Finch & Co



**TWO RARE NEW ZEALAND MAORI FISH HOOKS**

TWO RARE NEW ZEALAND MAORI FISH HOOKS
ONE OF HUMAN BONE AND ONE OF PACIFIC MUSSEL SHELL
OLD INK INSCRIBED LABEL ATTACHED 'NEW ZEALAND FISH HOOKS OF HUMAN BONE'
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: APPROX: 3.5CM LONG – 1¼ LONG AND 2CM LONG – ¾ INS LONG
CF: BRITISH MUSEUM COLLECTION OF MAORI FISH HOOKS MADE OF HUMAN BONE ILLUSTRATED HARRY BEASLEY 'FISH HOOKS' PG 9; PLATE XII A

**LITERATURE**

TO THE MAORI LIVING ON THE COAST OF NEW ZEALAND FISHING WAS A WAY OF LIFE. AN INGENIOUS VARIETY OF HOOKS WERE MADE WITH SPECIAL TYPES OF FISHING GEAR PRODUCED FOR SPECIFIC QUARRY. MANY OF THE OLD BONE FISH HOOKS WERE FOUND IN SAND DUNES AND KITCHEN MIDDENS. THEY WERE CARVED FROM WHALE, MOA BIRD OR HUMAN BONE AND NEARLY ALL HAVE A LUG FOR THE BAIT STRING. MOST OF THE SHELL HOOKS ARE CUT FROM THE NEW ZEALAND LARGE MUSSEL SHELL 'MYTILUS LATUS', AND MUST HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO PRODUCE IN SUCH MINUTE FORM. THESE SHELL HOOKS ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE SOUTH ISLAND.