

## **Missionary as Collector: The Role of the Reverend Joseph Annand**

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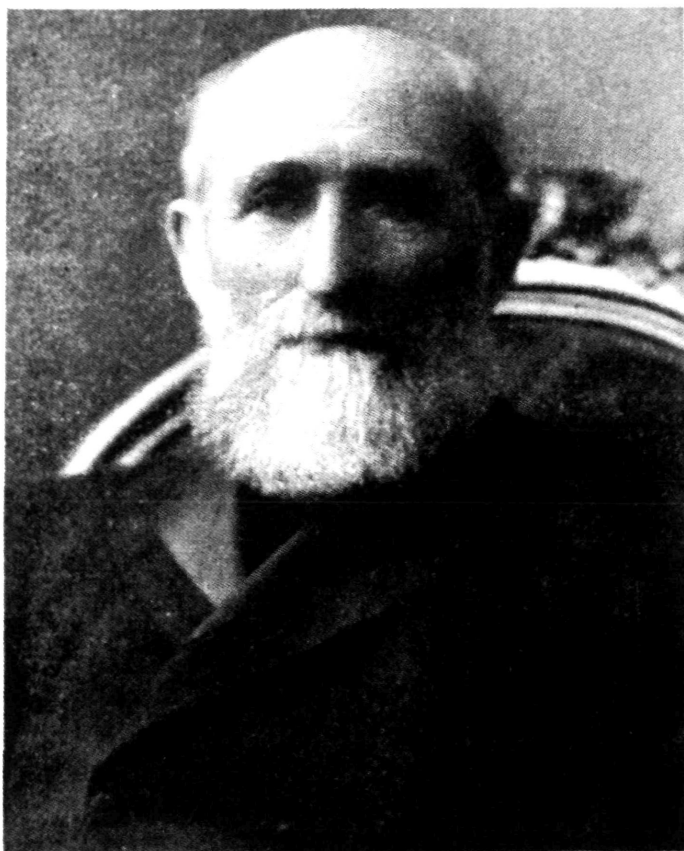
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Figure One



REV. JOSEPH ANNAND, D.D.  
Arrived 1873. Retired 1913 to Hants-  
port, N.S

Reverend Joseph Annand. Reprinted from James W. Falconer,  
*John Geddie, Hero of the New Hebrides* (Toronto, 1915).

ARTHUR M. SMITH

## Missionary as Collector: The Role of the Reverend Joseph Annand<sup>1</sup>

IF ONE WERE TO ASK AN AUDIENCE of contemporary Canadians what they knew about the group of islands in the South Pacific comprising modern-day Vanuatu, the response would probably be very limited. As the rare exception, someone might identify it as the birthplace of bungy-jumping or an excellent location for scuba diving among the wrecks of American warships sunk after the end of World War II. A similar question posed to Presbyterian Canadians at the turn of this century would probably have elicited a much more informed response, for through the medium of their church newspapers they were made intimately aware of the country and its culture. For close to 75 years, from the 1840s until the early 1900s, Presbyterian missionaries from Canada reported in great detail on their activities among the native peoples of Vanuatu, then known as the New Hebrides.

Some of these Canadian missionaries found themselves engaged in activities that we do not typically associate with the role of the missionary, as they joined with other Victorians in collecting and classifying the material world in which their missions were located. They were thus responsible for many ethnological and natural history collections which reside today in museums and archives in Atlantic Canada, Québec and Ontario. One of these is a collection of native artifacts from Vanuatu which was transferred in 1933 from the museum of the Toronto Normal School to the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. The accessions book for the Normal School identified it as "The Rev. J. Annand Collection from the New Hebrides",<sup>2</sup> and individually listed each artifact which related to the anthropology of Vanuatu. The ethnological materials in the Normal School's collections had been acquired at the end of the 19th century by its director, David Boyle, who had solicited artifacts from Canadian foreign missions, such as those operated by the Presbyterian Church in Vanuatu. In the tradition of the Victorian collector, the Reverend Joseph Annand from Nova Scotia was one of the missionaries to respond to Boyle's request for native artifacts to build up a strong ethnological collection in Toronto. A smaller collection of artifacts was assembled and sent by Annand to his *alma mater*, the Presbyterian College in Halifax. This collection currently resides in the archives of the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada. These collections can provide potentially valuable insights concerning the material culture

1 Revision in part of the author's thesis "The Relationship of Missionary to Native Material Culture: The Role of the Reverend Dr. Joseph Annand in the Collection of Native Artifacts of Vanuatu", M.T.S., Atlantic School of Theology, 1996.

2 Toronto Normal School, "Normal School Collection", n.d., p. 356, Library & Archives, Royal Ontario Museum [ROM].

of pre-20th-century Vanuatu.

