

ETHNOGRAPHICA

1.

TRANS-DANUBIAN  
MIRROR-CASES

ARRANGED BY

LÁSZLÓ MADARASSY

BUDAPEST

PUBLISHED BY THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

1932

*Anthrop. Qu.*  
*163.*

MONUMENTA HUNGARIAE ETHNOLOGICA

A. ETHNOGRAPHICA



# TRANS-DANUBIAN MIRROR-CASES

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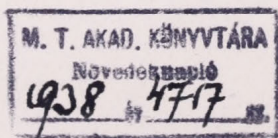
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TRANS-DANUBIAN  
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ARRANGED BY  
YVES MAGAM CIRZAI



MEMBERS OF THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

PRINTED BY FRANKLIN-SOCIETY BUDAPEST



The Ethnographical Commission was established by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1929. At first the Commission planned the issue of a publication to comprise the material and intellectual products of the Hungarian popular mind. This publication has been started now under the title of «Monumenta Hungariae Ethnologica», of which the first *A*) Ethnographica endeavours to illustrate by exact reproductions the monuments of ethnography. The projected *B*) series will contain the intellectual products of Hungarian folk-lore.

The Ethnographical Commission has appointed an editorial committee for the preparation of the first series of the «Monumenta Hungariae Ethnologica». Members of this committee are: Mr. Sigismund Bátky, Mr. Stephen Györffy, Prof. Bálint Hóman and Count Stephen Zichy.

According to the scheme of the editorial committee the publication is to appear in serial numbers (paper covers) and each number is complete in itself and to form an independent unit.

The object of Series *A*) of Monumenta Hungariae Ethnologica is to preserve the still remaining material monuments of Hungarian ethnography and to render them accessible for the purposes of scientific study. On the other hand it desires to acquaint the Hungarian and foreign public with the manifestations of Hungarian folk-art, and to maintain the Hungarian rights of ownership (copyright) of such subjects as reflect the ancient culture, soul and handwork of the Hungarian people — this referring naturally to the whole nation, including our racial brethren beyond the present political frontiers.

*The Editorial Committee.*





The Transdanubian *mirror-case* (tükrös) is a flat box encasing a mirror; the box being mostly made of wood the mirror-case is also called mirror-wood. The mirror-case is a small, light object to be carried about in the tied sleeve of a frieze-coat, in a wallet or in some pocket among little things used every day. The purpose of the mirror-case in the field or pasture is to serve as a mirror for its owner to twirl his moustache. For this purpose there is a Hungarian pomade-case in the frame. In the homestead or in the village the mirror-case serves as a shaving-mirror. But the well-to-do, purse-proud shepherd or farmer has in his home a separate shaving-mirror, which is larger, and has a stand or some kind of drawer.

The mirror-frames shown within have been carved and used by Transdanubian shepherds, mostly by those living near Lake Balaton. The mirror-case of square form have mostly a sliding cover, and the mirror is fixed with wax to the lower part. Some mirror-lids have an ingenious mechanism the opening of which requires special skill and much patience.

The mirror-case is generally made of the knotless dry wood of the spindletree or maple, which sometimes takes weeks of patient and careful work; the carving-tool is mostly a simple penknife used for outdoor meals. When the box and closing mechanism of the mirror-case have been finished, the maker proceeds to ornament the flat parts of the bottom and the cover. The outlines of the ornamentation are first marked with a punch or point of a knife. Where the ornament is a simple etching it is thrown into relief by the whole pattern being rubbed with grease, with a mixture of burnt and crushed walnut and oil, with soot mixed with tallow, with graphite or with gunpowder, so that the etchings become filled, and after the planing of the object remain black. When the decoration is effected by the pouring in or inlaying of a coloured material the etchings are widened into broader lines. (The sides of the lines are somewhat hollowed to enable them better retain the colouring material.) Tin is poured in the lines, or sealing wax is pressed in with the red-hot blade of a knife. After the inlaying the whole object is polished with horse-tail grass or with a piece of glass in order to even the rough surface caused by the pouring in or inlaying. When decorating the lid with relief-like carving, the edges of the partition lines are rounded off.

