

# *Finch & C<sup>o</sup>*



## **A RARE LIMOGES APPLIQUÉ RELIEF FIGURE OF THE VIRGIN MARY**

A RARE LIMOGES APPLIQUÉ RELIEF FIGURE OF THE VIRGIN MARY

CHAMPLEVÉ ENAMEL ON COPPER WITH TRACES OF GILT

1ST HALF OF 13TH CENTURY

SIZE : 12 CM HIGH, 3 CM WIDE, 1.5 CM DEEP – 4¾ INS HIGH, 1¼ INS WIDE, ½ INS DEEP

## **LITERATURE**

THIS BEAUTIFUL EARLY ENAMELLED SMALL SCULPTURE WAS ONCE FIXED BY RIVETS TO A CHURCH RELIQUARY CHASSE AND FORMED PART OF A CRUCIFIXION SCENE. THE VIRGIN IS SHOWN WITH HER ARMS BENT, AND GRASPING HER LEFT WRIST WITH HER RIGHT HAND IN THE BYZANTINE GESTURE OF SUSTAINED SORROW.

IT IS THROUGH IMAGES THAT MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN ART WAS ABLE TO MAKE TANGIBLE THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH. IN THE 6TH CENTURY SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT (540 – 604 AD) A POPE, DECLARED 'ONE THING IS THE ADORATION OF AN IMAGE, ANOTHER THING IS TO LEARN WHAT TO ADORE FROM THE STORY RENDERED BY THE IMAGE. FOR WHAT SCRIPTURE TEACHES THOSE WHO READ, THIS SAME IMAGE SHOWS TO THOSE WHO CANNOT READ BUT SEE; BECAUSE IN IT EVEN THE IGNORANT SEE WHOM THEY OUGHT TO FOLLOW, IN THE IMAGE THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW LETTERS ARE ABLE TO READ'.