THE FATE OF THURNWALD'S SEPIK ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS

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Abstract. Whilst the ethnographer Richard Thurnwald was exploring the upper reaches of the Sepik River of German New Guinea, World War One broke out and Anglo-Australian troops took possession of the German colony. Thurnwald's base camps on the lower and upper Sepik were raided by the military and his collections and stores taken to Madang. In early 1915, Thurnwald began the campaign to regain possession of his collections, a process that involved a contest between bureaucratic and scientific interests set against a background of enmity for the defeated Germans and assertion of Australian independence from Great Britain.

Introduction

Kaufmann (1990:592) has noted of Richard Thurnwald's ethnographic collections acquired during his participation in the Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition that

> "most of what Thurnwald collected was lost or, reportedly, destroyed by insects in the crates in which it remained in transit for ten years; what remains, most of it from the Keram River area, is without proper documentation."

According to Melk-Koch (1989:259-260), there were three components to the collections. She states that one component

> "had already arrived in Berlin from San Francisco at the end of 1922. The 49,000 Marks that had been raised for the storage and transportation of [the collections] turn out to have been wasted: the ethnographica had been stolen, apart from '33 mediocre pieces much damaged by moths and [worms] . . .', declared worthless by Eichhorn, and wax cylinders for the Institute of Psychology. In their place worthless 'European' toys had been packed" (translation from German by Harry Beran).

Another component, "stored in Madang", was sent to the Australian Museum in Sydney for safekeeping pending the outcome of a move by Australian authorities to expropriate the material. A catalogue of this component was prepared by W.W. Thorpe (see Appendix One). Melk-Koch writes:

> "When the collection, once 52 crates but now only 25, arrived in Berlin in December 1925, half the contents were packing materials, the clay pots were broken, and the

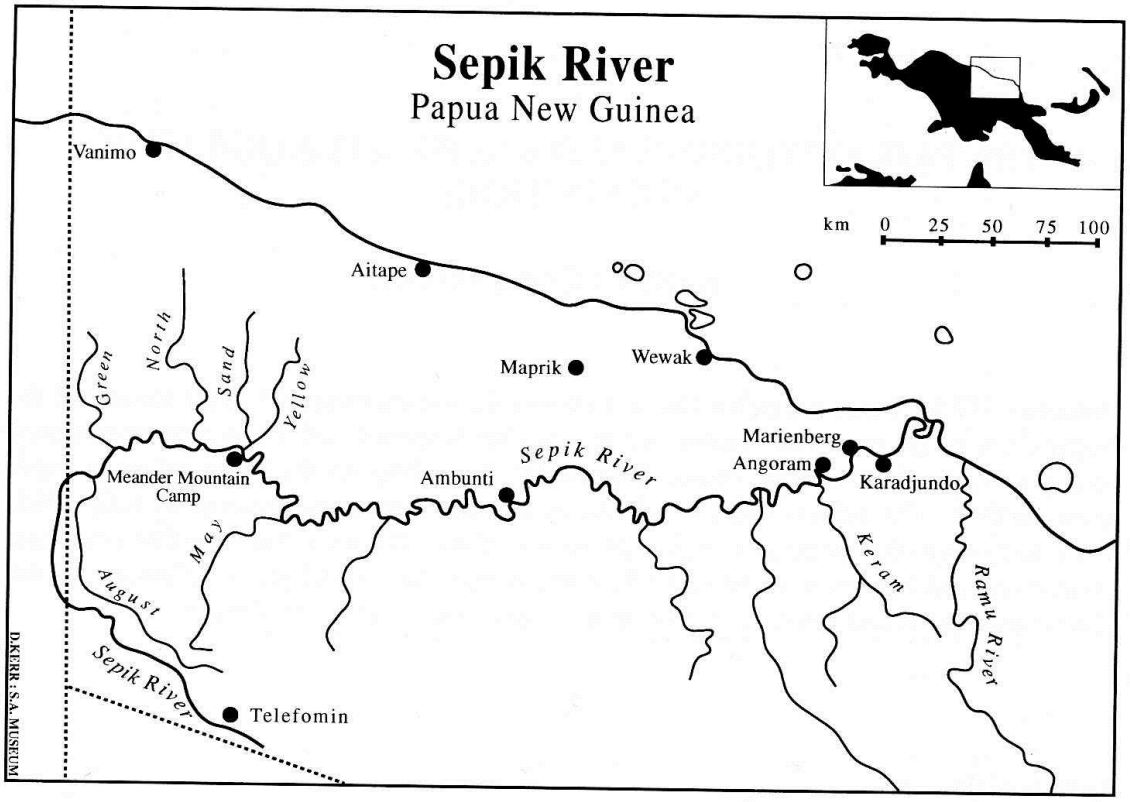

Fig. 1

pieces Sydney was asking for [some 62 objects] were the best ones" (translation from German by Harry Beran).[1]

A third component, consisting of eleven crates supposed to be in Java,

"could not be located . . . In September 1966, Gerd Koch, Head of the South Seas Department of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, was told confidentially in New Guinea by a colleague from one of the research units at the Australian National University that the crates, which in 1914 had been sitting on the beach ready for despatch, are believed to have been sold by Australia to the Museum in Chicago (translation from German by Harry Beran)."[2]

1 The Thorpe list notes 53 cases and packages; upon inspection, it was noted that there was some damage to pots and carved fretwork boards, as well as damage to feather and plant materials by insects; further, the collection was undoubtedly repacked more professionally, using more packing materials, than would have been possible in New Guinea, and in different crates, so this implied criticism is inappropriate.

2 This alleged transaction could not have occurred directly with A.B. Lewis whose South Pacific Expedition on behalf of the Field Museum in Chicago took place from 1909 until 1913, predating Thurnwald's collecting in the Sepik (Parker 1978:5,6). Of course, there is a slight chance that somebody who had met Lewis sent the collection on to him but this seems unlikely as the Australian military authorities were actively collecting and sending material to Australia. In any case, enquiries to the Field Museum in Chicago resulted in the following information by fax from Phillip Lewis (21st March 1997): "I checked with Rob Welsch, and looked in our donor/collector file, and we have no collections from Thurnwald, neither Sepik nor Buin."

Eventually Thurnwald became aware that what remained of his collections had arrived in Berlin but, as he was not offered any financial support to write them up, "he never again contacted the Museum für Völkerkunde" to continue research with the material.

To this day, a thorough account of Thurnwald's Sepik ethnographic collections has not been published. This obviously should be done by a German scholar and is long overdue. However, what happened to the collections left behind in Madang when Thurnwald left New Guinea in 1915 before their arrival in Germany in 1925 can be investigated by reference to memos and correspondence held in the Australian Archives and Australian War Memorial in Canberra and the Australian Archives in Melbourne. These sources reveal a contest between bureaucratic and scientific interests set against a background of enmity for the defeated Germans and assertion of Australia's independence from Great Britain.

The Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition[3]

Richard Thurnwald was engaged as ethnographer for the Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition which was supported by funds contributed mostly by the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin (83%), the rest by the four German states of Lübeck, Saxony, Bavaria and Württemberg (Kaufmann 1990:592). The Expedition, led by Artur Stollé, a mining engineer, commenced in February 1912 and was joined rather late by Thurnwald in January 1913. Kaufmann (ibid.) states that:

> "This expedition . . . aimed at putting the Sepik Basin on the map, in geography as well as geology, botany, zoology, and ethnography . . ."

Joseph Bürgers collected zoological material, Walter Behrmann was the geographer, C.L. Ledermann collected botanical material and Adolf Roesicke, ethnologist, collected ethnographic material. Captain Hollack was responsible for the expedition's steamer *Kolonialgesellschaft*.

Thurnwald seems to have operated virtually independently from the rest of the Expedition. Although he infers that he spent some time among the Banaro of the Töpfer (Keram) River (Thurnwald 1916b), an inference questioned by Melk-Koch (1989:236) from the evidence of his diaries, he assumed survey mode for the next two years and performed a most remarkable feat of European exploration of New Guinea by following the course of the Sepik from its mouth to its source basin, including many of its major tributaries to the north and south, twice walking through to the north coast. He was the first to contact the dense populations of Abelam speakers, recording their magnificent cult houses in photographs (Hauser-Schäublin 1989, Abb.189-198), and was the first

3 A detailed account of the genesis of the Expedition is provided by Melk-Koch (1989:161-5).

European to enter the central highlands of eastern New Guinea, in the vicinity of Telefomin (Craig 1988:7-8).[4]

His itinerary can be determined from his regular reports (1913; 1914a,b; 1916a; 1917a,b) and from the maps in Behrmann (1924):

January 1913 - arrived Sepik River and established a base camp at Karadjundo downstream from Marienberg.

February 1913 - explored west branch of Keram River and Yuat River.

March 1913 - up east branch of Keram to the vicinity of the Ramu River.

May 1913 - up south-west branch of Keram to the southern fall of the Schrader Range.

June 1913 - explored north of Angoram to Murik Lakes.

August 1913 - walked north of Kanduanam village to coast near Wewak.

October-November 1913 - walked from Pagwei on the middle Sepik through the Maprik region to the coast.

December 1913 - by boat back to the Sepik and upstream to establish a base camp at Meander Mountain in the vicinity of Yellow River.

January 1914 - up the Sepik to the Dutch border and up the October River.

February 1914 - explored Green River.

March 1914 - back downstream to his base camp at Meander Mountain, then up the Yellow River.

April-May 1914 - left the Sepik to go to Sydney and reprovision.

August-October 1914 - up the Sepik to the Dutch border and into the highlands to reach a point a short distance upriver from present-day Telefomin; returned to his base camp at Meander Mountain in mid-October and heard rumours of the outbreak of World War One. He decided to continue his exploratory work.

November 1914 - explored the Sand River, an eastern tributary of the Yellow River.

December 1914 - January 1915 - up the North River to the Bewani Range. Returned early January to find his Meander Mountain camp "utterly devastated". His engineer, Fiebig, and the boats were gone.

Thurnwald's camp had been raided by an Australian military expeditionary force led by Commander Claude Cumberlege. When Cumberlege found on his arrival at the camp on the 23rd December that Thurnwald was away on an exploratory trip, he returned downriver the next day, taking Fiebig and "his personal property". Major Martin volunteered to remain,

4 In the early 1960s, I interviewed Binengim of Kialikmin village, Telefomin, who recalled, as a teenager, trading some food with Thurnwald in return for a small knife. Binengim died in 1966. The first entry into the highlands of west New Guinea was by members of the Dutch Military Expedition of 1907-15, apparently by Van der Ven and Meeks who discovered people they termed "pygmies" in the vicinity of Mt. Goliath (Souter 1963:133).

> "but after searching for a week was unable to find [Thurnwald] so I loaded all the stores on the launch and two large flat-bottomed river boats which were there, getting back to Angarum [sic] without mishap on the 4th instant (from Report by Major Martin, 9.1.1915)."[5]

Thurnwald, in a letter of complaint to the Administrator in Rabaul, dated 2nd March 1915, stated:

> "The engineer told me, the soldiers broke up in the night into the store from behind and opened the cases and trunks by means of axes they found. The following morning he found the cases opened and 7 or 8 boxes gone. Later on the same day the soldiers opened the door of the store and searched the remaining boxes, taking away whatever they found: provisions, ethnological collections, skulls,[6] knives and axes for trading, clothing, shoes, medicaments, etc. My house on the hill was equally pillaged after having been searched for notes. . . . All the boats were taken and I was compelled to go down the 800 miles of the river on canoes with only a small quantity of beans left for me. [...]
>
> I went to Angorum, called on the British Police Station and was advised to stay at the Mission. There I heard that my other camp on the lower river [at Karadjundo] was equally destroyed. What the soldiers did not take, was robbed afterwards from the open boxes by the Kanakas of the neighbouring villages. I have to thank to the present garrison of Angorum for helping me to get back a little of my stolen property from the Kanakas."[7]

Thurnwald had gone on to Madang after this interlude and had written this letter after audience with the Administrator, Colonel Petherbridge, who happened to be in Madang that day. The apparently sympathetic Administrator, in a letter to the Minister of State for Defence, dated 9th March 1915, wrote that:

5 Australian Archives, Series AWM 33, Item 12/3; also Australian Archives (Victoria), Series MP472/1, Item 2/15/2197. Souter (1963:118) somewhat misrepresented these events when he wrote that "Cumberlege and his men took Dr Thurnwald and his assistant into custody and then returned in triumph to Madang." His defence however is that he followed the official history which states (Mackenzie 1938:173): "Cumberlege here turned downriver, taking with him the German [Fiebig, Thurnwald's assistant and engineer]. He left Major Martin and two police boys to await and bring back Thurnwald. This they did shortly afterwards."

6 Attached to this letter was a list of provisions, equipment and other material lost as a result of Cumberlege's actions. In this list Thurnwald includes "ethnological collections" valued at £200 and "10 skulls, etc." valued at £150 at the Meander Mountain camp.

7 Australian Archives, Series AWM 33, Item 12/3; also Australian Archives (Victoria), Series MP472/1, Item 2/15/2197. No ethnological material was listed from the camp at Karadjundo but it is evident from Melk-Koch's account (1989:229-230) that there were ethnological collections and notes that had been ransacked from cases in Karadjundo and, with the help of the Australian troops stationed at Angoram and Father Kirschbaum of the Mission at Marienberg, that some at least were retrieved by Thurnwald, under threat of burning down the villages implicated.

> "Dr Thurnwald was in great distress when I saw him and was literally in rags and almost bootless. I instructed the District Officer at Madang to attend to his immediate wants, and procure for him a passage to Sydney by the next steamer."

