

Finch & C^o



A NATIVE WOODLANDS INDIAN, HURON-WEDAT, BIRCHBARK SCISSOR CASE

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EMBROIDERED WITH MOOSE HAIR AND PORCUPINE QUILLS

IN FINE ORIGINAL CONDITION

CIRCA 1860

SIZE : 9.5 CMLONG – 3¾ INS LONG

LITERATURE

BY THE LATE 18TH CENTURY THE HURON HAD BEGUN TO MAKE MOCCASINS AND OTHER ITEMS EXQUISITELY EMBROIDERED IN DYED MOOSE HAIR FOR SALE TO TRAVELLERS AND ARMY OFFICERS STATIONED IN THE REGION OF QUEBEC. GRADUALLY AS A RESPONSE TO NEW IDEAS AND DEMANDS FROM EUROPEAN SETTLERS A MORE NATURALISTIC STYLE OF FLORAL EMBROIDERY DEVELOPED.

BY THE MID 19TH CENTURY THE PRODUCTION OF ART COMMODITIES SUCH AS THIS SCISSOR CASE WAS A STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL. THESE PRODUCTS ENABLED NATIVE COMMUNITIES TO HAVE A BASIC SUBSISTENCE. GOODS WERE OFTEN TRADED FOR FOOD : A QUILL EMBROIDERED BOX IN THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM IN TORONTO STILL CONTAINS A CAREFULLY LETTERED NOTE TO A LOCAL SHOPKEEPER ASKING FOR LARD AND CANNED CORN AS PAYMENT.