The mirror-case acquires its real colour and patina by being exposed to the weather and by wear; where it is desired to produce the same effect by artificial means, vegetable dyes, nitric acid, or blue are used, and at last the whole object is covered with



linseed oil, beeswax or shellac to make it shiny. In consequence of the declining of pastoral life and the change in folk-tales, the making of the mirror-cases is going out of fashion. The greater part of the material shown in our publication was made in the second half of last century and collected during the last forty years. Where no collection-title is given before the inventory number, the article in question is in the Ethnographical Collection of the Hungarian National Museum.



## LIST AND THE MOST IMPORTANT DATA OF THE OBJECTS SHOWN.

The name of common and county after the naming of the object means the place where it was found.  
Inv. No.: Inventory number the object bears in the Ethnographical Section of the Hungarian National Museum.

1. *Mirror-case, top part.* Mernye, Somogy County. Inv. No.: 16,494. Dated: 1885. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
2. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Mernye, Somogy County. Inv. No.: 16,516. Dated: 1881. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
3. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Somogy County. Inv. No.: 16,500. Dated: 1865. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
4. *Top part of No. 3.*
5. *Mirror-case.* Magyargencs, Vas County. Inv. No.: 114,965. Dated: 1840. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
6. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Erdősokonya, Somogy County. In the Museum of Agriculture, Budapest. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
7. *Top part of No. 6.*
8. *Mirror-case, top part.* Transdanubia. Inv. No. missing. Dated: 1843. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
9. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Erdősokonya, Somogy County. Inv. No.: 95,133. With inlaid work of various-coloured sealing-wax.
10. *Top part of No. 9.*
11. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Somogy County. Inv. No.: 15,418. Inscription: 861 A G 17. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
12. *Top part of No. 11.*
13. *Mirror-case, top part.* Somogy County. Inv. No.: 16,492. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
14. *Bottom part of No. 13.*
15. *Mirror-case, top part.* Rézeskut, Veszprém County. In the Veszprém County Museum. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
16. *The inner side of the top part of No. 15.*
17. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Transdanubia. In the Museum of Agriculture, Budapest. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
18. *Top part of No. 17.*
19. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Kisbajom, Somogy County. Inv. No.: 59,292. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
20. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Somogy County. Inv. No.: 16,491. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
21. *Top part of No. 20.*
22. *Shaving-Mirror, the mirror side.* Nagylózs, Sopron County. Inv. No.: 11,497. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
23. *Mirror-case, top part.* Somogy County. In the Museum of Agriculture, Budapest. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
24. *Bottom part of No. 23.*
25. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Lengyeltóti, County of Somogy. Inv. No.: 13,526. Etched ornamentation with tallowy soot.
26. *Top part of No. 25.*



27. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Transdanubia. Inv. No. missing. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
28. *Top part of No. 27.*
29. *Mirror-case, top part.* Somogy County. Inv. No. : 16,520. Dated : 1878. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
30. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Somogy County. Inv. No. : 16,491. Inscription. Dated : 1888. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
31. *Top part of No. 30.*
32. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Berzence, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 33,981. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
33. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Gyömöre, Győr County. Inv. No. : 69,180. With inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
34. *Top part of No. 33.*
35. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Mernye, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 16,503. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
36. *Top part of No. 35.*
37. *Mirror-case.* Mernye, Somogy County. In the Museum of Agriculture, Budapest. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
38. *Top part of No. 37.*
39. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Mernye, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 16,517. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
40. *Top part of No. 39.*
41. *Mirror-case.* Veszprém County. In the Veszprém County Museum. Ornamented with embossed carving, polished a yellowish-brown colour.
42. *Top part of No. 41.*
43. *Mirror-case, top part.* Zala County. Balaton-Museum, Keszthely. Embossed carving, polished dark brown.
44. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Szentgál, Veszprém County. Inv. No. : 101,307. Embossed carving, polished yellowish brown.
45. *Top part of No. 44.*
46. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Középiszkár, Veszprém County. Inv. No. : 16,506. Inscription. Dated : 1895. Embossed carving, polished yellow.
47. *Top part of No. 46.*
48. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Sümeg, Zala County. Inv. No. : 69,478. Dated : 1886. Embossed carving, polished brown.
49. *Top part of No. 48.*
50. *Inner side of mirror-case Fig. 48.* with mirror.
51. *Inner side of top part of mirror-case* shown in Fig. 48., with Hungarian pomade holder.
52. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Jánosháza, Vas County. Inv. No. : 101,337. Embossed carving. Polished dark brown.
53. *Top part of No. 52.*
54. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Veszprém County. Inv. No. : 103,767. Embossed carving. Polished yellowish brown.
55. *Top part of No. 54.*
56. *Mirror-case, top part.* Transdanubia. Inv. No. missing. Inlaid work in red sealing-wax.
57. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Zala County. Inv. No. : 48,970. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
58. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Szentgál, Veszprém County. Inv. No. : 101,309. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
59. *Top part of mirror-case* shown in Fig. 57.
60. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Mernye, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 33,985. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
61. *Top part of No. 60.*
62. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Drave district, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 2578. Inscription. Dated : 1888. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.



63. *Mirror-case, top part.* Somogy County. Inv. No. : 119,967. Etched ornamentation filled with tallowy soot.
64. *Bottom part of No. 63.*
65. *Mirror-case, bottom part.* Szill, Somogy County. Inv. No. : 59,225. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
66. *Bottom part of No. 65.*
67. *Bottom part of mirror-case shown in Fig. 5.*
68. *Shaving-mirror, back side.* Süttör, Sopron County. Inv. No. : 102,110. Inscription. Dated : 1866. Inlaid work in various-coloured sealing-wax.
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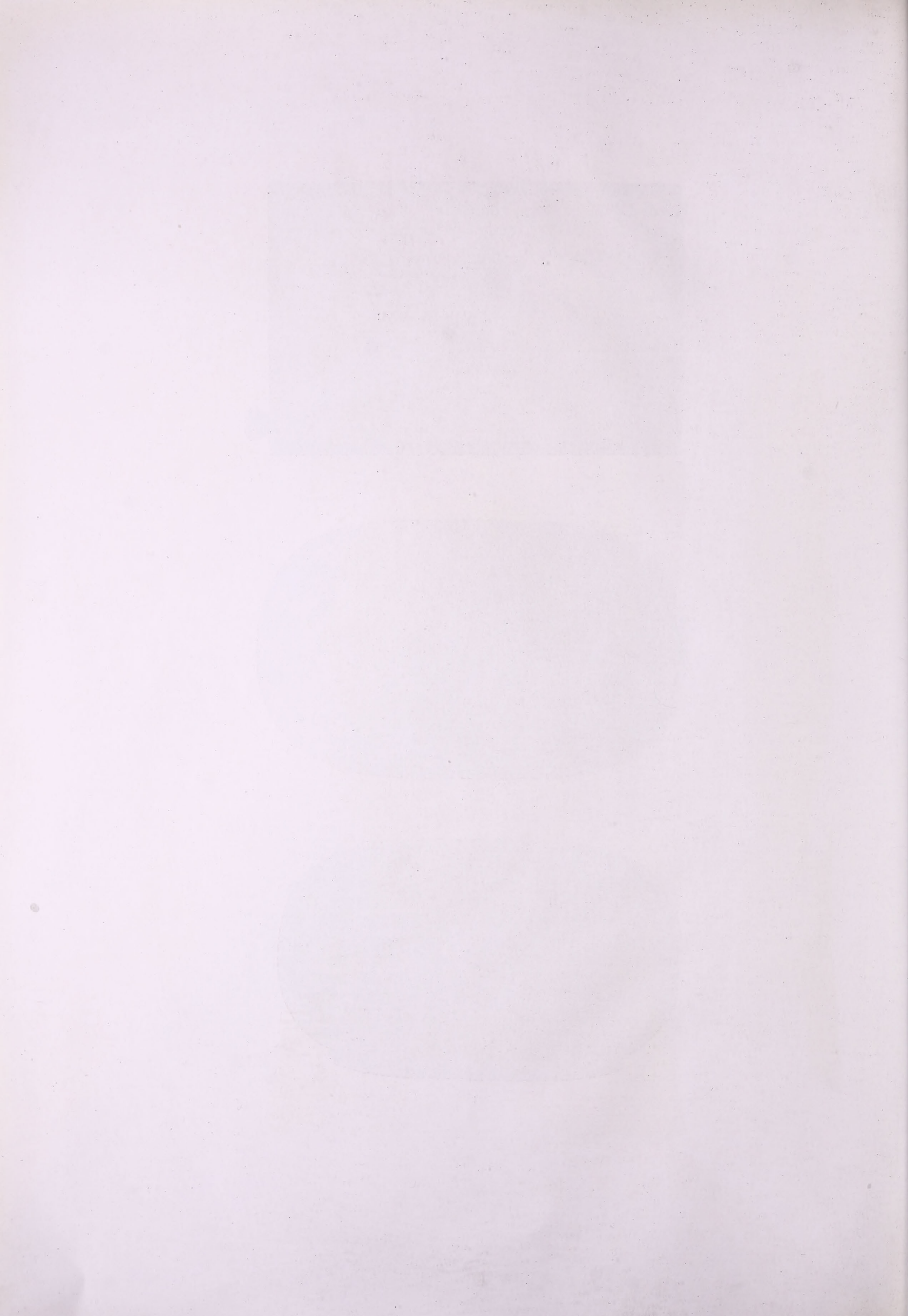


