

Finch & C^o



EXCEPTIONAL AND EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE AND HEAVY OLD FIJIAN TABUA

AN EXCEPTIONAL AND EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE AND HEAVY OLD FIJIAN TABUA
WESTERN POLYNESIA

USED AS A COMMEMORATE PRESENTATION GIFT TO CELEBRATE A 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY INSCRIBED: 'FIJI OCTOBER
10TH 1874 TO 1924' AND WITH THE MOTTO 'RERE VAKA NAKALOU KA DOKANA TUI'.

THE TOOTH LATE 18TH / EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 24.5CM WIDE, 8.5CM HIGH, 6CM DEEP – 9¾ INS WIDE, 3¼ INS HIGH, 2¼ DEEP

WEIGHT: 1245 GRAMS – (2.11 LB'S)

LITERATURE

THE SPERM WHALE TOOTH OR 'TABUA' HAD A PROFOUND MYSTICAL AND SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FIJIAN AND
WAS ONLY USED FOR PRESENTATIONS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. BOTH LARGE AND SMALL, POLISHED AND UNPOLISHED

TEETH WERE USED IN VARIOUS WAYS, BUT THE PURELY CEREMONIAL FORM WERE MUCH LARGER AND WERE
CAREFULLY POLISHED AND ANOINTED WITH COCONUT OIL AND TURMERIC TO DARKEN THEIR COLOUR. SOMETIMES

LARGER TEETH SUCH AS THIS COULD ACT AS SHRINES FOR FIJIAN DEITIES.

DRILLED AT BOTH ENDS FOR ATTACHING SINNET CORD THIS OLD TABUA WAS PROBABLY OF SUFFICIENT SIZE AND
IMPORTANCE FOR IT TO BE REASSIGNED FOR USE AS A PRESENTATION GIFT IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY.