

Finch & C^o



ANCIENT NORTHERN BRITISH CELTIC GNEISS STONE FEMALE FIGURE OF A GODDESS

A RARE ANCIENT NORTHERN BRITISH CELTIC GNEISS STONE FEMALE FIGURE OF A GODDESS, PERHAPS
BRIGANTIA

THE LARGE HEAD WITH CHARACTERISTICALLY CELTIC OVAL EYES AN UPTURNED SLIT MOUTH A CROWN
OF HAIR THE RUDIMENTARY BODY WITH SMALL ARMS AND TINY HANDS GESTURING TOWARDS HER
ABDOMEN

2ND - 3RD CENTURY AD

SIZE: 64CM HIGH, 19.5CM WIDE, 12CM DEEP – 25¼ INS HIGH, 7¾ INS WIDE, 4¾ INS DEEP

SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 13, ITEM NO. 124, FOR AN ANCIENT NORTHERN BRITISH CELTIC STONE
HEAD

CF: A CELTIC FEMALE HEAD OF SIMILAR FORM FOUND IN DUMFRIES SAID TO REPRESENT A LOCAL
GODDESS. ILLUSTRATED IN TOYNBEE, 1952 J.R.S. XLII PG 63-5

LITERATURE

GNEISS, FROM THE GERMAN WORD MEANING 'EYES', IS A FOLIATED METAMORPHIC ROCK IN WHICH THE
COARSE QUARTZ OR FELDSPAR MINERAL GRAINS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED INTO A BANDED STRUCTURE.
MOST OF THE OUTER HEBRIDES IN SCOTLAND HAS BEDROCK FORMED OF LEWISIAN GNEISS AND THE
PREHISTORIC STONE CIRCLE AT CALLANISH IS CONSTRUCTED OF IT.

THE CELTIC GODDESS WAS AT ONCE MOTHER, WARRIOR, VIRGIN, HAG, CONVEYOR OF FERTILITY AND OF
STRONG SEXUAL APPETITE WHICH LED HER TO SEEK MATES AMONGST BOTH MANKIND AND THE GODS,
GIVER OF PROSPERITY TO THE LAND AND PROTECTRESS OF THE FLOCKS AND HERDS. SHE WAS MORE
STATIC AND ARCHAIC THAN THE MALE GODS AND SO REMAINED TIED LOCALLY TO THE LAND FOR WHICH
SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE AND WHOSE STRIKING NATURAL FEATURES SEEMED TO HER WORSHIPPERS TO
BE MANIFESTATIONS OF HER POWER AND PERSONALITY. WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER VENERATED AS

DEITIES THEY BECAME CONVERTED INTO LOCAL NYMPHS, GUARDIANS OF POOLS AND WELLS, OR GREAT SUPERNATURAL HAGS HAUNTING MOUNTAIN PASSES OR DRIVING THEIR DEER OVER HILLS, CONFERRING BENEFITS OR EVILS ON HUMANITY AS THEY SAW FIT.

WHEN CHRISTIANITY EVENTUALLY DISPLACED THE OLD CELTIC REGION MANY OF THE CELTIC PAGAN GODS AND GODDESSES REMAINED TRACEABLE IN THE CHARACTERS OF THE LOCAL SAINTS AND IN THE SPIRITS OF INDIVIDUAL LOCALITIES.