

# Finch & C<sup>o</sup>



## **THAI 'SIAM' CARVED IVORY EFFIGY FIGURE OF THE DEITY 'KUMAN TONG'**

A THAI 'SIAM' CARVED IVORY EFFIGY FIGURE OF THE DEITY 'KUMAN TONG' A PROTECTIVE HOUSEHOLD SHRINE FIGURE  
TRADITIONALLY DEPICTED AS A YOUNG BOY 'THE GOLDEN GHOST BOY'  
INSCRIBED IN BLACK INK TO REVERSE: 'SIAM BT WEBSTER OCT 1897 P.'

W.D. WEBSTER (1868 - 1913) WAS A DEALER WHO IMPORTANTLY WAS THE FIRST TO PRODUCE ILLUSTRATED  
CATALOGUES OF HIS SELLING STOCK

MOUNTED ON A PITT RIVERS BASE INSCRIBED IN YELLOW 'SIAM'

LIEUTENANT GENERAL AUGUSTUS LANE HENRY FOX PITT RIVERS (1827 - 1900) WAS A PASSIONATE COLLECTOR WHO  
FORMED A REMARKABLE COLLECTION MUCH OF WHICH CAN BE SEEN IN THE MUSEUM THAT BEARS HIS NAME IN OXFORD  
HOWEVER MANY OBJECTS WERE SOLD FROM THE COLLECTION HOUSED IN DORSET BY BOTH SOTHEBYS AND  
CHRISTIES DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

FIRST HALF 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 14CM HIGH, 4.5CM WIDE, 2.5CM DEEP - 5½ INS HIGH, 1¾ INS WIDE, 1 INS DEEP / 17CM HIGH - 6¾ INS HIGH (WITH  
BASE)

## **LITERATURE**

THE 'GOLDEN GHOST BOY' IS BELIEVED TO BRING GOOD LUCK AND FORTUNE TO THE HOUSE AND ITS OWNER PROVIDED  
THAT HE IS PROPERLY REVERED AND DISPLAYED. ALTHOUGH NOT PART OF TRADITIONAL BUDDHIST BELIEFS AND  
PRACTICES THE 'KUMAN TONG' AS A TUTELARY DEITY HAS BEEN POPULAR IN THAILAND SINCE ANCIENT TIMES. THESE  
EFFIGIES WERE ORIGINALLY OBTAINED BY SHAMAN FROM THE DESICCATED FOETUSES OF BABIES WHO HAD DIED WITHIN  
THE WOMB. THE SHAMAN WOULD PAINT THE DRY BODIES OF THE KUMAN WITH 'YALAK' A KIND OF LACQUER USED TO  
COAT AMULETS, AND THEN COVER THEM IN GOLD LEAF. HENCE THE TERM 'KUMAN TONG' MEANING 'LITTLE GOLDEN BOY'.