Research Documentation Report

Maori Treasure Box

Museum of London Accession Number Q100

The Thomas Layton Collection

Authors

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"An art object such as a *wakahuia* (treasure box) is an enriched creation. The very name of the object, *wakahuia*, conjures up in the mind a long succession of vessels of varying shapes and sizes decorated in a variety of ways. If an artist wishes to make a *wakahuia*, then the name itself, the word, demands that he proceed in the full knowledge of what that word means. His choices are limited by what has happened in the past, and by what is occurring in the present. Thus the form and size selected by the artist are already clothed in a thousand words. Then more and more words are added until the object is in the hands of its intended owner(s) and is being used in an acceptable manner. The object touches the lives of several people, and it, in turn, is 'touched' by them and later by a succession of persons who may know nothing of it origins. *Over time an object becomes invested with interesting talk* [our Italics]."

Sidney Mead 1984, 21

Contents

1. Introduction

This report aims to document a Maori treasure box – a unique object within the Museum of London's collection. It was probably made within a Maori context, in New Zealand (*Aotearoa)*, but eventually came to be owned by the antiquarian Thomas Layton (1819-1911). Since 1959 it has been on long-term loan from the Thomas Layton Memorial and Museum Trust to the London Museum and, since 1975, to the Museum of London (MOL). This report focuses on four main areas of research:

- **Dating and provenancing the object**: This will focus on the Maori tribe that may have carved the object, when and from where it may have originally left New Zealand, and under what circumstances.
- **Thomas Layton:** Ascertaining how Layton may have acquired the object and what the object reveals about Layton as a collector of his time.
- **Layton's Collection:** Qualifying and quantifying the object within the Layton collection.
- **Current contexts:** Perspectives on treasure boxes within the London Maori community and how this informs object interpretation and use by the MOL today.

In order to answer our first research question, Section 3 focuses on the object's morphology and iconography as well as its materials and methods of manufacture. This will include an analysis of the object's *chaîne opératoire* – its 'operational sequence' of production (Schlanger 2005, 25ff.).

Section 4 of the report examines the object from a biographical viewpoint in order to approach the second and third research questions. It will discuss the wide ranging contexts the object has witnessed. This includes original context, the subsequent commodification of the object and finally the object within the museum context. This discussion will reveal some of the "interesting talk" the object has acquired during its lifetime (Mead 1984, 21).

Section 5 looks at the potential future of the treasure box, in terms of further research, education and display within the museum. It will discuss the object's current and potential future use. To answer the final research question, it is vital to understand the object's cultural value outside of the museum context. This is explored through engagement with a contemporary Maori London community, and other Maori sources.

Terminology

Throughout this report the object under discussion will be referred to as the 'Layton treasure box' in order to identify it as part of the Layton collection on loan to the Museum of London. Other examples will be referred to as 'treasure' rather than 'feather' boxes, another frequently used term for such objects. This follows conventions used at the National Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (hereafter Te Papa) as well as in the literature, especially Neich (2002). As a variety of valued items, not just *huia* feathers, were stored in such boxes, the term treasure seems more appropriate (Barrow 1969, 153; *idem* 1978, 89). We suggest the MOL changes the *title* of this object from 'feather box' to 'treasure box' in their documentation accordingly.

2. Object Information

MOL MIMSY XG Object Record

Links

- Activities (6)
- Authorities (3)
- Other (1)

*** ID Number (0)**	Q100
*** Section**	Prehistoric
*** Object Name (1)**	feather box
Production Date (1)	[check: Ethnographic]
Materials (1)	wood
Measurements (0)	L 465 mm
Summary (0)	Feather box, carved, boat shaped.
Place Collected	New Zealand, Maori?

Location Date	2011-03-01
Note	Layton Collection
Producer (0)	
Production Place (0)	
Collector (1)	Layton Collection
Date Collected (0)	
Acquisition	loan, 1959-09-03
Credit Line	
*** Owner Status (2)**	long-term loan
*** Whole/Part (0)**	whole
*** Number of Items (0)**	1

Accession Register and Object Entry

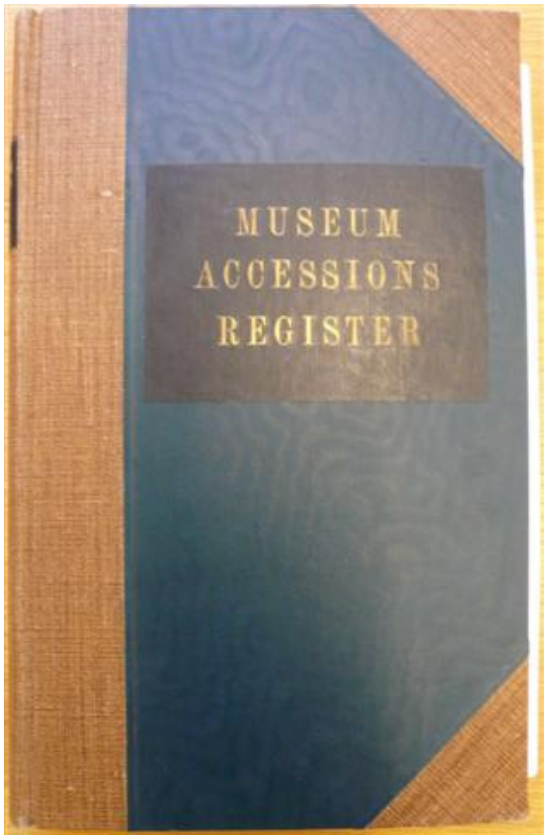


Fig. 3: (Photo: G. Davis).

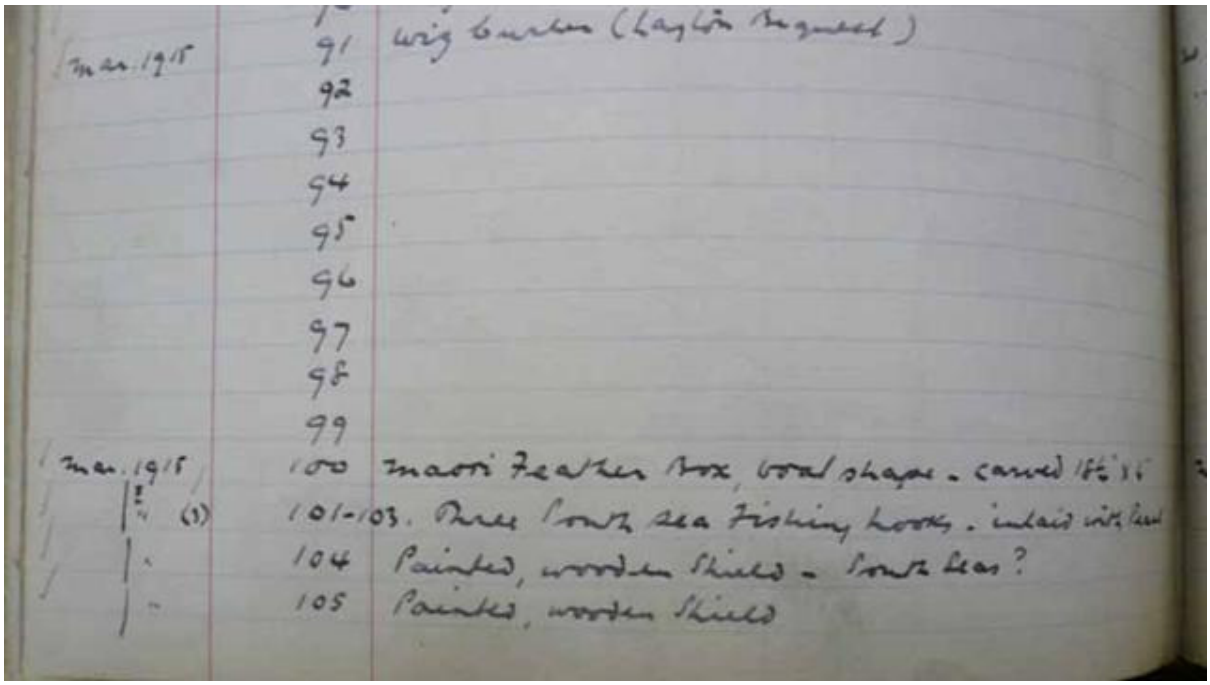


Fig. 4: (Photo: G. Davis).

Object Accession Card

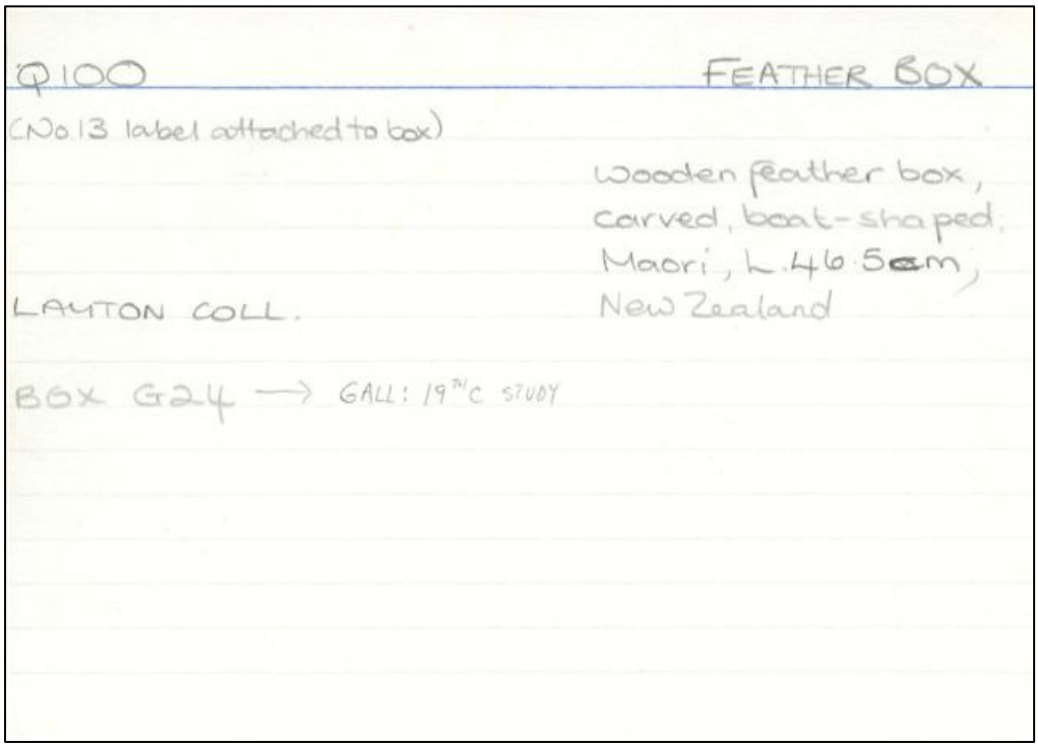


Fig. 5: (Photo: G. Davis)

Object Label

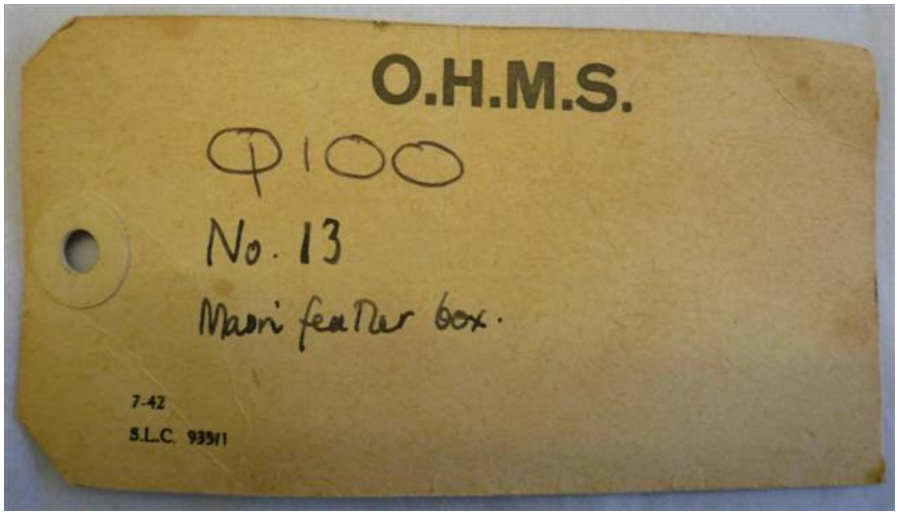


Fig. 6: (Photo: G. Davis).

A Note of the Accession Number 'Q100'

The Accession number 'Q100' is part of an alphabetical accession system used by Fred Turner in his original cataloguing of the Layton collection (See Section 4.3 for details). 'Q' represents the category 'miscellaneous' in this system. These categories can be consulted in the original Brentford & Chiswick Catalogue, held at Hounslow Library.

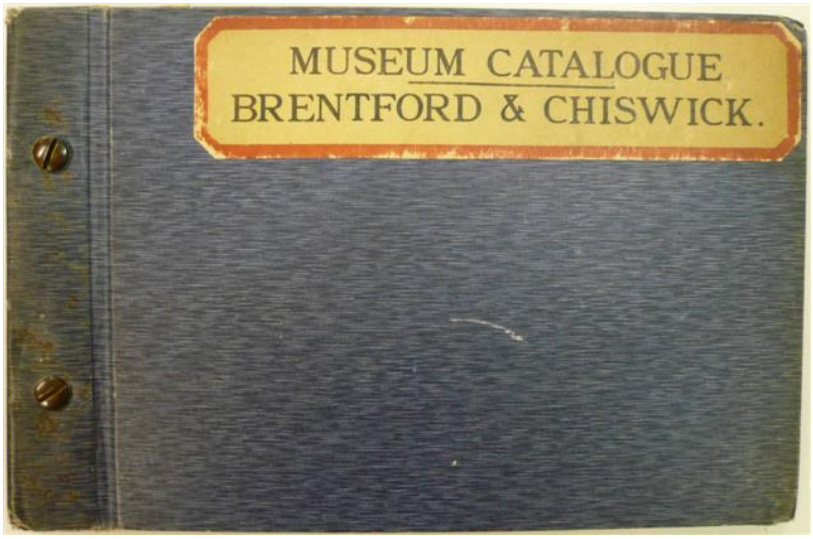


Fig. 7: (Photo: G. Davis).

It should be noted the Layton treasure box's accession number has been mistakenly attributed to another Layton object at a previous stage in its documentation within the MOL:

"Dagger, winding blade, ornamental handle, Indian (Also number of Maori treasure box)"

Museum of London Accession File

3. Object Description and Analysis

This section of the report will document the physicality of the object. Firstly, we will orientate the Layton treasure box in relation to other treasure boxes (Section 3.1). Section 3.2 analyses Maori treasure boxes more generally to inform and contextualise a detailed discussion of the Layton treasure box in Section 3.3. Lastly, Section 3.4 considers an important aspect of Maori material culture – that of fakes and the 'authenticity' of ethnographic objects.

3.1 Regional Distribution of Treasure Boxes

> "Duplicate feather boxes, I fear, do not exist. I never saw two alike"
>
> *L. Clarke to H.D.Skinner, 29 December 1925, Otago Museum archives*
>
> White 2007, 8

Each treasure box is unique, although sometimes the 'hand' of an individual carver can be observed between boxes (Neich 2002, 253). This creates a challenge when studying a lone treasure box, such as that held by the MOL, as it is difficult to identify typologies, to compare the object against.[1] Furthermore, although we can study the iconography and morphology of the Layton treasure box, there are very few boxes that have a known provenance or date.[2] By establishing the distribution of treasure boxes in other (public) collections it is possible to compare and contrast features of the Layton box.

Roger Neich, an authority on these objects, recently put the known number of Maori treasure boxes in public institutions at 440 and estimated that another 200 probably existed in private collections (Neich 2002, 254). Following Neich, we have identified potential treasure boxes in Museums from Australia (Bolton & Specht 1984), Canada and USA (Simmons 1982), New Zealand (Neich 2002) and the United Kingdom and Irish Republic (Gathercole & Clarke 1979).[3] This data has been presented in Appendix 1.

Twenty nine institutions in the UK and Irish Republic were contacted to ascertain if they still held treasure boxes in their collections, as detailed in the 1979 UNESCO survey. Additionally, we included museums that seemed germane to this investigation but were neglected by the original survey (Appendix 1.2). Even taking into account the museums that

[1] "The purpose of typology is to group objects with shared attributes into types which are mutually exclusive" (Furey 2004, 43).
[2] Material of a 'Cook-voyage provenance' is no exception (see Kaeppler 1978, 39 and Coote 2004, 111).
[3] A recent reappraisal of the 1970s UNESCO collection surveys or 'Oceanic Cultures Project' is discussed by Bolton & Specht (2005).

did not respond, it can be seen that the number of boxes has changed. This is due to museum reforms, dissolutions, the loss of ethnographic collections and new acquisitions.

The total number of treasure boxes (not all of which are necessarily Maori treasure boxes) totals 465. This excludes mainland Europe where there are known to be important collections, for example the Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna and the Museum für Völkerkunde, Dresden (Hooper 2006, 20; Neich 2002, 254). This figure, excluding European collections, is already greater than Neich's estimated 440. Treasure boxes in museum collections cannot be said to be rare, particularly when compared with other Maori ethnographic material such as feeding funnels or *korere (*B. Hyacinth, pers. comm. 14/02/11).

The intention of this investigation was not to provide a complete catalogue of treasure boxes held in museums. However, by beginning a scoping process treasure boxes can be seen to be important and widely dispersed objects (from both a Maori and a collecting perspective). Further, studying multiple other examples allows stylistic comparisons to be made with the Layton treasure box [Fig. 8 & 9]. Finally, the dynamic nature of ethnographic collections within the United Kingdom in particular can be understood.

Fig. 8: Treasure boxes in the British Museum collection, accessed by the authors (Photo: G. Davis).

Fig. 9: Treasure boxes in the Pitt Rivers collection, accessed by the authors (Photo: G. Davis).

3.2 Maori Treasure Boxes

Before beginning an in-depth analysis of the Layton treasure box (Section 3.3) it is important to understand the cultural context of Maori carving, including the object's *chaîne opératoire*. Additionally, by briefly examining treasure box typologies some unusual, even a-canonical, features of the Layton treasure box will be shown.

Maori Wood Carving: Mythology and Art

Scholars consider that Maori wood carving (*whakairo*) reached a level of excellence unparalleled by other Pacific peoples. Within Maori culture, wood carving became the most prominent of the arts (Mead 1961, 11; Neich 1996, 69). Sacred (*tapu)* beliefs were associated with *whakairo* giving men of high rank the authority to work with sacred material (Gream 1999, 5) (see Section 4.1 for a more detailed discussion of *tapu*).

Fig. 10: Wood carving has seen expression in major constructions as well as smaller items. *Above left:* Inside a Meeting House (http://www.hickerphoto.com/maori-art-3644-pictures.htm); *Above right:* Store House http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/image; *Below left:* Maori people posing for a photo in front a house (http://history.howstuffworks.com/australia-and-new-zealand-history/maori.htm); *Below right:* Maori war canoe (http://i.pbase.com).

