Finch & Co



A RARE HAWAIIAN IVORY HOOK FROM A ROYAL NECKLACE 'LEI NIHO PALAOA'

A RARE HAWAIIAN WHALE IVORY HOOK FROM A ROYAL NECKLACE 'LEI NIHO PALAOA'
19TH CENTURY
SIZE : 8 CM HIGH X 3 CM WIDE
3¼ INS HIGH X 1¼ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

ALL HAWAIIAN NOBLES BOTH MALE AND FEMALE WORE INSIGNIA OF THEIR RANK SUCH AS THIS WELL CARVED WHALE IVORY HOOK WHICH WAS SUSPENDED ON A NECKLACE OF FINELY BRAIDED HUMAN HAIR.
CAPTAIN COOK COLLECTED A NUMBER OF SUCH PENDANTS ON HIS THIRD VOYAGE ALL OF WHICH WERE SMALLER IN SIZE; AROUND AN INCH IN LENGTH. THE LATER 19TH CENTURY EXAMPLES ARE BIGGER AND MORE FINELY CARVED, AND WERE PROBABLY WORN BY MANY OF A LESSER SOCIAL RANK THAN EARLIER HAWAIIN NOBILITY.
APART FROM WHALE TEETH THEY HAVE BEEN FOUND MADE FROM CALCITE, SHELL, BONE AND BLACK CORAL. THESE PENDANTS WERE OBJECTS OF GREAT PRESTIGE AND THEIR EARLY SYMBOLIC VALUE WAS INFERIOR ONLY TO THAT OF FEATHER CAPES AND CLOAKS.