

Finch & C^o



A RARE VICTORIAN SPAR BOX CONSISTING OF BLACK ZINC ORE, QUARTZ AND FLUORSPAR

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CIRCA 1870 – 1880

SIZE: 47CM HIGH, 54.5CM WIDE, 13CM DEEP – 18½ INS HIGH, 21½ INS WIDE, 5 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THESE UNUSUAL, AND CURIOUS SPAR BOXES WERE MADE BY VICTORIAN LEAD MINERS FROM THE MINERAL CRYSTALS THEY OCCASIONALLY FOUND IN CAVITIES AS THEY LABORIOUSLY WORKED THE SEAMS OF LEAD ORE.

THE NORTH PENNINES WAS THE CENTRE OF A VAST LEAD MINING COMMUNITY IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, AND THE MAKING OF SPAR BOXES AND TOWERS BECAME AN ORGANISED AND COMPETITIVE PASTIME. COMPETITIONS WERE HELD IN THE TOWN HALLS OF THE AREA AND PRIZES WERE AWARDED FOR THE SPAR BOXES AND TOWERS JUDGED TO BE THE BEST AND MOST ELABORATE. A SELECTION CAN STILL BE SEEN IN THE KILLHOPE LEAD MINING MUSEUM IN UPPER WEARDALE.