Finch & Co

NEW ZEALAND MAORI VIOLIN SHAPED SHORT WHALEBONE HAND CLUB

A NEW ZEALAND MAORI VIOLIN SHAPED SHORT WHALEBONE HAND CLUB 'KOTIATE' THE BUTT CARVED WITH A 'WHEKU' FACE

EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 30.5CM LONG - 12 INS LONG

LITERATURE

THE SHORT HAND CLUBS OF THE MAORI KNOWN AS 'PATU POTO' WERE MADE IN SEVERAL SHAPES FROM WOOD, WHALEBONE, STONE AND NEPHRITE OR GREENSTONE. THEY WERE CARRIED THRUST INTO THE GIRDLE OF A KILT OR INTO A SPECIAL WAR-BELT. ALL 'PATU' WERE DESIGNED FOR QUICK IN FIGHTING WHERE SPLIT-SECOND ACTION REQUIRED THRUSTING JABS WITH LITTLE TIME FOR DOWNWARD BLOWS. SHORT CLUBS HAVE A FLAT BROAD BLADE WITH A ROUNDED END MADE SHARP ENOUGH TO SPLIT THE SKULL OF A MAN, OR TO CAUSE DEADLY INJURIES TO THE NECK OR RIBS BY THRUSTING BLOWS. THE FIGHTER KEPT FIRM HOLD ON THE WEAPON BY MEANS OF A THONG OF DOGSKIN WHICH PASSED THROUGH THE HOLE ON THE HANDLE AND AROUND THE WRIST AND THUMB. IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR A SKILLED WARRIOR WITH A SHORT CLUB, BY SPEED OF ACTION AND BY USING A CLOAK WRAPPED AROUND THE LEFT ARM TO PARRY BLOWS, TO DEFEAT AN OPPONENT ARMED WITH A LONG CLUB 'TAIAHA'.