Finch & Co



A SOUTH AFRICAN NORTH NGUNI SNUFF CONTAINER

A SOUTH AFRICAN NORTH NGUNI SNUFF CONTAINER
COMPLETE WITH WOOD STOPPER. CALABASH, COPPER AND BRASS WIRE
LATE 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 6.5CM HIGH, 7.5CM DIA. – 2½ INS HIGH, 3 INS DIA.

LITERATURE

SNUFF TAKING WAS A COMMUNAL ACTIVITY AMONG THE PEOPLES OF SOUTH AFRICA, AND SNUFF BOTTLES AND FLASKS WERE SOMETIMES WORN AS ORNAMENTS TO ENHANCE THE COSTUME OF THE OWNER. THUS MANY WERE CAREFULLY AND BEAUTIFULLY MADE. FOR THE ZULU, THERE EXISTED A STRONG ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TOBACCO AND THE ANCESTORS AND IT WAS SAID THAT A PERSON WHO SNEEZED A LOT AND WHO BECAME OVER FOND OF SNUFF WAS BECOMING POSSESSED BY A SPIRIT.
MEMBERS OF A GROUP OR FRIENDS MEETING WOULD IMMEDIATELY TAKE A PINCH OF SNUFF BEFORE ANY DISCUSSION OR ACTIVITY COULD BEGIN: 'ZULU'S SELDOM MEET WITHOUT TAKING SNUFF' (E.J KRIGE; THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF THE ZULU'S, 1936).