On 24th March, Thurnwald asked permission of the "Commander" at Madang (District Officer, Captain W.M. Balfour Ogilvy) "to continue my research work upon this land and the natives, their culture and language", and for access to the motor launch commandeered by Major Martin. In his response dated 26th inst., Ogilvy informs his superior in Rabaul that:

> "I have given Dr Thurnwald permission to reside at Marienberg (Sepik) with the Missionary there, after having satisfied myself that his work amongst the natives is only of a scientific nature . . . Dr Thurnwald was not anxious to return to civilization and I am of the opinion that he is a perfectly genuine gentleman, wrapt up in scientific research work." [8]

Cumberlege, in a response to Thurnwald's claims dated 15th April 1915, denied that his men had broken into the store:

> ". . . the gear was stowed in a lightly built bush house and I had to place a guard on it to keep out his own carriers who had pulled down a few poles at the back of the store to form an entrance. I might add that I noticed that every native had either a mouth organ or a Jews Harp[9] and a new Lava Lava the next day . . . I personally searched Dr Thurnwald's hut but found nothing which would throw any light on the expedition. I left the locked cases to be investigated later rather than break open the locks, as they appeared to contain only photographic gear, unused . . . With reference to the values he places on the gear, I consider these ridiculous, but the whole of what was removed was stored, I understand, at Madang and Angorum by Major Martin."[10]

Cumberlege must have come perilously close to offending the Administrator when he asserted that "all Germans are born liars" and added:

> "Dr Thurnwald's picturesque distress seems rather unnecessary. The most comfortable garb for such a climate being that usually affected by the Natives . . .

8 Australian Archives (Victoria), Series B543, Item W112/7/58. In his handwritten diary, Thurnwald likewise speaks well of Ogilvy (personal communication, March 1997, Peter Sack, Australian National University). This association between Thurnwald and Ogilvy suggests the possibility that a collection of Sepik artefacts sent late 1916 by Ogilvy to Rabaul for forwarding to the Australian War Museum in Melbourne may have been a part of Thurnwald's collection (see Appendix 2). I have been unable to discover from the archives whether or not Ogilvy visited the Sepik himself during 1915 or 1916. I am pursuing the possibility that diaries may exist in the possession of the Ogilvy family living in Renmark, South Australia.

9 Neither mouth organs nor Jews Harps were mentioned by Thurnwald in his detailed list of provisions left at Karadjundo and Meander Mountain.

10 Australian Archives (Victoria), Series MP472/1, Item 2/15/2197.

the claim appears to be a cultured but impudent attempt to obtain money by false pretences."

The Naval Secretary supported Cumberlege in his report of 1st May to the Secretary, Department of Defence:

"The Naval Board consider that Dr Thurnwald has greatly overstated his case, judging from the extravagant account of damages he has presented."[11]

Thus Thurnwald's claim for damages was unsuccessful. However he obtained £25 from the Administrator as rental for the use of his expedition pinnace and returned to Marienberg to work with two Keram River informants. The ethnographic collections commandeered by Major Martin lay in a shed on the waterfront at Madang whilst Thurnwald completed his research work on the Sepik, organized the remnants of his collections there and returned his informants to their villages on the Keram. He left New Guinea for San Francisco via Sydney in November 1915 with 40 small boxes, leaving 52 large ones in the care of the Neuguinea-Kompanie to be shipped back to Europe (Melk-Koch 1989:231-6).

The Struggle for the Collection[12]

The collection referred to here must be the 52 crates left in the care of the Neuguinea-Kompanie in Madang. However, there is no certainty that these crates, and the 40 smaller boxes he took with him to San Francisco, comprised all the ethnographic material surviving from Thurnwald's expedition. Some empty crates had been returned to Thurnwald by the Administrator in early March (ibid.:231) but it is not at all clear what had once been in them. It is quite possible that the ethnographic material from the Sepik sent to Rabaul by Ogilvy in 1916, and a Sepik collection sent by another officer in 1920, for forwarding to the Australian War Museum in Melbourne, may have been components of Thurnwald's collection from these crates (see Appendix 2). Matters are much clearer with regard to the 52 crates which Thurnwald was trying to get shipped to Germany.

In a Memorandum dated 8th April 1921, W.H. Lucas, Chairman of the Expropriation Board,[13] wrote to the Administrator in Rabaul that Thurnwald:

11 Op. cit.; the total claim exceeded £4000, including the motor launch at £675, 2 motor boats at £150 and 2 motors at £450.

12 This section is based on correspondence and memoranda in a file in the Australian Archives, Canberra, Series CRS A518, Item L806/1/3.

13 W.H. Lucas had been Islands Manager for Burns Philp and one of three people appointed to the 1919 Royal Commission On Late German New Guinea; his fellow Commissioners were Atlee Hunt (Secretary of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Home and Territories) and J.H.P. Murray (Lieutenant-Governor of Papua). Murray was at odds with Lucas and Hunt (and, it would seem, with Prime Minister Hughes) in recommending the amalgamation of the administration of New Guinea with that of

> "was repatriated early in the war, leaving behind a collection of curios of scientific and intrinsic value. Dr Thurnwald was prescribed on the 30th September 1920 and his property in the territory expropriated . . ."

Lucas recounted that Thurnwald claimed to have transferred ownership of the collection to the Museum voor Land en Volkenkunde in Rotterdam "before 1st September 1920, the date the New Guinea Company was prescribed . . . [therefore] the transaction should be recognized as bona fide." Acting on this advice, the late Administrator (Brigadier-General Griffiths) had given permission on 11th March 1921 for the collection to be sent to Rotterdam via Dutch New Guinea. However, Lucas claimed, the advice was erroneous in that the prescription applied to property owned by enemy nationals as at 10th January 1920 and Thurnwald was still the owner at that date. At the time of the writing of this memorandum, the collection was still being held by the New Guinea Company in Madang.

Prior to this communication, a letter from the Department of Trade and Customs in Melbourne dated 27th January 1921 informed the Administrator (Griffiths) in Rabaul that Lohmann & Co. in Australia had developed 600 photographs for Thurnwald (including some of Green River in the upper Sepik) and asked whether they would be of any use to the Administration. Griffith replied on 21st February that indeed they would and asked that they be securely packed and forwarded. This letter suggests that Customs was monitoring mail to New Guinea and intercepting and examining anything addressed to German nationals.

It would appear that R.R. Garran, Secretary to the Attorney General's Department, interpreted the Expropriation Ordinance differently to the Chairman of the Expropriation Board as a letter from him to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department dated 10th June 1921 urged that Thurnwald's collection be released and sent to Rotterdam. However, a telegram from the Administrator advised that instructions to the District Officer in Madang to release the collection had been cancelled on 9th April as a result of Lucas's letter.

A most revealing note was written at the bottom of a copy of this telegram, signed E.L. Piesse and dated 18th July 1921:

> "Acting Secretary. This seems a case in which our rights under the Peace Treaty should not be applied. There is doubt (see the Solicitor General's opinion) as to whether, on the facts, we are entitled to expropriate this property. But even if we are, we might very well let Thurnwald or his nominee have his collections. The Germans did much for the advancement of knowledge of the natives; the

Papua. Murray was also seen as being unsympathetic with commercial exploitation of Papua and therefore as an impediment to development in the late German New Guinea. Souter notes that one of the arguments put forward by Lucas and Hunt was that a separate administration in the late German territory would more efficiently handle the expropriation of German assets (Souter 1963:125-6).