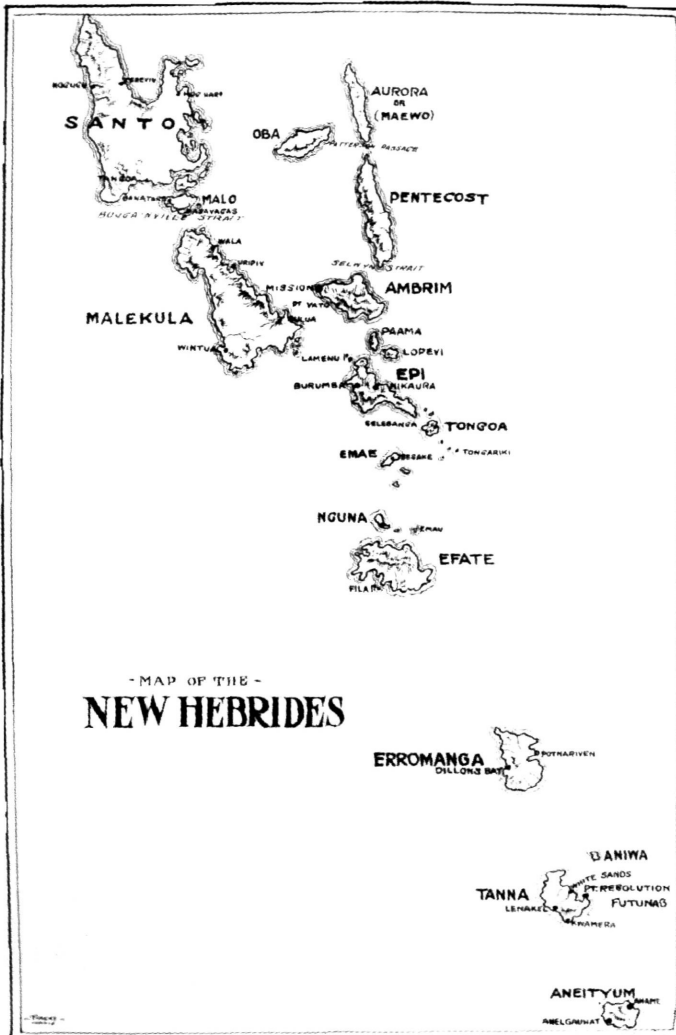
But such collections also provide insights concerning the culture and values of the collectors and their societies. The acquisition of ethnological artifacts by missionaries in the 19th century was undertaken with biases which have been identified with theological and cultural imperialism. Changing attitudes towards native culture, including native spirituality, in the 20th century have cast the missionary activities of the last century in a new light.<sup>3</sup> The artifacts acquired by the missionaries present a challenge to the museum world of today, which must struggle to interpret them in a manner which recognizes the integrity of indigenous cultures, yet acknowledges attributes ascribed to such artifacts by their missionary collectors.

The missionaries advanced their cause for Christianization with great vigour during the 19th century as western civilization exerted its influence around the globe. In aid of the cause, the missionaries wrote letters to their church newspapers back home, describing in great detail the 'uncivilized' culture of the native peoples and their work to Christianize and westernize them. These letters were intended to generate interest in their work of salvation as well as financial support for the missions. When the missionaries returned home on furloughs, they conducted speaking tours, visiting local churches across the country, seeking further support for their work. They often illustrated their talks with native artifacts characteristic of the 'primitive' cultures they were converting to western civilization. The Reverend Joseph Annand used both strategies to support his missions in Vanuatu. He was a prolific letter-writer to the Presbyterian newspapers in Canada and conducted speaking-tours on each of his furloughs, accompanied by his box of 'curios'. Though some of his collections were used to advance his mission work, many of Annand's artifacts and specimens were sent to educational institutions which were seeking to build ethnological collections. His diaries do not reveal his motivation for responding to requests from such institutions to supply native artifacts, but his actions would suggest that he shared the Victorian passion for collecting and classifying the material world in 'new lands'. Thus a case study focussing on the Reverend Joseph Annand can serve to shed light on the connection as well as on the tension between the missionary's role as collector and observer and his role as proseletizer both for the Lord and for western civilization.

The association between Vanuatu and Canada was initiated in 1848 with a missionary endeavour by the Reverend John Geddie, from Nova Scotia, on the group of islands in the South Pacific known since 1980 as the Republic of Vanuatu. Situated north-east of Australia, this archipelago of lush green islands was first described by Louis Varz de Torres, who sighted them in 1606. He named the largest island *Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo* in the belief that it was a southern continent. Over a century later this group of 82 volcanic islands was

3 See "Missiology in the Twentieth Century", in Smith, "The Relationship of Missionary to Native Material Culture". Much of the focus of missiology in the 20th century has shifted away from conversion of the 'heathen' to working in partnership with native churches and world religions, with a greater understanding of spiritual values held by different cultures.

Figure Two



Map of the New Hebrides. Reprinted from James W. Falconer, *John Geddie, Hero of the New Hebrides* (Toronto, 1915).

named the New Hebrides by Captain James Cook, who explored and charted them in 1774. The northern islands are tropical, while those in the south are subtropical. They are characterized by thick rainforests and savannas, with a hot, rainy climate. The native peoples are Melanesian. Although white traders and settlers began arriving in small numbers following Cook's expedition, the first European missionary effort was not initiated until after the turn of the 19th century. In 1839, John Williams, travelling under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, became the first European missionary to visit Vanuatu. He was killed at Dillon's Bay on Erromanga when he ventured inland to explore the island's interior. The first Christians to attempt residence in Vanuatu were three Samoan teachers assigned by Williams in 1839 to Port Resolution, on Tanna, where Cook had visited in 1774. They were joined in 1842 by the first missionaries from Europe. The Reverends Henry Nisbet, Thomas Heath and George Turner of the London Missionary Society attempted a permanent mission on the islands, but after only seven months they retreated to Samoa in fear for their lives. Subsequent visits by Samoan missionaries of the Society helped to prepare the way for the arrival of the Reverend John Geddie and his family in 1848, and the establishment of the first permanent Christian mission in Vanuatu on the island of Aneityum.

