

Finch & C^o



WEST AFRICAN BENIN CARVED COCONUT CONTAINER

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AN OLD LABEL STATING 'CARVED COCONUT BASKET BENIN NATIVES'

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 14CM HIGH, 10CM DIA – 5½ INS HIGH, 4 INS DIA

LITERATURE

THE KINGDOM OF BENIN PROPER CONSISTED OF THE CAPITAL CITY AND SEVERAL HUNDRED VILLAGERS. THESE RANGED IN SIZE FROM THE SMALLEST OF ABOUT 300 OR 400 INHABITANTS, TO THE LARGEST OF UP TO 4000 WHO MAINLY GREW YAMS AS THEIR PRIMARY SOURCE OF FOOD. BENIN CITY LIES 250 KILOMETERS EAST OF LAGOS ON A SANDY PLAIN IN THE MIDDLE OF A TROPICAL RAIN FOREST OF WESTERN NIGERIA. THE PLAIN IS CROSSED BY NUMEROUS SMALL RIVERS AND STREAMS FLOWING SOUTH TOWARD THE RIM OF THE NIGER DELTA. THE CLIMATE OF THIS TROPICAL FOREST REGION IS WARM AND HUMID AND IDEAL FOR GROWING COCONUTS.