	57	0.6	6	0.1
Ornament, breast	49	0.5	11	0.3
Needle	40	0.4	0	0.0
Sling stones	40	0.4	22	0.5
Ornament, other	37	0.4	0	0.0
Knife	35	0.4	9	0.2
Basket	34	0.3	32	0.8
Clothing, mourning	32	0.3	11	0.3
Arrow point	31	0.3	16	0.4
Hunting, animal	30	0.3	6	0.1
Musical instrument	27	0.3	5	0.1
Container, other	24	0.2	2	0.0
Ornament, head, comb	24	0.2	5	0.1
Container, water	22	0.2	5	0.1
Carved board	19	0.2	0	0.0

TABLE. 1. cont. Comparison of the duplicates selected by curator Charles de Vis with the total Official collection held at the Queensland Museum in 1897.

Category	Official 1897	%	Duplicates	%
Netting needle	19	0.2	6	0.1
Figure, human	18	0.2	0	0.0
Drill equipment	17	0.2	1	0.0
Barkcloth beater	16	0.2	3	0.1
Canoe, model	15	0.2	0	0.0
Raw Material, mineral	14	0.1	2	0.0
Sling	14	0.1	6	0.1
Raw material, metal	13	0.1	0	0.0
Fishing line/float/lure	12	0.1	7	0.2
Fish trap	11	0.1	2	0.0
Fishhook	10	0.1	4	0.1
Beheading knife	9	0.1	0	0.0
Canoe baler	9	0.1	0	0.0
Grindstone	9	0.1	0	0.0
Human skull/tooth	9	0.1	0	0.0
Raw Material, pigment	8	0.1	0	0.0
Clothing, cape	7	0.1	3	0.1
Dagger	7	0.1	1	0.0
Mancatcher	6	0.1	1	0.0
Skirt cutting board	6	0.1	3	0.1
Ornament, nose	5	0.1	0	0.0
Mat	4	0.0	0	0.0
Cap, netted	3	0.0	0	0.0
Cassowary whisk	3	0.0	0	0.0
Fire-making equipment	3	0.0	12	0.3
Hammock	3	0.0	0	0.0
Headrest	3	0.0	1	0.0
Raw Material, glass	3	0.0	0	0.0
Raw Material, human hair	3	0.0	0	0.0
Sawfish sword	3	0.0	0	0.0
Head carrier	2	0.0	0	0.0
Toy	2	0.0	0	0.0
Door	1	0.0	0	0.0

DUPLICATES IN THEORY

The concept of splitting up a collection to share with other museums was clearly present among museum staff in Brisbane and London from the inception of the Official collection. Shortly after the first shipment of material for the Official collection arrived in Brisbane in 1892, the British Museum (BM) requested a catalogue of the contents, possibly in preparation for laying a claim from its colony (QM Trustee Minutes, 1 Sept 1893; 4 May 1894; see Davies, Chapter 2 this volume). As the cases in the exhibition hall at the Queensland Museum overflowed with registered objects from the Official collection, curator Charles de Vis began removing items and storing them away with the intention that they could be used in future exchanges with other museums (QM Trustee Minutes 3 August 1894). In early 1895, the Chairman of the Museum Trustees reported that, 'The gallery set apart for New Guinea exhibits is now over-filled, notwithstanding that numerous duplicates have been stored away in readiness for distribution to other museums' (Norton 1895: 1).

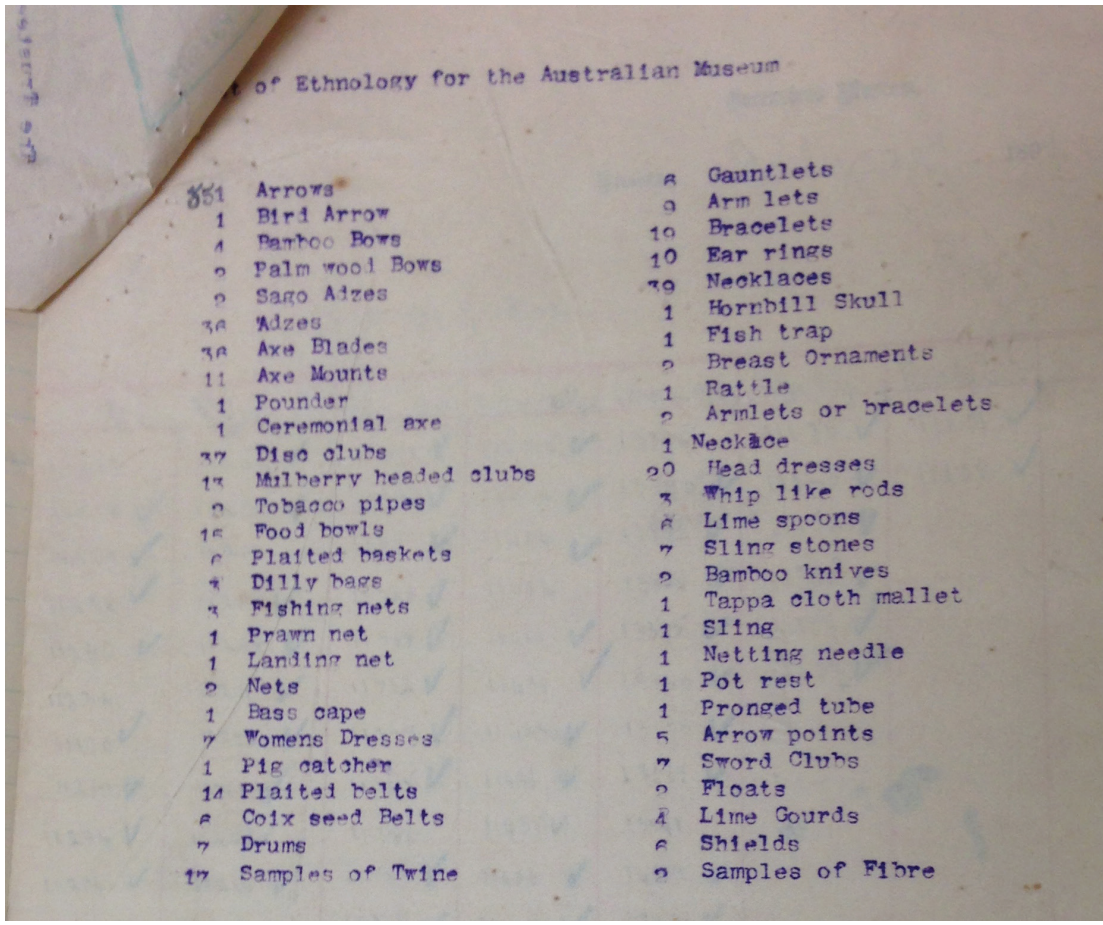
MacGregor was totally opposed to splitting up the Official collection which he clearly envisaged as 'the property of the Possession' (MacGregor 1897a: 88): i.e. British New Guinea. After much debate, described in detail by Quinnell (2000: 89–93), MacGregor was finally persuaded that in cases where there was a reasonably large number of similar artefacts, the 'best' examples could be reserved for the British New Guinea (i.e. Official) collection. Before any 'duplicates' could be used by the Queensland Museum, however, he noted that a distribution should also be made to the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, as recompense for their financial contributions to the cost of running the colony of British New Guinea. The Queensland Museum was assumed to receive a larger portion of the duplicates in acknowledgement of its efforts in curating the British New Guinea collection. In addition, MacGregor gave instructions that a set of the duplicates must also be reserved for the British Museum:

> I would respectively [*sic*.] suggest some arrangement more or less as follows.
>
> (a) Wherever there is only a single specimen it should be placed in the British New Guinea collection.
>
> (b) Where there are a number of specimens of the same article the best at least should be placed in that collection.
>
> (c) Where there are more specimens of one type of article than are required for that collection, then they might be dispersed of by the Trustees, first to fill up vacancies in the national collections of the Contributing Colonies and in the British Museum, and the remainder might be used as exchanges for the Queensland Museum proper or be sold to meet the cost of preparing an illustrated catalogue of the collection (MacGregor 1890b).

What is unusual about the distribution of duplicates from the Official collection is that these were not the usual exchanges between institutions, but one-way transfers considered as a kind of payment to the governments who had assisted in the cost of obtaining the collection. The assumption was not that the material would necessarily enhance the current holdings, but rather that the duplicates were currency to be used by the museums to acquire material they desired through exchange with other institutions.[3] Prior to the duplicate distribution, there appears to have been very little discussion or correspondence between de Vis and the recipients (Australian Museum, National Museum of Victoria, and British Museum) about what they would like to receive. De Vis might have been aware of what some curators desired because he had close colleagues at the Australian Museum. In addition, James Edge-Partington, a voluntary curator at the BM, had visited QM in 1897 and later published several items he had sketched in his series of illustrated albums (Edge-Partington & Heape 1898). Given the treatment of the duplicates once they arrived at their various destinations, however, it is clear that they were not considered as valuable additions to their collections (Torrence et al. 2020).

The selection of duplicates from the Official collection housed at QM began in June 1897 with material that had already been registered. This would have included material that had arrived in Transfers T46, T47, T52, T55 and T60 (see Davies, Chapter 2 this volume). Late in that same year shipments were made to the Australian Museum (AM) (943 objects); National Museum of Victoria (VM) (777 or 817 objects); and British Museum (BM) (721 objects). Each institution received a letter from de Vis and a list with the number of items for each kind of object included in the selection (e.g. Figure 1; Torrence et al. 2020:Fig. 2). Following a request from the Australian Museum, which was the first recipient, de Vis also provided a separate list of arrows with the locations where they had been collected, if known. The objects identified as duplicates had supposedly been recorded in the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897–1898), although Davies (Chapter 2 this volume) has identified serious problems with this source.[4] Unfortunately, some objects from other extant collections at QM were inadvertently mixed in with the Official collection duplicates.

Since this chapter focuses on the basic concepts that structured the choice of duplicates, the lists


of Ethnology for the Australian Museum

351	Arrows	8	Gauntlets
1	Bird Arrow	9	Arm lets
4	Bamboo Bows	10	Bracelets
2	Palm wood Bows	10	Ear rings
2	Sago Adzes	39	Necklaces
36	Adzes	1	Hornbill Skull
38	Axe Blades	1	Fish trap
11	Axe Mounts	2	Breast Ornaments
1	Pounder	1	Rattle
1	Ceremonial axe	2	Armlets or bracelets
37	Disc clubs	1	Necklace
13	Mulberry headed clubs	20	Head dresses
2	Tobacco pipes	3	Whip like rods
15	Food bowls	8	Lime spoons
6	Plaited baskets	7	Sling stones
3	Dilly bags	2	Bamboo knives
3	Fishing nets	1	Tappa cloth mallet
1	Prawn net	1	Sling
1	Landing net	1	Netting needle
2	Nets	1	Pot rest
1	Bass cape	1	Pronged tube
7	Womens Dresses	5	Arrow points
1	Pig catcher	7	Sword Clubs
14	Plaited belts	2	Floats
8	Coix seed Belts	4	Lime Gourds
7	Drums	8	Shields
17	Samples of Twine	2	Samples of Fibre

FIG. 1. The curator at the Queensland Museum, Charles de Vis, sent a list of the contents that had been shipped separately to each of the museums who had been allocated so-called duplicate material. This list prepared for the Australian Museum was included in a letter from de Vis dated 29 July 1897. Courtesy of Australian Museum Archives.

de Vis sent to the museums are accepted as an adequate record, although we realise that these may not be entirely accurate. Both the British Museum (Torrence et al. 2020: Fig. 2) and National Museum of Victoria lists have been amended in pencil, most likely after the material was inventoried and we have adopted the counts resulting from these changes. For the sample sent to Victoria, we also record the numbers given in the Trustees of the Industrial and Technological Museum Annual Report (Walcott 1898: 24), which vary considerably from de Vis' list. It is possible that unrelated material was mistakenly mixed up with the original group of duplicates sent from Brisbane, as the collection was moved among several venues in Melbourne before finally ending up in the Industrial and Technological Museum (Torrence et al. 2020). For the selection made for the Queensland Museum, we depended on the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897–1898). Despite the difficulties of obtaining totally reliable data, we assume that for the purpose of understanding the basic principles used to make the duplicate selection, the extant information represents an adequate approximation of de Vis' intentions.

The treatment of the Official collection duplicates at each of the institutions highlights significant variations in how ethnographic items from British New Guinea were imagined and valued at this period, just as the discipline of Anthropology was being formally established (see Torrence et al. 2020)[5]. Whereas the duplicate selection was welcomed at the Australian Museum, where the artefacts were incorporated into exhibitions and some were used in exchanges, the reception in Victoria was either cool or ambivalent, possibly because 'Ethnography' had not yet been established as a recognised scholarly discipline. After their arrival in Melbourne, the Official collection duplicates were transferred between several institutions and were only registered at the National Museum of Victoria two years after they had left Queensland. The register from the National Museum of Victoria lists eight potential transactions in which about 100 objects were meant to be exchanged with other venues. Some of these never went ahead, however, since many of the objects are still extant in the collections. In contrast, the British Museum printed special labels for the duplicates that identified them with MacGregor, rather than as the Official collection from British New Guinea (Torrence et al. 2020: Fig. 4). Except for several items that appear to have caught the curator's eye and were sketched on acquisition slips not long after they arrived in London, there was no formal listing of the material. The large group of duplicates sent to the British Museum was stored separately from the main collection and were never used for further exchanges or gifts, as originally intended. The majority of the British Museum Official collection duplicates were not registered for well over a hundred years.

DUPLICATES IN PRACTICE

In June 1897, there were 9791[6] items in the Official collection housed at QM. From among these, de Vis selected 4005 as duplicates. Given the concept that duplicates were surplus to the needs of the museum, it is interesting to trace the actual practice that de Vis used to select them. At 41 per cent of the total, the duplicates made up a considerable proportion of the extant Official collection. Since the task of curating and storing this large group of material was clearly a major ongoing obstacle for de Vis, (see Knowles & Curtis, Chapter 15 this volume), it is possible that he used the duplicate selection as an opportunity to reduce his curatorial burden while at the same time freeing up material that could be used in exchanges.

A comparison of the makeup of the duplicate assemblage with that of the extant Official collection in June 1897 is presented in Table 1 and summarised in Table 2, using standardised categories largely following the descriptors in the lists of duplicates that de Vis sent to the various museums. Although the duplicate selection highlights the kinds of objects that may have been most highly valued in the late nineteenth century, most choices appear to have been based on observations made during the cataloguing process, rather than tracking the overall composition of the assemblage on hand. For

example, arrows comprise 56.7 per cent of the total duplicate selection, more than double the 27.7 per cent they represent in the Official collection (Table 1; see also Philp, Chapter 12 this volume). Why was such a plethora of arrows selected for distribution? One possibility is that many of the arrows were considered by de Vis to be highly similar in terms of form and decoration. To achieve a representative sample for the Official collection, it might therefore make sense to select just a few from each 'type,' with the remainder considered as surplus to requirements and available for use as duplicates. On the other hand, arrows are bulky and present difficulties for storage so he might also have been taking a pragmatic approach to reducing storage and curatorial burdens.

In contrast, there is little evidence that in making his choices de Vis paid much attention to differences in the physical characteristics of the arrows because the assemblages lack variation in decorations. Instead, his actions appear to have been highly expedient. In early June 1897 de Vis began selecting duplicates from the most recent shipment of material from British New Guinea, Transfer 60, that had just arrived at QM in March. As by far the largest group of objects to arrive at one time (4315), Transfer 60 must have presented a major logistical problem for de Vis. Arrows took up 50 per cent of this large group. Setting aside arrows and probably other objects immediately after he had registered them might have saved him time and effort as well as the difficulty of finding additional storage for this large group. Based on the order of the entries in the *Ethnology Register (New Guinea)* (Queensland Museum c.1889-1910), de Vis began the choice of duplicates when he was about halfway through registering the arrows from Transfer 60.[7] In the end, approximately half the arrows in Transfer 60 were chosen as duplicates. In contrast, after he finished registering Transfer 60, de Vis only selected c.20–30 per cent of the catalogued arrows that had been received in earlier Transfers.

TABLE. 2. The duplicate selection in comparison to the Official collection as it was constituted in 1897.

Over-represented	Under-represented	Key Absences
Arrow	Spear	Canoe ornament
Adze/axe	Lime spatula	Mortar
Cordage	Raw material	Pestle
Basket	Bowl	Taro stirrer
Wrist guard	Shield	Bark cloth
Sling	Forehead ornament	Pottery
Sling stones		
Skirt cutting board		

To explore the nature of the kinds of things that were assigned to the Duplicates, we have used the list of categories shown in Table 1, which is approximately the same as those used in the lists sent to each museum[8]. These are roughly based on how the objects would have been used. Given its much greater size, it is perhaps not surprising that the makeup of the Official collection is considerably more variable than the duplicate selection: 83 categories of objects versus 56 among the duplicates (Table 1). This listing shows that de Vis clearly chose most of the duplicates from a few categories with the largest number of objects, rather than systematically sampling across a wide range of artefact types, a task that would have been very time-consuming given the size and complexity of the assemblage. Among both the Official collection and the duplicate selection, arrows, adzes/axes, neck ornaments (Figure 2) and clubs make up the largest proportions in that order. Except for arrows and to a lesser extent adzes/axes, the percentage of the total represented in Official collection versus the duplicates is similar. Although these four object categories comprise only 45 per cent of the Official collection, they make up over 75 per cent of the total duplicates, leaving little room to encompass the complete range of variability in the source group.

It is possible that de Vis particularly focused on the stone adzes/axes/clubs because these items already had well-established market values among

western collectors. Based on their popularity, he might have assumed that stone artefacts had good potential to broker exchanges for other institutions. For example, the prices listed in contemporary auction catalogues for these kinds of artefacts were relatively high (Torrence & Clarke 2011:47). On the other hand, the concentration on these categories could indicate that because of the absence of classification schemes within these large groups, all axe-adzes, clubs or necklaces were considered equal.

Another way to consider whether the duplicate selection matches the expectation that it was mainly 'surplus' material is to identify the kinds of things that are considerably over- or under-represented when compared to their frequency within the Official collection. As summarised in Table 2, in addition to arrows and adze/axes, cordage is a significantly overrepresented category among the duplicates. This group is composed of balls of twine made from several kinds of plant fibre with varying thicknesses

FIG. 2. Black and white beaded necklaces were among the most common items in the duplicates. Provenience and ER numbers are unknown: a. AM E.006270; b. AM E.006268; c. AM E. 006267. Queensland Museum Photography, Gary Cranitch with permission of the Australian Museum.

FIG. 3. When the duplicates were being selected, balls of twine were divided up into smaller samples as in this case, so that each museum could receive examples of each type (Davies Chapter 2, this volume). This may explain why cordage is overrepresented in the duplicate selection: Provenience unknown, ER Unknown (BM Oc,MCG.81). Scale bar: 2 cm. ©Trustees of the British Museum.

and methods of construction (see Torrence and Davies, Chapter 7 this volume: FIG. 6). Based on the consistent straight ends of many string samples in the duplicate selection, it seems that they had been cut by a metal implement (Figure 3). Evidently, de Vis divided large balls of twine into multiples so that one 'type' could be shared among all the museums in the duplicate selections (see list in Table 3, Appendix 3 this volume). The balls of twine were originally assigned a single registration number, but in 1897 when they were entered into the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897–1898), an alphabetical suffix (a-d) was added, indicating that the original objects had been divided up. The resulting increase in the number of string samples after the divisions probably explains why the percentage of cordage rolls among the duplicates is so high compared to their proportion in the Official collection. The care and attention given to careful division of the cordage samples is in stark contrast to the way large bunches of arrows were pulled out from a limited number of groups. Baskets and wrist guards were also over-selected for the duplicates.

TABLE. 3. Examples of how duplicates were selected. ER is the registration number in the *Ethnology Register (New Guinea)* (Queensland Museum c.1889–1910).

Hair Whips				Bamboo Tube	
ER	**Museum**	**ER**	**Museum**	**ER**	**Museum**
18691	Official	18707	QM	15194	BM
18692	Official	18708	Official	15195	Official
18693	MV	18708	Official	15196	AM
18694	BM	18709	BM	15197	Official
18695	Official	18710	Official	15198	Official
18696	MV	18710	QM	15199	QM
18697	QM	18711	Official	15200	Official
18698	QM	18711	AM	15201	QM
18699	BM	18712	BM	15202	Official
18700	QM	18713	QM	15203	Official
18701	MV	18714	QM	15204	QM
18702	QM	18714	AM	15205	QM
18703	QM	18715	Official	15206	Official
18703	Official	18716	QM	15207	Official
18704	Official	18716	QM		
18705	Official	18717	QM		
18706	Official	18708	Official		
18706	QM	18708	Official		

These woven objects may have been considered so plain that only a few needed to be retained in the Official collection to illustrate the variety of types, but many of these were clearly sourced from groups of nearly identical objects, such as the baskets in Figure 4.

NOTABLE BY THEIR ABSENCE

Spears stand out as a major inconsistency between the parent Official collection and the duplicates. Only one of the 437 spears were selected as a duplicate and was assigned to QM (Table 1). Given spears are the fifth most common item type in the Official collection, it is quite surprising that they are not included among the duplicates. One explanation for their absence may simply be that the long length of the spears (c. 2.5–3 metres) would have created difficulties for transport, rendering spears inappropriate as objects for international exchanges. Following this logic, the absence of pottery in the duplicate distribution, despite 101 items in the Official collection (Table 1) (Bonshek, Chapter 11 this volume) might also be because they were breakable. Only a single pot rest was assigned to the Australian Museum and this was made from non-breakable plant materials.[9]

An alternative explanation for the retention of pottery at QM is that the examples from the Northeast coast region of British New Guinea pictured in the official report (Anon. 1900: Pl. 5, Figs. 9, 10; Pl. 13, Fig. 25), were considered new discoveries that should be retained. De Vis could not have been influenced by the publication of the items in the report because it dates three years after the duplication selection had been made, but the uniqueness of the pottery was probably communicated to him by MacGregor. In addition, Motuan pottery from the Port Moresby region, which was not illustrated and was very familiar to scholars of British New Guinea, was also retained and not chosen as duplicates. Interestingly, inclusion in the Plates in the 1900 government report have had remarkably little influence on how many of the

FIG. 4. Baskets were among the categories that were overrepresented in the Duplicate selections perhaps because they were considered plain and therefore identical, as in the case of these examples from Normanby (Duau) Island in the Eastern Division that were assigned to the British Museum and Australian Museum, with three others reserved for the Official Collection: **a.** ER14291 or ER14292 (AM E.006372); **b.** ER14291 or ER14292 (AM E.006373) (Queensland Museum Photography, Gary Cranitch with permission of the Australian Museum; **c.** ER14290 (BM Oc,MCG.82). ©Trustees of the British Museum.

artefacts have been viewed and treated since then. For example, some of the stone pestles discussed below were also figured in the same volume but were included in the duplicate selections.

