Finch & Co



ANCIENT ROMAN MARBLE HEAD FROM A DIONYSIAN HERM

AN ANCIENT ROMAN MARBLE HEAD FROM A DIONYSIAN HERM DEPICTING BACCHUS THE GOD OF WINE HIS HAIR ENTWINED WITH IVY LEAVES AND BERRIES

2ND - 3RD CENTURY AD

SIZE: 13CM HIGH, 10CM WIDE, 5.5CM DEEP - 5 INS HIGH, 4 INS WIDE, 2¼ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THE ROMANS BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH THE VINE THROUGH THE ETRUSCANS WHO BROUGHT IT WITH THEM FROM ASIA MINOR. OVER TIME BACCHUS BECAME THE GOD OF VITICULTURE AND WINE, THE JOY OF MORTAL MEN AND THE SAP OF LIFE. AT FIRST WINE WAS REGARDED AS AN ARTICLE OF LUXURY AND WAS LIMITED IN ITS USE, BUT BY THE 1ST CENTURY AD THERE WERE OVER 80 FAMOUS BRANDS IN THE ROMAN TRADE AND NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF THESE WERE GROWN IN ITALY. THREE SORTS OF WINE WERE MADE DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR COLOUR; BLACK OR DARK RED WHICH WAS CONSIDERED THE STRONGEST, WHITE WHICH WAS THOUGHT THIN AND WEAK, AND BROWN OR AMBER WHICH WAS CONSIDERED GOOD FOR PROMOTING DIGESTION. THE WINE OFTEN RETAINED MUCH SEDIMENT AND IN ORDER TO MAKE IT CLEAR, IT WAS STRAINED THROUGH A CLOTH OR SIEVE WHICH WAS SOMETIMES FILLED WITH SNOW TO MAKE IT COOL AND REFRESHING. BOTH THE GREEKS AND ROMANS GENERALLY DRANK THEIR WINE MIXED WITH WATER.