Shortly after Geddie's death, in 1872, the Reverend Joseph Annand and his wife Alice arrived from Nova Scotia to begin a mission at Iririki, off the island of Efate. The original diaries of Joseph Annand, covering the period 1866 through 1915, document not only the events of his life as a missionary but also his endeavours as a collector of natural history and ethnographical artifacts.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph Annand was born on 1 January 1844 at Gay's River, Nova Scotia. He was raised on the family farm and educated at the grammar school in Shubenacadie. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Dalhousie University in 1869. He took his first year of theological training at Princeton University, followed by two years at the Halifax Presbyterian College, graduating in 1872. In that same year he received a Master of Arts degree from Dalhousie. While a student at Dalhousie University, Annand was probably exposed to the natural history collections of its first principal, the Rev. Dr. Thomas McCulloch, which are still exhibited in its Life Sciences Centre today. He may also have visited the first

4 Unlike many of the other missionaries, Annand did not publish any monograph accounts of his 40 years in Vanuatu. A record of his life as a missionary exists in the form of hand-written diaries which he maintained throughout his adult life. The diaries covering the period to 1915 are housed at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in Halifax. The post-1915 diaries, which cover the period of his retirement in Nova Scotia, continue to reside with members of the Annand family in Nova Scotia. Annand was also a prolific letter-writer, both personal and corporate, and surviving letters provide further insight into his life and career. Several of his letters to his sister have also survived, and are housed in the Public Archives. Two letters he wrote to David Boyle, curator of the Ontario Archaeological Museum at the Toronto Normal School, reside with Boyle's papers, housed at the Royal Ontario Museum. Many other letters by Annand may be found in Presbyterian newspapers published in Canada, including *The Presbyterian Record* and *The Home and Foreign Record*. These sources serve as a rich fountain of information on Annand's life and work in Vanuatu. Joseph Annand, Diaries, 1866-1915, MG1, vol. 2658-2659, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS].

zoological garden in British North America, founded by Andrew Downs in 1847, at the head of the North West Arm in Halifax, within close proximity to both Dalhousie and the Presbyterian College.<sup>5</sup> Annand's studies embraced both theology and the liberal arts of the 19th century. Upon completion of those studies, Annand married Alice Seville, of Halifax, and was ordained at Lunenburg. He did some supply preaching in Nova Scotia, but his intention was to pursue his vocation as a missionary. Under Geddie's influence, the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia was supporting the missions in Vanuatu through the supply of missionaries. The close connection between the Nova Scotian Church and its missions in the South Pacific was probably the determining factor in the Annands' setting sail for Vanuatu on 5 November 1872.

For the next 40 years the Annands would live and work in Vanuatu. In 1873 they arrived on Efate, where successful Presbyterian missions had been established at Erakor, Pango and Havannah Harbour. They established their first mission station on the tiny isle of Iririki, within close proximity to the native villages of Fila and Meli. Their efforts to convert the native peoples proved unsuccessful, as they were viewed with great suspicion. This is scarcely surprising: the local experience with non-missionary white traders up to that time had involved mass slaughter, slave labour and the abduction of women. Annand's diaries during this period are filled with laments about the 'heathen' condition and appeals to God to open the hearts and minds of the native peoples to hear his message of 'salvation'. Annand had little respect for the native traditions, and was especially critical of their values in reference to communal property, expecting, instead, that they should conform to western values and notions of private property. In their feasting, dancing and music Annand saw the presence of Satan.<sup>6</sup> Having met with very little success in converting the natives near their mission on Iririki, the Annands relocated, in 1876, to the mission station originally founded in 1848 by the Rev. John Geddie on the island of Aneityum. They spent 11 years there, devoting much of their energy to educating the Christianized natives. In 1887 the Annands responded to the Presbyterian Synod's request to establish a training school for native pastors and teachers on the small island of Tangoa, off the south coast of Santo, where they remained until their retirement to Nova Scotia in 1913.

Many missionaries of the Victorian era were closely associated with the collection of natural history specimens as well as native artifacts. According to F.A. Campbell, a contemporary observer who had spent a year in Vanuatu,

Not only are the missionaries doing good to the natives; they are also benefitting Science. As educated men amongst new peoples and new forms

5 "In time his [Downs'] gothic cottage, filled with case upon case of specimens of every description, a herbarium, and many paintings, and surrounded by a horticultural garden and grounds, containing an astonishing menagerie of monkeys, bears, deer, moose, beavers, and birds from all over the world, became a source of pleasure and instruction to visitors to Halifax." Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada*, 1982 Joanne Goodman Lectures (Toronto, 1983), p. 4.

