Finch & Co



SPANISH JET FACETED OCTAGONAL AMULETIC PENDANT ROSARY BEAD

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AGED POLISHED MIRROR BLACK SURFACE

MINOR CHIPS TO FACETED CORNERS

EARLY 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 3.5CM HIGH, 4.5CM DIA. (MAX) - 1¼ INS HIGH, 1¾ INS DIA.

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LITERATURE

ACCORDING TO THE ROMAN NATURALIST PLINY, JET PREVENTED SNAKE BITE AND WAS 'THROWN UP BY THE SEA'. PILGRIMS TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA OFTEN ACQUIRED MEMENTOES MADE OF JET, A LOCAL MATERIAL BELIEVED TO HAVE POWERFUL AMULETIC QUALITIES AS FROM THE TIME OF THE MIDDLE AGES THE TOWN WAS MAJOR CENTRE OF JET CARVING.

NUNS, NO MATTER HOW WEALTHY, WERE RESTRICTED TO THE HABIT OF THEIR ORDER, WITH THE CISTERCIANS WEARING AN ALMOST COMPLETELY WHITE ROBE. THEIR JEWELS WERE LIMITED TO JET ROSARIES, SOMETIMES WORN AS COLLARS IN SPAIN WHICH STRIKINGLY SET OFF THE WHITE FABRIC. NORMALLY WOMEN OF THE UPPER CLASSES OWNED GOLD, CORAL OR AMBER ROSARIES AND IN CHOOSING JET THE NUNS BELIEVED THEY WERE PERFORMING A KIND OF SELF-DENIAL, CONFINING THE COLOURS THAT THEY WORE TO WHITE AND BLACK.