



Gov. Hahl North Coast Headrest

A very rare headrest decorated with large ancestor masks at the extremities. The underside of the bar is deeply carved with a complex open-work design. The two powerfully carved heads at the extremities of the neck bar are carved in an expressive almost cubistic manner. The small head terminates at the chin with a stylized zoomorphic head. The ancestors both wear complex nose ornaments typical of the outlying islands off the North Coast. Their faces have open-work decorative elements around their outer edge as if portraying their beards. Bits of trade cloth are threaded through these lodgings. The legs of bent ratan are strapped together with thin bands of ratan.

North Coast area (Murik Lakes & Schouten Islands included), Lower Sepik, PNG, Melanesia. Hard wood with traces of pigment, ratan, cane and red colonial trade-cloth with a fine patina of age and usage. 50 x 13 cm. 19th/20th century.