Finch & Co



RARE EARLY ENGLISH MARINE IVORY LOTTERY OR TEETOTUM GAMBLING BALL

A RARE EARLY ENGLISH MARINE IVORY LOTTERY OR TEETOTUM GAMBLING BALL CARVED ON 24 SIDES WITH NUMBERS 1 TO 24

OLD SMOOTH CREAMY PATINA

LATE 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 4.5CM DIA. - 1¾ INS DIA.

LITERATURE

LOTTERIES FIRST BEGAN TO BE AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF GAMBLING IN THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH I. IN 1568-69 THE GOVERNMENT NEEDED TO QUICKLY RAISE A SUBSTANTIAL SUM OF MONEY FOR URGENT REPAIRS TO THE HARBOURS AND COASTAL FORTIFICATIONS OF ENGLAND IN ORDER TO REPEL THE THREATENED SEABORNE INVASION FROM THE SPANISH. SUCCESSIVE ACTS OF PARLIAMENT THEN ESTABLISHED LOTTERIES AS A LEGITIMATE MEANS OF INCREASING REVENUE AND OVER TIME THEY BECAME A LUCRATIVE SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT INCOME.

UNLIKE SPINNING DICE, TEETOTUM BALLS GIVE THE GAMBLER MORE OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN, BECAUSE WHEN THROWN THE FACETED NUMBERED SIDES OF A BALL GIVE AN EQUAL CHANCE OF ANY NUMBER TURNING UP.