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EARTHENWARE FRIEZE, WITH CARVED ORNAMENTATION PAINTED
IN WHITE, TURQUOISE, AND A MANGANESE GLAZE

CENTRAL ASIA, PERHAPS IRAN; 14TH CENTURY

H: 17.5; L: 85; D: 4.5 CM

This frieze dates to a period when colorful, glazed pottery began to play an increasingly prominent role in decorations on Islamic architecture. The trend was already present under the Il-Khanids and reached its first culmination with the monumental architecture of the Timurids in Samarkand.

It is uncertain where the frieze comes from, but the artist was able to create a fascinating pattern in white and turquoise – at times a positive, at others a negative – consisting of palmettes that bring to mind fleurs-de-lis. He underlined the relief effect by glazing the deeply carved grooves with manganese.

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