6 Annand diaries, 16 October 1874, MG1, PANS.

of animal and vegetable life, their observations upon these subjects are of great value. I can quite understand and believe the remark "that the missionaries have done more to bring to light new languages than all the learned societies in the world."<sup>7</sup>

Joseph Annand was no exception. While he did not record any collecting activity during his first years in Vanuatu, he made mention of a number of collecting expeditions after he moved to the mission on Aneityum. His accounts of his activity demonstrated a very deliberate attempt to document the natural history on the islands, thus suggesting that he had indeed been inspired by the natural history collections in Halifax. There is no documented evidence that he took any formal training in the sciences or that his personal library incorporated works on natural history. Yet his expeditions were organized to retrieve a diversity of specimens, and his care in preparing and labelling demonstrated his attention to detail. In September 1883 he wrote: "This afternoon we went out to gather ferns butterflies and beetles. Got some of all three. A few fine butterflies and some giant Silver weevil".<sup>8</sup> The following month he wrote of another excursion in which he was accompanied by Alice and one of the Christian natives, returning "with three new birds and two new species of butterflies which was quite a successful tour up towards Anapartijo".<sup>9</sup> His diary made mention of several other excursions in October of 1883 to collect the natural history of Aneityum. He also wrote of preserving birds and gathering fine sea shells and coral for his collections. Special mention was made of the purchase of a "Naforafata shell" in May 1884.<sup>10</sup> Alice Annand accompanied her husband on his natural history excursions, and was an active participant. He noted in August 1884 that "Alice put up a book of mosses today".<sup>11</sup>

In his role as an amateur collector, Annand demonstrated the great interest in the natural world which was so characteristic of the Victorian collector, although his diaries fail to reveal his motivations. He did, however, indicate that his specimens were for export as well as for his own private collections. In 1883 he wrote of making a collection of ferns to be sent to the unidentified "Sydney ladies"<sup>12</sup> and of mounting a collection of ferns for Miss E.J. Gibson of Greenfield.<sup>13</sup> He also made

7 F.A. Campbell and A.J. Campbell, *A Year in the New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, with An Account of the Early History of the New Hebrides Missions* (Geelong, [18-?]), p. 192.

8 Annand diaries, 15 September 1883, MG1, PANS.

9 Annand diaries, 2 October 1883, MG1, PANS.

10 Annand diaries, 19 May 1884, MG1, PANS.

11 Annand diaries, 14 August 1884. Barbara Lawson, *Collected Curios: Missionary Tales from the South Sea* (Montreal, 1994), which describes the Reverend H.A. Robertson collection at the Redpath Museum, McGill University, suggests that Mrs. Robertson was as active in this enterprise as her husband. This argument is supported by the Annand diaries which mention preparing a shipment of native artifacts for Mrs. Robertson.

12 Annand diaries, 17 December 1883, MG1, PANS.

13 Annand diaries, 18 September 1884, MG1, PANS.



collections of butterflies for a number of people, including a Mr. J. Müller who visited Aneityum in 1882. His collection of natural history continued after his relocation from Aneityum to Tongoa. In 1899 he mentioned packing and shipping "some red coral and a few other things for friends at home",<sup>14</sup> and in 1903, putting up a parcel of mosses for the Reverend W.W. Watts.<sup>15</sup> He also responded to a request, in 1902, from Levi W. Mengel of the Department of Science at the Boys' High School in Reading, Pennsylvania, for specimens of natural history. In response to a shipment of butterflies,<sup>16</sup> Mengel wrote Annand to express his appreciation and enclosed a shipment of books as payment. Unfortunately, no listing of the titles appears in Annand's diaries. Mengel had also suggested to Annand that the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia would probably be interested in purchasing "older anthropological material of the natives of your islands? I mean such things as the implements of warfare, &c."<sup>17</sup> Annand's response to Mengel's request was indicated by a note jotted on the envelope accompanying Mengel's letter: "Ans. with promise to look for a few more butterflies--but nothing else. JA".<sup>18</sup> Annand offered no explanation for this negative response. He was willing to oblige with further specimens of natural history, specifically butterflies,<sup>19</sup> but was not prepared to send native artifacts in response to Mengel's request.

The first mention to be made by Annand of acquiring ethnological artifacts was in October 1881 as he described exploring the northern part of the island of Santo. At Salambanga "many natives came around in their canoes with yams. . . . Also some ornaments and weapons were offered to purchasers. . . . I bought a spear, two clubs and some pudding carvers".<sup>20</sup> The next mention Annand made of collecting artifacts came 10 years later, when he documented the purchase of two spears in addition to his usual foodstuffs.<sup>21</sup> The following year he wrote of "Putting up spears for Mrs. Watt and Mrs. Robertson",<sup>22</sup> but did not indicate their destination. The Mrs. Robertson alluded to by Annand was probably the wife of a fellow missionary, the Reverend H.A. Robertson, on Erromanga. Further mention of procuring native artifacts was made in 1897, when, on a visit to the isle of Mele, he bought armlets and beads.<sup>23</sup>

While attempting to be quite comprehensive in his collection of natural history specimens, incorporating both flora and fauna, Annand appeared to be more

