Finch & Co



EAST AFRICAN BURUNDI TUTSI PEOPLES ARCHER'S WOODEN WRIST GUARD

A RARE EAST AFRICAN BURUNDI TUTSI PEOPLES ARCHER'S WOODEN WRIST GUARD ORNAMENTED WITH TINY PIECES OF COPPER POUNDED INTO THE SURFACE TO FORM A DELICATE DESIGN

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 10.5CM HIGH, 11.5CM WIDE, 6CM DEEP - 4 INS HIGH, 4½ WIDE, 2¼ INS DEEP / 15.5CM HIGH - 6 INS HIGH (ON BASE)

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LITERATURE

THESE ARCHERS WOODEN BRACERS OR WRIST GUARDS WERE WORN TO PROTECT THE WRIST FROM THE RECOIL OF THE BOWSTRING, BUT IT APPEARS THAT THESE WARRIORS BELONGED TO AN ELITE FORCE. THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM IN WASHINGTON D.C. HAS AN EXAMPLE WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS BEING 'VERY RARE' AND IT IS SAID THAT THERE ARE FEW EXTANT EXAMPLES. AS THEY HAVE BEEN SO CAREFULLY AND SKILFULLY CRAFTED, THEY WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY MADE FOR MEN OF HIGH RANK. A PHOTOGRAPH CONTAINED IN RENÉ COLLART'S 'BURUNDI: TRENTE ANS D'HISTOIRE EN PHOTO'S 1900 - 1930' SHOWS A ROYAL TUTSI FAMILY WITH MEMBERS WEARING SIMILAR WRIST GUARDS DECORATED WITH COPPER INLAYS.

PROVENANCE

EX BELGIAN PRIVATE COLLECTION

CF: A SIMILAR EXAMPLE IS IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART WASHINGTON D.C. INV: 93-18-1