

Finch & C^o



SAILORS NARWHAL TUSK WALKING CANE

A SAILORS NARWHAL TUSK WALKING CANE
SMOOTH OLD POLISHED CREAMY YELLOW PATINA

EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 84.5CM LONG – 33¼ INS LONG

PROVENANCE: EX ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION

SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 15, ITEM NO. 49, FOR ANOTHER SAILORS NARWHAL TUSK CANE

LITERATURE

LIEUTENANT EDWARD CHAPPEL OF THE ROYAL NAVY STOPPED IN 1814 AT THE SAVAGE ISLANDS IN THE HUDSON STRAIT WHERE HE WAS SHOWN ARROWS HEADED WITH 'SEA-UNICORN'S HORN'. THE BRITISH ARCTIC EXPLORER SIR LEOPOLD MCCLINTOCK IN 1857 WROTE THAT 'MOST OF THE POLAR INUIT CARRIED A SPEAR FORMED OUT OF THE HORN OF A NARWHAL'. IN A LAND WHERE EVEN A SMALL PIECE OF DRIFTWOOD WAS RARE AND PRECIOUS, NARWHAL TUSKS TOOK THE PLACE OF WOOD. THE INUIT HAVE HUNTED NARWHALS FOR HUNDREDS, PERHAPS THOUSANDS OF YEARS AND VISITING SAILORS TRADING WITH THEM HAVE TAKEN THE TUSKS ON BOARD SHIP AND SOMETIMES FASHIONED THEM INTO USEFUL OBJECTS DURING THE LONG VOYAGE HOME.