14 Annand diaries, 28 August 1899, MG1, PANS.

15 Annand diaries, 15 December 1903, MG1, PANS.

16 Annand diaries, 26 February 1902, MG1, PANS.

17 Levi W. Mengel, Reading, PA, to Joseph Annand, Santo, 6 November 1902, MG1, vol. 1588-2, PANS.

18 Mengel to Annand, 6 November 1902, MG1, PANS.

19 Annand diaries, 20 February 1903, MG1, PANS.

20 Annand diaries, 4 October 1881, MG1, PANS.

21 Annand diaries, 22 June 1891, MG1, PANS.

22 Annand diaries, 18 May 1892, MG1, PANS.

23 Annand diaries, 21 September 1897, MG1, PANS.

selective in his choice of ethnological artifacts and was not as systematic in his acquisitions. His major focus was on domestic items such as costume and household goods. Annand's diary for 1884 noted the existence of several *natmas* (native spirits) in his possession, including Mataro's 'Turtle eye', the 'eye of the Sancho', and Jobe's stone *natmas*, all examples of sacred stones.<sup>24</sup> Artifacts relating to native spirituality do not appear, however, among the collections Annand sent to Canada, nor did he mention in his diaries how he disposed of the *natmas* which had been in his collection. Sacred stones and masks, for example, do not appear in the collections at the Royal Ontario Museum or the Maritime Conference Archives. Moreover, contact with surviving family members in Nova Scotia failed to turn up any such objects from Annand's personal collection. While many missionaries collected ethnological material associated with native religious practices, Annand appears to have made a conscious decision not to preserve those which came into his possession.

Annand acquired his ethnological artifacts through barter with the native peoples who were quite willing to trade their spears and clubs, baskets and shells in exchange for fish hooks and lines, calico, tobacco, beads, hatchets and knives. His experiences were typical of missionaries who collected such material. F.A. Campbell described his experiences in the art of bartering with natives:

They [the natives] have all sorts of dodges by which to palm off on the unwary worthless articles. They will bring up shells, shining and beautiful and wet, barter them and go off, and shortly the purchaser finds that the shells are miserable weather beaten things, that the savage has picked off the beach and dipped in the water, so as to make them appear glossy and fresh.<sup>25</sup>

The Reverend H.A. Robertson's letter to *The Presbyterian Record* in 1898 noted that the native peoples had no means of acquiring money other than working for the missionaries, selling a small amount of yams and fowls, and by selling curiosities to passing ships.<sup>26</sup> The missionaries provided a significant market for native 'curios', sometimes serving as agents for collectors in Europe, North America and Australia.

Following in this tradition, Annand became, during the late 1890s, an agent for the Ontario Archaeological Museum in Toronto. While on furlough in 1895 he had visited the Toronto Normal School. He saw both its lyceum and museum,<sup>27</sup> and undoubtedly encountered the resident archaeologist, David Boyle, with whom he was to enter into communication upon his return to Vanuatu. He noted in his diary in December of that year that he had written Mr. D. Boyle.<sup>28</sup> Nine months later, in

24 Annand diaries, 1884, MG1, PANS.

25 Campbell and Campbell, *A Year in the New Hebrides*, p. 122.

26 Rev. Robertson to *Presbyterian Record*, November 1898, p. 291.

27 Annand diaries, 27 October 1895, MG1, PANS.

28 Annand diaries, 11 December 1895, MG1, PANS.

September 1896, he wrote: "Today in leisure hours I packed up a box of curios &c for the Ontario 'Archaeological Museum' Toronto".<sup>29</sup> The following month he noted having written once again to Boyle, and recorded that he was building a box "for more things to go to the 'Ontario Archaeological Museum'".<sup>30</sup> Boyle may well have been referring to this letter in his annual *Archaeological Report* for 1896-1897 when he quoted Annand's account of acquiring artifacts for the Archaeological Museum while sailing around Santo in August 1896 looking for prospective mission sites. This expedition was described by Annand in some detail in a letter to Dr. Morrison, printed in *The Presbyterian Record* in December of 1896. In particular, Annand noted the acquisition of a native male costume which he described as follows:

Here we noticed a peculiar style of dress not seen elsewhere in the group. It consists of a block of wood worn across the upper part of the hips, with a lot of fancy strings with beads stretched across the front and fastened to the ends of the block. I secured one for the Ethnological Museum in Toronto.<sup>31</sup>

This particular artifact was sent to Toronto with an accompanying note from Annand indicating that it had been purchased off a man's back. He had been reluctant as it would leave him naked, but Annand "induced him to part with it. . . [for] twenty sticks of tobacco".<sup>32</sup>

Annand's collection of artifacts was transported by the mission ship, the *Dayspring*, to Sydney, Australia, then forwarded by the Reverend James Cosh to Vancouver by the Huddart-Parker line, and on to Toronto via the Canadian Pacific Railway. Annand asked Boyle to bear the shipping expenses from Sydney, but offered to assume the cost of procuring the artifacts himself, for he was deeply interested in the success of the Museum from an ethnological perspective.<sup>33</sup> The accessions book for the Normal School Collection documented the receipt of the artifacts from Annand in 1897. The collection comprised native dress for men and women, seven clubs, bows and arrows, spears (one believed to be tipped with human bones), stone adzes, walking stick, mouth organ, fire drill kit, shell breastplate, spoon, cup made from coconut shell, combs, axes, boars' tusks, kava plates, pudding platter and dishes with sticks for pounding cooked breadfruit,

29 Annand diaries, 2 September 1896, MG1, PANS.

30 Annand diaries, 10 October 1896, MG1, PANS.

31 Joseph Annand, "Exploring Around Santo: Letter from Rev. Dr. Annand on Board the 'Dayspring', off West Santo, 21st August, 1896", *Presbyterian Record*, December 1896, p. 319.

32 "War Clubs and Axes: The New Hebrides Islanders Terrible Weapons", *Mail Empire* (Toronto), 10 March 1897.

