

Finch & C^o



A PAIR OF ATHABASCAN NORTH WESTERN CANADA MUKLUKS

A PAIR OF ATHABASCAN NORTH WESTERN CANADA MUKLUKS , CARIBOU SKIN , RED WOOLBROAD CLOTH AND GLASS BEADS . LINED WITH TRADE CLOTH

LATE 19 TH CENTURY

SIZE : 38 CM HIGH – 15 INS HIGH

LITERATURE

MUKLUKS ARE COMBINED MOCCASINS AND LEGGINGS . THESE EXAMPLES ARE MADE FROM THE SKIN OF CARIBOU WHICH TOGETHER WITH THE MOOSE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LARGE FOOD ANIMAL OF THE NORTH WEST . THE ATHAPASCAN , TLINGIT AND ESKIMO PEOPLES USED THE SAME MATERIALS TO CRAFT SIMILAR OBJECTS . THE ESKIMO WERE ALSO INFLUENCED BY THOSE PEOPLES OF THE SIBERIAN ARCTIC WITH WHOM THEY TRADED FURS AND OTHER MATERIALS .

FOLLOWING CONTACT , THE EUROPEAN FUR TRADE WAS A PERVASIVE INFLUENCE AMONG THE REGIONS NATIVE GROUPS . FROM THE 1600'S TO THE LATE 1800'S THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADING POSTS TRANSFORMED NATIVE CULTURE IN VARIOUS WAYS . ACCESS TO EUROPEAN TRADE GOODS PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED MATERIAL CULTURE , WITH THE GROUPS WHO HAD FIRM CONTACTS WITH THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TRADING POSTS BEING THE MOST AFFECTED .

WITH THE COMING OF THE MISSIONARIES IN 1849 TO THE GREAT SLAVE LAKE AND OTHER AREAS IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT FLORAL VESTMENTS , ALTAR CLOTHS AND CHURCH PAINTINGS BECAME THE INSPIRATION FOR NEW FLORAL DESIGN MOTIFS ALONGSIDE THE TRADITIONAL DOUBLE CURVE MOTIF OCCURRING IN BEADWORK THROUGHOUT THE NORTH WESTERN TERRITORIES . BY THE 1850'S THE SMALLER TYPE OF BEAD , THE GLASS SEED BEAD WAS GAINING FAVOUR AND WAS USED IN A VARIETY OF COLOURS WITH RED AND BLACK TRADE CLOTH TO EMBELLISH A WIDE VARIETY OF OBJECTS .

ATHABASCAN BEADWORK OF THE LATE 19 TH - EARLY 20 TH CENTURY PROVIDED A SOURCE OF REVENUE FOR OFTEN IMPOVERISHED FAMILIES . WOMEN MADE WALL POCKETS , DOG BLANKETS , POUCHES , MITTENS , JACKETS , BAGS , BOOTS AND EVEN SHELF VALENCES . ALL MAGNIFICENTLY EMBELLISHED WITH BEADS .