> Commonwealth Administration has done little or nothing; and it seems scarcely decent to seize these collections."

A handwritten note, signed "E.J.R." on a memo reiterating this opinion responds:

> "No exception should be made in this case as it would only create trouble with many other cases closely allied in principle."

The Administrator (General Wisdom) attempted to break the impasse in a letter to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department dated 8th July 1921:

> "It would be a great pity if [the collection] is allowed to perish through white ants or mould - I recommend therefore that it be sent to an Australian Museum for safe custody, overhaul and inventory, pending a decision as to its ultimate disposal."

A handwritten comment at the bottom of this letter suggests the Australian Museum [Sydney] would be an appropriate institution to care for the collection and a letter to the Curator of The Australian Museum dated 10th August 1921 requested this.

C. Anderson, Director of the Australian Museum, replied on 18th August 1921 to J. Strahan, Acting Secretary to the Prime Minister, agreeing to such an arrangement "in principle" pending agreement by the museum's Board of Trustees because of the space requirements:

> "As you are no doubt aware we already have on deposit the Papuan Official Collection which is destined for the future Federal Museum; that collection occupies a room in this Museum and there is some additional space there which could be given up to Dr Thurnwald's collection if it is not too bulky."

A telegram to the Prime Minister's Department from the Administrator dated 17th September 1921 notes the volume of the crated collection as 983 cubic feet (roughly the size of a present day standard shipping container); the Director of the Australian Museum confirmed agreement on 26th September to take the collection and a telegram from the Administrator in Rabaul dated 3rd October informed the Prime Minister's Department that "Thurnwald collection despatched Mataram September 17th".

A letter dated 8th October 1921 from the Director of the Australian Museum (Anderson) advised the Acting Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department (Strahan) that Thurnwald's collection had arrived at the museum on 28th and 29th September and a box of photographic negatives (developed) had arrived 4th October.

> "Having been packed away for so long a period in Madang, the collection has been considerably ravaged by borer beetles, white ants, cockroaches and silver fish; a large number of these pests were secured during unpacking . . . all the expedition tags, with the exception of about a dozen, were either wholly eaten or undecipherable. The pottery was badly smashed to the extent of more than half . . . of course much of the pottery can be mended and restored. Objects which were hopelessly destroyed or useless were discarded and notes to this effect were included in the draft inventories. Every article that was saved has been passed through a disinfecting chamber. [...]

> The collection consists chiefly of ceremonial objects such as human figures, facially-restored skulls, others painted, and some osteological material. There are many masks, and maskoids in pottery and wood, fretwork slabs and complicated carvings. Weapons are poorly represented; there are very few arrows and no stone-headed clubs. There is a large number of painted palm spathes. The pottery is of a fine quality and there are many vessels of all kinds. Netted bags and charms are well represented. Ornaments are plentiful though many are badly damaged."

The letter asked for a contribution of 20 pounds towards the cost of shelving and advised that a representative from the Swiss Consulate (Miss Gostling) and someone from the New Guinea Agency were present throughout the unpacking and an inventory had been compiled in duplicate. The contribution was agreed to and a copy of the inventory (Appendix One) was forwarded to Rabaul on 31st October 1921.

At this point no lesser personage than Winston Churchill weighed in on behalf of Thurnwald. Churchill wrote to the Governor-General Lord Foster on 19th October 1921 requesting favourable consideration of a translated copy of a letter dated 7th October from the German Chargé d'Affaires to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in London. The attached letter pointed out that Thurnwald's collection was

> "a valuable contribution to the knowledge of native customs in territory which had never been explored before and that it would therefore probably be of interest to the present mandatory Power in New Guinea.
>
> It is beyond doubt that these collections can only be turned to account by Dr Thurnwald himself, who has approached the German Government for the purpose of obtaining return of the cases.
>
> Mr Dufeur-Ference would therefore be grateful if the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston would use his influence with the Australian Government, in order that the collection in question might be released and its arrangement by Dr Thurnwald thus rendered possible. He begs to point out that the German government is willing to make the results of this exploration accessible to all interested persons."

The weight of British aristocracy in no way shifted Lucas's opinion. In a memorandum of 2nd December 1921, he reiterated that under Article 120 of the Peace Treaty, the collection was forfeit to the Australian Government, regardless of it being a scientific collection.

Perhaps in an effort to discover some loophole in the matter, P.E. Deane (Secretary to the Prime Minister's Department) wrote to the Governor-General's Official Secretary on 2nd November requesting answers to four questions:

> "1. What was the actual status of the Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition? Was it owned or financed by the German Government or was it a private venture?
>
> 2. Was Dr Thurnwald's collection made for or on behalf of the German Government, or as a private venture?

3. Is there any agreement with Dr Thurnwald as to the ownership of the scientific collection; if so will the German Government kindly supply certified copies?
4. What was the date and full text of the alleged agreement between Dr Thurnwald and the Rotterdam Museum, under which the latter claims delivery of the scientific collection now held by the Custodian of Expropriated Properties for New Guinea?"

The Governor-General passed on this request to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 12th December. The German Embassy in London responded on 7th April 1922 as follows:

"1. The expedition was financed partly by the German government and partly from private sources.
2. Dr Thurnwald is obliged to deliver all the objects collected by him to the German government for distribution to various German museums but none of the collection is the property of the German government. 'Duplicates' are to be handed over to a company which contributed the larger part of the financial backing of the expedition.
3. The scientific results of the expedition are in the first place to be at the disposal of the investigator in order that he may be in a position to complete his report on the expedition for publication. 'No actual right of ownership appertains to Dr Thurnwald'.
4. After the War ended, it became apparent that the cost of shipping would be a difficulty for the German government. 'The proposal was therefore considered to sell a part of the collections and to pay that cost out of the proceeds. Dr Thurnwald was instructed to open negotiations in his own name with the museums of neutral status.' The Maritime Museum Prince Hendrik of Rotterdam expressed interest but only on the condition that the right of ownership of the collections was assigned to it as security against the costs involved in shipping the collections back to Europe. 'This condition was agreed to in writing by Dr Thurnwald. Later on the Dutch museum, after making enquiries in London, withdrew from the business.'"

This response was sent on to the Governor-General in Australia with a covering letter from Winston Churchill dated 19th April 1922. As a result of this information, E.L. Piesse again urged a liberal approach to the matter in a memorandum dated 2nd June, apparently to Lucas. Piesse concluded that the Dutch museum had no claim on the collection, that Thurnwald was the appropriate person to deal with the collections, that the collections had little commercial value and that

"where the pursuit and increase of knowledge is concerned it is usual to apply a standard of conduct somewhat different from what would be thought appropriate to merely commercial affairs ... I would suggest that this is a case in which the country which organized the expedition might very well be allowed to have the collections".

Lucas remained stubborn. In a letter to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department dated 4th July, he concluded that he had been right in suspecting deception by Thurnwald, suggested that the collection was now of greater interest to Australia than to Germany, that "certain charges have been incurred in the storage at New Guinea and in Sydney, as well as freight, etc." Lucas then suggested that "the Australian War Museum might be glad to establish a New Guinea wing in which to house this collection."

