

Finch & C^o



PAPUAN NEW GUINEA KAMBOT KERAM RIVER JANUS HEADED FIGURAL WOODEN HOUSE POST

A PAPUA NEW GUINEA LOWER SEPIK REGION KERAM RIVER KAMBOT PEOPLES FIGURAL WOODEN MEN'S CEREMONIAL HOUSE POST CARVED IN THE ROUND WITH TWO ANCESTOR SPIRITS WITH PROTRUDING TONGUES AND SIX STYLISED CROCODILES

TRACES OF DECORATION IN RED OCHRE AND WHITE CLAY

OLD COLLECTION NUMBER: '253'

CIRCA 1900-1910

SIZE: 86CM HIGH - 34 INS HIGH

LITERATURE

ALTHOUGH IN THE MIDDLE AND LOWER SEPIK REGIONS WOMEN ARE VALUED AND ESTEEMED, AND HOLD A GREAT INFLUENCE OVER DAILY LIFE, THEY ARE ALMOST NEVER INVOLVED IN A CEREMONIAL CONTEXT. THE LARGE SQUARE IN THE CENTRE OF EACH VILLAGE IS A MAJOR SYMBOLIC AXIS WHERE ONE TO THREE CEREMONIAL HOUSES STAND WHICH ARE ENTIRELY RESERVED FOR INITIATED MEN. THESE 'MEN'S HOUSES' ARE WHERE THE ANCESTORS LIVE IN A TIME AND WORLD OF THEIR OWN, AND REPRESENT THE CENTRE OF ALL RITUAL AND POLITICAL POWER. IT IS WHERE ALL ADULT MALES INTERACT, AND ARE ORGANISED INTO GROUPS ACCORDING TO AGE AND INITIATION. IT WAS ONLY IN 1886 THAT THE FIRST EUROPEANS TRAVELLED UP THE SEPIK RIVER AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA BECAME KNOWN AS 'KAISER WILHELMSLAND'.