

# Finch & C<sup>o</sup>



## ASSAM NAGAHILLS ANGAMI WARRIORS CEREMONIAL DRESS ORNAMENTS

A COLLECTION OF ASSAM NAGAHILLS ANGAMI WARRIORS CEREMONIAL DRESS ORNAMENTS

LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURY

COMPRISING:

A

A SHALLOW CROWNED WAR HAT MADE OF COILED CANE WITH A BAMBOO BRIM DECORATED WITH A STRIP OF BEARS FUR AND HIDE, STRANDS OF RED DYED HUMAN HAIR AND TWO BOAR'S TUSKS

SIZE: 17CM HIGH, 25CM WIDE, 25CM DEEP – 6¾ INS HIGH, 9¾ INS WIDE, 9¾ INS DEEP

B

FOUR MEN'S WRISTLETS DECORATED WITH COWRY SHELLS SEWN ONTO A WOVEN GROUND EDGED WITH RED DYED GOATS HAIR THE CLASP TO EACH MADE OF TWO SLIDING WOODEN PEGS

SIZE: APPROX: 12CM HIGH – 4¾ INS HIGH (EACH) (EXCLUDING BASES)

C

A DOUBLE STRAND NECKLACE OF LONGITUDINAL PERFORATED COLUMELLA CONCH SHELL DROPS WITH BONE GEOMETRIC DECORATED SPACERS AND BLUE GLASS TRADE BEADS TO THE TOP. AN OLD LABEL INSCRIBED 'ARBOI CWH'

SIZE: APPROX: 70CM LONG – 27½ INS LONG

D

A NECKLACE COMPOSED OF LARGE BARREL SHAPED PERFORATED COLUMELLA CONCH SHELL DROPS INTERSPERSED WITH OVAL CORNELIAN AGATE BEADS

SIZE: APPROX: 80CM LONG – 31½ INS LONG

E

A MANS SINGLE BOARS TUSK NECK-LET WITH A CENTRAL PIECE OF CUT SHELL WITH A CORNELIAN AGATE BEAD BOUND WITH RED ORCHID ROOT

SIZE: 17.5CM WIDE, 15CM DEEP – 7 INS WIDE, 6 INS DEEP

F

A MANS DOUBLE BOARS TUSK NECK-LET WITH TWO CENTRAL MEDALLIONS OF CUT SHELL WITH CORNELIAN AGATE BEADS BOUND WITH ORCHID ROOT. THESE NECK-LETS DENOTE STATUS GAINED THROUGH FEASTING AND WARFARE

SIZE: APPROX: 20CM WIDE, 16.5CM DEEP – 8 INS WIDE, 6½ INS DEEP

G

AN ANGAMI WARRIOR'S LOIN CLOTH DECORATED WITH VERTICAL LINES OF COWRY SHELLS SEWN ONTO A WOVEN TEXTILE GROUND WITH RED DYED GOAT HAIR BOUND WITH YELLOW ORCHID ROOT HALF CIRCLES ABOVE

SIZE: 46CM HIGH, 31CM WIDE – 18 INS, HIGH, 12¼ INS WIDE

H

A MANS SKULL CAP OF COILED CANE WITH A BAMBOO BRIM WITH AN OLD LABEL INSCRIBED 'ARBOI CWH'

SIZE: 13CM HIGH, 28CM DEEP, 22CM WIDE – 5 INS HIGH, 11 INS DEEP, 8¾ INS WIDE

FOR THE NAGAS, ORNAMENTS MAKE A STATEMENT AND DEFINE THEIR IDENTITY AND THAT OF THEIR CLAN. KNOWN TO THE WORLD AS FEARSOME HEAD-HUNTERS, THEIR HEAD TAKING IS ACTUALLY EVIDENCE OF A 'SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP'. VIOLENCE MOSTLY OCCURS BETWEEN VILLAGES WHOSE COMMUNITIES KNOW EACH OTHER, ARE RELATED, OR HAVE LINKS OF SOME SORT. IT IS NOT RANDOM SLAUGHTER OF UNKNOWN PEOPLE. IT IS OFTEN A RITUAL EXCHANGE, POSITIVELY OF WOMEN, AND NEGATIVELY OF HEADS. IT IS RECIPROCAL BETWEEN THE VILLAGES AND CARRIED OUT WITH CEREMONY. CULTURALLY TO THE NAGAS, CO-OPERATION AND HOSTILITY WERE NOT SO VERY DIFFERENT. IN 1873 H H GODWIN-AUSTEN NOTED IN HIS JOURNAL THAT: 'A SORT OF DEBIT AND CREDIT ACCOUNT IN LIVES GOES ON YEAR AFTER YEAR'.