Finch & Co



A RARE SUPERB LARGE AND EXCEPTIONALLY LONG BLOND RHINOCEROS HORN PRESTIGE STAFF OF OFFICE

A RARE SUPERB LARGE AND EXCEPTIONALLY LONG BLOND RHINOCEROS HORN PRESTIGE STAFF OF OFFICE FOR A NORTHERN NGUNI OR KWAZULU-NATAL ZULU CHIEF CARVED WITH AN UNUSUAL OCTAGONAL KNOP
FINE SMOOTH SILKY LUSTROUS HONEY COLOURED PATINA
MID 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 90.5CM LONG - 35½ INS LONG / HEAD: 8CM HIGH, 7.5CM DIA.(MAX) - 3¼ INS HIGH, 3 INS DIA. (MAX)

LITERATURE

KNOBKERRIES OR STAFFS CARVED OF RHINOCEROS HORN WERE RESERVED FOR USE BY CHIEFS AS SYMBOLS OF STATUS AND PERSONAL DIGNITY. USED AS PRESTIGE ITEMS IN A CHIEF'S REGALIA, STAFFS OF THIS LENGTH IN RHINOCEROS HORN WERE RARE EVEN IN THE 19TH CENTURY WHEN THERE WERE GREATER NUMBERS OF WHITE RHINOS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. AS EVIDENCED IN 1844 WHEN THE SCOTTISH BIG GAME HUNTER ROUALEYN GORDON-CUMMING OBTAINED A LONG RHINOCEROS HORN IN EXCHANGE FOR A CUP OF GUNPOWDER FROM CHIEF SEKGOMA, THE LEADER OF THE BAMANGWATO. HE DESCRIBED IT 'AS A MOST WONDERFUL KNOBKERRIE' MADE FROM A 'VERY RARE SPECIES OF THE RHINOCEROS.... ITS CHIEF INTEREST CONSIST IN ITS EXTRAORDINARY LENGTH WHICH GREATLY EXCEEDED ANYTHING I HAD EVER SEEN OF THE KIND BEFORE OR HAVE SINCE MET WITH' (CUMMING LONDON 1850).