Finch & Co



RARE LARGE BEZOAR STONE PROBABLY FROM THE STOMACH OF A GOAT OR CAMEL SMOOTH GREYISH-GREEN PATINA

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SMOOTH GREYISH-GREEN PATINA

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: APPROX: 6.5CM HIGH, 7CM WIDE, 6.5CM DEEP - 2½ INS HIGH, 2¾ INS WIDE, 2½ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

BEZOAR STONES ARE FORMED FROM THE ACCRETIONS IN THE STOMACHS OF RUMINANTS THAT HAVE BECOME OSSIFIED. THEY WERE BELIEVED TO BE MAGICAL HAVING THE POWER TO DETECT POISON AND ACT AS AN ANTIDOTE TO MELANCHOLY. THE EMPEROR RUDOLF II OF PRAGUE WORE A SMALL ONE ON A PENDANT IN THE HOPE OF CURING HIS CHRONIC DEPRESSION AND HAD ANOTHER LARGER MADE INTO A CUP MOUNTED IN ENAMELLED GOLD STUDDED WITH RUBIES AND EMERALDS WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD RENDER ALL POISON HARMLESS.

IN 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY EUROPE THEY BECAME VALUABLE COMMODITIES AND IT IS SAID THAT THEY WERE WORTH UP TO TEN TIMES THEIR WEIGHT IN GOLD SO STRONG WAS THE BELIEF IN THEIR MEDICINAL AND MAGICAL POWERS.

PROVENANCE

FOUND IN A CHEST IN THE ATTIC OF A DECEASED ESTATE IN LONDON