Maori mythology refers to wood carving and its creator god *Tangaroa*. Ritual specialists, including those who were master carvers, were known as *tohunga* and ranked highly in *tapu*, prestige and authority. *Tohunga* carvers, usually male and often chiefs, claimed a genealogical lineage that could be traced back to *Tangaroa*. *Tohunga* were taught the craft

and rituals associated with all carving practice from a young age (Neich 1996, 69-70; Simmons 1985, 49). It is believed that the ability to carve smaller *tapu* items, such as treasure boxes, marked a carver's graduation (Neich 2002, 254; Simmons 1985, 49).

Even those high-ranking individuals who did not become *tohunga* carving specialists would have learnt to carve. However, in contrast to the large-scale *tohunga* projects, as seen in figure 11, leaders were more likely to carve their own weapons, personal ornaments and treasure boxes (Neich 1996, 110).

Fig. 11: Maori carvers at work inside a house at Matapihi, Tauranga in 1864. Women were not permitted into this space (Neich, 1996, 78).

Like most Maori art forms, wood carving was essentially functional due the integration of aesthetic form and practical function (Neich 1996, 81). Items were often intricately adorned with elements not merely decorative but containing "magical functions" (Barrow 1984, 23). It was vital, therefore, that the carver had both the necessary practical and ritual knowledge (Neich 1996, 69).

The primary figurative motif in Maori arts is the human figure, represented by *tiki*. These figures, in full body or head-only form, represent the first man, ancestors or gods [Fig. 12].

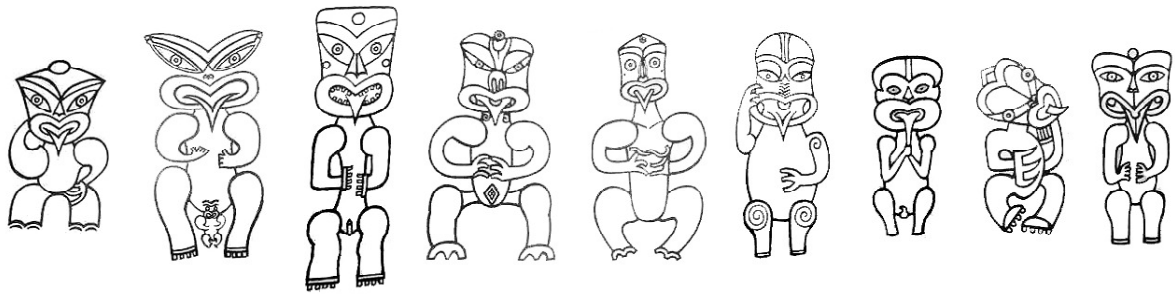
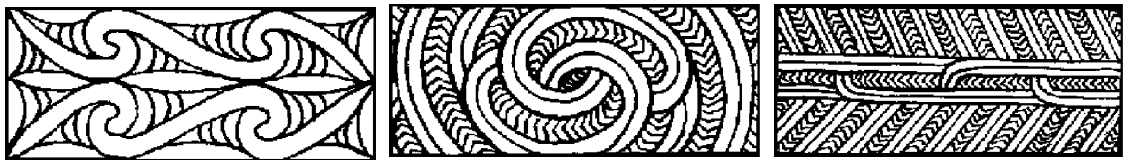


Fig. 12: Examples of full female and male *tiki*. Variation in the heads are associated with different tribes (*iwi)* although typically all have protruding tongues (Simmons 1985).

Secondary to these, elements symbolizing fertility are frequently shown alongside an array of patterns, categorized as in figure 13. Carvers worked within a Maori carving paradigm, however there was flexibility for the carver to adapt designs, making almost every object different, unique and individual (Neich 1996, 83).



Raperape
Carved throughout New Zealand, this design represents movement. It stands for continuity and is inspired by the stalk and leaves of the fern tree.

Whakarare* or *Korurangi
Seen throughout New Zealand, this is a variation of the *Rauponga* pattern and is used to show movement and experience.

Rauponga
From *Ngati Porou*, *Ngati Kahungunu*, *Te Arawa* and the *Waikato*, this design represents the ribs of the ancestors and is used to cover areas on smaller items. It is inspired by the fern leaf.

Maui
Seen throughout New Zealand, this pattern represents the fish hook of *Maui*, a deity linked to abundant food supply.

Unaunahi* or *Unahi
This pattern is mainly seen in the *Tai Tokerau* area. It represents fish scales and represents the abundance of food, wealth of the sea and the people.

Rauru
This is the most widely used variant of a common pattern. It is often seen in *Uhi Moko*, tattoos used on the buttocks.

Fig. 13: Most common patterns found in Maori wood-carving (Wilson).

Maori Wood Carving: Materials and Production

The Maori's spiritual relationship with the art of woodcarving and their technical knowledge both inform the *chaîne opératoire* of producing a treasure box.

- ***Material***

The natural timbers *kauri* and *totara* were the best indigenous timbers for carving. Both had a straight fine grain and were amenable to the curving cuts of Maori surface decoration (Neich 1996, 72-73).

Kauri (*Agathis australis)* [Fig. 14]

The *kauri* is one of the largest and oldest tree indigenous to New Zealand. It is restricted by climate to the northern area of the North Island, above Auckland (above latitude 38) (Barrow 1978, 68). *Kauri* wood has a light honey colour with a distinctive silvery speckled lustre, straight-grained timber and is a very fine wood for the carver (Neich 2002). When carved, it has a natural sheen (Barrow 1984). Its straight, knotless grain and its combination of softness and strength makes *kauri* one of the finest ship and house building woods.

Fig. 14: Kauri log founded at Waipoua Forest, North Island, New Zealand
http://www.nzmuseums.co.nz/account/3009/object/271/Agathis_australis_Kauri_Log

Fig. 15: Totara wood
http://www.natureshopnz.com/html/natural-ingredients.html

Totara (Podocarpus totara) [Fig. 15]

Totara is a conifer. It is abundant on high- and lowlands south of Auckland. *Totara* timber is dense, with a short straight grain and a rich, reddish colour. It can be rapidly split into long slabs, and is soft enough to be cut by stone tools. It is durable, although it has a tendency to develop surface cracks when exposed to sun and rain (Barrow 1969, 14). *Totara* trees can

grow extremely tall, a canoe made from a single tree could seat more than a hundred (Reed 1970, 3).

- ***Manufacture***

The most common tools used by the ancient Maori in their wood carvings were made from hard stone that could take a sharp edge. The earliest inhabitants of New Zealand used basalt and argillite for making stone tools. Prehistoric chisels made from nephrite jade (greenstone) have been found at many archaeological sites (Jones 1987, 58). Metal tools were not used in the New Zealand until after the introduction of metal by the first Europeans (Neich 1996, 73).

Carvers' tools would include adzes for felling trees and smaller adzes for hollowing timber, mallets for striking cutting tools, and, most importantly, chisels for the majority of carving and decoration of a treasure box.

Fig. 16: A carver's mallet. Whalebone was the favoured material for mallets although wooden mallets were also used. This mallet has a bruised surface from repeated strikes to the chisel head (Barrow 1969, 71).

Fig. 17: A rare example of a complete chisel (*whao*), including the wooden handle, nephrite blade and lashing. Recorded as having been collected by Captain James Cook (Barrow 1969, 71).

- ***Design***

A three-stage process would inform the design of a treasure box (Barrow 1969, 72). An outline would first be marked out. This outline would then be cut in low relief until the object was 'blocked-out'. Chisels would then be used to finish surface decoration. The sequence of carving was informed by the object's usual mode of display in which the underside of a treasure box was the most visible [Fig. 18]. The base of boxes would be finished first,

followed by the sides and then the lid (Barrow 1969, 153). This sequence of execution can be seen on the Layton treasure box, where the sides have been left unfinished and the lid is uncarved (see Section 4.3).

Fig. 18a, 18b & 18c: Left-right: Outlining, blocking-out and surface in Maori woodcarving (Barrow 1969, 72).

- ***Finishing***

Although treasure boxes could be left untreated, once carved many were finished with an oil or paint as a final stage in the *chaîne opératoire*. Shark liver oil was used to protect the surface of worked wood (Neich 1996, 74). This had the advantage of soaking deep into the wood, providing better protection than other methods (Sentence 2003).

Red pigment, known as *kokowai*, was a red ochre produced through roasting haematite in a fire to create a powder. This was then mixed with shark liver oil to make a paint which did not dry to a hard coat but become powdery and soft (Barrow 1978, 68; Neich 1996 74; Strafford 1997, 57) [Fig. 19].

Fig. 19: Red pigment visible in the crevasses of a treasure box, The British Museum, Acc. No. Oc1910 (Photo: R. Pinto).

Treasure boxes were also darkened as a result of being hidden in swamps to prevent looting by enemy raiders (Neich 1996, 74). Black paint could be made from soot and shark oil, but this was rarely used on carvings (Barrow 1978, 70).

Maori Treasure Boxes: Wakahuia, Papahou and Powaka Whakairo

- ***Wakahuia***

Waka translates as 'canoe' and *huia* refers to the tail feathers of the *huia* bird. These boxes are often oblong and oval, typically described as 'canoe' shaped. Typically two handles, carved as human heads, project from the terminal ends of the box. The base is almost always carved throughout, although this is based on the corpus of *wakahuia* collected by Europeans now present in museum collections (Neich 2005, 49; *idem* 2010, 43; Simmons 1985, 49).

The lids of this box-type vary in style and decoration [Fig. 20b]. Some were left plain and others decorated to match the base. Most *wakahuia* are as deep (or deeper) as they are wide. According to Neich (2010, 43) this type of box was produced mainly in central and eastern areas of New Zealand, but with access to metal tools and European demand its production spread across the country during the C19th.

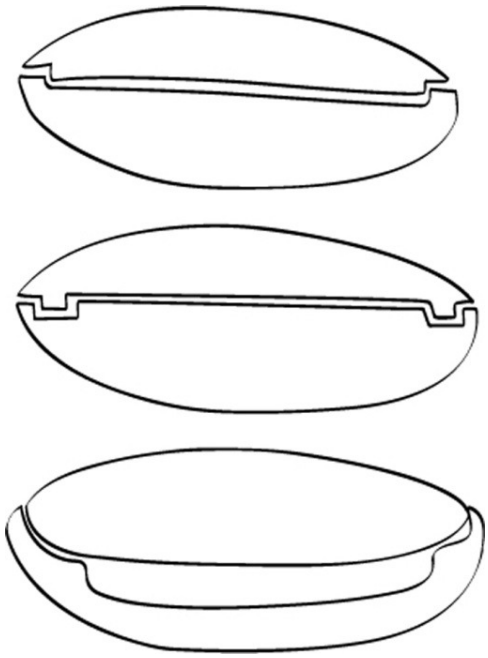


Fig. 20a & 20b: *Left*: Examples of *wakahuia* in the British Museum collection (Photo: R. Pinto) *Right*: Different types of lid systems found in *wakahuia* (R. Pinto after Capistrano-Baker 1998, 26).

- ***Papahou***

This box-type is rectangular in shape, shallow with a flat base and approximately three times wider than it is deep. *Papa* means box or chest while *hou* is a term for feather, in particular the tail feather. *Papahou* can be highly decorated but occasionally have plain bases (Neich 2005, 49; *idem* 2010, 43) [Fig. 21]. Most *papahou* were carved using stone tools and did not make the transition to metal tools. This may have been due to most carvers from those areas being wiped out by epidemics and the Land Wars (Neich 2010, 43). Most of these boxes can be considered an ancient regional type from northern and western areas.

Fig. 21: Examples of *papahou*.
Left: British Museum, Acc. No. Oc.1854,1229.87.b (Photo: R. Pinto); *Centre*: Te Papa, Acc. No. OL000331 & ME023811; *Right*: British Museum, Acc. No. Oc.1921-10.14 (Photo: R. Pinto).

- ***Powaka Whakairo***

This is a rare box-type only recently identified by Neich (2005). It has a distinctive form, being rectangular and deep, featuring sharp edges and a flat base purposefully designed to stand on surfaces. Unlike the *wakahuia* and *papahou* this box was not designed to be suspended from the rafters of dwellings and was covered in decoration all over, including the base (Neich 2005, 57, 65; *idem* 2010, 43) [Fig. 22].

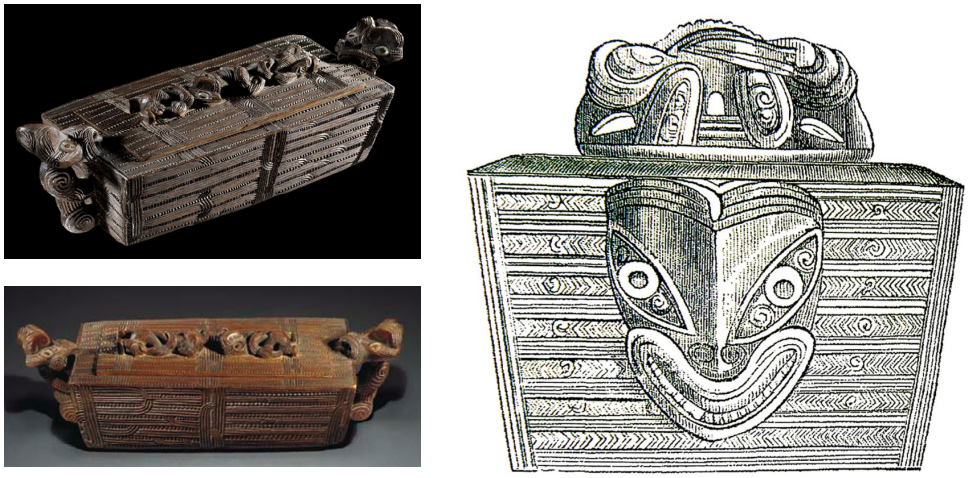


Fig. 22: Examples of *powaka whakairo*
From *top* to *bottom*: Te Papa, Acc. No. ME023774
http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=4515307;
Right:
http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/LargeImage.aspx?image=/lotfinderimages/d45153/d4515309x.jpg

3.3 The Layton Treasure Box

- **Form**

The Layton treasure box has an intricately carved 'boat' shaped wooden base [Fig. 23], with a handle protruding from each end carved in the form of a human head. ([Fig. 24]. The lid of the box is undecorated and slightly convex [Fig. 25] (see also Fig. 85 & 86, Appendix 2).

Fig. 23: Base of the Layton treasure box with dimensions (Photo: R. Pinto, adapted from R. Stroud).

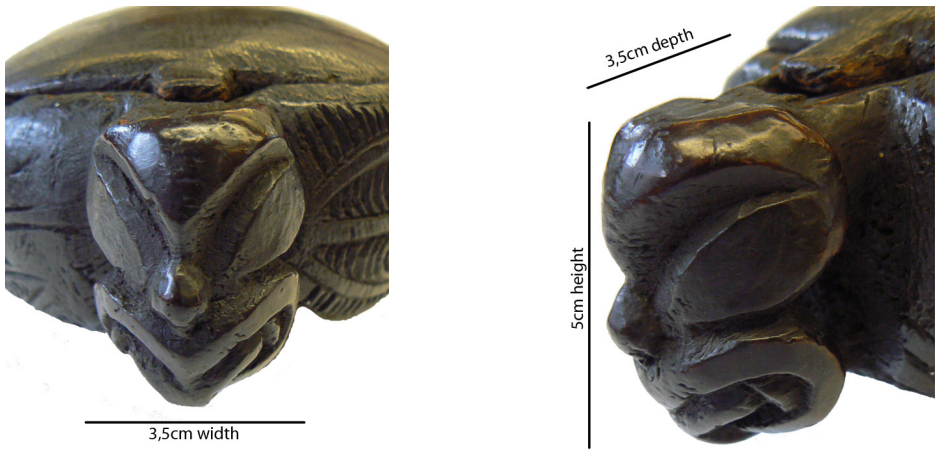


Fig. 24: Detail of carved handles with dimensions (Photo: R. Pinto).

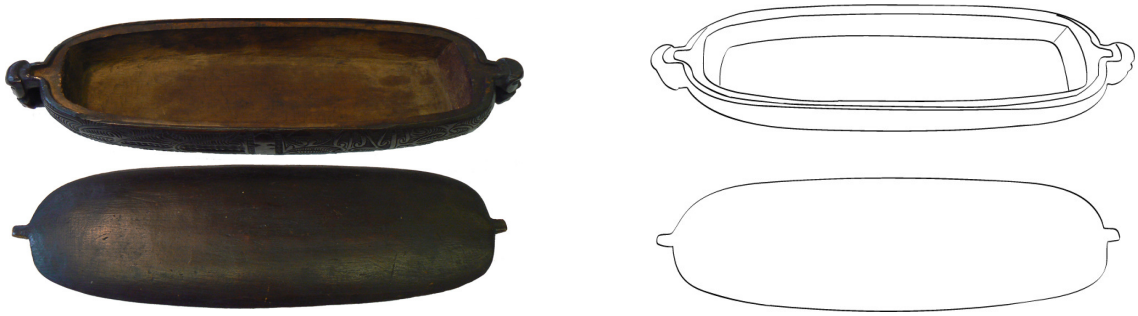


Fig. 25: *Left*: The Layton treasure box base and lid. *Right*: Drawing delineating the general form of this box (Photo & Drawing: R. Pinto).

The base was carved from one piece of wood but it is unknown whether the lid was carved from the same block. The internal surface is flat with slightly curved walls and straight-cut ends. Internal chisel marks as in Fig. 25 have similar characteristics to several containers dated to the early C18th.

Fig. 26: *Left & Centre*: Chisel marks inside Layton Treasure Box (Photo: R. Pinto). *Right*: Marks in an early *Wakahuia* collected in 1800 Te Papa Acc. No. WE000946.

Due to its shallow depth, the Layton treasure box can be classed as a hybrid form, between *wakahuia* and *papahou*. A treasure box of overall similar shape (especially the shallow form) and size was found in the *Te Papa* online catalogue [Fig. 27]. *Te Papa* explains "This *waka huia* (treasure box) was originally identified as a *papa hou*. The rectangular form of *papa hou* is a northern variation of the more widespread *waka huia*, which are canoe shaped."[4] The general morphology of the Layton treasure box is that of a *wakahuia*. *Wakahuia* were traditionally produced in central and eastern areas, with production spreading across the country during the 'metal-tools' era (Neich 2010, 43).

[4] Te Papa Tongarewa's online catalogue on 09/09/11: http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/objectdetails.aspx?oid=448890&page=2&term=carved+box

Fig. 27: Treasure box of similar morphology to the Layton treasure box. Note the *huia* feather. Te Papa Tongarewa, Acc. No. WE000946.

- **Lid**

The lid was carved to fit the base, with a tab at each end. The base rim has a ridge and groove to accommodate the lid and a carved notch at either end [Fig. 28 & 29]. In her study on lid technology of treasure boxes, Capistrano-Baker described this system as prevalent in eastern areas during the metal-tool era, and additionally found in north-western regions (1998, 26). Capistrano-Baker suggests that this lid system is "associated with feather boxes carved towards the second half of the C19th."

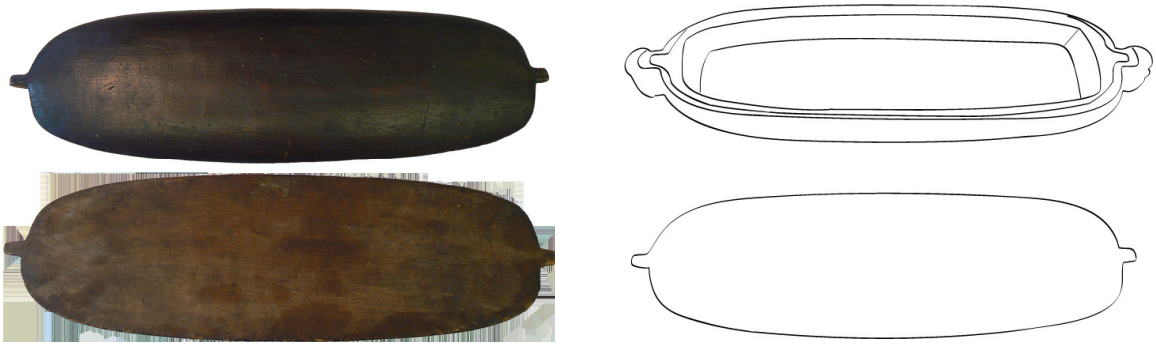


Fig. 28: Detail of the Layton treasure box lid system (Photo: R. Pinto). *Left*: Outer and inner surface of lid. *Right*: Drawing delineating the 'ridge-and-groove' and 'tab-and-notch' of the lid system (R. Pinto).

Fig. 29: Detail of 'tab-and-notch' and 'ridge-and-groove' system (Photo: R. Pinto).

During analysis of the lid, we discovered a very faint inscription that reads: "He Papa / or carved/ Box / see / p. 383." (see Section 4.3 for further discussion) [Fig. 30].

Fig. 30: Accurate photography of the inscription was impossible due to it being extremely faint. The images above show the same photo before (*left*) and after (*right*) with a line drawing traced over the inscription (Photo & Drawing: R. Pinto).

Based on our understanding of Capistrano-Baker and Neich we conclude the following about the Layton treasure box:

A. If produced before the second half of the C19th it came from the Eastern region.
B. If produced after the second half of the C19th it came from either the Eastern or North-western regions.

- **Surface**

The outer surface of the box is dark, shiny and smooth. The general aesthetics are traditionally Maori, similar to the soft and intuitive style present in early carvings collected between the C18th and the first half of the C19th (Barrow 1984, 52; Neich 1996, 81; see also *Te Papa's* website: http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/objectdetails.aspx?oid=706395) [Fig. 31].

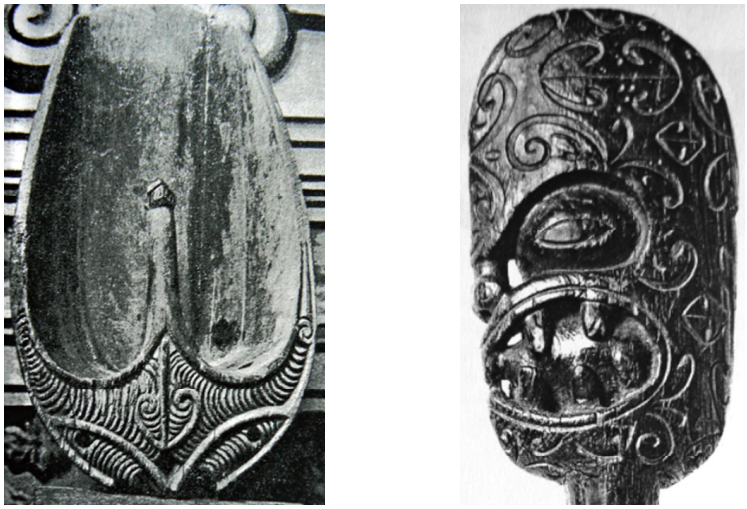


Fig. 31: The 'naïve' and 'intuitive' carving style of the Archaic Maori period.
Left: canoe bailer (Phillips 1955, 25); *Right*: wooden club (Barrow 1984, 43)1

The underside carving has a smooth and shallow 'U' groove whilst the sides of the box show a deeper and narrower 'V' groove. The 'U' groove could be indicative of the use of stone tools (Barrow 1984, 52) and the 'V' groove, metal tools (http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/objectdetails.aspx?oid=706395). These differences in design and groove marks may suggest that the box was initially decorated on the underside only with the carving of the sides executed at a later date, possibly by a different carver.[5] However, these are contentious suppositions. Firstly, various scholars dispute whether stone tool and metal tool groove marks can be distinguished [Fig. 32]. Secondly, to finish someone else's carving –particularly a treasure box– was considered *tapu*, hence many treasure boxes were found unfinished in burial grounds or swamps (Neich 1996, 81; Simmons 1985, 49).

[5] This was also the opinion of George Nuku, a contemporary Maori artist (pers. comm. 09/03/11): "…the sculptural forms(s) expressed on both the projecting heads and overall shape of the wakahuia is inconsistent with the koru patterns carved on the side- obviously it is difficult to get the fullest picture as the *wakahuia* is incomplete, perhaps they were executed by a different carver possibly even a *pakeha*". Also R. Raymond pers. comm. 18/03/11; L. Heidi Stumpe pers. comm. 09/02/11.

Fig. 32: Differences in carving between stone and metal tools (Barrow 1984, 52). Barrow (1984, 43) used these images to explain the idea that there are visible differences between carving with stone tools (*left*) and metal tools (*right*). Stone tools were used in the period before the Europeans arrived and in the transition period until the mid C19th.

Typical of Maori-carved treasure boxes, the Layton treasure box has an overall balance to its design, with similar but asymmetrical decorated sides. This subtle asymmetry also appears on the handles. The Layton treasure box was decorated with traditional primary and secondary elements (see below).

Primary Elements (Human):

Heads: The handles are carved as human heads [Fig. 24] with the tongues sticking out, a typical Maori motif. Carved heads perform the symbolic function of representing ancestors (Simmons 1985, 49).

Tiki: The Layton treasure box has a complete *tiki* head on one side [Fig. 33 & 34]. This important element symbolically represents the 'first man', the tribe's guardian; each tribe has their own *tiki*. Although we have compared this *tiki* with others from specific regions, we have found no conclusive match.

Fig. 33: *Tiki* head on the side of the Layton feather box. *Right*: Detail of the *tiki* head (Photos: R. Pinto).

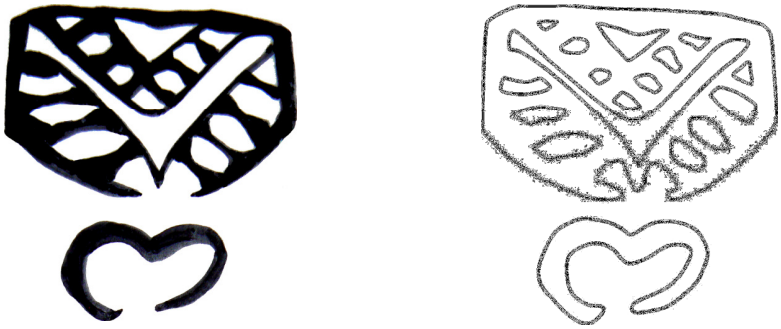


Fig. 34: Drawings of the Layton treasure box *tiki* head (R. Pinto).

Manaia: This is a human element also representing Maori ancestors [Fig. 35]. *Manaia* are often adapted (stretched/curved) to fit within a carving. Their form is often somewhat obscured by other carvings on treasure boxes making it difficult to distinguish them. No *manaia* are present on the Layton treasure box.

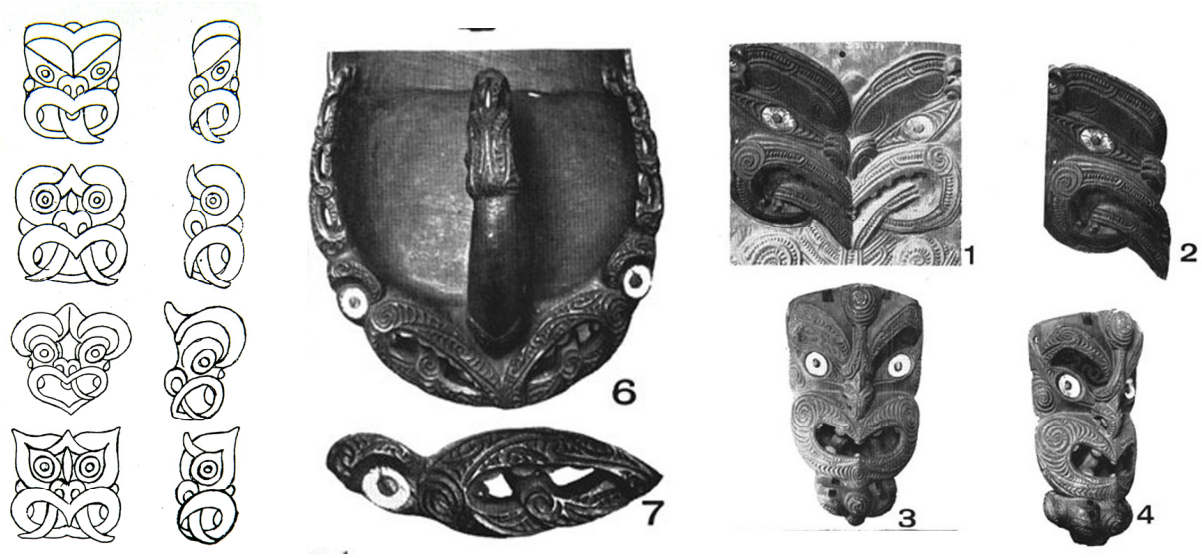


Fig. 35: Examples of *manaia* prominent features. *Manaia* can often be found adapted to fit an empty area of a carving.

(*Left*: Reed 1972, 9; *Centre and right*: http://www.jps.auckland.ac.nz/document/Volume_45_1936/Volume_45,_No._178/Maori_carving_patterns,_by_G._Archey,_p_49-62/p1)

Phallus: An abstracted phallus is possibly outlined on the side of the Layton treasure box, on the opposite side to the *tiki* [Fig. 36]. Sexual organs represent fertility and are a very common decoration on treasure boxes.

Fig. 36: This central element on one side of the Layton box looks like an abstracted phallus (Photos & Drawing: R. Pinto).

Secondary Elements (Pattern):

Koru or *pitau*: The *koru* is a foliate form, a curved stalk with a bulbous end. It is the basis of a range of patterns typical of the curvilinear decorations abundant in Maori art (Barrow 1984, 43; Gream 1999, 7; McEwen 1966, 1) [Fig. 37]. Often combined with crescent lines and dots, *koru* effectively fill spaces while introducing rhythm and a sense of movement (Mead, 1961: 44; Gream, 1999: 7) as we can see on the sides of the of the Layton treasure box [Fig. 37 & 38].

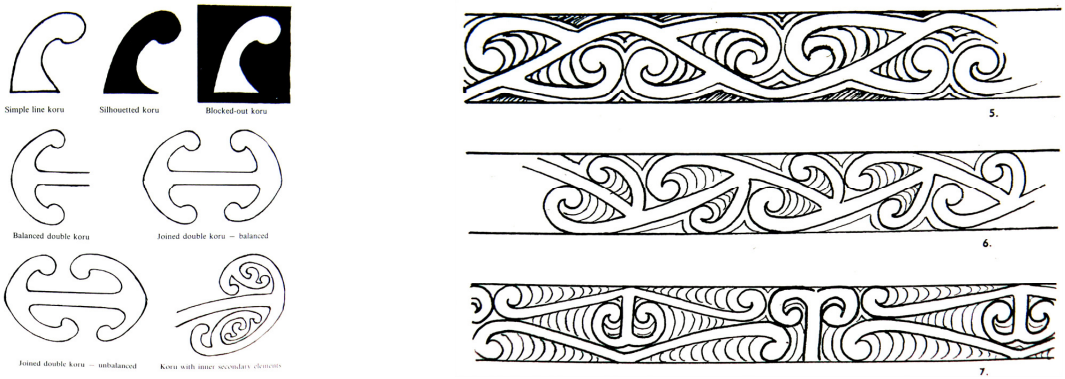


Fig. 37: *Left*: *Koru* from its basic form to its full form: balanced double stalk, joined balanced double stalk, joined unbalanced and unbalanced double *koru* with inner secondary elements (Barrow 1984, 44). *Right*: Development of *koru* patterns (Mead 1961, 45).

Fig. 38: *Koru* patterns on the Layton treasure box (Photos: R Pinto).

This motif, alongside the spiral, is one of most widely used in Maori art and is often found in archaic items. The archaic style is more naturalistic but over time the *koru* patterns underwent a process of stylization and refinement to become geometric patterns (Phillipps 1943, 10-11; Barrow 1984, 44; Knight 1985, 4).

Koru is also the basic element for the creation of spirals (Barrow 1984, 45; Neich 1993, 26 and 54) [Fig. 39]. It is believed to represent the unfurling of a fern frond, while spirals represent the heart of a baby fern. Fern leaves and spiralled baby ferns are found fossilized in New Zealand; fossilized fern leaves are not dissimilar in appearance to carved *Koru* elements in wood (Harris 1966, 1).

Fig. 39: *Left*: Development of spiral forms from the basic *koru* (Barrow 1984, 45). Right: Detail of the only two spirals present in the Layton treasure box decoration (Photo: R. Pinto).

The *koru* pattern present on the Layton treasure box seems more naturalistic which could indicate that carving was begun on the box in the C18th probably in the Eastern region. However, it is worth noting that Rosanna Raymond, a Polynesian artist, has commented on the comparatively poor quality of the *koru* carvings – the "naturalistic style" may be attributed to a lack of skill rather than an early carving date (pers.comm. 18/03/11).

Rauponga: This pattern covers the bottom of the Layton treasure box base [Fig. 39]. It is believed to represent the ribs of ancestors while also referencing fern fronds (Neich 1996, 89; Reed 1972, 14). *Rauponga* is formed by a line of notches (called *pakati*) in diamond, crescent or chevron shapes. These are than enclosed by parallel lines of grooves (called *haehae*) and ridges (called *raumoa*). This pattern was often used to cover the surfaces of wooden boxes, especially treasure boxes (Reed 1972, 14; Neich 1996, 89).

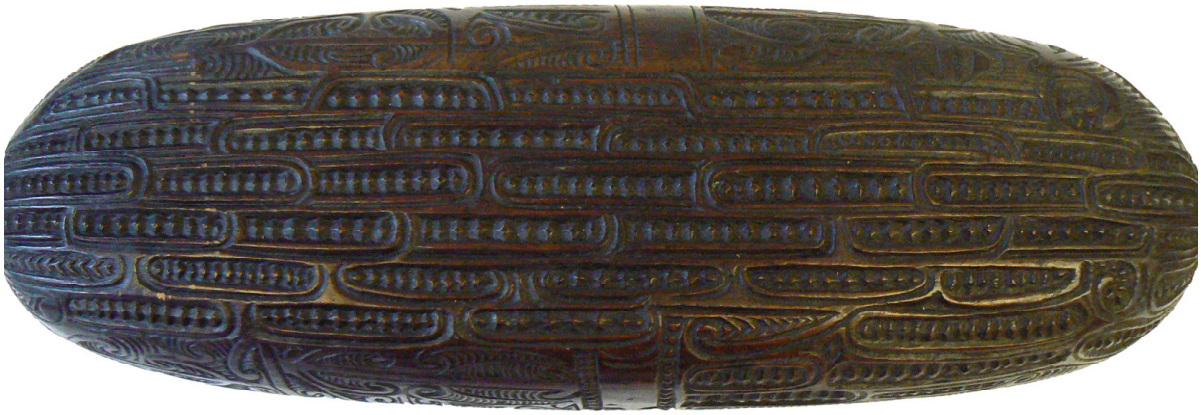


Fig. 40: *Rauponga* pattern decorating the majority of the base of the Layton treasure box (Photo: R. Pinto).

Early items with *rauponga* patterning had a varied number of *raumoa* and *haehae*. These according to Reed (1972, 14) had only one or two *haehae* and *raumoa,* whereas Neich states they could range from one to seven (1996, 89). Notwithstanding, the two authors concur that carvings of mid C19th items onwards show a standardized *rauponga* of three plain ridges (*raumoa*) surrounding the notched area (*pakati*) (Neich 1996, 89; Reed 1972, 14). Early carvings of *rauponga* have been identified as a decorative element present in the following four tribes: *Ngati Porou, Ngati Kahungunu, Te Arawa* and *Waikato* (Simmons1985; Wilson). The *rauponga* pattern present on the Layton treasure box ranges from one to two *raumoa*, meaning that it fits within the prescriptions of pre mid C19th carvings as stated by Reed (1972, 14) and Neich (1996, 89).

To conclude, an iconographic analysis of the shape, heads and *rauponga* pattern indicate that this item is stylistically an object produced before the mid C19th, most likely during the transitional period. With this in mind, and assuming that Capistrano-Baker's findings are correct, we can also conclude that this item was probably firstly produced in the Eastern region in either of the two coastal tribes of *Ngati Kahungunu* or *Ngati Porou* tribe of the Poverty Bay (Fig. 41).

What we cannot deduce, however, is whether the box has been carved solely with stone or metal tools. Additionally it is not known if the *koru* pattern was added by a less-skilful, possibly *pakeha* (non-Maori New Zealander) hand and how long the hiatus between the two stages of carving may have been.

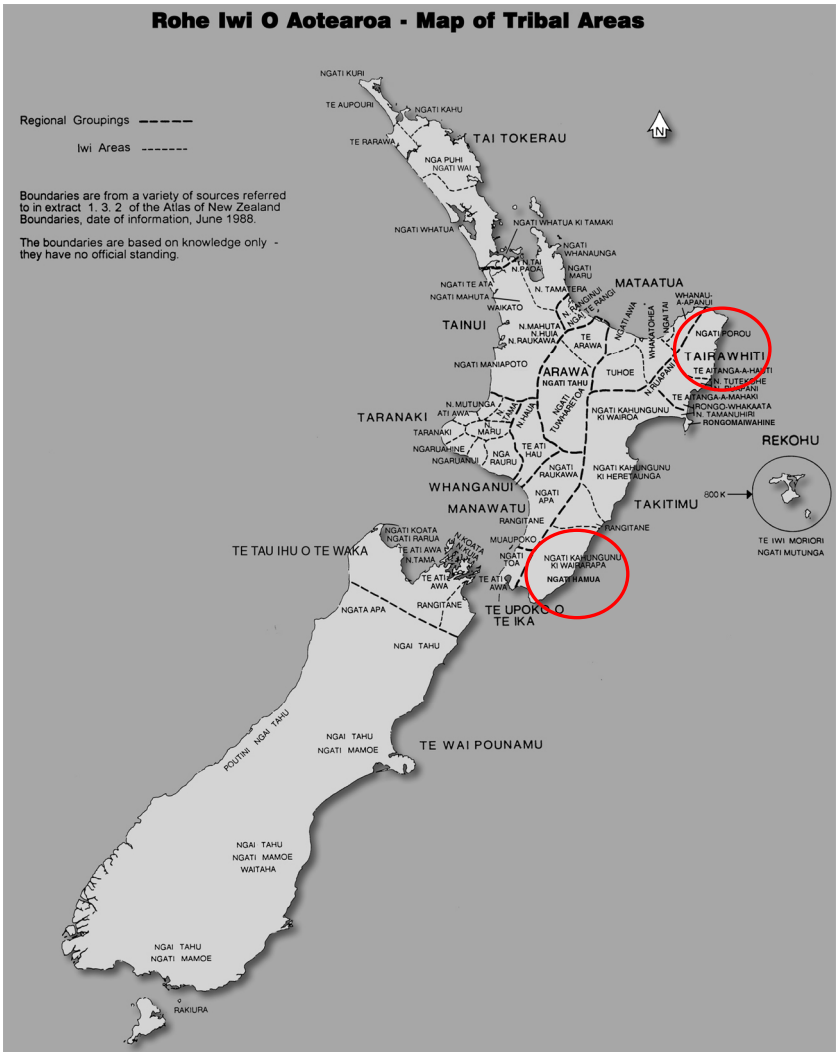


Fig. 41: Tribal map of New Zealand with the *Ngati Kahungunu* and *Ngati Porou* tribal areas circled (Reproduced from www.takoa.co.nz/media/rohe_iwi.pdf).

Scientific Analysis & Absolute Dating

There is evidence to suggest that the Layton treasure box was made out of *totara* wood. However, visual examination cannot establish this with certainty. *Totara*, is usually distinctive but it is difficult to ascertain whether it has been used as the box's surface has been darkened perhaps through indigenous treatment (such as oiling or burial), handling and poor storage over time and even potential 'cleaning' or superficial restoration.

Dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) of the box is not possible as this would require a cross-section of the wood (Baillie 1995, 18). This technique would date the material to the time it was felled, even though the actual carving may have taken place at a later date (Oddy 1992, 484; Renfrew & Bahn 2000, 137).

As wood is an organic material, radiocarbon dating could be undertaken. This would not, however, provide a specific date but a date range incorporating a standard deviation of ±80 years (Renfrew & Bahn 2000, 144). This procedure would entail destructive sampling, requiring 10-20 mg (Gillespie 1984, 6) or at the very least 5-10 mg of material (Renfrew & Bahn 2000, 141).

3.4 Faking Maori

A consideration of the Layton treasure box's *chaîne opératoire* – its sequence of tooling – suggests that it is of Maori manufacture. However, initially, the possibility of the box not being genuine had to be entertained, owning to the lack of provenance and to its somewhat unusual form.

Treasure boxes were high status items, both in their original context and in the context of commodities within the European collecting market (Gathercole 1978, 282). The faking of Maori objects burgeoned between 1890 and 1930. The Englishman, James Edward Little (1876–1953) and the New Zealander, James Frank Robieson (1880–1966) are two prominent fakers, active in the early 20th century (1905-10) and known to have faked Maori treasure boxes (see Gathercole 1978, Skinner 1974; Watt 1990). Little and Robison postdate Layton's major phase of collecting, his death occurring in 1911. Their methods highlight a number of issues surrounding the authentication of Maori objects.[6]

Accomplished fakers, Little and Robieson's style differed somewhat due to their respective backgrounds and knowledge of Maori material culture. Little, a trained furniture restorer, had no knowledge of Maori carving and copied directly from original artefacts he stole from public collections (Skinner 1974, 187). Notably, Little stole the lid of a treasure box (replacing it with a counterfeit) from the Museum of the Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society at Devizes in 1915 (Watt 1990, v.1: 86).[7] One of Little's main trademarks, "the 'S' shaped simple, double spiral", is a giveaway of his output (Watt 1990, v.1: 119) [Fig. 42].

Little was ousted as a faker in 1910 by the prominent collector W.O. Oldman in the Journal *Man* (Gathercole 1978 282). Little had been dealing with Oldman for many years and on one occasion at least offered him a treasure box:

"I am sending you today the best NZ feather Box I have seen at ten pounds with large raised figure [...] a very old carving."

Letter dated 13 May 1910

Watt 1990, v.2: 9

[6] Watt (1990, v.2) discuses a number of examples, but due to copyright restrictions images are not reproduced. Additionally, a number of these fake treasure boxes are from private collections, which Watt does not reference.

[7] This treasure box is now in the British Museum collection, but the lid has never been recovered (Neich et al. 2010, 46. Catalogue Entry 217, Plate 59). Since treasure box lids are particular to their container it is entirely feasible that the lid, if it exists in another collection, could be identified.

Unlike Little, Robieson had intimate knowledge of Maori material culture, having worked alongside Arawa carvers during the construction of carvings for Whakarewarewa, a Maori settlement (Barrow & Skinner 1974, 182). Robieson collected and acquired Maori objects through various means, even looting burial caves (Watt 1990, v.1: 63, 92). Robieson's signature style is described as "heavy surface decoration usually formed by parallel grooves, straight or curved, with heavy dog tooth notches set between the lines" (Barrow & Skinner 1974, 187) [Fig. 43].

Fig. 42: Free standing "Maori" figure believed to have been faked by Little (Jones 1990, 255-256.)

Fig. 43: *Maripi* believed to have been faked by Robieson (Barrow & Skinner 1974, 186).

A comparison of the Layton treasure box with 'Maori' treasure boxes made by Little and Robieson documented by Watt (1990) suggests that the Layton piece is not by either hand.

However, even modern scientific analysis cannot always detect fakes. Both Little and Robieson worked in original materials. Little sourced “pieces of New Zealand *kauri* and other timber from the Pacific Islands” onboard docked ships (Watt 1990, v.1: 82) and Robieson brought original materials with him when he returned to England (Barrow & Skinner 1974, 183).

When studying the subject of fakes, ‘authenticity’ becomes an issue in itself. The Cuming Museum holds a treasure believed to be a fake (B. Hyacinth pers. comm. 09/02/11) [Fig. 44].

Fig. 44a: Treasure box from the Cuming Museum, Acc. No. C01073 (Courtesy B. Hyacinth).

Fig. 44b: Detail of the treasure box from the Cuming Museum, Acc. No. C01073 (Courtesy B. Hyacinth).

The box does not display any characteristics of Little or Robison’s work. It is somewhat poorly executed – steel tools having been used to create harshly cut grooves. It has been suggested that Maori people were actively employed to create such objects, for purposes of sale. This opens up the question of authenticity in a new way. Although Maori-carved, are these artefacts still considered ‘authentic’? (see Jones 1990, 29-33 for discussion). For some collectors this was and is certainly an issue. A.C. Haddon, advisory curator to the Horniman Museum (1902 -1915), would not collect anything that he deemed “altered by colonialism” (Byrne 2003, 26). This was either in regard to artefacts of hybrid materials as well as objects “specifically made for sale to colonial buyers” (Byrne 2003, 27). However, according to Watt:

"…artefacts themselves do not necessarily reveal whether or not they are fakes. What reveals a fake is establishing that an artefact was made or altered with the intention to deceive by falsifying the artefact's true origin and provenance."

Watt 1990, v.1: 20

Thus in Watt's opinion Maori artists producing such objects cannot be considered fakers. It is those who subsequently deceive, usually through sale of the object, which convert the object into a fake.

In his study of the 'knowledge' surrounding objects at different stages in their commodity flow, Appadurai raises the important issue of authenticity:

"There is a particular set of issues concerning authenticity and expertise that plagues the modern West, and this set, which revolves around the issues of good taste, expert knowledge, "originality", and social distinction, is especially visible in the domain of art and art objects."

Appadurai (1986, 45)

Aside from the work of Little and Robieson, other faked Maori objects, including treasure boxes, no doubt exist in public and private collections. After stylistic comparison we have determined that the Layton treasure box is not by either of these carvers. Furthermore, it is unlikely to be a fake *per se*, although colonial influence may have impacted upon the design.

4. Object Biography and Contextualisation

Having analysed the Layton treasure box as an object, detailing its physicality and the context behind its *chaîne opératoire* we will now trace the object's 'cultural biography' (Kopytoff 1986). The Layton treasure box's biography can be considered "culturally informed" (Kopytoff 1986, 68), due to its nature as an ethnographic object which has been displaced and "culturally redefined" by another (Kopytoff 1986, 67). Even without detailed knowledge of the object's social life in its original context, contextualising the object and comparing this to its later (better documented) social life will reveal greater understanding of this redefinition. The object's previous biography is essential for understanding its current context within the museum.

4.1 Original Context: *Aotearoa*

New Zealand was originally settled as part of a series of migrations from Southeast Asia to Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia that began around 50,000 years ago [Fig. 45] (Stafford 1997, 6). New Zealand was the last island group to be settled in about the C13th (http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/history/1). Legend recounts how disputes in Haiwiki, the mythical origin-island of the Maori people, led to the migration to New Zealand (Stafford 1997, 15). The temperate climate there presented new challenges for the settlers, but New Zealand remains an integral part of the Polynesian archipelago (Hooper 2006, 21).

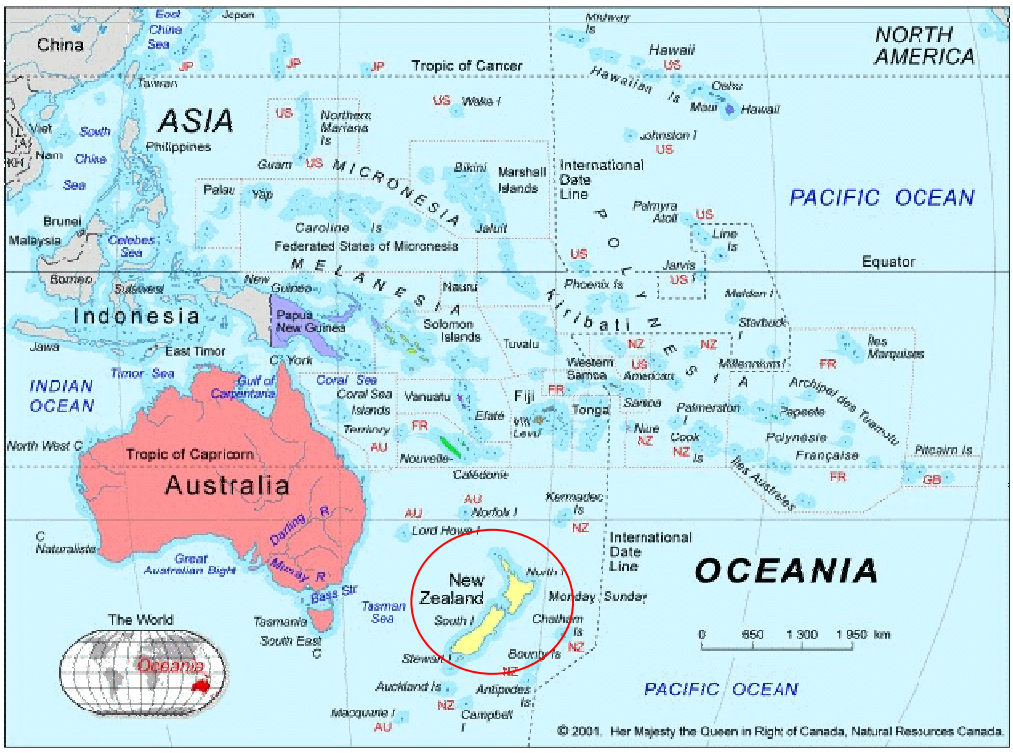


Fig. 45: Map of the Pacific. New Zealand circled.
http://tice.univ-nc.nc/~lacabanne/english.htm

Maori Society: Mana, Tapu and Noa

Religion and ritual are vital in all spheres of Maori life. A good relationship with the gods is intrinsic to the success of most activities. Divinity was and still is embodied by chiefs, *tohunga* and objects which became the focus of veneration, respect and fear. Three essential concepts rule action and inaction in Maori society, *mana, tapu* and *noa* (the absence of *tapu)* (Table 1).

Mana can be understood as divine power or spiritual force. It is fundamental to chiefship, and is sometimes described as chiefly prestige and efficacy (Hooper 2006, 37).

The wood used in most Maori carvings, as in the Layton treasure box, was *kauri* or *tōtara* both of which were seen as representing revered ancestors and hence possessed *mana* which was then transferred to objects made of the wood (Neich 1996, 73).

Fig. 46: To cut down a *tōtara* tree required specific rituals presided over by a *tohunga* to appease Tāne the god of the forest who was considered the father of all *tōtara* (Neich 1996, 180).

Tapu is another complex concept, meaning 'marked', 'contained', 'restricted', 'set apart' or 'sacred'. It can represent the power of *manu* bound up or tied down. *Tapu* areas, objects or individuals may be restricted to some individuals or curtail behaviour (Hooper 2006, 37;

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku 1996, 26-7). In the past, chiefly *tapu* was extremely powerful, a kind of personal sanctity and materialized *mana*, inspiring dread and awe (Te Rangi Hiroa & Buck 1950, 346). If a chief drank from a vessel, or handled another's possessions, through the transferral of *mana* such objects were believed to become dangerous to others (Barrow 1978, 16).[8]

Tapu was mainly concentrated in the chief's head so hair cuttings had to be safely disposed of. Personal adornments, particularly those worn on the head, had to be stored carefully (Te Rangi Hiroa & Buck 1950, 347). The English word 'taboo' can trace its origins to Cook's Pacific voyages, but has a different denotation (Barrow 1978, 14).

Noa is the absence of *tapu*, meaning 'free' and 'unrestricted'. It is all human life in which *mana* is not present, the mundane and the everyday.

Tapu	***Noa***
Sacred	Profane
Male	Female
Senior	Junior
Restricted	Free
Presence of *mana*	Absence of *mana*

Table 1: *Tapu* and *noa.* Although the above dichotomy is somewhat simplistic, it attempts to illustrate the nuanced meaning of each term.

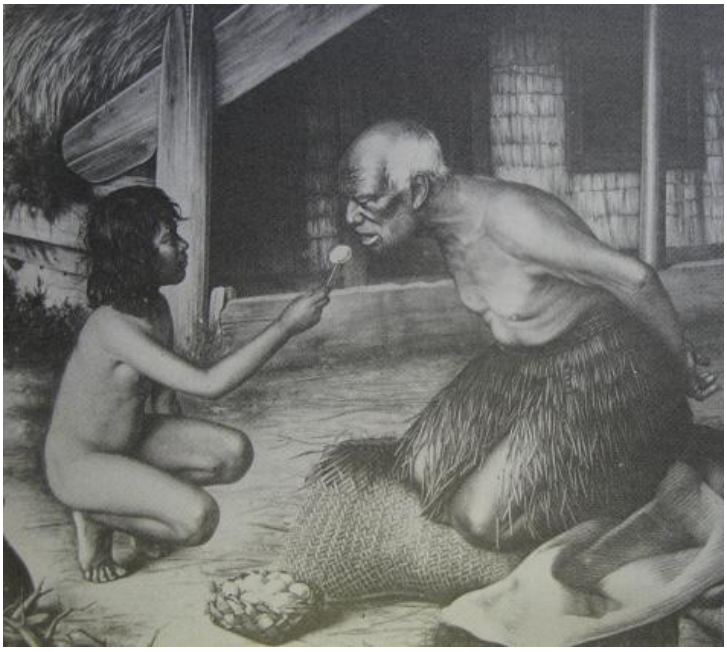


Fig. 47: Cooked food was *noa.* Here a Maori elder is being fed. He is unable to touch food due to *tapu* restrictions, for example those in place during a carving project (from Barrow 1978, 14).

[8] For a vivid account of the customary disposal of a personal object by a Maori chief see Taylor 1870, 56.

Treasure Boxes and Bodily Adornment

Throughout Polynesia, adorning the body with tattoos, clothing and jewellery continues to be an important part of life (Kaeppler 2008, 111). Such adornments were often stored in treasure boxes as in figure 48 (Hooper 2006, 44).

Fig. 48: Society Islands treasure box from the late C18th, used to store feathers and pearl shells (Hooper 2006, 181).

Visual impact was vital to chiefly *mana* and not simply for fashion *(*Ngahuia Te Awekotuku 1996, 45). In Maori society, a chief's *mana* was enhanced by his constructed appearance. High-ranking Maori would usually wear earrings and one or more pendants. Men often wore their hair in a top-knot alongside a decorative comb and feathers [Figs. 49 & 50]. *Huia* bird feathers [Figs. 51 & 52] were highly prized; occasionally whole birds were worn as ear ornaments (Ngahuia Te Awekotuku 1996, 39-43).

Fig. 49: "a New Zealand Chief whose head is ingeniously TATAWED" (Anderson c.1784, unpaginated).

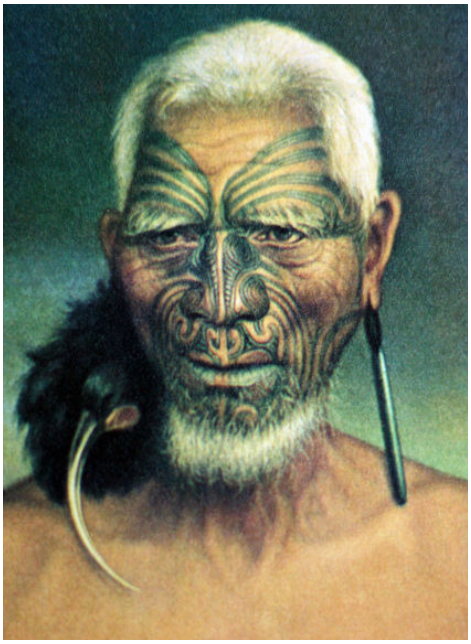


Fig. 50: A high-ranking Maori wearing a *huia* ear decoration http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huia

Fig. 51: A male and female *huia* bird. The black and white tail feathers were much prized by the Maori. The birds were hunted to extinction at the beginning of the C20th http://www.prints-4-all.com/cgi-bin/item/DG-3179495328/search/DG7-Male-%26-Female-Huias-Wild-Life-Birds-1894--Digital-Image-Download#

Fig. 52: "A tail feather of the huia (Neomorpha Gouldii), worn in the hair by chefs, on all important occasions; this bird is abundant about Taupo, but so shy, that the natives have great difficulty in procuring it." (Angas 1847, Plate XXXIX).

Bird feathers were considered sacred throughout Polynesia – feathered garments and headdresses conferred particular social status in eastern Polynesia (D'Alleva 1998, 107ff.; Thomas 1995, 154). The sacredness associated with birds is probably most explicit in the cult of the bird man (*tangata-manu*) at Orongo, Easter Island (D'Alleva 1998, 123-125).

A process of separation and containment was needed in order to protect others from the *mana* contained within the above-mentioned items. The objects stored inside a treasure box would have had contact with their owner's head and hence became *tapu* (Neich 2010, 43). Hooper argues that treasure boxes used to store such personal, powerful valuables fall into a continuum that also includes carved bone caskets and meeting houses (Hooper 2006, 44).

As discussed in Section 3.2, high-ranking men would have learnt to carve; leaders made their own weapons, personal ornaments and treasure boxes. *Tapu* personal valuables would be stored in a treasure box made either by the individual in question, or by an ancestor (Hooper 2006, 44; Neich 1996, 110; *idem* 2005, 50). The treasure box was suspended from flax cords in the living house of the owner possibly explaining the lack of decoration on the top surface of some boxes (Neich 2010, 43) [Figs. 53-55].

