

# Finch & C<sup>o</sup>



## A FINE SCRIMSHAW SCENE OF A THREE MASTED SHIP

2 A FINE SCRIMSHAW SCENE OF A THREE MASTED SHIP ETCHED ON THE PAN BONE OF A SPERM  
WHALE JAW

SAILING OFF A ROCKY COAST WITH A LIGHTHOUSE IN THE DISTANCE.

AN OLD INK INSCRIPTION TO THE REVERSE PARTLY READING 'LANCE... C COMP 3RD BATT SOMERSET LITE...'

16548... CAPTAIN 1ST BATT COMPANY 3 GROUP 2 BRIGADE 4 ...'

CIRCA 1835-45

SIZE: 18 CM HIGH, 25 CM WIDE – 7 INS HIGH, 9¾

## LITERATURE

ON DECEMBER 16TH 1845 THE MATE OF THE WHALER ACUSHNET ENTERED IN THE SHIPS LOG 'BUSY DOING NOTHING -  
NOTHING TO DO IT WITH'.

SCRIMSHAW WAS BORN OF BOREDOM. IT BECAME AN ESCAPE FROM THE ENDLESS SEA  
WHALING WAS ONE OF THE HARDEST AND MOST BRUTAL SEAFARING ACTIVITIES THE WORLD EVER KNEW. IT WAS THE  
BASQUE FISHERMEN WHO WERE THE FIRST TO SYSTEMATICALLY AND EXTENSIVELY PURSUE THE WHALE AS AN  
INDUSTRY, AND IN THE 10TH CENTURY THEY WOULD SAIL AS FAR NORTH AS ICELAND IN THEIR PURSUIT.  
IT WAS THE SEARCH FOR A NORTHWEST AND NORTHEAST TRADING PASSAGE WHICH BROUGHT KNOWLEDGE OF VAST  
NUMBERS OF WHALES IN THE ARCTIC SEAS AND BY THE EARLY 17TH CENTURY VOYAGES OF SMALL WHALING FLEETS TO  
SPITZBERGEN AND GREENLAND WERE BEING ORGANIZED BY THE ENGLISH, DUTCH, FRENCH, SPANISH AND  
SCANDINAVIANS WHO DIVDED THE NORTHERN SEAS INTO WHALING GROUNDS AND CONTROLLED THEM FOR OVER A  
HUNDRED YEARS.

THE DUTCH WERE THE MOST SUCCESSFUL UNTIL THE ENGLISH STIMULATED BY GOVERNMENT BOUNTIES OPENED A  
NEW WHALING ERA IN THE MID 18TH CENTURY. BY 1770 A WHALING FLEET OF SOME 60 VESSELS ANNUALLY VISITED THE  
GREENLAND SEAS FROM THE ENGLISH PORTS. HOWEVER THE AMERICAN COLONIES HAD EVINCE AN INTEREST IN THE  
WHALING INDUSTRY FROM THE EARLIEST SETTLEMENT AND BY 1750 THE AMERICAN INDUSTRY WAS ALSO STRONGER  
AND VIGOROUS WITH NANTUCKET HAVING OVER 80 VESSELS ENGAGED IN DEEP SEA WHALING.  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION HALTED THE INDUSTRY'S PROGRESS BUT IT RECOVERED ONLY TO BE SET BACK AGAIN BY  
THE WAR OF 1812. HOWEVER WITH THE DISCOVERY OF NEW WHALING GROUNDS IN THE PACIFIC IT QUICKLY  
REBOUNDED AND REMAINED AN IMPORTANT INDUSTRY THROUGHOUT THE 19TH CENTURY.