

Finch & C^o



SAILOR'S SCRIMSHAW WHALEBONE WALKING CANE

A FINE SAILOR'S SCRIMSHAW WHALEBONE WALKING CANE
THE RIBBED OCTAGONAL HANDLE CARVED OF SPERM-WHALE TOOTH, SET ON A BALEEN COLLAR
OLD SMOOTH AND MELLOW PATINA
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 90.5CM LONG – 35½ INS LONG

LITERATURE

ALTHOUGH WALKING CANES WERE PROBABLY NEVER USED ON BOARD A WHALE SHIP THEY WERE A POPULAR ITEM FOR SCRIMSHANDERS TO MAKE, PERHAPS BECAUSE THE WHALEBONE WAS INITIALLY FAIRLY EASY TO CARVE.

JAW BONES FROM THE SPERM-WHALE WERE REGULARLY SALVAGED FOR SCRIMSHAW AFTER THE TEETH WERE EXTRACTED. THE BROAD AREA OF JAW BEHIND EACH ROW OF TEETH WAS KNOWN AS THE PAN BONE, TAKEN FROM THE TERM 'JAW PANS' GIVEN TO THE DEPRESSIONS WHERE THE JAW ARTICULATED WITH THE SKULL. IT WAS THE MAIN MATERIAL FOR TOOLS AND SHIPS FITTINGS, AND THE LOWER MARGIN WAS SUFFICIENTLY LONG TO BE CUT OR TURNED INTO WALKING CANES SUCH AS THIS.