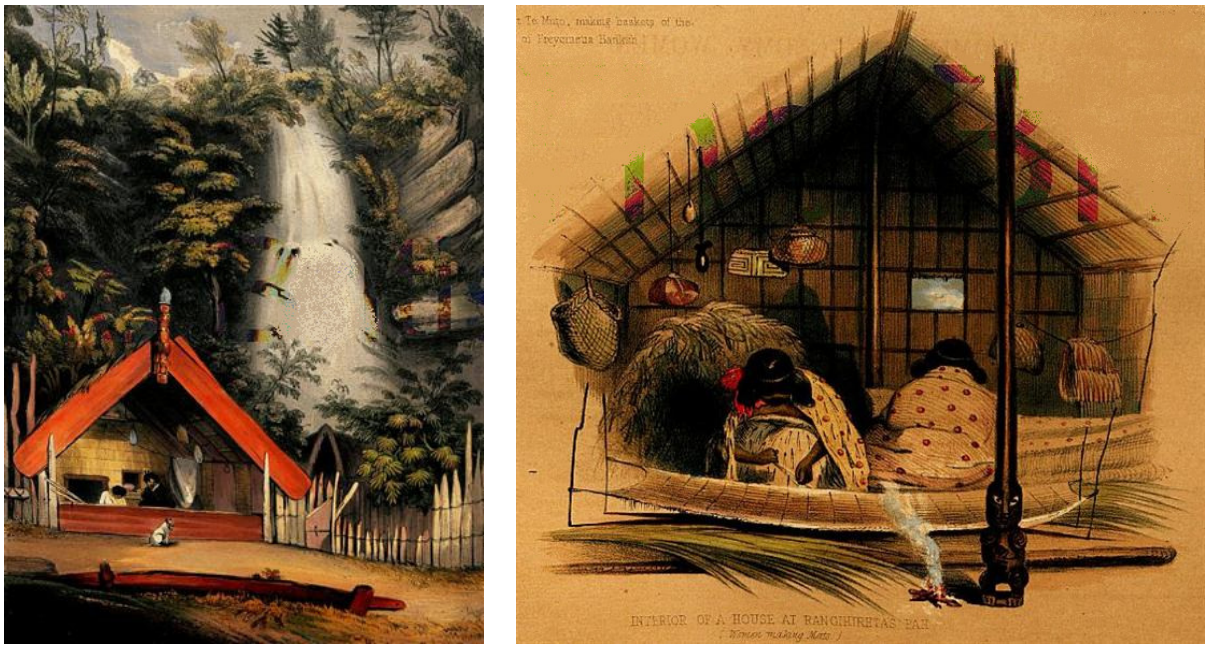


Fig. 53a & 53b: Depictions of Maori dwellings, showing various objects suspended from the rafters (Angas 1847, Plates XXI and LIX).

Fig. 54: Treasure box suspended from cords by the *tiki* heads at each end, Te Papa Acc No. OL001058.

Fig. 55: The Layton treasure box with superimposed flax cords (R. Pinto)

4.2 Changing Context: From New Zealand to London

Although European exploration of the Pacific began as early as the C16th it was not until the 1760s that the age of the European explorer really began (Hooper 2006, 12) [Fig. 55]. From that time not only explorers, but scientists, traders, artists, whalers, evangelists, planters and settlers travelled throughout Polynesia (Hooper 2006, 48ff.). Settlement shortly followed as "By the late 1830s, in addition to around a hundred thousand Maori, there were about two thousand Europeans and other foreign nationals living in the country, as well as innumerable temporary residents" (Henare 2005, 115).

Colonial Contact and Change in Maori Material Culture

Acquisition in the early days of exploration was largely equitable. Writing about the 'men of science' on Cook's voyages, Hooper states that objects associated with Joseph Banks, at least, "were acquired on terms regarded as fair at the time" (Hooper 2006, 24). There was a mutual interest in the artefacts of the other and exchange rates were established in terms of relative European and indigenous value systems.

Fig. 56: Cook's map of New Zealand (courtesy Altea Antique Maps, London).

Metal was in particular demand by Maori communities, Cook had to stop his crew pulling his ship apart in the hunt for nails to trade (Hooper 2006, 24). These were used to make rudimentary tools including those for carving (see Section 3.2). Maori carving seems to have been particularly attractive to the foreign eye due to the detail of carving and diversity of uses (Neich 1996, 70). European contact led to a proliferation of designs, forms and sizes based on the traditional treasure box. These encompassed settler-used boxes designed to hold sewing kits, tobacco or trinkets and souvenirs and tourist art for sale to visitors (Neich 2005, 64).

The Europeans were dependent on their hosts' willingness to trade for sustenance as their small ships needed frequent restocking (Borofsky 1989, 258).

By 1860 Polynesia had entered a colonial relationship with Europe (Hooper 2006, 13). The use of the term 'fourth world' to describe people indigenous to a land who have no power to direct their own lives can be applied to the Maori from the beginning of British rule

until relatively recently. Lewis, discussing Papua New Guinea, suggests that in such a context, arts are rarely produced for local consumption or to a peoples' own unmodified tastes. Inevitably there will be significant influence from those in authority (Lewis 1990, 161). Hooper concurs with this perspective, proposing that ideas of “authenticity”, a “pristine culture” and pre- or post- contact periods are a European construct (2006, 29).

Fig. 57: Bartering: This 1769 watercolour by Tupaia, Banks’ Tahitian protégé, is thought to depict Banks and a Maori exchanging a handkerchief or piece of Tahitian barkcloth for a crayfish (Hooper 2006, 25).

Imported disease as well as the 1860s Land Wars led to a severe decline in the Maori population (Stafford 1997, 33; Allen 1998, 147). The North-East was particularly affected and very few carvers remained, meaning local patterns were lost. By the 1900s the Maori held only 10% of the land area. Displaced communities were particularly vulnerable to the seizure or forced sale of treasures, or *taonga*, lacking a voice to object to the erosion of *mana* that accompanied this loss (Allen 1998, 147).

Colonial Collecting

Multiple motivations lie behind the collecting of different non-indigenous groups. State-sponsored expeditions such as that of Cook included naturalists and artists and were intended as a scientific enterprise [Fig. 58]. Collections were established for classification, although ethnographic objects were often left unlabelled or identified in rather broad terms (Hooper 2006, 67).

Fig. 58: Group portrait by John Hamilton Mortimer (1740 – 1779) of Dr. Daniel Solander (far left), Sir Joseph Banks (left seated), Captain James Cook (centre), Dr. John Hawkesworth (right of centre) and Lord Sandwich (far right) c.1771 (Kaeppler 2009, 20).

These expeditions were partly exercises in diplomacy as countries vied for colonial control and forged relationships with local chiefs (Hooper 2006, 59). By contrast, traders were explicitly motivated by profit and set up complex trade routes in the pursuit of wealth (Hooper 2006, 60). Missionaries were the final main group of collectors, but with a different agenda. Objects, particularly so-called idols, were collected in order to be shown in Europe as evidence of handiwork and therefore indigenous potential, conversion successes and to raise funds for further work (Hooper 2006, 65).

It must be remembered that personal souvenir collecting and the above activities were not mutually exclusive, although not always officially sanctioned. Additionally, prejudices, preconceptions and limitations on what could be shipped home (small and

durable was best) inevitable led to such colonial collections reflecting as much about the collectors as Maori society itself (Gosden and Knowles 2001, xix).

The collecting of Maori objects by Europeans was based on an unequal power relationship, although the Maori themselves should not be seen as the "passive victims of alien exploitative trading… practices" (Howard & Borofsky 1989, 243). Local sellers or informants also had an influence over what was collected and ways in which collected objects were described and conceptualised (ter Keurs 2007, 5, 9).

It must be remembered that not all exchanges were equitable or that the acquisition of objects was always legitimate. For example, Maori burial caves, usually hidden to prevent enemies despoiling the body and reducing a tribe's *mana*, were among the most *tapu* of places. Extensive looting of these caves for grave goods, including personal ornaments or offerings, and bones for "scientific" investigation was carried out by trophy hunters (Barrow 1978, 99).

The Layton treasure box, as a highly portable, carved object, would have had broad-based appeal to the European. It could have been collected for trade, as a trophy or souvenir, or even as an object of scientific interest. Given that it probably dates to the late C19th, it is less likely to have been the latter.

4.3 The Thomas Layton Collection

"To understand a collection, one must understand the collector and be aware of the historical climate within which his objects were obtained."

Gathercole 1978, 276

The Collector

The now obscure antiquarian, Thomas Layton was born at Strand-on-the-Green, Chiswick in 1819 [Fig. 59]. In 1825 the family moved nearby into a "fine 18th century house" (Seaton 1992, 1) at 22 Kew Bridge Road which Layton was to inherit and where he died in 1911. Layton, like his father before him, was a coal merchant and lighterman. He owned a number of barges (Seaton 1992, 3) and was involved in dredging the river Thames, the source for many of his finds (Galer 2007, 2; Smith 1918, 1).

Fig. 59: Thomas Layton, b.1819 – d.1911 (Whipp & Blackmore 1979, 91).

It is not known when Layton began collecting, although an account given in a Geological Society of London publication credits "Mr. Thomas Layton, jun.", who would have been thirty years old at the time, for his "active zeal" in preserving bones found near Kew Bridge (Morris 1849, 201). Layton's father, also named Thomas (1783-1870), is likely to have also been a collector. The British Museum holds letters addressed to A.W. Franks, keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum, which seems to have been written by Layton senior in the 1860s. The correspondence suggests that, much as his son was to do, Layton sending objects to the Museum for inspection (MSS letters held by Department of Prehistory and Europe). Interestingly, Layton senior owned a copy of *A New, Authentic, and Complete Collection of*

Voyages Round the World, which details the voyages of Cook to New Zealand [Fig. 60]. The book, now housed in Hounslow Library as part of Layton the younger's library, is inscribed "Thomas Layton Waterman/ Kew Green/ Surrey/ 1794". In light of these findings, it is not impossible that Layton senior could have acquired the treasure box.

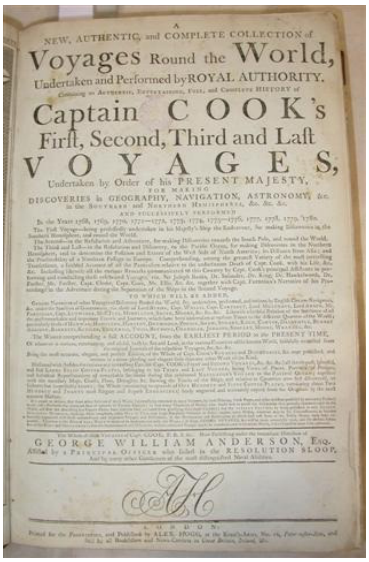

NEW, AUTHENTIC, and COMPLETE COLLECTION of
Voyages Round the World,
Undertaken and Performed by ROYAL AUTHORITY.
Captain COOK's
First, Second, Third and Last
VOYAGES,
Undertaken by Order of his PRESENT MAJESTY,
GEORGE WILLIAM ANDERSON, Esq.

Fig. 60a: Thomas Layton Snr's copy of *A New, Authentic, and Complete Collection of Voyages Round the World* (Photo: C. Elliott)

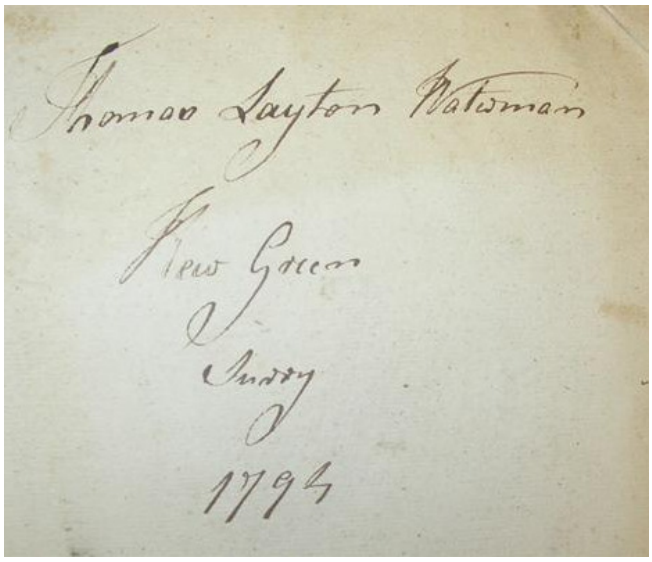


Fig. 60b: Thomas Layton Snr's inscription in his copy of *A New, Authentic, and Complete Collection of Voyages Round the World* (Photo: C. Elliott).

Layton has been accused of being "a misguided collector" (Whipp and Blackmore 1977, 90), a criticism that was also prevalent during his lifetime. Notoriously private, he did not welcome visitors to his envied, and in some categories unrivalled, collection. One fortunate party was archaeologist and collector 'Canon' William Greenwell (1820–1918). After many years of pleading to see the collection, Rev. Greenwell was finally granted access. Writing in 1886 to fellow antiquary, Spencer George Perceval, Greenwell states "Mr Layton has been getting large numbers of stone and bronze things from the Thames, but still keeps them without any order or arrangement" (Galer 2007, 6). However, given that Layton senior may also have been a collector we cannot be certain to which Layton this comment refers. Hitherto father and son seem to have been conflated in the literature and elsewhere.

Although access to the collection was almost unheard of, Layton junior loaned objects to the British Museum (see below) and occasionally presented material to the Society of Antiquaries, where he was made a Fellow in 1868 after many years attendance. It has been suggested that Layton was encouraged to give his collection to the British Museum (Galer

2007, 37). Instead he is recorded as having only donated a single object to the Museum in 1883, the so-called Fulham Sword (Acc. No. 1883,0407.1) [Fig. 61 -62].

Fig. 61: The 'Fulham Sword' currently on display in the British Museum's Roman-British Gallery (Photo: G. Davis).

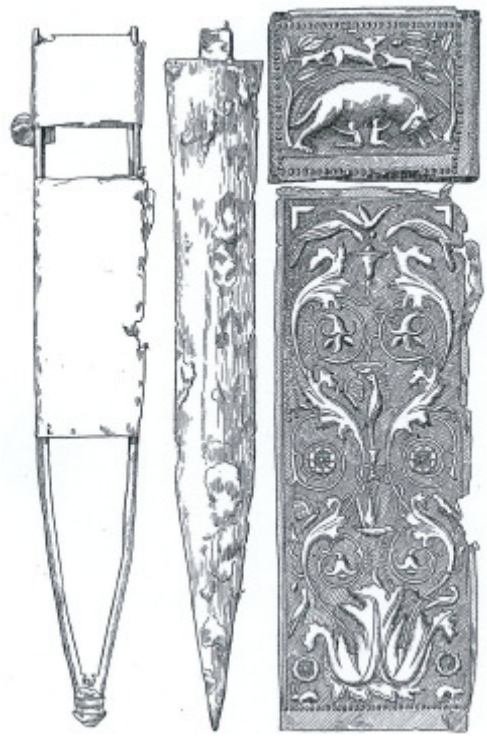


Fig. 62: The 'Fulham Sword'. An early C1st AD Romano-British sword found in the Thames at Fulham, London [Acc. No. 1883, 0407.1] (Smith 1918, 26).

During his lifetime, Layton was something of a hoarder. He is said to have collected "with little method or discretion" (Smith 1918, 1) and on his death he left a large furnished house and over thirty sheds and outhouses crammed full of pictures, books, specimens and objects "in a state of indescribable confusion" and neglect (Middlesex Chronicle 1915, 8). Rather than going to another institution, it was Layton's wish that a museum be established posthumously in his house, for which he left £20,000 in his will as provision. However, certain unusual clauses obstructed the establishment of a museum.

Presumably because of its vast size, the executors of Layton's estate dispersed part of the collection in a series of auctions. Objects to keep were selected after consultation with, among others, Charles Hercules Read (1857–1929) keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum and a leading figure at the Society of Antiquaries (Turner 1922, 180). Layton's derelict house was eventually demolished in the 1940s, meaning a museum for his collection as he envisioned never materialised.

The Collection

What remains of Layton's collection, now housed at the MOL, is predominantly archaeological in nature. However, there is an ethnographic collection comprising around 480 objects.[9] Of this collection, 69 objects are of a Pacific provenance and the Layton treasure box is part of a small corpus of Maori objects (see below). Nothing is known of the provenance of the other six Maori objects:

- Carved club (Acc. No. NN23200)
- Carved ornament (Acc. No. NN23220)
- Stone implement (Acc. No. LT228)
- Stone club (Acc. No. LT232)
- Stone club (Acc. No. O1135)
- Stone beater (Acc. No. O1136)

The MOL also stores a rare Banks bronze *patu* (Acc. No. O2543) from the Layton Collection [Fig. 63 & 64].

Fig. 63 & 64: *Left*: Banks' brass *patu* in the British Museum collection (Acc. No. AOA Ethno 1936, 2-6.1). *Right*: One of two examples of Banks' brass *patu* held by the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. (Photo: G. Davis). Forty such brass *patus* are known to have been commissioned by Banks to present during Captain Cook's second voyage (Hooper 2006, 141), but according to Coote only six are currently accounted for (2008, 62-3).

[9] Green & Merriman 1988, 3. This figure is an approximation derived from subtracting the Lloyd collection of 43 objects from the overall total of 525 objects in Green & Merriman's (1988) survey. For discussion around the issues that arise from labelling a collection as 'ethnographic' see West 1996.

How much Layton knew about Maori culture and his Maori objects is not known. Judging by what survives of his library, and given the fact that his collection included Maori and other 'South Sea' (Polynesian) material, it would seem that he had an interest in Polynesia and New Zealand. Additionally, the 1914 house sale lists topographical views of New Zealand[10] and six lots of, often multiple, 'South Sea' objects.[11]

During the course of our research we made an important discovery on the lid of the Layton treasure box, as mentioned earlier (page 23). A faint pencil inscription is decipherable [Fig. 65] and reads:

"He Papa/ Carved Box/ see/ p383"

Fig 65a & 65b: (Photo & Drawing: R. Pinto).

'He Papa' is an unusual, if not idiosyncratic, term for a treasure box. It corresponds with the term given for a similar piece illustrated in a book found in Layton's library (held at Hounslow Library) – *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants* by Rev. R. Taylor, a missionary to that country. Layton possessed two editions of Taylor's book, an 1855 and 1870 edition, and although the illustration appears in both editions, significantly it features on page 383 of the later version [Fig. 66 & 67].

[10] Sale of books and printed material, Hodgson & Co., 21st & 22nd January 1914, lot 925.
[11] House sale, Allan Booth & Dampney, 26th to 27th May 1914.

Fig. 66: A selection of Layton's books on New Zealand housed by Hounslow Library (Photo: G. Davis).

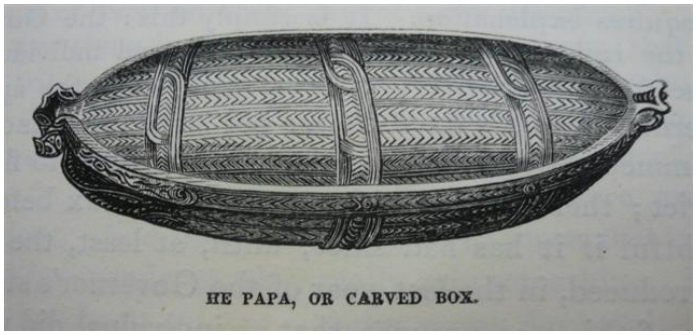


Fig. 67: An illustration of a treasure box as it appears on page 383 in Layton's copy of *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants* (Taylor 1870, 383). The caption reads 'He Papa, or Carved Box' which corresponds with the pencil inscription on the lid of the Layton treasure box.

