

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



## AN INTERESTING TOPOGRAPHICAL GOUACHE OF THE DUTCH COLONY OF SURINAM

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WITH DUTCH NAVAL SHIPPING AT ANCHOR OFF THE COAST, A CARIB AMERINDIAN CHIEF, DISTINGUISHED BY HIS FEATHER  
DECORATION, AND HIS TRIBE GREETING THE EUROPEANS. THE TRIBAL VILLAGE SHOWN ON SHORE  
GOUACHE HEIGHTENED WITH WHITE ON PAPER  
EARLY 19TH CENTURY  
SIZE: 29 CM HIGH, 42 CM WIDE – 11½ INS HIGH, 16½ INS WIDE

## LITERATURE

BY 1600 BRITISH AND DUTCH NAVIGATORS HAD EXPLORED THE ENTIRE GUIANA COAST FROM THE ORINOCO TO THE  
AMAZON. SURINAM WAS SETTLED BY THE ENGLISH IN THE 17TH CENTURY AND BECAME A DUTCH COLONY IN 1667. IT WAS  
VALUED SOLELY FOR ITS SUGAR PLANTATIONS. SLAVES WERE ORIGINALLY BROUGHT FROM GUINEA AND ANGOLA TO  
WORK IN THE PLANTATIONS, BUT WITH THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN 1863 WORKERS WERE THEN BROUGHT IN FROM  
INDIA AND JAVA. EVENTUALLY SURINAM SUFFERED THROUGH ITS OVER DEPENDENCE ON A SINGLE CROP AND THE  
SHORT TERM PROFITEERING OF THE PLANTERS SERIOUSLY IMPEDED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.  
MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN ( 1647-1717 ) ARTIST AND NATURALIST SPENT TWO YEARS IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY SURINAM  
STUDYING AND PAINTING. SHE WOULD ALWAYS CONSULT AND USE AMERINDIAN GUIDES TO FIND PLANTS AND INSECTS  
IN THE FOREST. HER DESCRIPTION OF THE PEACOCK FLOWER IN HER BOOK 'METAMORPHOSIS INSECTORUM  
SURINAMENSIS' INCLUDES THIS SYMPATHETIC OBSERVATION: 'THE SEEDS OF THIS PLANT ARE USED BY WOMEN WHO  
HAVE LABOUR PAINS AND WHO MUST CONTINUE TO WORK, DESPITE THEIR PAIN. THE INDIANS, WHO ARE NOT TREATED  
WELL WHEN IN SERVICE TO THE DUTCH, USE IT TO ABORT THEIR CHILDREN SO THAT THEIR CHILDREN SHOULD NOT  
BECOME SLAVES AS THEY ARE. THE BLACK SLAVES FROM GUINEA AND ANGOLA MUST BE TREATED BENIGNLY,  
OTHERWISE THEY PRODUCE NO CHILDREN IN THIS THEIR STATE OF SLAVERY. IN FACT, THEY EVEN KILL THEMSELVES ON  
ACCOUNT OF THE USUAL HARSH TREATMENT METED OUT TO THEM, AND BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL BE  
BORN AGAIN FREE AND LIVING IN THEIR OWN LAND. THEY TOLD ME THIS THEMSELVES'.