

A

CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM—ETHNOLOGY

50-19

252548
(A & B)

Provenience: Western Caroline Islands ; Palau

Field No.

People or Culture: Palauan

Object: fire making equipment

56-50

Material: bamboo

(A & B)

Description: This equipment consists of a saw and a hearth. The saw is made of ratureiómel (a variety of bamboo which has matured, died and dried by itself in the bush). It is especially desirable for use as a saw because it makes fire quickly. The hearth is made of beliik (bamboo

Neg. No.

Dimensions:

(in cm.)

length of saw: 54.5

length of hearth: 38.3

(over)

Acc. 2574

Collection: Presented by Roland W. Force; Collector, 1956. Tri-Institutional Pacific Program Ethnological Expedition to Palau, 1954-1956.

There are no separate name for the components of the fire-making kit. The entire unit is called suis. The tinder is inside the hearth and is either suld (coconut husk) or ulengidel era lius (another combustible part of the coconut palm). Every house used to have such a unit and it was house property, not the separate property of any of the inhabitants. Flint and steel was used after contact with traders. Fire was also carried from house to house. This is still done in spots isolated from supply of matches which are available and widely used today.