

Finch & C^o



A FINE FRENCH EBONY HANDLED AND POLISHED CUT STEEL TOOTH KEY

A FINE FRENCH EBONY HANDLED AND POLISHED CUT STEEL TOOTH KEY MARKED ON THE SHAFT 'MARIAUD'. ONE END OF THE HANDLE UNSCREWING SO THAT IT MAY BE USED AS AN ELEVATOR. THE CENTRAL SHAFT WITH A FEATHERED AND SHAPED CUT STEEL RATCHET ALTERING THE POSITION OF THE KEY

CIRCA 1770

SIZE : 15 CMLONG – 6 INS LONG

LITERATURE

THE GREEKS WERE THE FIRST TO USE EXTRACTION AS A DENTAL TREATMENT AND FOR MANY CENTURIES IT WAS THE ONLY FORM OF DENTAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE OTHER THAN CRUDE POTIONS FOR TOOTHACHE. BARBER – SURGEONS HAD LITTLE KNOWLEDGE AND POOR EQUIPMENT, ONLY BY THE MID 19 TH CENTURY DID METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS BEGIN TO DEVELOP AND EVOLVE MORE RAPIDLY.

DENTAL TREATMENT WAS PRACTISED BY CHARLATANS AND QUACKS WELL INTO THE 19 TH CENTURY AND WAS OFTEN A SIDELINE OF BLACKSMITHS OR OF MOUNTEBANKS WHO DREW TEETH AS ENTERTAINMENT AT FAIRS; THE CRIES OF THE POOR SUFFERER BEING DROWNED BY RAUCOUS MUSIC FROM AN ASSISTANT. PETER THE GREAT (1672 -1725) FANCIED HIMSELF AS A DENTIST AND HAD A LABELLED COLLECTION OF PEOPLE'S TEETH, NO. 23 'A BISHOP OF ROSTOV' THAT HE HAD EXTRACTED HIMSELF UPON DEMAND. THESE CAN STILL BE SEEN IN HIS KUNSTKAMMER IN THE MUSEUM IN ST. PETERSBURG.

INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS THIS WERE KNOWN AS 'CLEF ANGLAIS' IN FRANCE, BEING FIRST MENTIONED IN 1742. THE EARLY KEYS HAD A CLAW WITH TWO POINTS, BY 1770 A SLIGHT BEND HAD OCCURRED IN THE SHAFT AND LATER, A DOUBLE BEND TO PREVENT STRAIN ON ADJACENT TEETH.