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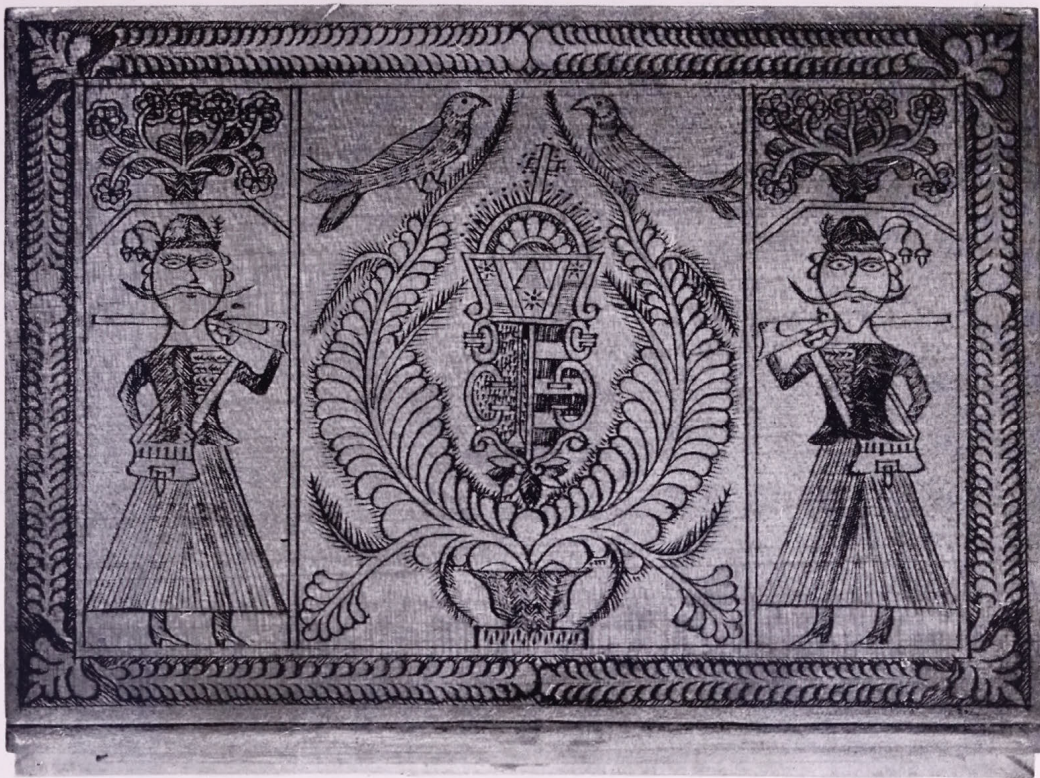












