Finch & Co



**BERING STRAIT ARCTIC THULE ESKIMO BOW DRILL**

A BERING STRAIT ARCTIC THULE ESKIMO BOW DRILL WITH PICTOGRAPHS OF A MAN HUNTING CARIBOU A GROUP OF ANIMALS AND A LONE YOUNG DEER AND TO THE REVERSE A REINDEER FORAGING AND A RUNNING CARIBOU

SMOOTH RICH AND CREAMY PATINA

18TH CENTURY OR EARLIER

SIZE: 35CM LONG, 2CM HIGH, 1CM DEEP - 13¾ INS LONG, ¾ INS HIGH, ¼ INS DEEP

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**LITERATURE**

THESE TINY ENGRAVINGS OR PICTOGRAPHS RESEMBLING EUROPEAN PREHISTORIC CAVE PAINTINGS, ARE UNIQUE IN ESKIMO CULTURE. THEY COMBINE UNUSUAL TECHNIQUE AND ARTISTRY TO PORTRAY IN MINIATURE, SCENES FROM A VAST, STARK AND HARSH ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT. BOW DRILLS WERE USED TO MAKE HOLES OR CREATE A COMBUSTIBLE LEVEL OF HEAT AND WERE GENERALLY FOUND AMONG PEOPLE LIVING NORTH OF NORTON SOUND. TO DRILL A HOLE THE BOW'S THONG IS WRAPPED AROUND THE SHAFT. THE DRILL BIT IS POSITIONED AND OTHER END OF THE SHAFT IS PLACED IN THE SOCKET OF THE MOUTHPIECE WHICH IS GRIPPED IN THE TEETH. WHEN THE BOW IS MOVED FROM SIDE TO SIDE THE SHAFT ROTATES AND DRIVES ITS TIP INTO THE SURFACE OF THE OBJECT BEING DRILLED. THE SPEED AND THE DEPTH OF THE HOLE IS CONTROLLED BY VARYING THE AMOUNT OF PRESSURE BEING EXERTED THROUGH THE DRILL POINT.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CARIBOU, THE SPIRITS OR 'INUA' AND MAN WAS CAREFULLY AND CONTINUOUSLY STRENGTHENED THROUGH RITUAL AND CEREMONIAL ACTIVITY, BECAUSE THE CARIBOU WAS AN IMMENSELY IMPORTANT PROVIDER OF MANY MATERIALS; FUR, HIDE, ANTLER, SINEW AND MEAT. THEY WERE CRITICAL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF BERING SEA CULTURE.