33 David Boyle, *Archaeological Report, 1896-97* (Toronto, 1897), pp. 10-12. In his report Boyle noted his appreciation of "public spirited men like the Rev. Dr Annand of the New Hebrides", and pointed out that the ethnological collections from 'other lands' were the result of his appeals for "gratuitous contributions".

figurehead from a canoe, strings of beads, belt girdle, baskets, mat, pot and basin. Annand had marked the function of each object as used by the native peoples. One of the spears, actually a javelin, was indicated by Annand to be tipped with human bones. When described for the Toronto audience by the *Mail Empire*, it was identified as a "ceremonial, or Santo war spear, ornamented with human bone tips, a truly hideous affair. . . . [It] is ornamented with 87 human bones, each about three inches long, and sharpened to a fine point".<sup>34</sup>

While he carefully noted the function of each artifact, Annand was unable to provide much information concerning their manufacture. Boyle had made inquiries as to the kinds of wood used in the artifacts, for example. Annand confessed only to knowing the material used for the spear shafts and pudding dishes. The former was identified as bamboo or palm trees, and the latter as island teak, for which Annand did not know the scientific name.<sup>35</sup> His use of vernacular terms clearly indicates his amateur knowledge of natural history, as opposed to that of a scientist. This may have been a source of some frustration to Boyle who was, by 1897, becoming interested in comparative ethnology, not just of North America but around the world. By that time he was curator of the new archaeological section of the Ontario Provincial Museum at the Toronto Normal School, having been named to the position in November of 1896.

Curators were limited in their ability to develop comprehensive collections when relying upon the cooperation of missionaries, especially those who did not have the same interests or vision as their own. The relationship between Annand and Boyle was no exception. Boyle wanted to obtain a collection of artifacts which would "illustrate the life of the female from infancy to old age",<sup>36</sup> but Annand did not deem this feasible, as, in his view, the life of the female native was not distinguishable from that of the male. Competition from private collectors posed an even greater obstacle. In a subsequent letter in June 1897, Boyle sought the names of other missionaries in the South Pacific who might be willing to supply native artifacts to his museum. Annand responded: "I am not able to give you the name of any one in other groups who would be likely to help you. Few people seem willing to contribute to Museums, while private collections increase in number almost daily".<sup>37</sup> While we do not know to which 'private collections' Annand referred, this last statement illustrated his own commitment to the institution of the museum as an appropriate place in which to house collections of native artifacts. At the same time, he acknowledged the Victorian proclivity to assemble private collections of 'curios'. Annand was strongly committed to the acquisition of anthropological materials for the Museum in Toronto, the Presbyterian College in Halifax, and the Honan Mission Museum in China.<sup>38</sup> However, he was reluctant, for unknown reasons, to acquire materials for other institutions, such as the

34 "War Clubs and Axes", *Mail Empire*, 10 March 1897.

35 Joseph Annand to David Boyle, 8 June 1897, Boyle Papers, ROM.

36 Annand to Boyle, 8 June 1897, Boyle Papers, ROM.

37 Annand to Boyle, 1 November 1897, Boyle Papers, ROM.

38 Annand diaries, 8 August 1908, MG1, PANS.

Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. In contrast to his attitude concerning natural history specimens, in his diaries he made only one mention of sending ethnological artifacts to a private source, and they were sent to missionary wives located elsewhere in Vanuatu. Moreover, neither Annand's diaries nor Boyle's papers indicate that Annand sent any further collections from Vanuatu after 1897, although he continued to reside there until 1913.

The missionary practice of acquiring native artifacts to use on speaking tours was also followed by Annand. He maintained a small collection of artifacts and specimens for this purpose. When on furlough in Canada, he brought along examples of his collections. Prior to his furlough in 1885, for example, Annand wrote of packing cases containing shells and coral, which he referred to as 'curios'.<sup>39</sup> Writing in his journal about his 1906 furlough, he mentioned purchasing "a cheap case to hold my curios"<sup>40</sup> while on a speaking engagement in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Several days later, in Louisburg, he wrote of showing "the dresses, ornaments &c that I have with me".<sup>41</sup> Subsequent mention was made of exhibiting his 'curios' during stops at Presbyterian churches in Mabou, Saltsprings and Scotsburn, Nova Scotia.

Annand's 1906 furlough included a speaking tour of Presbyterian churches throughout Ontario as well as the Maritimes. While in Toronto in June, he took time to visit the Provincial Museum of the Toronto Normal School, situated at St. James Square, where he failed to see its curator, David Boyle, who was out of town at the time.<sup>42</sup> En route back to Vanuatu the following March, however, a stopover in Toronto allowed him to meet with Boyle who gave him a tour of the Museum.<sup>43</sup>

During his long career in Vanuatu Annand had acquired his own small private collection of artifacts and specimens. In 1912, as he prepared to leave the mission for retirement in Nova Scotia, he wrote in his diary of taking down the spears that had adorned his abode for a number of years, and of his provision for shipping home his collection of artifacts. "This day I got our spears, clubs, bows and arrows and golf clubs (5) packed for shipping home."<sup>44</sup> Mention was also made of packing a small box of coral.<sup>45</sup>

Annand's efforts to collect ethnological materials closely parallel those of the Reverend Hugh A. Robertson. Like Annand, Robertson was a graduate of the Presbyterian College in Halifax, to which both men donated small collections of native artifacts from Vanuatu. After Annand had retired to Nova Scotia he assisted