Layton is known to have labelled objects in his collection, especially during his earlier phase of collecting (Hume 1956, 25; Cotton 2001, 69). To some Layton has appeared 'fetishistic' in his collecting habits (J. Cotton, pers. comm. 17/01/11), however his labelling of objects suggests there may have been a systematic element to his collecting (see Pearce 1992, 69-88 for discussion). Examples of Layton's handwriting from his diary, will and surviving letters do not seem to match that of the inscription on the treasure box lid [Fig. 68]. Having also compared the inscription against the handwriting of Fred Turner, librarian and curator of Brentford Library, it seems likely to be his hand [Fig. 69]. Turner catalogued Layton's collection after the latter's death and seems to have used Layton's library as a resource.

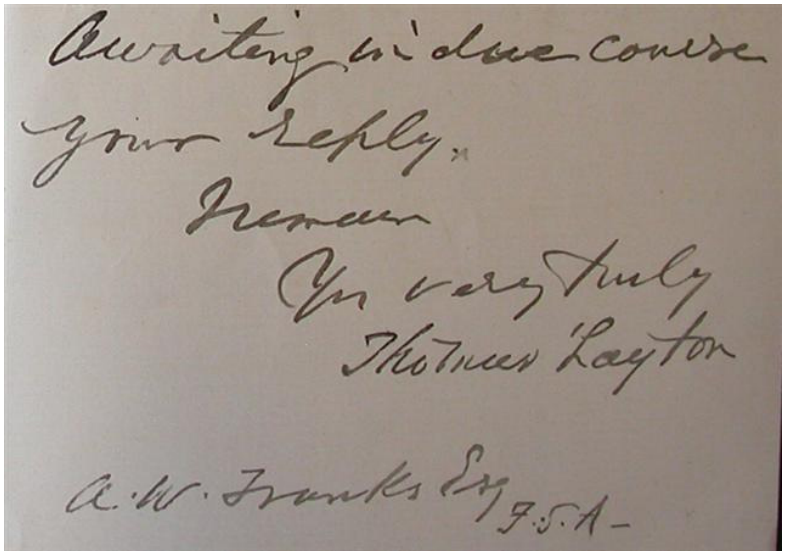


Fig. 68: Extract of a letter from Thomas Layton (Jnr) to A. W. Franks. 10/04/1890 (Layton 1890). The British Museum.

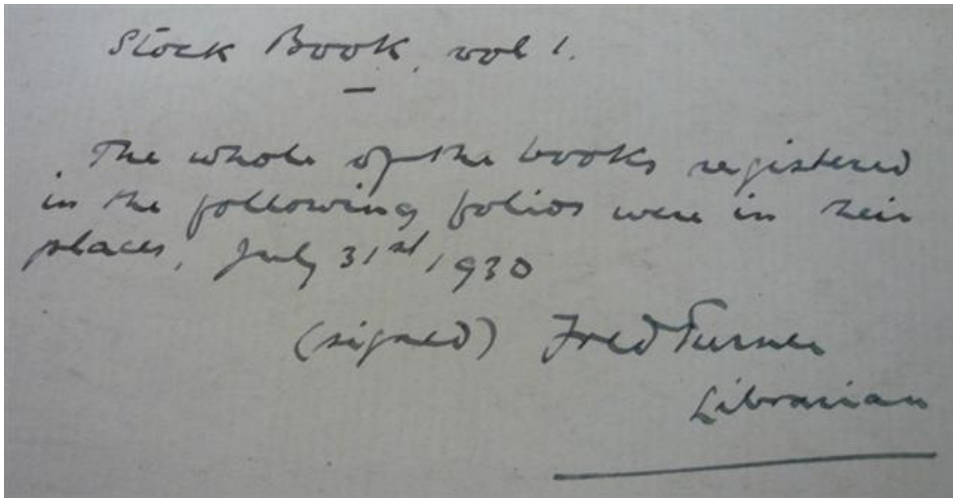


Fig. 69: Sample of Fred Turner's handwriting from one of his accession registers for the Layton collection, stored at Hounslow library.

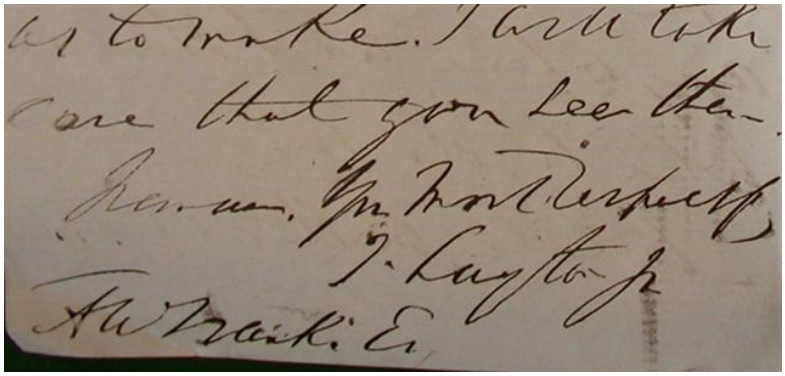


Fig. 70: Extract of a letter from Thomas Layton (Snr?) to A. W. Franks. 25/03/1865(7?) (Layton 1865(7?). The British Museum.

Studies of both Layton junior and senior's handwriting[12] and inscriptions on other Layton objects, including those on the stone club (O1135), the stone beater (O1136) and the stone implement (LT228), have proved inconclusive [Figs. 68, 70-72]. However, they do warrant further investigation and possibly the services of a handwriting specialist.

Any information regarding Layton's collecting habits and the provenance of his objects died with the man himself. He is said to have kept "almost no records of where items were found" (Galer 2007, 16) and labelled only some objects (Galer 2007, 37). Shortly before he passed away, Layton apparently burned almost all of his papers, some of which may have contained vital clues about the sources of his objects.

[12] Including letters from the 1860s and late 1800s (MSS letters held by Department of Prehistory and Europe).

Fig. 71: Maori club (MOL Acc. No. O1135) with pencil inscription

Fig. 72: Maori stone implement (MOL Acc. No. LT228) with two labels.

Quantifying the Collection

In 1988 Green and Merriman catalogued the ethnographic material in the MOL's Layton and Lloyd collections in response to the 1979 UNESCO Oceanic collections survey (Green and Merriman 1988, 1). The total number of 'ethnographic' objects held by the MOL is 525 (Green & Merriman 1988, Appendix 1).[13] Lloyd's collection is not differentiated from Layton's in Green and Merriman's survey, therefore it is necessarily included in the analysis below. However what is known is that "all of the ethnographic material (43 pieces) consists of stone tools and weapons, mostly of North American origin" (Green & Merriman 1988, 3).

Of the 525 objects in the ethnographic collection 351 can be classed as 'weapons' which includes 200 arrowheads.[14] These arrowheads will be excluded from the collection total below, as they skew analysis of the collection.

Object Type	Number in Ethnographic Collection (/325)
Weapons	151
Tools	11
Paddles	13 (including nine unprovenanced 'South Sea' paddles)[15]
Pottery	24
Other	126

[13] Green & Merriman erroneously state the total figure as 521, which is not the sum of the individual objects.

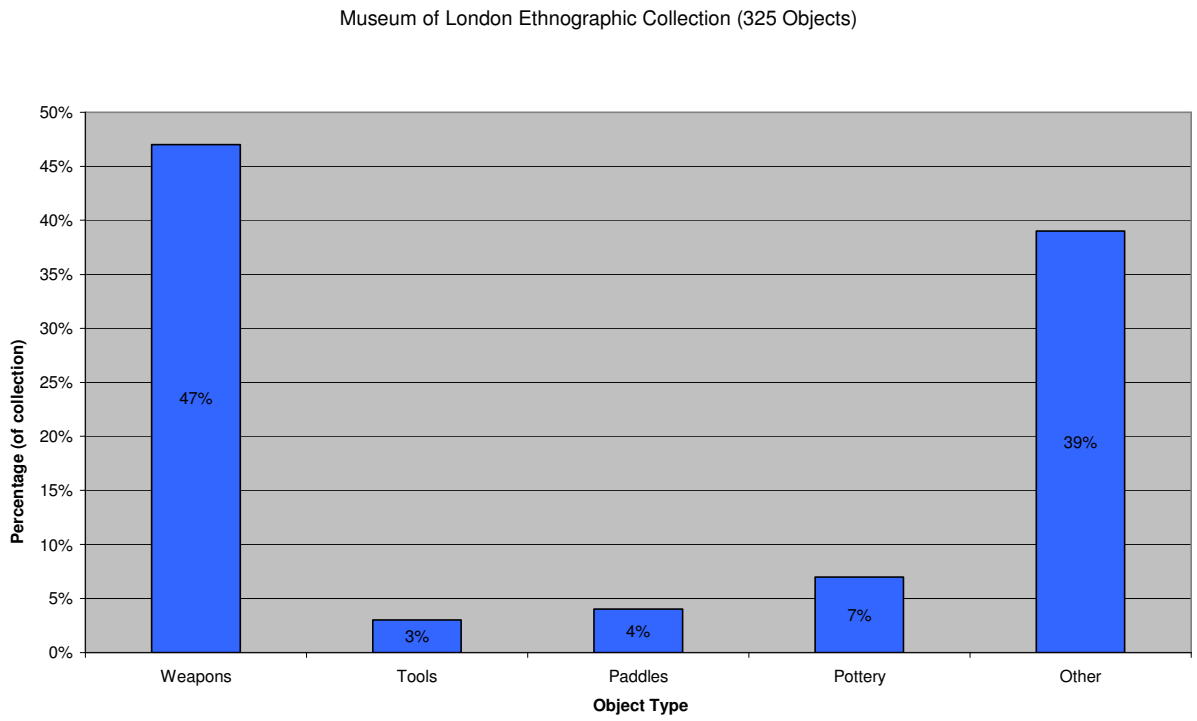
[14] This figure includes: 'weapons', axes, spears, bows, a sword, a knife, a dagger handle, spearheads, harpoons, a blade, clubs and a staff (although, the latter two types could be considered ceremonial objects).

[15] 36 objects in the collection are unprovenanced. These nine paddles have been included as they have more recently been identified as 'South Sea' objects by the MOL. The origin of the remaining 27 objects is still unknown.

Quantifying the type of Pacific material to assess Layton's collecting practice will allow us to assess him as a collector 'of his time'. In the collection, 69 objects have been catalogued as Pacific (Polynesian, Micronesian or Melanesian):

Object Type	Number represented in Pacific Material (/69)
Weapons	31
Tools	4
Paddles	12 (including nine unprovenanced 'South Sea' paddles)
Other	22

If this data is compared with larger studies of UK ethnographic collections, some interesting results emerge. Weapons make up 47% of Layton's collection:



Pole's (2000) survey of collections in south-west England show that "weapons (including shields) account for almost forty per cent of Pacific items". (Specht & Bolton 2005, 63). Although these figures correspond, it is still debateable whether Layton can be considered representative in relation to contemporary C19th collectors.

These objects may simply have overpopulated the Western market as a result of Pacific Islanders producing these items specifically for sale on said market (Specht & Bolton 2005, 63-65). Layton's interests become more apparent when we consider the rest of his

collection. Prehistoric (especially Neolithic) tools are a dominant artefact (Smith 1918, 1). These objects may have been some of the first Layton collected, in relation to his work on the Thames. They may have informed his collecting habit, as he seems to have had a passion for Bronze Age weapons as well as Romano-British weapons.

Specific objects sometimes dominate a collection such as "decorated Austral Island's paddles outnumber[ing] all other categories recorded for this island group" (Specht & Bolton 2005, 63). This is the case with the Layton collection, where three Austral Island paddles make up the entire group of Austral material.

It is useful to compare Layton's collection with that of another London collector – Frederick J. Horniman (1835 – 1906). Museum registers which documented the collection of Frederick Horniman in 1898 (three years before the museum opened), reveal that of the 7920 objects, only 5% of were of a Pacific origin (Shelton 2001a, 13). The Pacific collections of the Horniman Museum became the focus of A. C. Haddon between 1902 – 1915, in which time he collected around another 3000 objects (Shelton 2001b, 10). Of these 213 were of 'New Zealand' origin, representing 7.7% of the Pacific collection (Shelton 2001b, 305 n.30). Layton's New Zealand material represented 13% of his Pacific collection; however, Layton was not operating with the same 'curatorial' agenda as Haddon in acquiring his collection.

Unfortunately these figures only represent the Layton Collection as it now stands and cannot account for the material lost to us through the auctions in 1914. From the house sale catalogues a number of Pacific objects (especially 'South Sea' material) were recorded:

Page No.	Lot	Description
9	77	"An ormulu mounted shell, a specimen of coral under glass shade, a Fiji carved bowl, eight shells, a lac-Japan cardbox, a pin tray, eight Oriental spoons."
20	213	"...a box containing specimens of Australian woods..."
22	247	"Two South Sea paddles, and a bundle of weapons and shields and Crimean water bottle."
275	269	"Two South Seas dishes, three ladles, and a bundle of arrows."
29	343	"A bundle of South Sea Island bows and arrows."
38	395	"...two South Sea trays..."
34	409	"A box containing several South Sea Islanders' garments, a bundle of ditto spears, and a bow of cowrie shells."
39	488	"A collection of South Sea Islanders' carvings – Gods, ditto of a leopard, and three pill glasses in mahogany box."

If the MOL did posses Layton's entire collection, beyond his personal collecting habits, it could inform us about "disposable wealth in Britain, its uses and display, and of local and social history, as well as missionary and imperial activity abroad." (Teague 2001, 123).

The London* Milieu: *Collectors, Museums, Auction Houses and Dealers

During the period that Layton was active as a collector, between c.1840 and up to his death in 1911, he was part of a network of collectors (Galer 2007, 37). Collectors of ethnographic and other material were "obsessed by the pursuit of objects" (Waterfield 2006, 6) and competed in a friendly, gentlemanly manner "for the possession of new or rare additions to their collections" (Allingham 1924, 6). Layton seems to have been particularly interested in the 'chase', for he "took no care of his collection; longed for purchases, but apparently possession took away all interest in his discoveries" (Middlesex Chronicle 1915, 8).

Historically, London taverns and coffee houses were the meeting places for gentlemen collectors. Many museums, auction houses and other institutions, such as the Society of Antiquaries, can trace their origins to these establishments. Antique shops also flourished from the beginning of the C19th, probably the result of foreign travel (Wainwright 1989, 27). There were brokers and 'nicknackitarians' who also dealt in 'curiosities' – then valued as novelties rather than ethnographic objects (Wainwright 1989, 33; Furey 2004, 29). It is important to acknowledge that "the activities of both brokers and collectors were considerably helped by the existence of a variety of continental brokers and middlemen" (Wainwright 1989, 47), London being a dynamic central hub for the movement of objects from the 'periphery' to the 'centre'.

The arrival of Polynesian objects from Cook's voyages of discovery caused great sensation in London, arguably then the foremost trading centre for ethnography. Served by a river and docks, objects changed hands both informally between individuals and formally through public sales.

An early auction, and probably the "first ethnological catalogue of the South Seas ever printed" (Kaeppler 1978, 13), was held by Mr Hutchins of King Street and Hart Street, Covent Garden on 14th and 15th June 1781. Sir Ashton Lever (1729–1788), who had in 1774 moved his Leverian Museum to London, purchased from the 1781 auction. In 1786 Lever sold his museum and the new owner finally dispersed the content of the museum in a sixty-five day sale conducted by King and Lochee in 1806.[16]

[16] See Hyacinth (2008, 129ff.) for discussion of the Leverian museum and its sales.

William Bullock (c. 1780–1849), made some significant purchases from the Leverian Museum sale which would then have been displayed and later sold at his museum emporium on Piccadilly. Bullock tiring of his business, dispersed the contents at auction in 1819 (King *in* Waterfield 2006, 11) in a twenty-six day sale (Kaeppler 1978, 87).[17] Although both the Leverian Museum and Bullock's Museum held Maori material, it is not clear whether this included any treasure boxes. No such boxes "can be precisely traced to Cook's voyages" (Kaeppler 1978, 181).

The 'most famous' auction house dealing in ethnography (King *in* Waterfield 2006, 13) during the C19th and early C20th, J.C. Stevens had rooms at 38 King Street in London's West End.[18] One of their earliest, if not the earliest, sales of ethnography was held in 1824 (Allingham 1924, 26). Stevens sold Maori material prior to this, in the period 23 June 1885-10 October 1901, according to their (unillustrated) catalogues, sales included a number of Maori lots. These included clubs and paddles, and a single "Maori box carved" (lot 90, 5 July 1898). On 16th April 1912, Stevens sold an entire collection of 'Maori weapons and implements' (The Times 1912, 11). According to *The Times*, "the prices were good" (i.e. strong) and a "Wakahuia, or carved box for ornaments, with tail feathers of the Huia bird' sold for £24 (The Times 1912, 11).

Layton is likely to have bought at auction and several dispersal sales after his death were conducted by J.C. Stevens suggesting that during his lifetime Layton also had dealings with that auction house.[19]

Another distinct possibility is that Layton was buying objects from dealers, in addition to the books and prints he is known to have purchased "in immense numbers" (Whipp and Blackmore 1977, 91). One notable ethnography dealer, whose activities coincide with those of Layton, is W. D. Webster (1868–1913). He was born at Greenwich and became a collector and dealer in ethnography during the early 1890s. Based firstly in Oxfordshire and then later in London, between June 1895 and August 1901 Webster issued a total of 30 illustrated sale catalogues. During this period he offered for sale a total of seven Maori treasure boxes, none of which matches the Layton box. Prior to around 1940 when tastes

[17] See Kaeppler (1974) for a detailed discussion of Bullock's museum.
[18] Christie's and Sotheby's, both founded in London in the 1700s and who today dominate the auction market for African and Oceanic art, 'handled ethnography usually when it was part of an estate' (King *in* Waterfield 2006, 13).
[19] A lot in one of the Layton collection dispersal sales, in this case of books, manuscripts, drawings and prints, is described as 'Auction sale Catalogues of Books and Prints, dating from 1786 in 22 vols' (Hodgson & Co., 21st & 22nd January 1914, lot 840).

changed, there was an “obsession with carved surfaces…seen in the high prices paid for … Maori feather boxes” and other carved objects (Waterfield 2006, 7).

Aside from buying out-of-hand from mudlarks and other punters who approached him directly:

He [Layton] was known to every Tom, Dick and Harry who had the slightest connection with that stretch of the Thames [Richmond to Wandsworth], and as soon as a relic was found the cry would go up, “Take it to Mr. Layton”, and Layton never let them down.

Hume 1956, 23

Layton, who had considerable means, may have bought from other collectors but it is debateable if he ever swapped or sold to such collectors as he rarely let anything leave his collection (Whipp & Blackmore 1977, 92). In this respect he seems more like his contemporary collector Pitt Rivers (Waterfield 2009, 43). A possible exception is a Prehistoric bone haft found near Hammersmith Bridge which a fellow angler and member of the Society of Antiquaries, the afore-mentioned Rev. Greenwell acquired from Layton. The object was purchased from Rev. Greenwell by the British Museum in 1867 (Acc. No. St/D.87).

