Finch & Co



WESTERN PACIFIC GILBERT ISLANDS STRING OF SHARK TOOTH CURRENCY CONSISTING OF 113 SHARKS TEETH

A WESTERN PACIFIC GILBERT ISLANDS STRING OF SHARK TOOTH CURRENCY CONSISTING OF 113 SHARKS TEETH
19TH CENTURY
SIZE: APPROX: 48CM LONG – 19 INS LONG
SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 6, ITEM NO. 94, FOR TWO GILBERT ISLANDS SHARK TOOTH DAGGERS

LITERATURE

THE GILBERT ISLANDS HAVE BEEN UNDER CONTINUOUS BRITISH RULE SINCE THE 18TH CENTURY AND WERE ONCE HEAVILY POPULATED. AS A CONSEQUENCE, INTER-TRIBAL FIGHTING WAS FREQUENT WITH ELABORATE OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT EXTENSIVELY CRAFTED ON THE ISLANDS. AS METAL WAS GENERALLY UNAVAILABLE, SHARKS TEETH PROVIDED THE SHARP CUTTING EDGE WOVEN INTO COCONUT FIBRE CORDAGE AND SEWN INTO GROOVES ON DAGGERS AND SPEARS. THICK PLAITED COIR COMBAT ARMOUR WAS DEVELOPED TO COUNTERACT THE LACERATING EFFECT OF THESE WEAPONS WORN WITH A SPIKY PUFFER FISH SKIN HELMET.