This last point suggests Lucas was aware that several consignments of New Guinea curios had been sent to the Australian War Museum during the period 1916 to 1920 (see Appendix Two). On 21st September, Deane (Secretary, Prime Minister's Department) sought confirmation from J. Treloar (Director, War Museum) that he would be willing to do as Lucas suggested. Treloar took his time in responding; however, in a letter dated 10th April 1923 he declined to accept the collection although he was willing "to receive the Thurnwald collection and hold it in trust against the time when a Commonwealth Ethnological Museum may be established."

Lucas wrote a memo to the Custodian of Expropriated Properties dated 19th April reiterating Thurnwald's "clever efforts" to obtain the collection "by pretending it was the property of a Dutch museum". He outlined Piesse's case for returning the collection to Germany and his own case for retaining it in Australia. He noted that both the Australian Museum and the War Museum were willing to hold the collections in trust "until there is a Federal Museum to take them". He concluded that the collections were the property of the Commonwealth government "as the mandatory Power" and that the Government would have to make the decision about the disposal of the collections. The Custodian agreed and wrote to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department on 28th June handing over the collections to that Department and requesting reimbursement of expenditure to date (£150.9.3).

A memorandum from Piesse dated 3rd July again states the value of Thurnwald's work, suggesting he be allowed to have the collections. Deane (Secretary, Prime Minister's Department) passed the buck to the Secretary of Department of Home and Territories stating that since that Department would be administering the Territory of New Guinea, its Secretary could make the decision about Thurnwald's collections.

Piesse seems to have taken the matter up with Professor A.C. Haddon who was in Melbourne in August 1923 for the Pan Pacific Congress. Apparently Haddon "thought it would be equitable to let Dr Thurnwald have the collection". Piesse passed on this opinion to the Secretary, Home and Territories, in a memorandum dated 21st August 1923. The Secretary then discussed the matter with Haddon and added a handwritten note to the memorandum from Piesse, stating that Haddon:

> "confirmed to me this afternoon . . . that Dr Thurnwald could make better scientific use of the collection than anybody else. In fact, he said, the collection would be of very little use to anybody else but Dr Thurnwald [whose report would] become a

public document of which the Commonwealth could obtain copies [and thus] secure a valuable addition to its knowledge of native customs and institutions which it could ill afford to be deprived of."

A marginal inscription on this memorandum states:

"*Cabinet.* Approved the return of the collection, the German government to be asked to reimburse the expenditure of Expropriation Board. G.P.Pearce 31/8/23."

The Australian War Museum, the Secretary of State, and the High Commissioner in London, were informed in September 1923 of the decision.[14]

Although a decision had now been made, the matter was not resolved in a hurry. A handwritten note of 15th May 1924, eight months after the decision was made, says the German Consul-General wanted to look at the collection "in order to determine whether it was worth taking over in view of the expense involved". This was agreed to but when the Consul-General sought to appoint a Mr Mainka as his agent for the purpose of the inspection, the Custodian of Expropriated Property insisted that the Consul-General inspect the collection himself. A letter from the Consul-General dated 6th September 1924 agreed to take over the collection and pay £150 in costs. The Secretary of Home and Territories then authorized the Director of the Australian Museum to deliver the collection to the German Consul-General; the money was paid over on 29th September 1924.

A last minute attempt by the Australian Museum to retain part of the collection was unsuccessful. The Museum's secretary wrote to the Secretary, Home and Territories, requesting the German Consul-General be asked for duplicates "as recompense for the trouble which the Museum had to bear". The request was duly conveyed 20th October. The Consul-General replied two days later regretting that he was not aware of any such arrangement and that the Thurnwald collection already had been shipped on the 15th inst. But he promised to send on the request to the authorities in Germany. The Australian Museum, nothing daunted, wrote to Thurnwald informing him as to which pieces were wanted. Thurnwald responded complaining that the pieces identified were not duplicates but "amongst the best pieces of the whole collection".

Now, the German government seemed to be under the impression that all the papers and photographs of Captain Hermann Detzner (see Gash & Whittaker 1975: Pl. 403; Souter 1963:118-124) had been taken over by a Captain Nelson and were being held by the Commonwealth government, and suggested that the return of some of the Thurnwald collection to the Australian Museum could be dependent on the return of the Detzner material to Germany. The Secretary, Home and Territories, wrote to the German Consul-General 24th July 1925 stating emphatically that Detzner's material

14 Just two months later (either 19th or 28th December 1923), Feodor Fiebig (Melk-Koch 1989:Abb.27) committed suicide. He had left the Sepik in 1919 and for several years unsuccessfully prospected for gold in Dutch New Guinea. The authorities were uncertain of exact time of death (Australian Archives Series A5, Item NG1924/3488 - thanks to Kate Cumming, Access Services, for this information).

was *not* in the possession of the Australian government. The Secretary of the Museum then asked the Consul-General about the duplicates but was told (28th November 1925) that there were no "duplicates". The Consul-General added, with admirably diplomatic circumlocation:

> "As this [the exchange] can no more be procured it seems to me that the matter is closed to a certain extent for the time being."

The Australian Museum then seems to have accepted the matter as closed in a letter dated 9th December 1925. However, Melk-Koch states (1989:260) that:

> "Eichhorn is empowered to set aside for Sydney about half of the pieces they want; a representative of the [Australian] Department for External Affairs is present and, after they meet the transportation costs, the collection is placed in this Department's hands" (translation by Harry Beran).

There seems to be some doubt that this collection reached the Australian Museum as a recent search in the register (April 1997) in response to an enquiry from me was unable to identify a collection from Thurnwald or the Berlin Museum at that time.[15]

There does not seem to have been any residual bad feeling about Thurnwald's long battle to get his collection back to Germany; a letter from A.R. Radcliffe-Brown dated 11th March 1929 requested permission for Thurnwald to be allowed to carry out fieldwork in Buin (Solomon Islands) under grant funding from the Australian National Research Council. The reply from the Administrator in New Guinea, dated 6th April 1929, states simply "No objection".

Acknowledgements

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15 There is a collection of 48 items, E.38262-309, presented by Thurnwald to the Australian Museum in 1935, mostly from Africa, with only 8 items from Bunaram on the Sepik and one from Buin, Solomon Islands. This obviously is not the collection given to External Affairs.

Appendix One: Australian Museum Inventory of Thurnwald's Sepik Collections

This inventory (Australian Archives, Series A518, Item L806/1/3), prepared by W.W. Thorpe of the Australian Museum in Sydney, was checked by a representative of the Swiss Consul in Sydney on behalf of the German authorities and signed by the Consul on 13th October 1921. In the original inventory, a distinction was made between "case" and "package" and the case and package numbers appear randomly whereas I have reproduced the list in numerical order so that apparently missing case or package numbers can more readily be identified. In all, there appear to have been 1066 items plus 43 destroyed and/or discarded. Some objects were damaged, especially pots, presumably in transit.

