

Finch & C^o



TWO FINE ANTIQUE NARWHAL TUSKS OF SIMILAR PROPORTIONS

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BOTH WITH OLD MELLOW AND SMOOTH PATINAS AND SPIRALLING GROOVES
EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZES: A: 188CMLONG – 74 INS LONG / 195CMHIGH – 76¾ INS HIGH (WITH STAND)

B: 188CMLONG – 74 INS LONG / 195CMHIGH – 76¾ INS HIGH (WITH STAND)

LITERATURE

IN THE LATE 900'S AD, THE VIKINGS DISCOVERED GREENLAND, ITS SEAS SWARMING WITH NARWHALS, THEIR TUSKS MORE PRECIOUS THAN POLAR BEAR PELTS AND THE LIVE FALCONS THEY TRADED TO ARABIAN PRINCES. THE NORSE LONGBOATS ROWED NORTH IN PURSUIT OF THE BIG SPIRAL TOOTHED WHALES, BRAVING SUMMER STORMS TO TRADE WITH THE SKRAELINGS, AS THE VIKINGS CALLED THE INUIT, WHOM THEY DESPISED. THE INUIT WOULD HUNT THE NARWHAL BOTH FOR ITS TUSKS AND 'MATTAK', A LAYER OF SKIN AND BLUBBER THAT IS EATEN RAW WHICH THEY SAY

TASTES LIKE HAZELNUTS. HAVING NO VEGETABLE MATTER OR FRUIT, THIS WAS AND FOR SOME STILL IS, THEIR ONLY SOURCE OF VITAMIN C. IT IS SAID THAT WHEN FOREIGN SAILORS ABSTAINED FROM EATING THE VITAMIN C RICH 'MATTAK' THEY OFTEN THEN DIED OF SCURVY.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1638, WHEN THE DANISH SCHOLAR OLE WORM SHOWED THE PRIZED HORN CAME FROM NARWHALS, THAT THE UNICORN MYTH BEGAN TO BE REFUTED AND FADE FROM EUROPEAN MEMORY.