

Finch & C^o



COLLECTION OF VICTORIAN MINIATURE SHOES

A COLLECTION OF VICTORIAN MINIATURE SHOES: A SCOTTISH DOUBLE SHOE POCKET SNUFF BOX CARVED OF HORN AND INLAID WITH BRASS PICQUE, A SCANDINAVIAN CHIP CARVED BOXWOOD SNUFF SHOE, A PAIR OF CARVED SOLID MAHOGANY AND BRASS PICQUE MINIATURE SHOES, A PAIR OF BRASS STUDDED CARVED MINIATURE LADIES BOOTS AND A PAIR OF CARVED AND BRASS PIQUED SOLID BEECH-WOOD LADIES LACED ANKLE BOOTS

MD 19TH CENTURY

SIZES: 10CM HIGH, 16.5CM LONG – 4 INS HIGH, 6½ INS LONG (MAX)
2.5CM HIGH, 8CM LONG – 1 INS HIGH, 3 INS LONG (MIN) (DOUBLE HORN SHOE)

LITERATURE

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE SYMBOLISING OF THE SHOE OR BOOT IN CONNECTION WITH LUCK AND MARRIAGE WITHIN WESTERN CULTURE DATES BACK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE BIBLE WHERE THE PLUCKING OFF OF A SHOE DENOTED THE CONFIRMATION OF A CONTRACT FOR REDEMPTION, OR CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP, WHICH COULD INCLUDE MARRIAGE. IN THE 'BOOK OF RUTH' IT STATES, 'NOW THIS WAS THE MANNER IN FORMER TIMES IN ISRAEL CONCERNING REDEEMING AND CONCERNING CHANGING, FOR TO CONFIRM ALL THINGS; A MAN PLUCKED OFF HIS SHOE, AND GAVE IT TO HIS NEIGHBOUR: AND THIS WAS A TESTIMONY IN ISRAEL.'

THIS CONNECTION BETWEEN FOOTWEAR, LUCK AND MARRIAGE STILL PERSISTS WITH THE MINIATURE SILVER SHOE PLACED ON THE WEDDING CAKE, AND THE TYING OF A BOOT OR SHOE TO THE BACK OF THE VEHICLE IN WHICH THE NEWLYWEDS COMMENCE THEIR HONEYMOON. THE ANCIENT YORKSHIRE CUSTOM OF 'TRASHING' ALSO CONTINUES TODAY WHERE THE CONGREGATION THROWS OLD FOOTWEAR AFTER THE BRIDE AND GROOM AS THEY LEAVE THE CHURCH.

IT WAS THE CUSTOM IN WALES TO CARVE AND PRESENT THE BRIDE AND GROOM WITH A PAIR OF MINIATURE SHOES, SOMETIMES SOLID AND SOMETIMES HOLLOWED OUT, AS LOVE TOKENS TO ENSURE THE COUPLE PROSPERED IN LIFE. IN SCOTLAND THE RARE TWIN JOINED PAIRS OF SHOES ARE SYMBOLIC, PROCLAIMING 'WE TWO ARE ONE'.

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT COBBLER'S APPRENTICES MADE SHOE SNUFFBOXES AS 'PASSING OUT' PIECES AND AS WOODCARVING WAS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF A COBBLER'S TRADE, THIS IS MOST PROBABLY TRUE.