The large discrepancy in the occurrence of lime spatulas, as the sixth most abundant group in the Official collection with 421 objects (4.3 per cent of the total), versus only 31 (less than 1 percent) in the duplicates (Table 1), requires a different kind of argument, since these are relatively small and portable items. When considered together with other objects sampled at much lower levels than their proportion in the Official collection, it seems highly plausible that artefacts with carved or incised designs infilled with lime (e.g. lime spatulas, bowls, pots, shields, swordclubs, paddles and drums), and/or with colourful painted designs (e.g. bark cloth, shields, bags, paddles, tobacco pipes) were largely retained in the Official collection and not made available as duplicates. Part of de Vis' rationale for not releasing decorated items might have been that the motifs and designs were conceived as critical to the definition of a unique 'type'. Since it would have been impractical for him to test this assumption, given his large workload and his lack of expertise in Ethnology, it is more likely that simply the presence of decoration was a key factor in the choice to retain objects. The swordclubs provide strong support for this hypothesis, since the 32 out of 198 that were chosen as duplicates have little or no decoration. The same bias characterises the selection of wooden bowls and shields. Most of the bowls in the duplicate selection are not decorated. Only a thin band of incised designs occurs around the rim of a small proportion of the duplicates (Figure 5). Similarly, a majority of the shields included in the duplicate selection are not carved or painted (e.g. Torrence et al. 2020: Fig. 3).

FIG. 5. Described as 'food bowls' in the lists sent by Curator Charles de Vis, wooden bowls are underrepresented among the duplicates. Most were probably retained because they were decorated with incision and infilled designs, as in the case of these objects from the Trobriand Islands, Eastern Division: **a.** ER8763 (AM E.007086); **b.** ER9203 (AM E.007092); **c.** ER9760 (AM E.007097); **d.** ER11831 (AM E.007090). Queensland Museum Photography, Gary Cranich with permission of the Australian Museum.

Another piece of evidence supporting the importance of decoration in de Vis' choice of duplicates are his choices of body ornaments. Although the very abundant neck, arm and head ornaments occur in the duplicate selections in roughly the same proportion as in the Official collection (Table 1), forehead ornaments ('frontlets' in Table 3) are poorly represented. The neck ornaments chosen are typically homogeneous strings of beads; most of the arm ornaments are simple woven bracelets; and many of the head ornaments consist of plumes of bird feathers that would have been components of larger headdresses. A further way to examine the role of decoration is to consider categories for which there were 50 or more examples in the Official collection but which are absent among the duplicate selections. As perhaps the most colourful and ornate of all the objects in the Official collection, each canoe ornament is likely to have been considered as unique and therefore earmarked for retention. In addition to the canoe ornaments, mortars, pestles, taro stirrers, bark cloth and pottery are also highly ornamented objects with colourful painted or incised designs and many were also carved into distinctive shapes. For example, a letter from MacGregor to de Vis shows that MacGregor considered the bark cloths from the Musa River 'to be of very great value... the patterns quite uninfluenced by anything introduced by Europeans' (MacGregor 1895). Not surprisingly, none of these were considered duplicates despite the large number in this group.

APPORTIONING PLAIN ITEMS

Having selected the bulk of the duplicates from among the most numerous object categories in the Official collection, presumably de Vis then decided to cull excess material from among the seemingly undistinguished, unadorned objects such as baskets, shields, slings, and sling stones. Frequently, he made his choices from among groups of nearly identical objects that had been registered in sequential order. Perhaps immediately following their registration, he split groups of seemingly indistinguishable objects into duplicates assigned to each museum.

It is difficult to discern a standard methodology that de Vis used to choose the specific duplicate objects for each museum. Many were chosen from groups of similar objects that had been entered into the register in consecutive order, but he did not employ a standardised pattern of selection: e.g. one for each museum in order and starting again until all had been allocated. For example, duplicates taken from among five hornbill skulls lacking provenience (ER15105-15109) and registered at the same time were chosen in the following order: first two for the Official collection and then one for QM, one for the AM and the last one again for QM. In this case the Official collection and QM received equal numbers, but the AM was only assigned one and the MV and BM lost out. In another case, a bundle of 8 'arrow guards woven on round twigs' that had been assigned a single registration number (ER15431) was divided up and then allocated so that all museums received equal numbers. Using the order of numbers in the *Ethnology Register (New Guinea)* Queensland Museum c.1889–1910, they were selected as QM, AM, AM, MV, Official, Official, QM, MV, with the BM excluded.

The procedure appears to involve selecting out the most decorated or ornamented and/or best-preserved examples for the Official collection. The next lot was assigned to QM and then the remainder was apportioned among the three other museums, usually with equal numbers. For a selection of 34 head ornaments made from strands of human hair and described as 'hair whip' in the register and 'whiplike rod' in the lists sent to the museums (ER18691-18717), de Vis alternated among the recipients ending up with 12 Official; 13 QM, 3 MV, 4 BM, 2 AM (Figure 6). As shown in Table 3, the order in which they were chosen appears to be haphazard. Presumably criteria such as complexity of how the strands were tied or how well the artefact was preserved were used to select those for the Official and QM collections.

Similarly, a bundle of 24 arrowpoints (all assigned the same number ER15216) were divided up with five each for the AM, MV and QM, leaving nine for the Official collection. In another case in which the artefact was described in the register as 'Piece of bamboo, bifid on one side of node, ornate on other' (ER15194-15207), the BM and AM received one

each (see Figure 13 in Torrence et al, Chapter 8 this volume), four went to the QM and eight were retained for the Official collection, including all the variants with one or both 'forks cut off'. Again, the order in which the objects were registered is not an indication of the way they were selected (see Table 3).

Although the Queensland Museum decided they were 'surplus' to their requirements, several kinds of seemingly simple and plain objects selected by de Vis as duplicates in this manner are absent from most museum collections from British New Guinea, probably because they represent the ordinary, everyday tools or spare parts that did not generally attract the attention of western collectors. Many were not generally offered to foreigners by local people because they were indispensable for daily tasks, as spare parts, or were special items used in rituals. For example, it is also the case that because of their plain appearance, stone pestles and bamboo tubes believed to be acquired from the Marind-Anim punitive raid were divvied up among the museums as duplicates by de Vis. If he had known they were ritual artefacts absent from British New Guinea collections, they would probably have been retained (see Torrence et al., Chapter 8 this volume).

FIG. 6. From a total of 34 items described as 'whiplike rods' three were allocated to each of the British Museum, Australian Museum and National Museum of Victoria. Probably from the North-East Division, these items were head ornaments. They are comprised of bundles of human hair wrapped up with twine leaving a fringe at the end: **a.** ER18714 (AM E.006326); **b.** ER Unknown (AM E.006325); **c.** and closeup ER18711 (AM E.006328). Queensland Museum Photography, Gary Cranitch with permission of the Australian Museum; **d.** BM Oc,MCG.67. Scale Bar: 5 cm. ©Trustees of the British Museum.

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

Although de Vis was broadly consistent in how he apportioned the duplicates among the four recipient museums, there are notable discrepancies. Table 4 lists the selections for each museum using the terminology in the typed lists sent to the institutions or, where they cannot be matched, the categories in the *Annual Report of the National Museum of Victoria* (Walcott 1898). Of the four museums, QM was assigned the largest number of items, whereas a smaller and much less diverse group was sent to the other three museums:

- QM 83 categories comprising 39% of the total
- AM 53 categories comprising 24% of the total
- VM 37 categories comprising 19% of the total
- BM 31 categories comprising 18% of the total

Preferential treatment for the AM may be the consequence of close relationships among curators and scientists at the two institutions over many years. Surprisingly, despite MacGregor's instructions, the British Museum does not appear to have been treated as an equal in the distribution. Many object groups set aside for the colonial museums were excluded from the BM (i.e. arrow point; drum; food bowl, headdress, lime gourd, lime spoon, netting needle,

TABLE. 4. Duplicate selection using descriptive terms that appear in the original lists. For the Australian Museum and the British Museum these include the numbers as annotated on the list sent by de Vis. For National Museum of Victoria both the annotated numbers on the de Vis list and those published in the Annual Report (Walcott 1898) are reported. The Queensland Museum list was compiled from the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897-1898) (see Davies, Chapter 2 this volume).

Item Name	British Museum	Australian Museum	National Museum of Victoria	MV Annual report	Queensland Museum
Adze	31	36	23	22	
Adze and handles					65
Armlet	2	9	5	5	42
Armlet or bracelet		2			
Arrow point		5	5	5	6
Arrow	527	551	528	528	661
Arrow, Bird		1			1
Axe blade	15	36	37	35	64
Axe mount	6	11	8	7	20
Axe, ceremonial		1			
Bow				5	1
Bow, bamboo	6	4	4		11
Bow, palm wood	2	2	1		5
Bamboo knife		2	1	1	5
Bamboo piece	1				3
Bark bag					1
Bass cape	1	1			1
Battle charm					4
Betal mortar					1
Bone dagger					1
Bracelet	10	19	23	23	27
Breast ornament	1	2			8
Cap					2
Chaplet				5	
Club				45 [10]	
Club disc	33	37	29		66
Club fighting					1
Club mulberry headed	6	13	11		20
Coconut spoon					2

TABLE. 4. cont. Duplicate selection using descriptive terms that appear in the original lists. For the Australian Museum and the British Museum these include the numbers as annotated on the list sent by de Vis. For National Museum of Victoria both the annotated numbers on the de Vis list and those published in the Annual Report (Walcott 1898) are reported. The Queensland Museum list was compiled from the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897-1898) (see Davies, Chapter 2 this volume).

Item Name	British Museum	Australian Museum	National Museum of Victoria	MV Annual report	Queensland Museum
Coconut bowl					1
Coconut gourd					2
Coconut water bottle				2	
Coix seed belt		6			
Comb					5
Dilly bag	2	4		3	11
Drill					1
Drum		7	3	3	19
Ear-ring	1	10	9	9	25
Fire Stick					1
Fire tong					2
Fish trap		1			1
Fishing line and reel					1
Float	1	2	1	1	2
Food bowl		15		10	39
Frontlet	1				2
Gauntlet	1	6	9	9	13
Girdle				9 [11]	
Hammer					1
Headdress		20	12	11	39
Headrest				1	
Hornbill skull		1			2
Kangaroo net					1
Knife					1
Lime gourd		4	1	1	13
Lime spoon		6	4	4	21
Mancatcher					1
Necklace	32	40	21	21	130
Net	4	2	1		2
Net fishing		3	2	4	4
Net landing		1	1		3
Net prawn or shrimp		1			1
Netting needle		1	1	1	4
Obsidian lump					2
Paddle					13
Pig catcher	1	1			1
Pipe		3	2	2	3
Plaited basket	3	6	1	1	22
Plaited belt	10	14		11	40
Pot rest		1			1
Pounder	1	1	1	1	2
Pronged tube	1	1	1	1	3
Raddle pots					2
Rasp					1
Rattle		1		1 [12]	2
Sago adze/axe	2	2			4

TABLE. 4. cont. Duplicate selection using descriptive terms that appear in the original lists. For the Australian Museum and the British Museum these include the numbers as annotated on the list sent by de Vis. For National Museum of Victoria both the annotated numbers on the de Vis list and those published in the Annual Report (Walcott 1898) are reported. The Queensland Museum list was compiled from the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897-1898) (see Davies, Chapter 2 this volume).

Item Name	British Museum	Australian Museum	National Museum of Victoria	MV Annual report	Queensland Museum
Sago beater					2
Sample of fibre	2	2	1	1	2
Sample of twine	13	17	5	5	17
Shark hook					4
Shell pendant					1
Shell trumpet					1
Shield	2	6	4	4	
Sling		1	1	1	4
Sling stone		7	5	5	10
Spear					1
Spear point, bundle					1
Swordclub		7	5		20
Tapa cloth board	1				2
Tapa cloth mallet		1	1	1	1
Torch				3	
Tortoise shell, piece					7
Whiplike rod	2	3	3	3	8
Woman's dress		7	7	5	16
Woman's jacket				2	5
Total	**721**	**943**	**777**	**817**	**1564**
% of Total Duplicates	**18**	**24**	**19**		**39**
Number of Categories	**31**	**53**	**37**		**83**

tobacco pipe, sling and sling stone, swordclub, tapa cloth mallet, woman's dress and woman's mourning coat). In contrast, the only categories absent among the extensive QM duplicates can probably be accounted for by different names having been assigned to similar items. For instance, the terms 'torches' and 'chaplet' used in the *Annual Report of the National Museum of Victoria* (Walcott 1898) are not commonly used descriptors and what might appear to be a unique headrest in the MV list was actually a pot rest identical to one sent to the AM. The absence of shields within the QM selection, however, is difficult to understand. The undecorated shields sent to the other museums fit de Vis' method for allocating plain objects from among multiples that were registered in sequence, as described previously. Possibly the absence of shields in the QM duplicate selection was simply an oversight on de Vis' part, because allocation to QM was, of course, only nominal, so any such absences could easily have been corrected subsequently.

Variations from the standard list shared by the three receiving museums are difficult to explain in terms of the way de Vis allocated most objects. Outside QM, the AM is the only institution to receive bird arrows, a fish trap, and, more significantly, a hornbill skull (used as a head ornament) and five head bands made from possum (cuscus) fur (Figure 7). The inclusion of these head ornaments is surprising because they were often worn by men in British New Guinea as distinctive badges showing that the wearer had committed homicide (e.g. English 1894: 68; Williams 1930: 177–179; Beaver 1920: 97–98). The MV was the only museum to be assigned

FIG. 7. One of nine bundles containing strips of possum (cuscus) fur from Collingwood Bay called 'headdresses' sent to the Australian Museum: ER12974 (AM E.006356). Scale bar: 5 cm. Queensland Museum Photography, Gary Cranitch with the permission of the Australian Museum.

coconut water bottles. More puzzling, however, is why 'bass cape,' breast ornament, and sago axe were not assigned to the MV since there were enough of these items in the Official collection to be shared around.

An important factor in the differences among the museums was the possibility of external influences, particularly by staff from other institutions who took a strong interest in the Official collection. For example, Australian Museum curator Robert Etheridge had long term personal connections with staff at QM and visited during the period when the duplicates were being selected (Torrence et al. 2020:114). As a natural historian, he may have specifically requested the hornbill head ornament and the possum skin head bands, which were included among the AM duplicates. Similarly, James Edge-Partington, who was a volunteer with the British Museum, visited Queensland Museum in May 1897 just before de Vis began making the selections (Davies & Quinnell 2021:170) and reported his observations to Charles Hercules Read, Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography (Torrence et al. 2020:118). It seems quite likely that following his requests, the BM was allocated several rare items, such as a skirt cutting board. It is also possible that the exclusion of some categories from the BM selection was deliberate, following Edge-Partington's inspection of the Official collection. He may have suggested to de Vis that the items with little or no ornamentation that made up the bulk of the duplicate selections, especially for objects that were often decorated, (e.g. bowls and swordclubs) were unsuitable for the British Museum collection and so they were duly excluded. Interestingly, the BM still received a comparable number of arrows, probably because de Vis was eager to divest QM of the overwhelmingly large quantity in the Official collection.

By the time he visited QM, Edge-Partington was very well acquainted with collections around the world, as illustrated in his albums depicting material culture from the Pacific region. Once he discovered some highly unusual objects in the Official collection, he might have lobbied to have an example included in the BM duplicate selection. For example, three items from the BM duplicates are illustrated in the third volume of his encyclopaedic study of Pacific ethnographic collections (Edge-Partington & Heape 1898). These included a forehead ornament made from coix seeds with pointed bone attachments (ER12808; BM Oc,MCG.77; Edge-Partington & Heape 1898: Plate 89, No. 3) and a 'tapa cloth board' (skirt cutting board ER11902; BM Oc,MCG.64; Edge-Partington & Heape 1898: Plate 83, No. 12) (Figures 8, 9). The latter was chosen from among six examples in the Official collection, of which one each was assigned only to the BM, QM and Official collection. Finally, all the museums were allocated a single enigmatic forked bamboo object (see more detailed discussion of these objects in Torrence et al., Chapter 8 this volume), possibly at the urging of Edge-Partington, who must have recognised that they were very rare in other museum holdings. Described in the register as 'Piece of bamboo, bifid on one side of node, ornate on other', a sketch of one of the duplicates is included in Edge-Partington and Heape (1898: Plate 91, No. 2). It is also significant that the example chosen for the BM (Q98.Oc2, ER15194) was among only two duplicate items formally documented by the museum shortly after the duplicates arrived in London (Torrence et al. 2020:118–120).

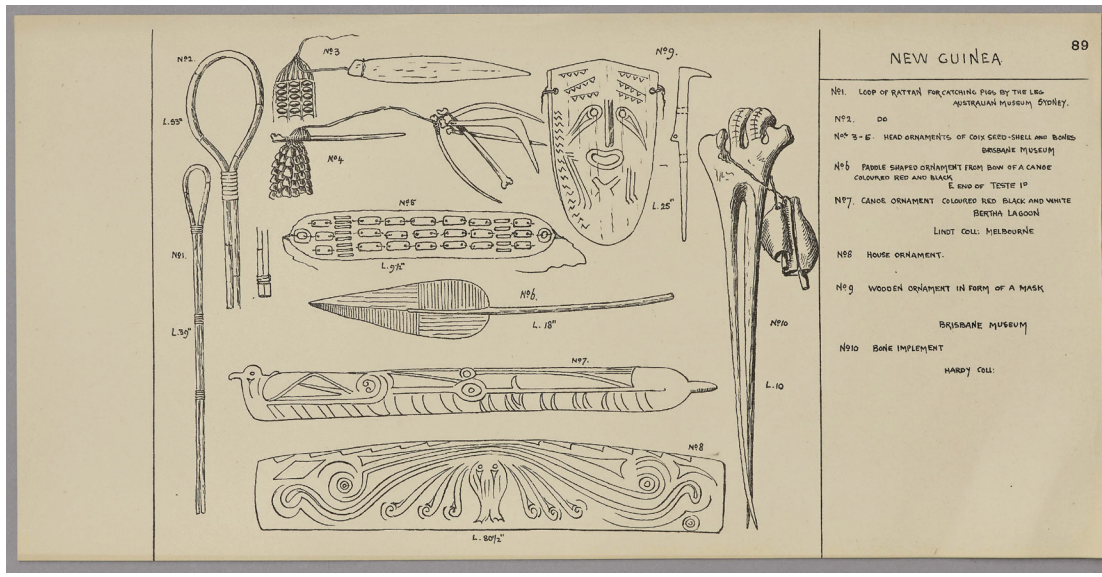


FIG. 8. Three head ornaments from the Official collection (Nos. 3–5) sketched by Edge-Partington when he visited the Queensland Museum in 1897 were later included in his influential book *An album of the weapons, tools, ornaments, articles of dress etc., of the natives of the Pacific Islands* (Edge-Partington & Heape 1898: Pl. 89). Courtesy of the Queensland Museum Research Library.