CASE # 9A (Photographic plates)
7 cartons 5 x 4 negatives
8 (only) 4 x 3 negatives
18 cartons 4 x 3 negatives

CASE # 12 (53 items - sic; actually 54)
1 canoe model (indifferent)
19 painted palm spathe sheets
1 adze shaped maskoid
1 fretwork tablet (broken)
1 drum
1 palm spathe tablet with maskoid
1 palm spathe envelope
7 fretwork tablets
1 crocodile carving
4 carved figures
1 small palm spathe tablet, painted
1 carved canoe prow
3 carvings (large)
2 carvings (small)
3 bamboo flutes
1 set Pandean pipes
1 notched palmwood stick
2 feather plumes
1 bone gouge
1 calvarium of crocodile
1 hook

CASE # 16 (67 items)
2 carved spades
2 carved figures
51 palm spathe tablets, decorated
4 palm spathe tablets, decorated, with maskoids attached
2 palm spathe tablets, decorated, winged
1 cane mask
1 large maskoid
1 grass tray
1 vase shape basket
1 bamboo flute
1 cylindrical object (incomplete)

CASE # 17 (92 items)
3 stools
1 carving, canoe prow
8 skulls, features restored
7 human skulls
11 carved tablets
1 plain tablet
3 cylindrical objects
7 maskoids
1 maskoid (pottery)
2 carved figures
3 plaited armlets
1 bamboo smoking pipe
5 carved bamboo tubes
1 small carving
1 sheet bark cloth
1 stone bladed adze
4 plaited funnels
1 human bone necklet
1 carved bowl
1 skull mask
1 bamboo flute
2 adze handles
1 cocoanut cup
1 bamboo knife
2 plaited funnels
2 human mandible ornaments
1 mammalian tooth necklet
3 carved nuts
1 cocoanut shell spoon
1 maskoid
1 creeper armlet (with pendants)
1 bone necklet
1 hank human hair
1 tusk breast ornament
1 bone necklet
1 cane armlet
1 lime gourd
1 plaited belt
2 cocoanut spoons
2 tusk armlets
1 carved disc
1 stone adze blade

CASE # 20 (12 items)
9 bow sticks
1 large carved figure
1 carved figure on base
1 carved chair

CASE # 23 (24 items)
1 skull of pig
4 palm spathe tablets with maskoid
19 palm spathe tablets

CASE # 30 (1 item)
1 pottery vessel, broken

CASE # 31 (1 item)
1 pottery vessel

CASE # 32 (2 items)
2 earthenware pots, decorated

CASE # 33 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels (1 damaged)

CASE # 34 (2 items)
1 earthenware pot
1 earthenware pot in frame (damaged)

CASE # 35 (3 items)
3 earthenware pots (broken)

CASE # 36 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels (broken)

CASE # 37 (1 item)
1 ornate pottery vessel (damaged)

CASE # 38 (3 items)
3 earthenware pots (2 broken)

CASE # 39 (1 item)
1 ornate pottery vessel (damaged)

CASE # 40 (2 items)
1 pottery vessel
1 portion of pottery vessel

CASE # 41 (1 item)
1 ornate pottery vessel (damaged)

CASE # 42 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels (1 broken)

CASE # 43 (3 items)
2 pots (broken)
1 earthenware maskoid

CASE # 44 (1 item)
1 pottery vessel (damaged)

CASE # 45 (2 items)
2 earthenware pots

CASE # 46 (1 item)
1 earthenware bowl (damaged)

CASE # 47 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels (damaged)

CASE # 48 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels

CASE # 50 (4 items)
4 pottery vessels

CASE # 51 (2 items)
1 painted gourd
1 pottery bowl (smashed)

PACKAGE # 52 (3 items)
3 pottery vessels, 1 broken

CASE # 53 (1 item)
1 pottery vessel on pad

CASE # 54 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels, 1 broken

PACKAGE # 55 (1 item)
1 drum

PACKAGE # 56 (1 item)
1 drum (insect eaten)

CASE # 57 (1 item)
1 drum

CASE # 58 (4 items)
1 trough (large)
3 pottery "studs"

CASE # 59 (1 item)
1 ornate pottery vessel (damaged)

CASE # 60 (2 items)
2 pottery bowls (1 broken)

CASE # 61 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels

CASE # 62 (2 items)
2 pottery vessels

CASE # 63 (4 items)
2 pottery vessels, 1 broken
2 rami

CASE # 64 (13 items)
3 earthenware pots (2 damaged)
3 earthenware pots (1 broken)
4 vase shape baskets
1 rami dress
1 cane tray
1 framed fish net

CASE # 65 (15 items)
15 shields

CASE # 66 (25 items + 2 discarded)
9 carved figures
2 curved (sic) clubs
1 large fretwork carving
13 composite tablets
1 carved pole (discarded)
1 shield (discarded)

CASE # 67 (57 items + 10 discarded)
10 palm leaf thatch (destroyed)
2 mounted fish nets
1 bark hood
3 beaded bags
1 palm leaf bag
1 hank fibre
1 plume maskoid
1 packet sea weed
44 palm leaf tablet, painted
1 feather wand
1 palm spathe tablet with maskoid
1 parcel feather plumes

CASE # 80 (159 items)
3 shell necklets (snail)
2 coix seed necklets
1 maskoid
1 cane cuirass
1 vase shape basket
1 sorcerer's outfit
9 bamboo tubes
24 netted bags (sizes various)
10 netted bags (small)
2 netted bags, small, with bone implements
5 lime gourds
1 bundle cuscus fur (strips)
4 pig tusk breast ornaments
50 coix seed ornaments
2 parcels red pigment
4 tusk nose ornaments
1 block resin
2 seed and bone (bird) necklaces
1 bone for head plume
2 small netted bags
10 small string ornaments
1 feathered necklet (damaged)
2 coix seed necklets
1 carved bamboo tube
1 parcel Paradise Bird feathers

10 plaited string ornaments
8 pairs cassowary quills

CASE # 81 (48 items)
4 masks
1 maskoid
5 carved figures
3 carved drums
3 palm leaf baskets
2 cocoanut bowls (1 damaged)
2 wooden bowls (1 damaged)
3 plaited ornaments
5 shell adze blades
1 shell for adze blade
4 stone adze blades
2 fishing nets
3 bags
2 lamps
1 (2?) human bone implement(s)
1 parcel pig tusks
3 bone implements
1 grass plume
1 plaited cane armlet
1 stone pebble

CASE # 82 (15 items)
4 earthenware (2 badly broken)
2 plaited belts
1 bark belt
1 palm spathe tablet, painted
5 wooden food bowls (1 broken)
1 carved figure
1 stone bladed adze

CASE # 83 (88 items + 2 discarded)
1 framed fish net
1 fishnet frame, net destroyed
1 fishnet (under construction)
6 palm leaf baskets
1 carved tree bole
1 decorated ceremony paddle (damaged)
1 bundle arrows (various)
1 large fretwork board
2 feather boards (destroyed)
1 (2?) palmwood bow(s)
1 crocodile carving
1 lime gourd
1 bundle bark cloth
2 bone daggers (small)
1 bundle grass dress material
10 fish spears
10 spears with human vertebrae attached
21 palmwood spears, bamboo points
7 palmwood spears, plain points
6 palmwood spears, bilaterally barbed
9 palmwood spears, feathered butts
5 palmwood spears, 1 row barbs

