Finch & Co



FIJIAN CEREMONIAL CHIEF'S STAFF 'I TITOKO'

A FINE AND RARE FIJIAN CEREMONIAL CHIEF'S STAFF 'I TITOKO'
THE HARDWOOD WITH FINE RIPPLED SMOOTH AND SILKY PATINA
ENGRAVED TO ONE END FOR USE AS A GRIP
WITH AN OLD LABEL INSCRIBED IN INK: 'ANTIQUE CHIEFS STAFF CARVING WORN WITH USE FIJI'
18TH – EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 145.5CM LONG, APPROX: 4CM DIA. - 57¼ INS LONG, APPROX: 1½ DIA.

LITERATURE

THE COMMON ROUGHER FORM OF THIS STAFF IS KNOWN AND USED AS A WALKING STAFF FOR HIKING ACROSS DIFFICULT TERRITORY. THE EVERYDAY IMPORTANCE OF THE ORDINARY 'TITOKO' IS INDICATED BY CAPTAIN CHARLES WILKES: 'OUR NEXT DIFFICULTY WAS TO ASCEND A VERY STEEP AND SLIPPERY PATH, LEADING UP TO A MOUNTAIN SPOT, TO THE TOWN OF VUNIMBUA THE CAPITAL OF THE SOLOIRA DISTRICT, AND THE RESIDENCE OF ITS CHIEF. THE EARTH WAS SO MOIST AFTER THE LATE RAINS, THAT WE WERE OBLIGED TO USE LONG TITOKOS OR WALKING STICKS TO PRESERVE OUR FOOTING. THE NATIVES HERE, BUT MORE ESPECIALLY THE WOMEN WHO ARE MUCH ILL-USED, AND EMPLOYED AS BEASTS OF BURDEN, CARRY A TITOKO WITH THEM WHENEVER THEY GO ON A JOURNEY' (NARRATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES EXPLORING EXPEDITION DURING THE YEARS 1838 - 1842 VOL. 3, PG. 70)