FIG. 9. This forehead ornament (ER12751 (MAC2875)) made from shell and plant stems attached to a woven piece is probably from the North-East Division. As shown in FIG. 8, it was included in Edge-Partington and Heape's (1898: Pl. 89, No. 5) influential album of Pacific Island artefacts. Scale bar: 3 cm. Queensland Museum Photography, Peter Waddington.

THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE

The composition of the duplicate selections from the Official collection at the Queensland Museum in 1897 shows that practical constraints were probably as important in the choice of objects as was the theory that duplicates could be used as a kind of currency for acquiring new types not already held in the museum. As detailed historical studies at the Smithsonian Institution have previously shown, there was often a large gap between theory and practice in the selection of duplicates (e.g. Walsh 2002; Nichols 2016). During the peak periods of colonial expansion and consolidation in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, museums were frequently overwhelmed by vast quantities of material pouring in from a growing number of expeditions, missionaries, and travellers. Although many curators expressed a desire to leverage 'surplus' material to obtain additional specimens through exchange, particularly to fill in gaps in their global coverage, in some periods they were also faced with a pressing need to divest themselves of an ever-growing quantity of objects/specimens that put serious strains on resources (Walsh 2002).

The 1897 duplicate selection from the Official collection is a good example of how one museum coped with the demands of rapidly growing collections through passing on material which they considered to be excess to requirements. Although labelled as 'duplicates', these were not always copies of objects already in the collection. Clearly, one of Charles de Vis' aims in sending material to the other colonial museums and the BM was to relieve his own museum of the burden of the huge numbers of objects and the resulting demands on storage associated with the Official collection. Arrows would have been a particularly difficult problem due to the large quantities MacGregor included in the shipments and adze-axes also consumed large amounts of space because they are difficult to stack neatly. Why de Vis did not also take advantage of the duplicate distribution to decrease the number of spears is a puzzle, unless their length was a serious obstacle to shipping.

The analysis of the choices de Vis made suggest that his selections were also guided by a basic taxonomy of artefacts based largely on his understanding of how they had been used by people in British New Guinea, but the presence of ornamentation was also a major factor in identifying an object that might represent a unique 'type' which should be retained for the Official collection. One consequence of objects being converted in conceptual terms into scientific 'specimens' based solely on their physical characteristics was that the individual histories of manufacture and use of artefacts made and used by people in British New Guinea were overlooked and/or downplayed. Consequently, some objects used in ritual and others that were very rare or absent in other collections from British New Guinea were inadvertently placed in the duplicate selection, simply because they had simple shapes and lacked ornamentation. Walsh (2002:205) reports a similar, although more exaggerated situation that occurred during one period at the Smithsonian Institution when the concept of a duplicate was equivalent with 'low value' or 'disposable' rather than objects similar in shape, form or usage.

Although de Vis was relatively conservative in his choice of duplicates, concentrating on the most numerous artefact classes as well as those with plain, undecorated items, he also had an urgent need to reduce the curatorial burden created by the substantial size of the collection assembled by Sir William MacGregor and shipped to Brisbane for the Queensland Museum. The irony is that very few of the so-called duplicates were ever used by the recipient museums to broker exchanges and convert their shares of the Official collection into more desirable objects, adding further support for the existence of a major disconnect between the theory and practice in the selection and use of 'duplicates.'

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❑ ENDNOTES

1. For background information on the history of William MacGregor and the 'Official collection' that he assembled, see Torrence et al. (Chapter 1 this volume) and Quinnell (2000).
2. Detailed accounts of the historical background to the decision by the British colonial administration to allow the distribution of duplicates and how they were subsequently treated in the receiving museums can be found in Quinnell (2000).
3. For an account of how the duplicates were treated after they moved from the Queensland Museum to the recipients, see Torrence et al (2020).
4. As discussed by Davies (Chapter 2 and Appendix 3 this volume), the *Ethnological Control Register* (Queensland Museum 1897–1898) is not an accurate account of the choice of duplicates. There are numerous mismatches between notations in the register, the list of objects sent to each museum by de Vis, and recent inventories of the objects at the various institutions by the 'Excavating MacGregor' project team. It seems likely that for some objects the *Ethnology Register (New Guinea)* (Queensland Museum c.1889–1910) was not consulted to ensure that objects selected were part of the Official collection and not another acquisition.
5. Due to limited time and resources, this project was not able to track down accurate information on which artefacts were used in further exchanges of the duplicates from all the four museums. It does appear that none were exchanged from the British Museum and only small numbers from the other institutions.
6. The number includes all objects from Transfers T46, T47, T52, T55, and T60 plus 34 other objects described as 'hair whips' that were among those in the duplicates sent to the museums (See Davies, Chapter 2 this volume).
7. All the arrows and other objects were recorded in the primary register, *Ethnology Register (New Guinea)* before they were entered into the *Ethnological Control Register*.
8. The reason for using these categories is that converting the much larger number of objects in the entire Official collection (11 000 objects) to match those in de Vis' lists is not feasible since since c.1900 objects cannot currently be accounted for as shown by the NF (not found) designation in the Master List in Appendix 2.
9. The headrest assigned to the National Museum of Victoria was wrongly described on the list de Vis sent. It is actually a pot rest.
10. Probably includes five wooden swordclubs, listed separately on other lists.
11. These are likely to be the same kind of object as described for the Australian Museum and British Museum as 'coix seed belt.'
12. The list actually states 'three shells' but these were probably originally tied together as a 'rattle' as in the case of the object sent to the Australian Museum.

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