CASE # 84 (111 items - sic; actually 110 + 9 discarded)
3 bags (destroyed)
3 painted skulls
1 skull with mandible
1 skull of adult, no teeth
1 human mandible
5 human mandible ornaments
2 pig bone gouges
1 pig tusk ornament (broken up)
2 bone section necklets
2 bamboo knives
1 seed necklet
5 carved cocoanuts
1 carved gourd
1 cocoanut receptacle
1 seed necklet, destroyed
2 bamboo jews harps
16 carved charms (1 destroyed)
4 smoking pipes
4 carved cocoanut charms
2 plaited cane gauntlets
3 cane armlets
1 plaited armlet
1 creeper armlet
1 skull of pig, complete
2 biconical ornaments
1 stone adze blade
4 small carved tablets
1 Pandean pipes and bird figure combined
1 stone adze, complete
1 drum
2 head rests
1 bundle palm wood choppers
1 carved implement handle
1 wooden stool
1 hank human hair
1 carved crescent of cocoanut shell
1 carved cocoanut bowl (perforated)
2 carved figures
1 long maskoid (damaged)
15 bamboo tubes (4 discarded)
9 maskoids
1 maskoid, earthenware
1 carved figure on root
2 bamboo tubes
1 feathered board (damaged)
3 carved tablets
1 leafy wand
1 spear head (palm wood)

CASE # 85 (118 items)
3 human skulls
3 human mandible ornaments
1 human tooth necklet (incomplete)
1 seed and bone necklet
4 bone section necklets
1 adze blade in shoe
1 shark backbone (portion)
1 seed necklet with seed pendant
4 carved nuts
1 bone gouge
3 armlets
1 bamboo staff (damaged)
4 cylindrical objects
17 carved figures (various)
14 maskoids
15 carved bamboo tubes
8 carved charms
5 lime gourds
2 palm leaf scoops
1 effigy in wax of bird
1 set Pan pipes
2 cassowary bone daggers (carved)
12 plumes
3 cocoanut shell cups (carved)
2 small bags (grass)
1 string sporran
3 small carvings
1 wooden anvil
2 bamboo tubes
1 pith carving (incomplete)

CASE # 86 (33 items - sic; actually 23 + 1 discarded)
5 composite tablets
1 paddle blade (discarded)
1 clam shell adze blade
1 shell ornament - Sepik River
1 painted shield (indifferent)
1 palm spathe tablet
1 human hair ornament
2 wooden maskoids
1 feather tablet (indifferent)
1 painted tablet
1 whirler shaped tablet
1 small carved figure
3 maskoid tablets
2 large carved figures
1 dancing wand carved
1 adze shoe

CASE # 87 (15 items)
15 composite carvings

CASE # 88 (26 items)
2 adze handles
1 palm wood chopper
2 palm spathe tablets with maskoids
21 painted palm spathe sheets

CASE # 89 (29 items + 2 discarded)
1 decorated skull - Sepik River
1 bone dagger - Sepik River
6 maskoids (wooden)
7 carved figures
1 maskoid (palm spathe)
1 wooden maskoid (discarded)
5 palm spathe tablets (decorated)
1 grass basket (discarded)
1 calvarium of crocodile on stick
2 stone adzes (1 minus blade)
1 length feathers on canework
1 bundle bamboo tubes
2 small carvings
1 tusk ornament

VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM DIFFERENT PACKAGES (12 items + 17 discarded)
1 pair cassowary quills
1 pig tusk ornament
1 (2?) carved bamboo tube(s)
1 phallus gourd
1 seed rattle (incomplete)
1 shell cocoanut scraper
1 string boar tusk sections
1 string conus shell sections
1 block fossil coral
1 small collection fossiliferous mud
1 parcel boar tusks
1 shell knife
1 parcel native tobacco (destroyed)
1 pot shape basket (destroyed)
2 circular nets (destroyed)
2 net bags (destroyed)
2 string ornaments (destroyed)
1 adze shoe (destroyed)
2 grass sporrans (destroyed)
1 skull hornbill (destroyed)
1 small carving (destroyed)
1 set Pandean pipes (destroyed)
1 small maskoid (destroyed)
1 cocoanut spoon (destroyed)
1 bamboo knife (destroyed)

Appendix Two: The Australian War Museum Collection

The Australian War Museum Collection consists of ethnographic material sent from the former German colony to Melbourne during the period of Australian military occupation following the declaration of war against Germany in 1914. Various administrators, such as District Officers, collected ethnographic material which became part of the collections of the Australian War Museum which was then located in Melbourne (later in Canberra). This collection was transferred *on loan* to the National Museum of Victoria in 1925 (Bolton 1980:92). Bolton reported that there are 488 objects in this collection and noted, "The documentation for this collection is very poor. There is only a brief register entry in which many of the assigned provenances are doubtful or confusing" (1980:107-8). Most of the objects appear to be registered as X.31956-32419.

Correspondence regarding parts of this collection can be found in the Australian Archives in Canberra. One collection of 53 pieces, for which I have been able to locate a list dated 4th December 1916 (see below),[16] was sent to Rabaul by Captain W. Balfour Ogilvy.[17] It consists of mostly "Sepic" [ie. Sepik] material. The Administrator, Brigadier-General Samuel Pethebridge, wrote a letter dated 14th December 1916, enclosing the list of objects, to Senator Pearce, Minister of Defence, stating:

> "I am sending by S.S.'Morinda', three cases containing native curios . . . They were obtained by District Officers, while on inspection or patrol duty - Some of them are said to be very old and valuable as they are ‚stone axe' work. They are sent for disposal to Museums or otherwise as you may decide" (Australian Archives, Series AWM33, Item 54/4).

It would appear that this consignment was sent on the initiative of the Administrator but the reason for sending ethnographic material to the War Museum is not at all clear. A letter from the Director of the Australian War Museum dated 9th April 1920, to the Secretary, Department of Defence, in Melbourne stated:

> "the Australian War Museum does not desire that the Administrator, Rabaul, should arrange to forward any further native trophies for the Museum unless they are unique and different to the specimens already sent, or directly connected with the Australian operations in the Pacific Islands" (Australian Archives, Series MP367/1, Item AA580/2/3123).

However, the Administrator (by this time, Brigadier-General Johnston) had already received "Two cases of War Trophies collected by the District Officer at Morobe, in response to my request about 12 months ago to endeavour to secure Trophies suitable for the War Museum" and had given instructions for them to be forwarded to the War Museum.[18] Johnston's memo is accompanied by a list of 62 items which includes weapons, a model sailing canoe, string bags, a range of domestic items (cooking pots, "grass petticoats", bark cloth loincloths, cane fish trap, pig nets, etc) and an example of the unique pottery handdrum of the Adzera of the upper Markham valley (for illustration of such a drum, see Egloff 1977:33). Johnston's letter also remarked that "all articles have been labelled showing place of origin".

