

Finch & C^o



A VERY FINE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CHURINGA 19TH CENTURY

A VERY FINE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CHURINGA WITH SUPERB PATINA
19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 42 CMLONG X 5 CM WIDE
16 INS LONG X 2 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

A CHURINGA IS A SACRED OBJECT WHICH REPRESENTS THE ANCESTRAL AND THE INDIVIDUAL SPIRIT OF ITS OWNER. THE ANGULAR MEANDER PATTERN ON THIS EXAMPLE IS SPECIFIC TO THE AREA OF BROOME AND THE WESTERN KIMBERLEYS. THEY CAN VARY IN HEIGHT FROM A FEW INCHES TO SEVENTEEN FEET, THE LARGEST BEING KNOWN AS 'DANCING BOARDS'. A CHARACTERISTIC FEATURE OF SOME WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CHURINGAS IS THE DECORATION OF THEIR UPPER SURFACE WITH INCISED DESIGNS, WHILST THE REVERSE REMAINS PLAIN AS IN THIS EXAMPLE. CHURINGAS ARE MANUFACTURED WITH GREAT CARE AND ENGRAVED BY MEANS OF POSSUM TEETH. ALL OF THE CONVENTIONAL DESIGNS HAVE SYMBOLIC MEANING AND RECORD LEGENDS, THE VARIOUS SYMBOLS HELPING A MAN WHO KNOWS THE LEGEND TO RECITE IT CORRECTLY.