It is impossible to trace the route through the London *milieu* that the Layton treasure box took before ending up in Layton’s possession, although we have explored some plausible avenues. Bearing in mind the peripatetic nature of ethnographic material in the C18th – C19th, the box may have been in circulation for some time and passed between a number of hands. However, given the paucity of Layton documentation we may never be able to understand its path or fully recapture its “interesting talk”.

4.4 From Layton House to Museum of London

Two years after Layton's death a court order allowed Brentford Library to house what we now know as the 'Layton Collection' (Galer 2007, 9). This was meticulously catalogued by the institution's librarian and curator Fred Turner (1864 – 1963) [Fig. 73].

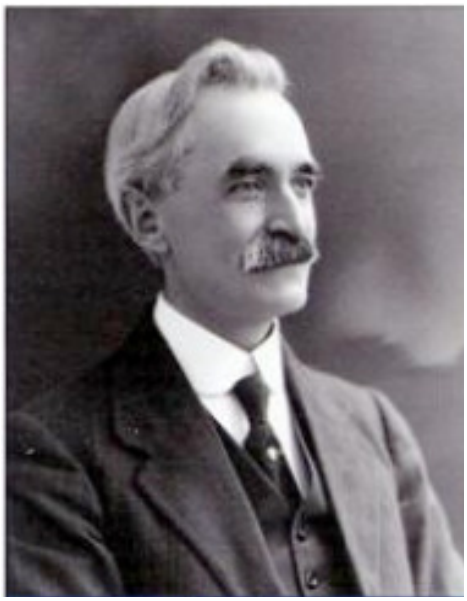


Fig. 73: Fred Turner b.1864 – d.1963 (Galer 2007, 10).

It is not known how or where Layton kept the treasure box during his lifetime, whether it was displayed in his house or stored in one of its many outhouses. After his death, the treasure box, along with a large proportion of the Collection was stored in various locations, including Brentford Library, Chiswick Library and Gunnersbury Park Museum (Galer 2007, 11).

The treasure box along with the majority of Layton's archaeological and ethnographical material was transferred to the London Museum in 1959 as a long term loan (Galer 2007, 9). An undated and unpublished letter from curator Francis Celoria to Donald Harden (Director 1956 – 1970) shows the Layton collection was re-catalogued, most probably during the 1960s. The letter values the archaeological material over the ethnographic objects which were referred to as "Victorian collectors' debris". Celoria mentions that some Layton artefacts were on display in the Museum at Kensington Palace, but it would seem unlikely the treasure box was included given the evident disregard for such objects.
The Layton Collection, still on long term loan, was then transferred to the MOL, which opened to the public in 1976 (Sheppard 1991, 161).[20] The nature of this loan has as yet not

[20] The MOL was officially formed in 1975 through an amalgamation of the London Museum (1911-1975) and Guildhall Museum (1826-1975).

been reassessed by the MOL, despite a recent review of the Museum's collections policy (D. Chan pers. comm. 04/02/11). It remains on long-term loan to the MOL, with the Thomas Layton Memorial and Museum Trust the owners of the collection. In the late 1980s the Layton Collection ethnographic material was re-catalogued by Linda Green and Nick Merriman (Green & Merriman 1988; Green 1989). The "Maori feather box" is mentioned as one of the more "intrinsically interesting" items (Green & Merriman 1988, 5) and would have been stored in the Museum's "Wood Store" as it was of organic material (Green 1989, 3).

The MOL's accession file for the Layton Collection holds detailed correspondence between the Layton Trust and the Museum. It appears the previous Head of Department of Early London History and Collections, Nick Merriman, attempted to gain permanent ownership of the collection in the late 1980s (*MOL Thomas Layton Accession File: Legal Correspondence*). The current view is that there is no reason for the MOL to own the Collection, as a mutually beneficial relationship exists between Trust and Museum (J. Cotton pers. comm. 17/02/11).

Until the current research, the treasure box has largely remained in storage. However it has been displayed on at least two occasions whilst being on loan to the Museum of London. In around 1987 the box was exhibited in the Museum's C19th Gallery in a display case entitled 'Men of Science' (A. Werner pers. comm. 31/01/11). This display intended to recreate a 'typical' Victorian collector's study. It is ironic that the Layton treasure box and other Layton objects were used in this context as Thomas Layton was an atypical antiquarian collector in many respects. The box was positioned upside down in the display [Fig. 74] presumably to show its detailed, carved base. As discussed before, in its original context the treasure box would have been suspended from rafters in a Maori dwelling. Furthermore, in the context of a collector's study it is unlikely to have been displayed in this manner. The Museum's rationale for displaying the object in this way was clearly focussed on the aesthetic, without consideration of the object's previous contexts.

Fig. 74: 'Men of Science' display case, MOL. The Layton treasure box is displayed on the third shelf from bottom (Photo: MOL).

Fig. 75: *The Antiquary's Cell* by E. W. Cooke, 1835. Cooke is known to have bought the objects to illustrate in this painting. Objects such as may have inspired the 'Men of Science' display at the MOL (Wainwright 1989, 39 – 40).

The treasure box was taken off display in 2000 due to gallery refurbishment (A. Werner pers. comm. 31/01/11) and went into storage. In 2006 it went on short-term to Gunnersbury Park Museum, as part of the exhibition entitled "'A most confusing private museum' – A Thomas Layton Exhibition" [Fig 76 & 77]. This exhibition was predominantly curated by Mike Galer, with assistance from Jon Cotton (MOL) and Vanda Foster (Gunnersbury Park Museum). In this display the box, like many of the objects, was used to consider Thomas Layton, the collector.

Fig. 76: ''A most confusing private museum' – A Thomas Layton Exhibition', Gunnersbury Park Museum. The Layton treasure box is displayed in the left side case (M. Galer pers. comm. 15/02/11; Photo: Gunnersbury Museum).

Fig. 77: Exhibition poster for 'A most confusing private museum' – A Thomas Layton Exhibition'.

These two instances of display while in the Museum's care are interesting for their respective interpretations of the object and the lack of consideration for its original context. Since returning from loan in 2007, the box has been stored in the MOL's General Store, only leaving this location temporarily for study on a number of occasions during preparation of this report.

We have attempted to document the treasure box's biography up until the present but its social life "is far from over". It is hoped that it will "continue to participate in society through exhibition, loans to other institutions, and research, bringing people together and generating discussions about [its] origin and value" (Henare 2005, 48). This will be further explored in the final section

5. Object Discussion

Interpretation of the Object

Based on our research, it seems likely that the Layton treasure box was made within a Maori context in New Zealand during the C19th. It was probably carved by a high-status male, possibly a chief, to store his personal *taonga*. The decoration is unusual and may have been executed by more than one person; European settler influence has also been suggested by some specialists.

The circumstances under which the box was acquired are not known; it may have been gifted, traded, appropriated or stolen. How the box reached London is also unknown but it could have been circulated between collectors, dealers, auction houses among others before it was acquired by Thomas Layton. There is no traceable documentary evidence of this acquisition or how the box was understood within Layton's lifetime.

Until this current research, the Maori context of the box has remained relatively overlooked within the museum context and this is reflected in the way in which it has been stored and displayed. The treasure box has been used as a token ethnographic piece, rather than considering its cultural biography.

Fig. 78 & 79: The only example of Layton ethnographic material displayed by the MOL (at the Museum of London Docklands) in the exhibition 'Sailortown'. The object has been used in context of a C19th curiosity shop. *Right:* Acc. No. NN23195 (Photos: U. Kruekamwang).

Cultural Value and Significance

From a Maori perspective, the more *mana* or spiritual essence present in an object, the more significant and valued the object. According to Mead, *mana* levels vary according to different criteria, including the *mana* of, and connectedness to, the original carvers and owners (1997, 186-7). Although small, *taonga* or treasure, such as the Layton treasure box, develop additional *mana* from being passed down the generations, particularly if owned by well-renowned or especially skilled ancestors (Neich 1996, 110).

Given that the Layton treasure box has lost its relational network, its *mana* is somewhat difficult to judge. Although it is old and was almost certainly used in a Maori context to protect from chiefly *tapu*, the identity of the original owner is unknown. However, according to Awhini Tamarapa at Te Papa, a *taonga* such as an ancestral carved *wakahuia* retains its intrinsic cultural meaning and value regardless of location. Its *mana* undiminished, the connection with ancestors still holds even if a Maori object is fragmentary or without provenance (A. Tamarapa pers. comm. 2011).

The object's use within the MOL also impacts on its *mana.* Maori *taonga* is in part created by *korero,* 'talk', which gives social significance. *Korero* is essential to the history of *taonga*, linking it to social groups and allowing objects to mediate ancestral ties (Hooper-Greenhill 1998, 130; Mead 1997, 182). Bereft of its associations and *korero*, perhaps it is unsurprising that the *Ngāti Rānana* London Maori Group did not find discussion about the object engaging, or wish to view it (pers. comm. 21/01/11; 16/02/11; 23/02/11).[21] Tamarapa suggests that *taonga* separated from the living world can become inactive or "asleep", requiring the right people and the right circumstance to bring them to life through celebration, ceremony and performance (pers. comm 17/03/11). Members of *Ngāti Rānana* were somewhat dismissive of the object, particularly given that it is unlikely to be repatriated, and talked in terms of 'old collectors' and 'dusty museum cupboards' (pers. comm. 16/02/11).

[21] Ngāti Rānana are a group based in London that aim to provide New Zealanders residing in the United Kingdom (and others interested) with an environment in which to teach, learn and participate in Maori culture. According to Awhina Tamarapa of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Ngāti Ranana have an important role in taking care of Maori *taonga* and upholding Maori cultural values, forming a link between the United Kingdom and New Zealand (pers. comm .2011). We participated in three Ngāti Rānana club nights on the following dates: 21/01/2011, 16/02/2011 and 23/02/2011, which took place on Wednesday evenings in New Zealand house, London.

Finally, Mead considers that the rising international profile of Maori culture has increased the *mana* of all such objects (1997, 185). Rosanna Raymond, a Polynesian artist, concurs that an object can always attract new *korero (*pers. comm. 18/03/11). Following this rationale, our research on the Layton treasure box has reignited "interesting talk" and understanding around the object, subsequently raising its *mana.*

Overall, it seems certain that the Layton feather box's cultural value is far from static, but without further engagement, recontextualisation and a better understanding of the box's provenance it risks remaining "asleep" in the MOL.

Changing Values: Commoditisation

An interesting perspective of the Layton treasure box with regard to 'value' relates to its movement in and out of a 'commodity phase' (Appadurai 1986, 13). As *taonga*, treasure boxes were never intended to be exchanged, although they could be gifted (gift- and barter-exchange differ somewhat from 'commodity exchange' Appadurai 1986, 9, 11). In this respect treasure boxes were originally an anti-commodity in that they could not posses inherent exchange value and were therefore without economic value. With European contact, *taonga* such as treasure boxes entered the state of *diversion* commodities where "objects are placed into a commodity state though originally specifically protected from it" (Appadurai 1986, 16). Many were traded with Europeans although "how so many Maoris were persuaded to part with such valuable and personal possessions is hard to understand..." (Barrow 1969, 135). Changing demand gave rise to the concept of 'tourist art'. This has previously been misrepresented in understanding the complex evolution of Maori material culture: "they are important documents of Pacific socioeconomic history that reflect the Islander's engagement with...the expectations of their nineteenth-century visitors..." (Specht & Bolton 2005, 65). Additionally, the concept of tourist art once again brings up the question of 'authenticity' (Appadurai 1986, 47).

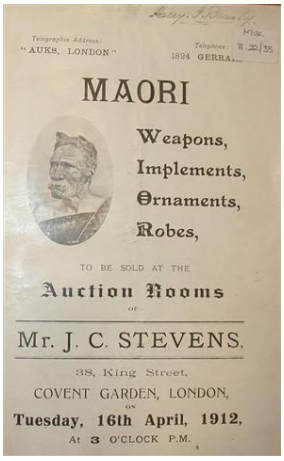
Although Maori material culture became commoditized from the C18th onwards, the Layton treasure box ended up with an unusual collector. Because Thomas Layton was tenacious in retaining his collection, it could be said that the treasure box left its previous commodification phase, once it entered his possession. In its current museum context, it seems to have acquired some of the 'inexchangeability' it once possessed in its original context. Although the MOL is not the owner of the Layton treasure box, its association with the institution of the museum places it in a new, non-commoditised state.

Commercial Value and Significance

The enthusiasm shown for carved objects especially by early collectors of ethnography, as noted by Waterfield (2006, 7), has already been mentioned. This interest and admiration was evidently shared by early visitors to New Zealand. A publication of the time states that “In point of ingenuity, they [the Maori] are not behind any uncivilized nations…without the assistance of metal tools, they make every thing…with neatness, strength, and convenience” (Anderson c.1784, 435).

Fig. 80: Of the few objects of Maori material culture illustrated in two documented accounts of Captain James Cook’s voyages of discovery, this same carved treasure box features prominently in Hawkesworth (1773 Vol:III, Plate 15) and Anderson (c.1784, Plate unpaginated), above. This box appears to be British Museum Acc. No. Oc,NZ.109, which is said to have been 'collected during one of Cook's voyages' (The British Museum online collection database).

Once in Europe, an object such as the treasure box would have entered a different scheme of value and potentially changed hands numerous times, for example through sale, exchange and inheritance. A survey of W.D. Webster’s catalogues, of which he produced 30 between June 1895 and August 1901, reveals that this well-known dealer in ‘curiosities’ offered for sale a total of seven Maori treasure boxes, ranging in price from £5.5.0 to £15.15.0, almost without exception the more expensive Maori objects. During the same period, auction house J.C. Stevens was also offering Maori material, including treasure boxes but the pre-sale estimates were not published.


"AUKS, LONDON"

MAORI

Weapons,
Implements,
Ornaments,
Robes,

TO BE SOLD AT THE
Auction Rooms
OF
Mr. J. C. STEVENS.
38, King Street,
COVENT GARDEN, LONDON,
on
Tuesday, 16th April, 1912,
At 3 O'CLOCK P.M.

Fig. 81: A copy of J.C. Stevens 1912 Maori sale catalogue, presumably that of dealer Harry Beasley whose name is written top right.

A British Museum annotated copy of a sale catalogue gives us an idea as to the commercial value of treasure boxes shortly after Layton's death. On 16th April 1912 Stevens offered for sale an anonymous collection of 'Maori Weapons, Implements, Ornaments, Robes' [Fig. 80].

Of the 65 lots offered, ten were photographed, including all three treasure boxes included in the sale. This, together with the prices achieved for the boxes (£16, £24 and £18 respectively) suggest the high regard for *wakahuia*. The most expensive *wakahuia* (lot 49a and containing *huia* feathers) was only outsold by three objects: a "*Tau ihu*, prow of a large war canoe" which sold for £63; a "*Taurapa*, a carved stern post of a canoe" which went for £32; and a "*Toki Poutangata"*, an adze handle which achieved £37.

Over time prices for ethnographic material increased as it became scarcer and therefore rarer, an aspect dealers and auction houses liked to emphasise then as now. Referring to the auction market of the 1920s, Emily Allingham writes of J.C. Stevens' early sale of ethnography which took place a century prior, that 'The collectors who now have to pay in pounds for what those who were present at the sale picked up for shillings' (Allingham 1924, 26). However, as suggested above, in around 1940 collecting tastes changed. Over recent decades the auction market for ethnographic material has witnessed a steady and accelerated demand and appreciation in value of its stock in trade. Perceived value and price are closely linked. Nomenclature has also shifted, for example the auction houses now consider the objects as art, rather than ethnography or 'curios'.

The authors contacted two leading international auction houses, both of which hold specialised sales of African and Oceanic art, and asked them to value the Layton treasure box. Independently, Sotheby's and Christie's valued the treasure box based on the images

and information we had supplied.[22] It must be stressed that these assessments were based on photographs and are subject to change after firsthand inspection and further research by the auction houses.

The commercial value of the Layton treasure box has changed over time. Even though we do not know the details of how or when it was first acquired or even when it entered the Layton collection, we can assume that its value will have changed, depending on its context. Once removed from its context in New Zealand, in terms of commercial value the box quite possibly went from being an object of scientific, souvenir or craft value, to being one of curiosity value and now as a work of art.

Recommendations for Accessibility

The MOL's mission statement is to "inspire a passion for London" (MOL 2011, 7). The Layton ethnographic collection sits uneasily within the MOL because, at first glance, it does not support this mission and the rest of the collection. This position is reflected in the object's under-use and limited display. This could be redressed in several ways, both for the whole ethnographic collection and the Layton treasure box in particular.

- ***Redisplay and Use: Source Communities***: Engagement with source communities has the potential to reignite the treasure box as *taonga*, but this process would involve specific ceremonies to lift *tapu* from the object, reconnecting the object with the wider community, and fasting to avoid *noa* intruding on the rites (Gallop 1998, 34; R. Raymond pers. comm. 18/03/11). The relationship between people and the object needs to be maintained to sustain the reanimation of the box. Raymond states that, "museums have responsibility for conservation of a relationship [with *taonga*] as much as physical conservation", although she also feels that even if the object does go "back to sleep", its essence will be carried by those who have met and interacted with it (R. Raymond pers. comm. 18/03/11). It must be noted that the transient nature of much of the London Maori community raises significant issues for the long-term legacy of any such project (D. Sully pers. comm. 08/02/11).

- ***Digital Media***: The use of digital media can enable broader access to objects and information, a potential 'digital repatriation' allows for the return of versions of objects to their original social and cultural contexts (Basu 2011, 20). This also has the advantage

[22] It is worth noting that even during this research process the MOL has reconsidered the *insurance value* of the Layton treasure box, increasing it from £5000 to £7000 in an attempt to reflect current replacement value.

that, in contrast to actual repatriation, additional space and resources for care of the repatriated object are obviated. However, while museum displays can ensure the separation of highly *tapu* objects from the *noa*, some Maori communities are concerned that such protection is not afforded to digital images. For example a highly *tapu* object may be viewed by someone eating at their computer (Smith, 2011). Additionally, many rural communities in New Zealand have very limited access to the Internet (Raymond, pers. comm. 18/03/11).

Educational Potential

There are multiple possibilities for the use of the Layton treasure box educationally. These include activities such as the visual arts and engagement with contemporary Maori communities. Educational themes could include Maori epistemology and mythology, carving techniques, C19th exploration as well as trading and markets.

- ***Museum Visitors (Families)***: Family activities focussing on Maori designs could introduce children to Maori culture (for example colouring-in sheets). Ideas of personal treasure and creating one's own treasure box could provide a better understanding of the unique and personal nature of such objects. Ideas of *tapu*, limits and restrictions could also be explored in relation to their own lives, for example: Where are they not allowed to go? What objects are they not allowed to touch? How does this relate to museum objects?

- ***Schools***: For schools, content needs to support the National Curriculum. Learning packs could be developed accordingly. Possible topics might include 'Captain James Cook' as part of the study of famous people (history) or as an explorer (geography), and also an appreciation of the box's materiality and construction techniques (art and design) (H. Lahr pers. comm. 20/03/11).

- ***Source Community***: In regards to the source community, Tamarapa points out the importance of such *taonga* in helping young Maori people develop an understanding of their own cultural identity (pers. comm. 17/03/11). To help further such aims, work could be undertaken with organisations such as *Te Kohanga Reo O Ranana,* a group set up to facilitate the education of Maori children in London in "their *reo* (Maori language), their *tikanga* (customs) – their identity" (http://www.kohanga.co.uk/index.html).

