

Finch & C⁰



A FINE AND EARLY LONG ROOTSTOCK CLUB WITH INLAID 'TEETH'
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EXCELLENT COLOUR AND PATINA

WOOD, TEETH

FIJI

LATE 18TH / EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 111.5CMLONG - 43¾ INS LONG

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LITERATURE

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY IN FIJI FEW PEOPLE LIVED TO DIE OF OLD AGE; MEN DID NOT DARE TO MOVE ABOUT THE ISLANDS UNARMED. WILLIAM MARINER WROTE OF FIJI IN THE EARLY 1800S: 'A MAN SELDOM GOES OUT, EVEN PERHAPS WITH HIS GREATEST FRIEND, WITHOUT BEING ARMED, AND CAUTIOUSLY UPON HIS GUARD.' (MARINER 1827: 208). HEAVY CLUBS, SPEARS AND OTHER WEAPONS ACCOMPANIED THE WARY FIJIAN ON EVEN SHORT WALKS BEYOND HIS VILLAGE.

THESE CLUBS ARE MADE FROM THE BUTTRESS ROOTS OF AN UPROOTED SAPLING THAT WAS PLANTED AND CAREFULLY TRAINED TO PRODUCE THE DESIRED SHAPE. CLUBS WERE THE FIJIANS, FAVOURITE WEAPON, WHO IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY LIVED IN A VIRTUALLY CONSTANT STATE OF WARFARE. A GREATER VARIETY WERE MADE ON FIJI THAN IN MANY OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDS, BUT BY 1870 THE IRON AXE HAD ALMOST SUPERSEDED THE WOOD CLUB AS A FIGHTING WEAPON. THE HATCHET OR SPLITTING AXE HEAD WAS HAFTED ONTO LONG CLUB TYPE HANDLES.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE SCOTTISH COLLECTION

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION