

Finch & C^o



FINE WHALEBONE SCRIMSHAW STAYBUSK

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EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 37 CM LONG , 4.5 CM WIDE – 14½ INS LONG , 1¾ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

A STAYBUSK IS A STIFFENER THAT WAS INSERTED INTO A LADIES CORSET OR CORSAGE . IT HAD BECOME A CUSTOM IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES FOR SAILORS , ESPECIALLY THOSE ON BOARD WHALING SHIPS , TO MAKE THESE TO PRESENT TO THEIR SWEETHEARTS AS LOVE TOKENS .

THE EARLIEST KNOWN STAYBUSK IS MADE OF WOOD AND DATED 1660 AND CAN BE SEEN IN BIRMINGHAM CITY MUSEUM IN THE PINTO COLLECTION . ANOTHER DATED 1675 IS IN THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM , LONDON . THE MAJORITY WERE MADE BETWEEN 1760 AND 1800 , THE DICTATES OF FASHION EVENTUALLY RENDERING THEM OBSOLETE .

THIS EXAMPLE HAS THE INITIALS H D & A D AND WAS PROBABLY MADE TO COMMEMORATE A MARRIAGE .