- ***Repatriation***: We have begun the process towards digital repatriation by undertaking a digital 3D scan of the Layton treasure box; however it should be acknowledged that such a response to repatriation requests may be contentious. Museologically, the treasure box is of greater value as part of the Layton Collection.

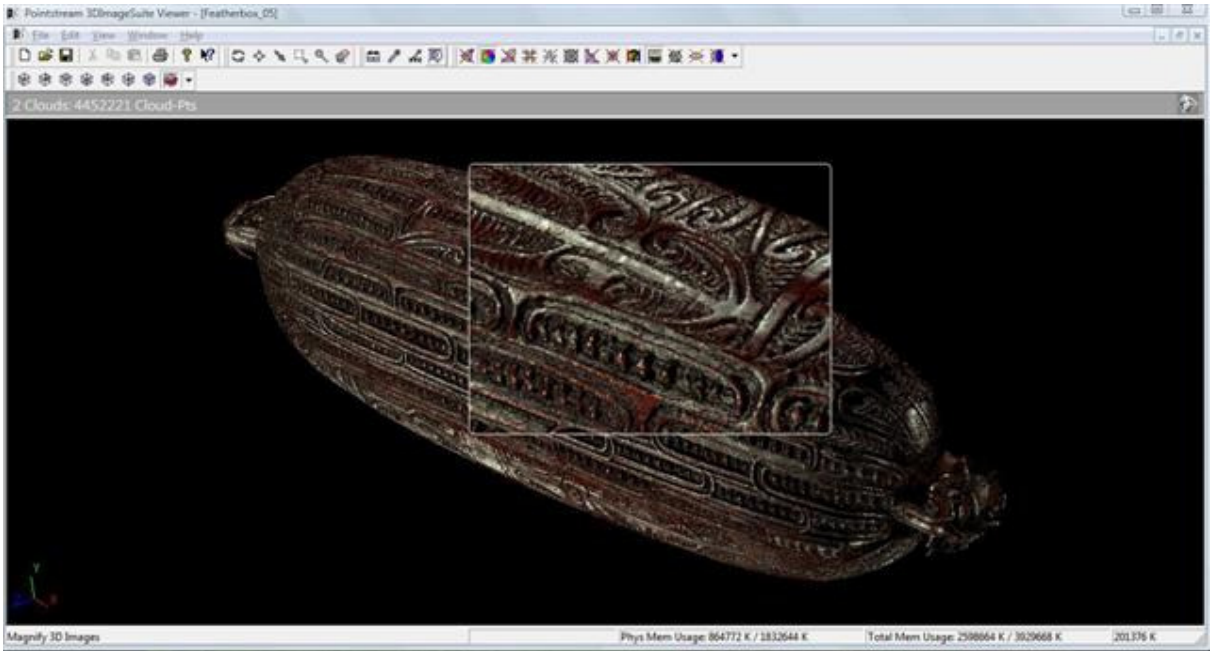


Fig. 82: Screen shot of the Layton treasure box during 3D scanning (Courtesy: S. Robson).

Research Potential

Our research presented here is necessarily limited in scope. We propose several routes of further investigation which have the potential for continued reanimation of the Layton treasure box:

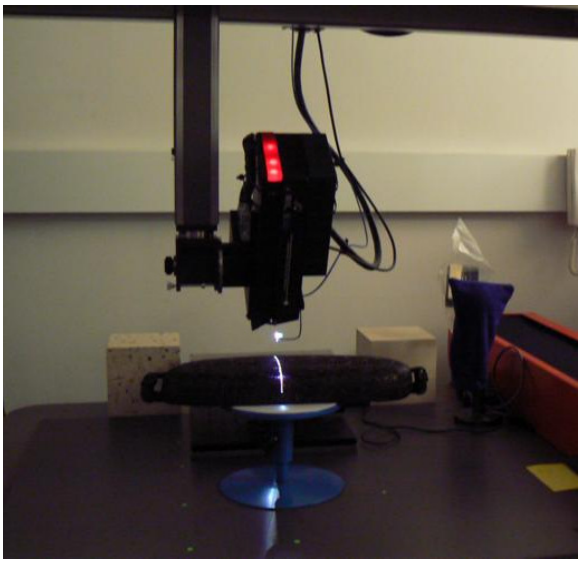


Fig. 83: The Layton treasure box being scanned at the Department of Engineering, UCL (Photo: R. Pinto).

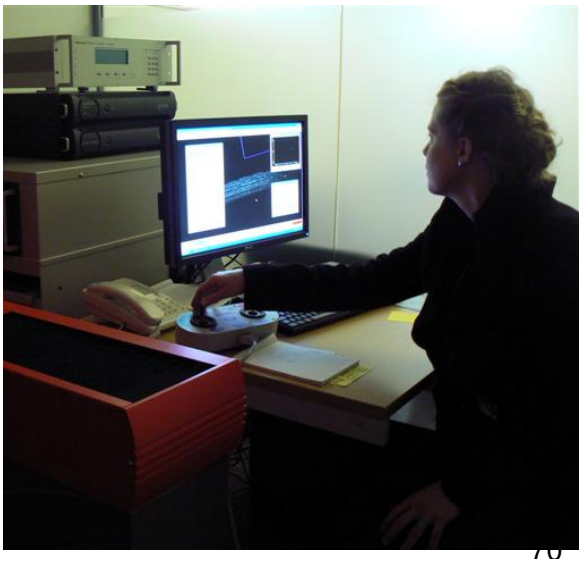


Fig. 84: Mona Hess operating the Arius 3D imaging scanner, Department of Engineering, UCL (Photo: R. Pinto).

- Working with current Maori artists to better establish the *chaîne opératoire* of the Layton treasure box, in particular with regard to the possible multiple carvers involved.
- Identifying more comparable examples of Maori carving, especially treasure boxes, which could potentially give a better provenance to the box.
- Further tracing the London network of dealers, auction houses, collectors, and others to understand how they interacted and how objects circulated.
- Looking at, and better identifying, Layton's other ethnographic material in order to develop a clearer understanding of his preferences and collecting practices. This could also encompass a project to further disentangle the current conflation of Layton senior and junior.
- Examining the ways in which the object is understood in terms of Maori modes of understanding in opposition to academic perspectives.
- Digitising the Layton Collection would significantly increase the Collection's research, education and access potential. This project could be undertaken by volunteers, operating along similar lines to the successful inclusion projects already run by the MOL (Corsini *et al.* 2010; G. Davis pers. comm. 7/03/11).

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Appendix 1.1: Museums in the United Kingdom & Irish Republic with New Zealand 'Boxes'

Data Extracted from: Gathercole & Clark. 1979. *Survey of Oceanian Collections in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic.*

Region	Museum	No. of New Zealand 'Boxes'	Confirmed No. of Maori Treasure Boxes
Aberdeen	Anthropological Museum	7	4
Birmingham	Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery	1	NO REPLY
Bournemouth	Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum	1	NO REPLY
Bristol	City Museum & Art Gallery	3	NO REPLY
Cambridge	University Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology	17	17*
Derby	Derbyshire Museum Service	1	1
Doncaster	Museum & Art Gallery	1	0
Dublin	National Museums of Ireland	5	NO REPLY
Edinburgh	Royal Scottish Museum	15	8†
Exeter	Royal Albert Memorial Museum	1	1
Hastings	Hastings Museum & Art Gallery	1	1
Ipswich	Ipswich Museums & Art Galleries	4	4
Leeds	Leeds City Museum	2	NO REPLY
Lincoln	Lincoln City & County Museum	1	NO REPLY
Liverpool	Merseyside County Museums	20	18
London	Cuming Museum	1	1
London	Royal Air Force Museum	1	NO REPLY
London	Horniman Museum	3	3
London	Museum of London	1	1
London	Museum of Mankind (British Museum)	50	48‡
Manchester	The Manchester Museum	4	4
Middlesbrough	Captain Cook Birthplace Museum	2	NO REPLY
Nottingham	Caste Museum	1	1
Oxford	Pitt Rivers Museum	16	19
Perth	Museum & Art Gallery	5	5
Stirling	Smith Art Gallery & Museum	2	2
Warrington	Museum & Art Gallery	1	1
Warwick	Warwickshire Museum Service	1	0§
Whitby	Whitby Museum	1	1
Total		**169**	**141**

*NO REPLY: Figure of 17 derived from online catalogue search.
† This figure obtained from National Museums Scotland (*not* the Royal Scottish Museum).
‡ Derived from Neich *et al*. (2010) (32 *wakahuia*, 14 *papahou*, 2 *powaka whakairo*, +1 *papahou* lid).
§ Warwick's ethnography collection was sent to British Museum in 1982 (M. Wood pers. comm. 17/02/11).

Appendix 1.2: Museums in the United Kingdom & Irish Republic with Treasure Boxes

Museums not covered in: Gathercole & Clark. 1979. *Survey of Oceanian Collections in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic.*

Region	Museum	No. of Maori Treasure Boxes
Brighton	Brighton Museum & Art Gallery	2
Glasgow	The Hunterian Museum (University of Glasgow)	1

Appendix 1.3: Consulted Museums in the United Kingdom & Irish Republic without Treasure Boxes

Region	Museum	No. of Maori Treasure Boxes
Essex	Saffron Walden Museum	0
London	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	0
London	Science Museum	0
London	Wellcome Collection	0
Torquay	Torquay Museum	0
West Sussex	Horsham Museum	0
Whitby	Captain Cook Memorial Museum	0

Appendix 1.4: Museums in Canada & the USA with Treasure Boxes*

Data Extracted from: Simmons. 1982. *Catalogue of Maori artefacts in the museums of Canada and the United States of America*.
Excludes objects* only *described as 'boxes' (i.e. not treasure/feather boxes)

Region	Museum	No. of Maori Treasure Boxes
Quebec: Montreal	Montreal Museum of Fine Arts	2
California: Berkley	The Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology (University of California)	1
Colorado: Denver	Denver Art Museum	3
Hawaii: Honolulu	Bernice P. Bishop Museum	2
Illinois: Chicago	The Field Museum of Natural History	21
Massachusetts: Harvard	Peabody Museum of Archeology & Ethnology (Harvard university)	3
Massachusetts: Salem	Peabody Museum	5
Massachusetts: Waltham	Rose Art Museum (Brandeis University)	1
Missouri: Kansas City	St. Louis Art Museum	1
New York: New York	The American Museum of Natural History	4
New York: Brooklyn	The Brooklyn Museum	1
New York: Buffalo	Buffalo Museum of Science	3
New York: Manhattan	Museum of Primitive Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art	5
Ohio: Cleveland	Cleveland Museum of Art	1
Pennsylvania: Philadelphia	The University Museum	6
Washington DC: Washington	The National Museum of Natural History of the USA & The Smithsonian Institution	2
Total		**61**

Appendix 1.5: Museums in Australia with New Zealand 'Containers'

Data Extracted from: Bolton & Specht. 1984. *Polynesian and Micronesian artefacts in Australia: An inventory of major public collections. Vol. II. New Zealand and Eastern Polynesia*

Region	Museum	No. of Maori Containers
Australian Capital Territory	Australian Institute of Anatomy	1
Australian Capital Territory	Australian National Gallery	3
	National Museum of Victoria	10
Tasmania	Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery	3 (+2 Lids)
South Australian	South Australian Museum	1
Tasmania	Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery	1
Total		**19**

Appendix 1.6: Museums in New Zealand with Treasure Boxes

Data Extracted from: Neich. 2002. *Papahou and wakahuia: Maori treasure boxes*.

Region	No. of Treasure Boxes
Wellington	99
Auckland	62
Dunedin	29
Christchurch	13
Whanganui	11
Total	**214**

Appendix 2: Images of the Layton Treasure Box

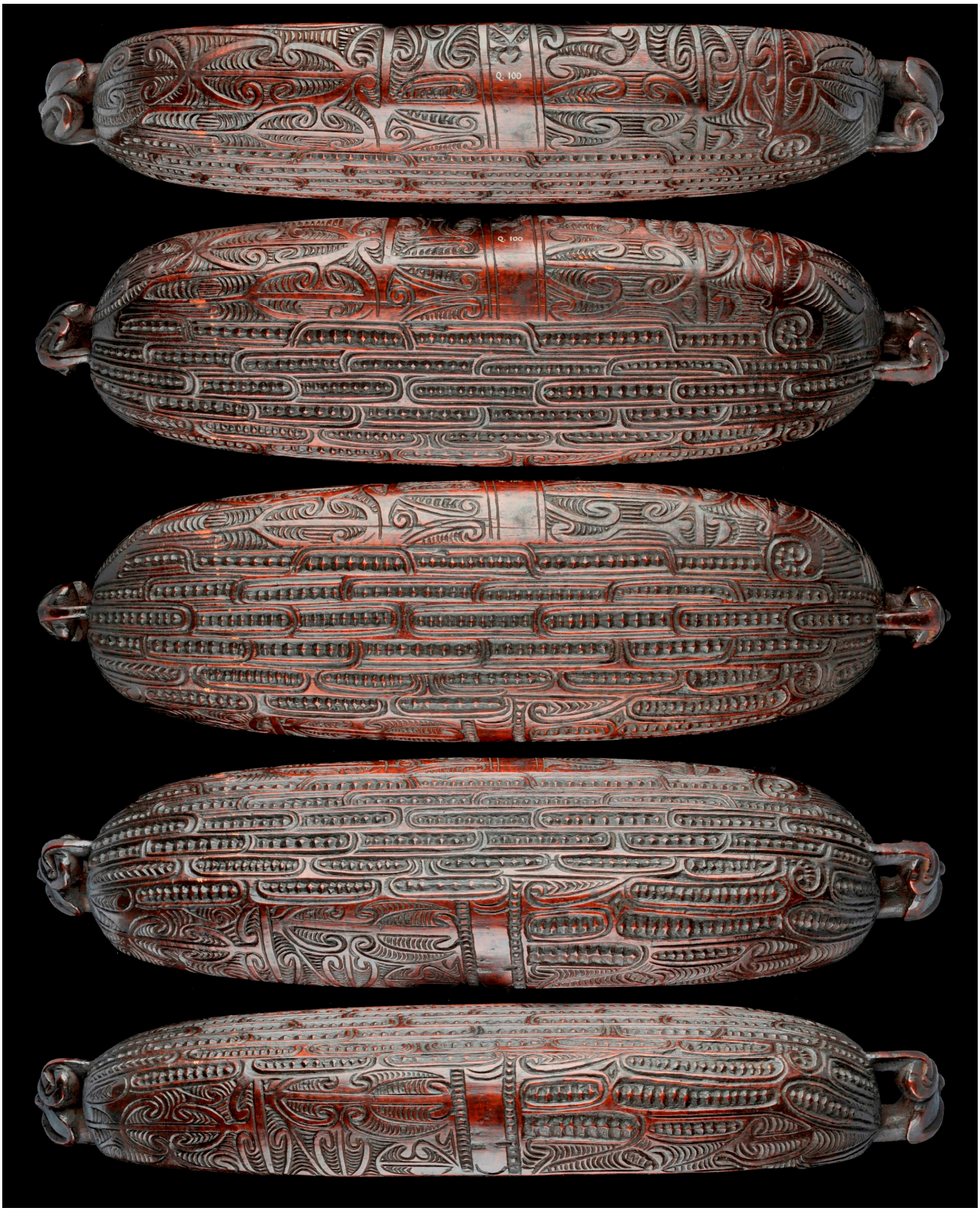

Fig. 85: Photo: R. Stroud.

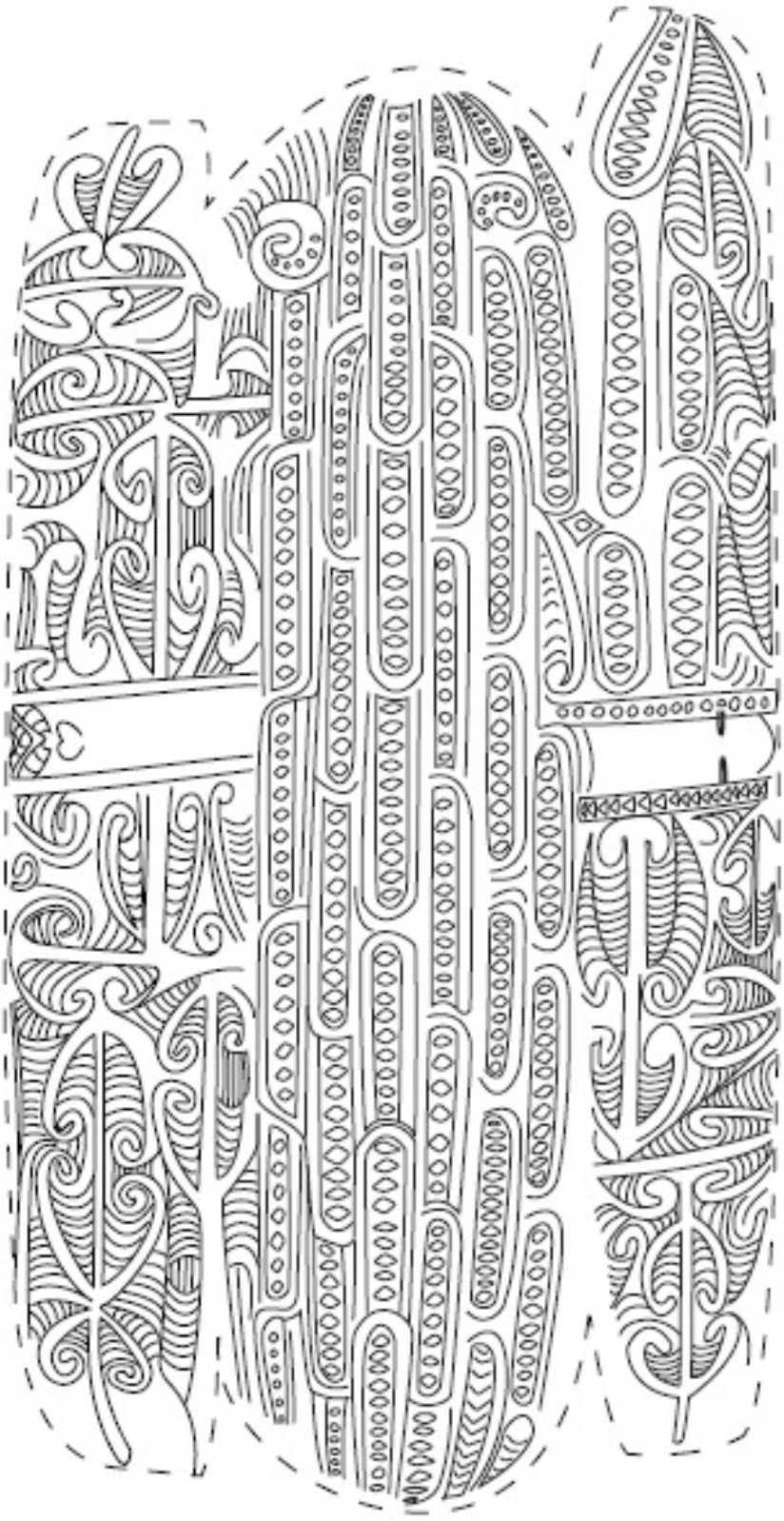

Fig. 86: Drawing: R. Pinto.