Finch & Co



A CELTIC STONE HEAD WITH 'STARING' EYES, LONG NOSE AND SLIT MOUTH

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LIMESTONE

BRITISH

2ND CENTURY BC - 1ST CENTURY AD

SIZE: 26CM HIGH, 13CM WIDE, 16CM DEEP - 10¼ INS HIGH, 5 INS WIDE, 6¼ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

SPRINGS, WELLS AND RIVERS ARE OF FIRST AND ENDURING IMPORTANCE AS A FOCAL POINT OF CELTIC CULT PRACTICE AND RITUAL, AND THE HUMAN HEAD, SYMBOLIC OF DIVINITY AND A POWERFUL CELTIC MOTIF, WAS ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH SACRED SPRINGS, WELLS AND RIVERS. MADE OF STONE, WOOD OR METAL, IMAGES OF HEADS WERE USED IN MAKING VOTIVE OFFERINGS AND DROPPED INTO THE WATERS. MANY OBJECTS OF A CULT NATURE HAVE BEEN RECOVERED FROM SPRINGS, WELLS, LAKES, POOLS, BOGS AND RIVERS, SUGGESTING THAT THEY WERE REGARDED AS A FOCUS FOR VENERATION AND HEALING.

THE CELTS REGARDED THE SOURCE OF A RIVER AS A NATURAL SANCTUARY AND AN ENTRANCE TO THE OTHERWORLD. IN IRELAND MANY RIVERS HAVE GODDESSES NAMES AND IRISH CULT LEGENDS PURPORT TO THE NAMING OF THE BOYNE AND THE SHANNON. THE GODDESSES BOAND AND SINANN DEFIED THE MAGIC POWERS OF THE WELL OF SEGAIS AND THE WELL OF COELRIND, AND AS A RESULT THE WELLS ROSE UP IN ANGER DROWNING THE GODDESSES AND TURNED INTO MIGHTY RIVERS, RUSHING DOWN TO THE SEA.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE ENGLISH COLLECTION, BEFORE 2000

EX IMPORTANT EAST ANGLIAN ESTATE

THENCE BY DESCENT

CF FOR SIMILAR FACIAL FEATURES SEE: ROSS, A., PAGAN CELTIC BRITAIN, LONDON, 1967, PL. 39A. AND 91A.