

Boomerang carved with central floral motif and horizontal bands on arms, from Queensland

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Physical description

A slightly asymmetrical, medium brown-coloured boomerang carved on the anterior with figurative and geometric designs. A plant motif features in the centre and each arm is decorated with three parallel bands. The top and bottom bands are carved with X-shaped designs and the middle band is decorated with incised crosshatching. Vertical bands of incised diamond design on the left arm and crosshatching on the right arms mark the end of the horizontal bands on each arm. The ends are unadorned and the posterior features the letters 'GM' hand-written in pencil near the apex.

Statement of significance

This collection consists of eighty one decorated objects including boomerangs, clubs, scrimshaw, stock whip handles, shields and walking sticks. The majority of the objects are associated with Aboriginal missions during the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries, in particular the Barambah/ Cherbourg mission (QLD), La Perouse (NSW), Palm Island (QLD), and Lake Tyers (VIC). Various locations in South Australia are also included.

From the late nineteenth century Aboriginal people in Eastern Australia created a range of artefacts decorated with incised, carved, painted and pokerworked motifs, which documented their experiences of interaction with European settlers. 'Non-traditional' designs emerged which were specific to individual missions - such as the cross hatching and playing card iconography characteristic of Cherbourg and the incised flora and fauna motifs characteristic of La Perouse. Many of the objects in this collection reflect these new designs, and depict the changing circumstances brought about by European settlement as well as continuing links to land and traditional cultural practices. When used as trade items, these objects quickly became sought after, and as production increased they found a market as tourist souvenirs. This collection brings together a range of such objects from several key sites, including two of the most important east coast mission stations, Cherbourg and La Perouse. It also includes a number of hybrid objects, such as a tin yandi and a nail club, which combine tradition forms and functions with non-traditional materials. This collection is significant for including types of objects not well represented in existing museum collections, and for representing the range of objects being made by Indigenous people in Eastern Australia during this period, particularly those living on missions.

Object information

What

Type	Boomerangs
Collection	Scott Rainbow collection
Dimensions	L 595mm x W 245mm x H 10mm
Material	Wood

When

[1920-1930](#)
Circa 1925

Where

Place made
[Queensland, Australia](#)

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