Finch & Co



RARE AMERICAN SAILORS SCRIMSHAW NARWHAL TUSK WALKING CANE

A RARE AMERICAN SAILORS SCRIMSHAW NARWHAL TUSK WALKING CANE WITH AN UNUSUAL CARVED WALRUS TUSK PORTRAIT HEAD HANDLE

FIRST HALF 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 85.5CM LONG - 33¾ INS LONG

NOTES REGARDING SHIPPING: THIS CANE CAN BE LEGALLY IMPORTED TO THE USA TOGETHER WITH THE APPROPRIATE CITES EXPORT CERTIFICATE

PLEASE CONTACT FOR DETAILS AND SHIPPING QUOTES

CITES ARTICLE 10 DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE

LITERATURE

SCRIMSHAW AS THE ART OF THE WHALE-MAN FLOURISHED AND REACHED ITS PINNACLE AT THE HANDS OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH-SEA WHALE-MEN IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY. THE PRODUCT OF IDLE HOURS ON ENDLESS CRUISING SEARCHES FOR THE ELUSIVE LEVIATHAN, IT BECAME A UNIQUE NAUTICAL FOLK ART. HUNDREDS OF AMERICAN WHALING VESSELS ROAMED THE OCEANS CARRYING THOUSANDS OF SAILORS EACH OF WHOM WOULD PROBABLY TRY THEIR HAND AT THE ART. MANY CAME FROM FOREIGN PORTS, FROM AFRICA TO THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, HAWAII SUPPLYING MANY NATIVE 'GREEN HANDS'. EVENTUALLY THE TYPICAL WHALING CREWS BECAME A SORT OF SEAGOING UNITED NATIONS IN MINIATURE WITH ONLY THE OFFICERS ON BOARD AMERICAN NATIONALS.
MANY EXAMPLES OF SKILLED ORNAMENTED SCRIMSHAW WERE CREATED FOR THE SHEER JOY OF SUCH ELABORATION AND AS A TESTAMENT TO THE CREATOR'S SKILL. SUCH DECORATIVE PIECES WERE MEANT TO BE SEEN AND TREASURED, RATHER THAN USED.