39 Annand diaries, 15 September 1884, MG1, PANS.

40 Annand diaries, 15 August 1906, MG1, PANS.

41 Annand diaries, 17 August 1906, MG1, PANS.

42 Annand diaries, 21 June 1906, MG1, PANS.

43 Annand diaries, 5 March 1907, MG1, PANS.

44 Annand diaries, 2 October 1912, MG1, PANS.

45 The whereabouts of his private collections are unknown at this time. Only a few artifacts are known to reside with surviving family members, which suggests that Annand's private collections may have been very small in number.

the Reverend Dr. Clarence Mackinnon, principal of Presbyterian College, Halifax, with the labelling of some of the native artifacts he had donated to the college.<sup>46</sup>

The expansion of the British Empire during the Victorian era coincided with an explosion of interest in natural history and anthropology. Voyages of exploration such as Cook's in the previous century had helped to generate public interest in all things 'exotic' among Europeans and North Americans.

The Victorian reader who took up a work in popular natural history on a particular area, or a periodical published by a natural history society, expected to find descriptions of animals, birds, and fish, as well as geological structures; a record of natural events during the seasons of the year; some evocation of the scenery; and even discussions of back-woodsmen and settlement and accounts of the societies and legends of the native peoples. The primary mission of natural history was to collect, describe, and classify the flora and fauna, and identify and trace the geological formations, of new, unknown territories.<sup>47</sup>

Historian Carl Berger has argued that a colonial culture as witnessed during the Victorian era is related to a culture of collecting. In the same manner that a colonial power exerts control over political and social states, a culture of collecting attempts to define and control the elements of nature and society. Interest in natural history was informed by a 'natural theology'.

The chief claim of natural theology was that there existed an overall design in nature, a rank and order in the chain of life, and a regularity in the operation of laws, all of which were evidence of a transcendent guiding intelligence. For theologians, these truths became abstract arguments for the existence of God; for naturalists they offered a religious sanction for scientific investigation. Nature was worth studying because it was a product of divine activity.<sup>48</sup>

46 These artifacts currently reside in the Maritime Conference Archives, some with Annand's original labels still attached. Mention of this collection appears in Lawson's survey of Vanuatu materials held in Canadian museum collections, though Robertson is not identified as the donor of a number of the artifacts. Other significant collections reside in the Nova Scotia Museum, the New Brunswick Museum, First Presbyterian Church in Pictou, N.S., and the Agnes Etherington Art Gallery at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. The collection at the Nova Scotia Museum originated with the Reverend John Geddie. The provenance of the other collections has not been established for the purposes of this work. Lawson determined that the only other significant collection of missionary-related artifacts from Vanuatu was donated by Robertson to the Australian Museum in Sydney. Recent research by staff of the Royal Ontario Museum has revealed collections of Vanuatu artifacts in French museums, but their provenance has yet to be determined. Whether they originated with the French Catholic missionaries to Vanuatu is a subject for further research.

47 Berger, *Science, God and Nature*, p. xi.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

The act of collecting was an intellectual activity that could be engaged in by learned persons in situations otherwise deemed lacking in civilized activity. Materials were readily accessible, and the Linnæan system of classification was well known during the Victorian era.

Enter into this milieu Joseph Annand. He began his collecting activities with natural history specimens found on the island of Aneityum, followed by the collection of ethnological artifacts. He described the specimens and artifacts in his diaries and letters as 'curios', similar to terminology used in 18th-century accounts of James Cook's voyages. Nicholas Thomas has suggested that the term 'curiosities', and, after the mid-19th century, the more common word 'curios', reflected certain western attitudes and values. Cook had referred to native artifacts such as costume, tools and ornaments as 'curios' or 'curiously carved'. Thomas has argued that, by the end of the last century, the term 'curio' was associated, in the eyes of westerners, with symbols of idolatry and cannibalism in such a manner as to evoke strong moralistic responses. He further suggests that such "attitudes tended to objectify the tribal specimens as expressions of a savage condition, a barbaric stage founded in the order of social development".<sup>49</sup> Annand used the term 'curios' when referring to the native artifacts and specimens which accompanied him on his furlough speaking engagements in Canada. In using the term he thus ascribed to those objects additional meanings which conveyed a negative image of the native peoples of Vanuatu. Annand believed strongly in the need to convert the 'heathen' natives. His 'curios' were visual representations of the primitive cultures about which he spoke when addressing Presbyterian congregations across Canada. His letters and diaries offer further evidence of the negative imagery he used to describe traditional native culture. They reveal, as well, his perception of the 'uncivilized' human condition of the native peoples prior to their acceptance of Christianity — and, coincidentally, western culture.<sup>50</sup>

Annand's speaking tours, accompanied by his 'curios', were designed to solicit funding support, a common practice among his missionary contemporaries. Some of the artifacts used for this purpose have been acquired by museums, where they have become the subject of considerable debate. The Reverend Walter Currie displayed his collection of African native artifacts (a beaded charm, a medicine pouch and a rattle for protection against disease) at church gatherings in Canada. They now reside in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum. Susan Pearce has suggested that their procurement by Currie and their subsequent exhibition in Canada reflected a strong imperialist message — the victory of Western culture

49 Nicholas Thomas, "Licensed Curiosity: Cook's Pacific Voyages", in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, eds. *The Cultures of Collecting* (London, 1994), p. 122.

