Finch & Co



CARVED LIMESTONE PAPUA NEW GUINEA EAST NEW BRITAIN TOLAIS PEOPLES SPIRIT FIGURE 'POKOPOKO INGIAT'

AN INTERESTING CARVED LIMESTONE PAPUA NEW GUINEA EAST NEW BRITAIN TOLAIS PEOPLES SPIRIT FIGURE 'POKOPOKO INGIAT'

SCULPTED TO THE FRONT WITH SHORTENED LIMBS AND ENLARGED HEAD WEARING A SHELL AND FIBRE BREAST ORNAMENT TRADITIONALLY WORN BY THE TOLAIS ABOUT HIS NECK

AN OLD PAPER LABEL TO REVERSE IN INK 'PAPUA NEW GUINEA A.347'

LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURY

SIZE: 30CM HIGH, 11.5CM WIDE, 7CM DEEP - 11¾ INS HIGH, 4½ INS WIDE, 2¾ INS DEEP

AN INTERESTING CARVED LIMESTONE PAPUA NEW GUINEA EAST NEW BRITAIN TOLAIS PEOPLES SPIRIT FIGURE 'POKOPOKO INGIAT'

SCULPTED TO THE FRONT WITH SHORTENED LIMBS AND ENLARGED HEAD WEARING A SHELL AND FIBRE BREAST ORNAMENT TRADITIONALLY WORN BY THE TOLAIS ABOUT HIS NECK

AN OLD PAPER LABEL TO REVERSE IN INK ‘PAPUA NEW GUINEA A.347’

LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURY

SIZE: 30CM HIGH, 11.5CM WIDE, 7CM DEEP - 11¾ INS HIGH, 4½ INS WIDE, 2¾ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THE TOLAIS PEOPLE LIVE ON THE GAZELLE PENINSULA AND THE DUKE OF YORK ISLANDS OF EAST NEW BRITAIN, PAPUA NEW GUINEA. SMALL LIMESTONE SPIRIT FIGURES WERE ONCE TRADITIONALLY CARVED FOR THE ‘INIET’ SECRET SOCIETY INITIATES. RITUAL SCULPTURES OF ANIMALS AND HUMANS WERE PRODUCED TO REPRESENT VARIOUS ANCESTRAL DEITIES AND SPIRIT ENTITIES. THESE CEREMONIAL FIGURES WERE OFTEN COLLECTED BY THE EUROPEAN CATHOLIC AND METHODIST MISSIONARIES WHO FIRST VISITED THE AREA IN 1875. IN 1878 AN ENGLISHMAN, GEORGE BROWN, LED A PUNITIVE EXPEDITION AGAINST THE TOLAIS WHO HAD REPORTEDLY EATEN FOUR MISSIONARIES. SEVERAL VILLAGES WERE BURNT DOWN AND THE PEOPLES BELIEFS REPRESSED AND CURTAILED. BY THE 1900’S LITTLE REMAINED OF THEIR PREVIOUS INDIGENOUS RELIGION.