On 18th June 1920, the Administrator in Rabaul (this time, Brigadier-General T. Griffiths) wrote a letter to the Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne (Australian Archives, Series MP 367/1, Item 580/2/3123) regarding such collections:

"For some time back we have been collecting trophies for the War Museum. The trophies collected, of course, have not been actual War trophies, but are more in the nature of South Pacific objects of interest. We have just received a letter from the War Museum [dated 9th April, quoted above] stating that no further trophies are required, except they are actually connected with the War . . ."

The Administrator had been about to send a consignment of Sepik objects when he received this advice, so he continued:

16 Australian Archives, Series AWM33, Item 54/4.

17 The South Australian Museum acquired a rare type of Sulka (East New Britain) *hemlaut* mask from Major H. Balfour Ogilvy, the younger brother of Captain W. Balfour Ogilvy, in 1917 (Craig 1995:Fig.15), among a collection of 54 items (several of which were multiple such as bundles of arrows and spears) from the Markham valley and New Britain.

18 Memo to Secretary, Department of Defence, dated 26th April 1920, Australian Archives, Series MP367/1, Item AA580/2/3123.

> "May I suggest that as the articles are not required by the War Museum that possibly the Minister would like to present them to one of the State Museums - I think that Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne are well supplied with such items, but suggest that Adelaide, Hobart or Perth would be very glad indeed to receive them."

Attached to this letter is a list dated 21st June 1920 of 36 items (39 objects - see below)[19] from the Sepik region including, among other things, two examples of the rare "sing-sing shield ornamented with various birds feathers, obtained from the Pottery River" (i.e. the Keram River - for an example, see Kelm 1968:Plate VII), several skull racks with skulls, several shields and three painted overmodelled skulls. After he saw the list, the Director of the Australian War Museum decided to receive the consignment. There is a possibility that this collection, as well as the one sent by Ogilvy in 1916, also could have been made by Thurnwald.

These three lists do not account for the whole collection noted by Bolton. No doubt other lists may be found in the archives that will throw light on the material now kept on loan at the Museum of Victoria.

1916 LIST:

RABAUL, 4TH Dec. 1916

LIST OF CURIOS FORWARDED TO MINISTER OF DEFENCE, MELBOURNE
BY BRIGADIER GENERAL S.A. PETHERBRIDGE. C.M.G.

Presented by Captain W. Balfour Ogilvy.

	Numbered
One Crocodile from Middle Sepic	"1"
One Native Dancing Gear (Sepic)	"2"
One Native Dancing Gear (Sepic)	"3"
One Fish basket (Sepic)	"4"
One Native Head Bag (Sepic)	"5"
25 Spears (Sepic)	"6"
One Fish Basket (Ramu)	"7"
One Paddle (Ramu)	"8"
One Dancing Gear (Sepic)	"9"
One Fighting Shield (Sepic)	"10"
One Fighting Shield (Sepic)	"11"
One Fighting Shield (Sepic)	"12"
One Fighting Shield (Sepic)	"13"
One Fighting Shield (Sepic)	"14"
One Figure of Mary (From Sepic)	"15"
One Sing Sing Staff (From Sepic)	"16"
One Image from tributary of Sepic used by Cannibal Chief	"17"
One Idol from Sepic	"18"
One Wooden Crocodile from Sepic	"19"
One Idol from Sepic	"20"
One Native Curio (Sepic)	"21"
Five Stone Axes from Sepic	"22"
One Image from Sepic	"23"
One Carved Lime Carrier	"24"

One Model Canoe made by Natives at a Village named "Bider" near Kieta, Bougainville (N. Solomons) Presented to Administrator, Brigadier General S.A. Petherbridge by Captain A.R. McGregor, District Officer. November, 1916.

And some broken pieces.

19 Australian Archives, Series MP367/1, Item 580/2/3123.

1920 LIST:

RABAUL, New Britain. June 21st 1920

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The Secretary, Department of Defence, MELBOURNE

With reference to my communication herewith, intimating that a quantity of Sepik River curios were being consigned per "Sumatra" to Commandant, 2nd Military District, to await your instructions to him as to their disposal - The following are the details -

(1) This is a Native Tambaran, constructed of human (ancestors') skulls and sacred to the Sepik River Natives as the God of Kaikai (food). It was obtained from a tributary of the Sepik River, via Pottery River.
(2) A Native Tambaran similar to No.1.
(3) A Native Tambaran similar to Nos.1 & 2.
(4) A Native Tambaran similar to Nos.1, 2 & 3.
(5) A fighting Battle Shield used by the Natives of Central Sepik in their tribal wars.
(6) A Battle Shield similar to No.5.
(7) A Battle Shield used by the Natives of the Sepik.
(8) A Battle Shield.
(9) A Battle Shield from the Middle Sepik.
(10) A Battle Shield from Upper Sepik.
(11) A Sing-sing Shield ornamented with various birds' feathers, obtained from Pottery River - a tributary of the Sepik.
(12) A Sing-sing Shield similar to No.11.
(13) A Dancing Mask worn by the Duie [Duic?] tribe, Sepik River.
(14) A fighting Badge of Natives of Middle Sepik.
(15) and
(16) Two nets (or "Biluam") used by the Native women of Middle Sepik for carrying purposes.
(17) A carved ornament, or [of?] house tambaran, Middle Sepik.
(18) An ornamented rack from Middle Sepik.
(19) An ornamented rack from Middle Sepik.
(20) An ornamented rack from Middle Sepik.
(21) An ornamented rack of living house of the Natives of Middle River.
(22) An ornamented rack, Middle Sepik.
(23) An ornamented rack, Middle Sepik.
(24) A carved house ornament, Middle Sepik.
(25) A carved house ornament, Middle Sepik.
(26) A carved bow of canoe, Middle Sepik.
(27) Male native's "Mal" or lava lava, manufactured from tree fibre - lower Sepik.
(28) Ornamental Mal or covering used by natives of Middle Sepik.
(29) and
(30) [Two] Native Adzes, used for constructing canoes, Middle Sepik.
(31) A Sword of sword fish, killed Upper Sepik.
(32) A kunda [kundu? - handdrum], from Upper River.
(33) Native skulls (3) ornamented, from the Sepik.
(34) A carved Kambang, or lime box, middle Sepik.
(35) Male native's hairnet, Lower Sepik.
(36) Old native's beetle-nut [betel nut] dish. When a native becomes too "lampoon" ['lapun'] (too old, or decrepit) to chew the beetle nut, the nut is pulped and mixed with lime for him.

[Signed] T. Griffiths Administrator

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1914a Vom mittleren Sepik zur Nordwestküste von Kaiser-Wilhelmsland. *Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten* 27,1:81-84.

1914b Entdeckungen im Becken des oberen Sepik. *Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten* 27,3:338-48.

1916a Vorstösse nach dem Quellgebiet des Kaiserin-Augusta-Flusses, dem Sand-Fluss und dem Nord-Fluss bis an das Küstengebirge. *Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten* 29,2:82-93.

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