Finch & Co



A RARE LARGE TONGAN 'PA' A BONITO FISHING HOOK AND TROLLING LURE

A RARE LARGE TONGAN 'PA' A BONITO FISHING HOOK AND TROLLING LURE
WHALEBONE, TORTOISESHELL, PEARL SHELL AND FIBRE
19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 15 CM LONG – 6 INS LONG
SEE FINCH AND CO CATALOGUE NO. 2 ITEM, NO. 28 FOR ANOTHER EXAMPLE

LITERATURE

THE SHANK OF THIS HOOK IS MADE OF CLOSE GRAINED WHALEBONE HAVING A STRIP OF DARK COLOURED PEARL SHELL RECESSED INTO THE BACK. THE BARB IS CUT FROM A STOUT PIECE OF TURTLE SHELL LASHED ON WITH BANDS OF TWISTED FIBRE. THIS FIBRE 'TOUCHARDIA LATIFOLIA' IS USED THROUGHOUT THE ISLANDS OF POLYNESIA FOR MAKING DIFFERENT SORTS OF FISHING LINES.
HARRY BEASLEY RECORDS THAT THE REV THOMAS OF THE WESLEYAN MISSION WRITING IN THE MISSION JOURNAL OF 1839, STATES THAT 'THE LARGE HOOKS CALLED 'BA' (SIC) WERE HIGHLY VALUED'. TUNA AND BONITO FISH WERE CAUGHT WITH THESE LURE HOOKS, REGARDED AS 'MAGICAL' BY TROLLING FROM THE STERN OF A CANOE.