

Finch & C^o



AN UNUSUAL POLYNESIAN FIGHTING CLUB OF TAPERED 'POLE' FORM

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DECORATED ALL OVER WITH A GEOMETRIC DESIGN AND 'GLYPH' TYPE MOTIFS

DARK GLOSSY PATINA, EXCELLENT COLOUR, RETAINING THE ORIGINAL LUG TO THE BUTT

WOOD

TONGA

EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 74.5CMLONG - 29¼ INS LONG

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LITERATURE

ON TONGA, THE QUALITY OF A WARRIORS WEAPON WAS A SYMBOL OF HIS RANK. CHIEFS OFTEN POSSESSED FINELY FINISHED AND DECORATED WAR CLUBS THAT WERE SYMBOLIC OF THEIR SOCIAL STATUS. THE FAVOURITE WEAPONS OF THE TONGAN WARRIOR WAS THE CLUB AND THE SPEAR. THEY WERE FIERCE FIGHTERS AND HIGHLY RESPECTED FOR THEIR BRAVERY IN BATTLE EVEN BY THE FEROCIOUS FIJIAN.

THE EXQUISITE ENGRAVING OF THE CLUBS WAS ORIGINALLY ACHIEVED BY USING A SHARK'S TOOTH LASHED WITH PLAIED COIR SINNET BINDING INTO THE END OF A ROUND WOODEN HANDLE. DESPITE THE EXTREME HARDNESS OF THE WOOD, THE ENGRAVER WOULD QUICKLY NOTCH THE DESIGNS UNTIL THE DECORATION WAS COMPLETE. THIS FORM OF SURFACE DECORATION WAS MADE CONSIDERABLY EASIER POST CONTACT BY THE CONSIGNMENTS OF EUROPEAN IRON NAILS, FIRST BROUGHT TO TONGA BY CAPTAIN COOK.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE ENGLISH COLLECTION