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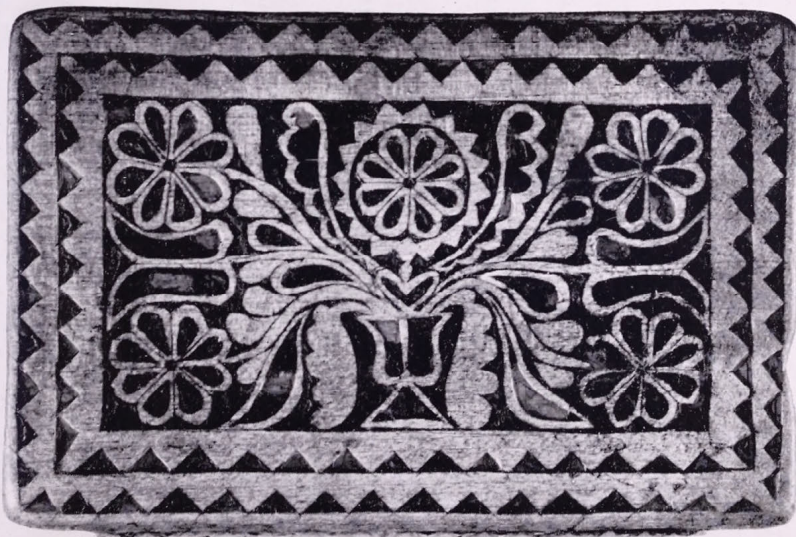




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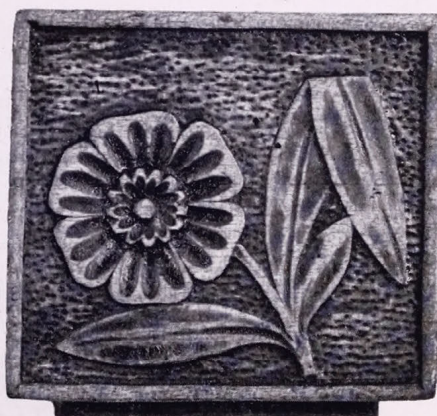
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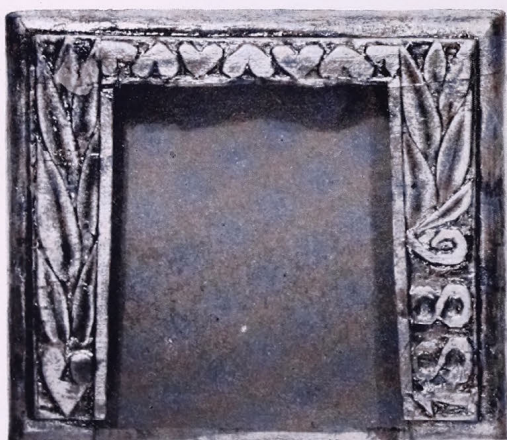
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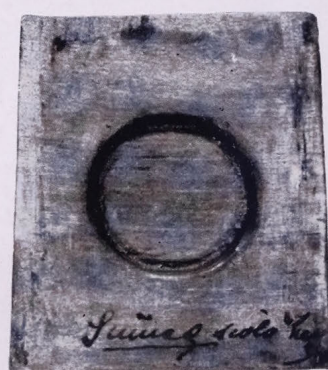
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