Finch & Co



A SOUTH WESTERN SHONA , ZIMBABWE HEADREST

A SOUTH WESTERN SHONA, ZIMBABWE, BORDERS OF BOTSWANA, MAN'S CARVED WOODEN HEADREST
19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY
SIZE : 13.5 CM HIGH X 16.5 CM WIDE, 7.5 CM DEEP
5¼ INS HIGH, 6½ INS WIDE, 3 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

SHONA HEADREST WERE OFTEN USED TO PROTECT THE ELABORATE HAIRSTYLES OF THE MEN. J.T BENT TRAVELLING IN THE SHONA AREAS IN 1891 NOTED THAT THE SHONA SLEPP 'WITH THEIR NECKS RESTING ON A WOODEN PILLOW, CURIOUSLY CARVED: THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED TO DECORATE THEIR HAIR SO FANTASTICALLY WITH TUFTS ORNAMENTALLY ARRANGED AND TIED UP WITH BEADS THAT THEY ARE AFRAID OF DESTROYING THE EFFECT, AND HENCE THE PILLOWS' (BENT 1892 : 36)