Finch & Co



THREE MELANESIAN ADMIRALTY ISLANDS THROWING SPEARS THE BLADES WITH OBSIDIAN

THREE MELANESIAN ADMIRALTY ISLANDS THROWING SPEARS THE BLADES WITH OBSIDIAN POINTS DECORATED WITH INCISED AND PAINTED PATTERNS ON CORD BINDING AND PARINARIUM MASTIC WITH INSERTED COIX SEEDS THE CONNECTING WOOD PIECE CARVED VARIOUSLY WITH:

A A RARE DOUBLE BLADED SPEAR WITH THE ABSTRACT DESIGN OF TWO SEVERED UPSIDE DOWN MALE HEADS TO THE CONNECTING WOOD SECTION

B A SINGLE OBSIDIAN SPEAR WITH WOOD SECTION CARVED AND PAINTED TO DEPICT A CROCODILE BELOW WHICH IS A SECTION OF WOVEN FERN

C A LARGE OBSIDIAN SPEAR WITH WOOD SECTION CARVED AND PAINTED WITH ANTHROPOMORPHIC ABSTRACT DESIGNS

THE LONG SHAFTS CUT DOWN

EARLY 20TH CENTURY / CIRCA 1905 - 1915

SIZE: 122CM LONG - 48 INS LONG / 122CM LONG - 48 INS LONG AND 121.5CM LONG - 47¾ INS LONG

LITERATURE

OBSIDIAN, BLACK VOLCANIC GLASS, WAS MINED IN THE ADMIRALTIES ON THE ISLANDS OF POAM, MOUK AND LOU, BUT

CEASED IN THE EARLY 1900'S. DEEP SHAFTS CAN STILL BE SEEN AS HOLES IN THE GROUND AND THE MINERS ARE SAID TO HAVE REMAINED IN THE SHAFT DIGGING FOR THE OBSIDIAN FOR THREE TO FOUR DAYS WORKING BY THE LIGHT OF TORCHES. OBSIDIAN WAS TRADED IN WHOLE BLOCKS AND RICHARD PARKINSON STATES IN HIS 1907 'THIRTY YEARS IN THE SOUTH SEAS' THAT THE BLADE MAKER WOULD SELECT A SMALL BLOCK AND 'KNOCKED SMALL CHIPS OFF THE SIDE BY MEANS OF A STONE… HE THEN FIRMLY GRASPED THE BLOCK WITH HIS HANDS SO THAT THE SIDES RESTED ON HIS PALM AND HIS FINGERS FIRMLY CLASPED BOTH ENDS. HE THEN MADE A LIGHT RAPID BLOW ON THE OUTER SURFACE OF THE BLOCK AND A LONG SPLINTER IMMEDIATELY SPLIT OFF FROM THE SIDE CLASPED BY THE HAND. BY MEANS OF LIGHT BLOWS HE COMPLETED THE FORMATION OF THIS SPLINTER INTO A SPEAR POINT'.

PROVENANCE

EX CALIFORNIAN COLLECTION U.S.A.