50 See "Reverend Joseph Annand as Missionary", in Smith, "The Relationship of Missionary to Native Material Culture". Annand's writings reveal how he was an agent for cultural change in Vanuatu as he introduced western values and practices, including games such as golf and croquet, western hymns and musical instruments. There is little evidence that he adopted any elements of traditional native culture.

over another, and of one religion over another.<sup>51</sup> Annie Coombes has gone so far as to describe the exhibition of such artifacts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as nothing more than history reconstructed as 'imperialist propaganda'.<sup>52</sup> The display of 19th-century ethnological collections and the development of anthropology as an academic discipline were merely instruments to advance the colonial and imperial state and to exert social control over all societies.

By labelling his collection of native artifacts as 'curios', Annand decontextualized them. It is doubtful that they would have been displayed in a manner which would have honoured their traditional use and value in native culture. As artifacts spread out on a table in a church hall they would not have been unlike the artifacts of 19th and early 20th-century European travel books, in which objects were displayed in a symmetrical arrangement devoid of meaning. Similarly, when Annand's collection at the Ontario Archaeological Museum was presented to the Canadian public in the *Mail Empire* of 1897, domestic tools were illustrated next to native costume, while arms were all labelled as "weapons of war",<sup>53</sup> a highly suspect categorization as many of the objects were probably used for hunting and ceremony. The artifacts illustrated in the *Mail Empire* conveyed a negative image of an uncivilized culture, while the text of the article made references to "barbaric or semi-civilized parts of the globe".<sup>54</sup> Thomas suggests that by abstracting these artifacts from their human uses and purposes, they became decontextualized and thus were rendered irrelevant as to their original meaning in native culture.<sup>55</sup> As mere 'curios' they reflected the traits of an inferior culture.

In writing of the African experience, Coombes suggests that the Victorian and Edwardian fascination with the categorization of exotic lands enabled the British to see the Empire as the heart and soul of the universe. Museums contributed to this process by using taxonomies and descriptions which presented to the public the results of Empire expansion and Christian conversion.<sup>56</sup> Using exhibitions as a medium for relaying the findings of anthropological studies, museums chose to create displays which would attract the public's attention, often using materials supplied to them by missionaries. As such,

the focus tended to be on aspects which were highly visible and susceptible to spectacularisation. Often this meant a concentration on the physical and the body through, for example, displays of anthropometry which frequently bore some relation to aspects of eugenic theory. Other times it resulted in

51 Susan Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London, 1995), p. 341.

52 Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (New Haven, Conn., 1994), p. 2.

53 "War Clubs and Axes", *Mail Empire*, 10 March 1897.

54 Illustrations in *Mail Empire*, 4 March 1897, bear captions such as "Spear tipped with human bones", "War clubs", "Executioner's knife". The author of the article is not identified.

55 Thomas, "Licensed Curiosity", p. 120.

56 Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, p. 214.



the scientific racism of the predominantly evolutionary narratives constructed from material culture from certain colonies, notably those on the African continent and in the South Pacific.<sup>57</sup>

Annand would have been in agreement with the display of native material culture for the purposes of illustrating a 'savage civilization' as confirmed by his writings which proclaim his belief in the superiority of western culture.<sup>58</sup>

David Boyle likewise demonstrated that he shared many of the 19th-century attitudes toward native material culture. He believed that modern western culture was rooted in the practices and customs of prehistoric man. Ethnological collections represented a tool for studying the evolution from savage to civilized human. He saw such modern customs as hunting for pleasure, crime, folklore and superstitions, taste for half-cooked meat and aged cheese as throwbacks to a time when all were savages. These cultural traits were believed to be hereditary, and explained why some races were less civilized than others.<sup>59</sup> In his annual archaeological reports Boyle revealed his goal to build ethnological collections which re-affirmed his belief in the superiority of western culture and his view of 'primitive' cultures as deviations from natural law.

Annand was a partner with Boyle in creating a collection of native artifacts which illustrated the 'primitive' society of Vanuatu prior to its westernization. There is no suggestion in any of his writings that Annand was attempting to preserve the elements of traditional native culture. His 'curios' and collections represented his success in westernizing and christianizing 19th-century Vanuatu.

Museums are challenged by contemporary society to display anthropological collections such as Annand's in a manner which recognizes the original attributes of the artifacts as well as those values assigned to them by the missionary collector within the context of a colonial era. The Royal Ontario Museum exhibition "Into the Heart of Africa"<sup>60</sup> was an attempt to show both of these characteristics as they related to a collection of native African artifacts assembled by the Reverend Walter T. Currie in the 19th century. The public outcry from some members of the African-Canadian community in opposition to the exhibition demonstrated the need to recognize a third set of attributes ascribed to native artifacts by modern-day nationalisms of decolonizing peoples. Anthropological collections such as Annand's are invaluable resources for documenting the traditional native cultures from around the world, but their exhibition in our pluralistic Canadian society must be sensitive to the three voices which give them meaning — the voices of the native peoples who created them; the voices of the missionaries who collected them; and the voices of modern native society which attach nationalistic values to them.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>58</sup> See "Reverend Joseph Annand as Missionary", in Smith, "The Relationship of Missionary to Native Material Culture".

<sup>59</sup> Gerald Killan, *David Boyle: From Artisan to Archaeologist* (Toronto, 1983), pp. 181-82.

<sup>60</sup> Jeanne Cannizzo, *Into the Heart of Africa* (Toronto, 1989).