

Finch & C^o



A NEW ZEALAND MAORI GREENSTONE 'MERE POUNAMU'
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LATE 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 31CMLONG, 10CMWIDE – 12¼ INS LONG, 4 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

MAORI SHORT CLUBS WERE UNIQUE IN FORM FROM THE REST OF POLYNESIA AND UNIQUE IN BEING DESIGNED FOR A FORWARD THRUST INSTEAD OF THE DOWNWARD BLOW CHARACTERISTIC OF OTHER FORMS OF CLUBS. A STRIP OF DOG-SKIN WAS PASSED THROUGH THE HOLE IN THE HANDLE AND TIED IN A LOOP FOR PASSING OVER THE THUMB AND AROUND THE HAND. THIS STOPPED THE HAND FROM SLIPPING ALONG THE HANDLE WHEN THE FRONT EDGE CONNECTED AND PREVENTED THE FORCE OF THE THRUST FROM BEING WEAKENED. MERE WERE USED FOR QUICK INFIGHTING IN WHICH A FRACTION OF A SECOND WAS TOO IMPORTANT TO WASTE IN RAISING THE WEAPON TO STRIKE A BLOW. A HALF ARM JAB WOULD BRING THE FRONT EDGE OF THE CLUB INTO CONTACT WITH THE TEMPLE, NECK OR RIBS AND AS THE ENEMY WAS FALLING THE BUTT OR HEEL DELIVERED A DOWNWARD BLOW ON THE SKULL.