

String and belt wampum, ca. 1890

Share it now!

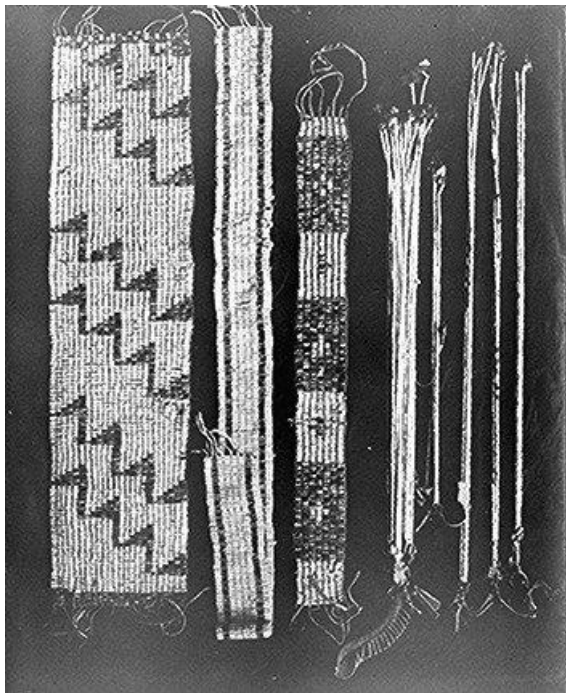


String and belt wampum, ca. 1890

Circa 1890 photograph of string and belt wampum. "Wampum" means "white shell" in the Algonquin language family spoken by several tribes. Wampum consists of cylindrical beads made from the ends of shells rubbed down, polished, and threaded on strings. Each intricate wampum bead could take as much as a day to create, and many were combined to form bracelets, belts, collars, and more. "Belt" refers to the shape of the item, not the purpose -- they were not worn as we would wear a belt today.

Wampum were traded amongst native tribes (and later European settlers) and often used to visually represent important events or stories. They were not used as currency until European settlers arrived.

See this entry on Ohio History Central for more information about Wampum belts: http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Wampum_Belt



Citation (Chicago Style):

"String and belt wampum, ca. 1890." American Indian Select List number 16, Native American Photographs, National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/select-list-016.html>

Available at:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/select-list-...>

Read the related article: Dashed Hopes for the Frontier
Usage Statement:

Public Domain

Public Domain is a copyright term that is often used when talking about copyright for creative works. Under U.S. copyright law, individual items that are in the public domain are items that are no longer protected by copyright law. This means that you do not need to request permission to re-use, re-publish or even change a copy of the item. Items enter the public domain under U.S. copyright law for a number of reasons: the original copyright may have expired; the item was created by the U.S. Federal Government or other governmental entity that views the things it creates as in the public domain; the

work was never protected by copyright for some other reason related to how it was produced (for example, it was a speech that wasn't written down or recorded); or the work doesn't have enough originality to make it eligible for copyright protection.

Source URL: <https://www.ncpedia.org/media/wampum>