Finch & Co



**SAILOR'S SCRIMSHAW BALEEN AND WALRUS IVORY PAPER KNIFE**

AN UNUSUAL SAILOR'S SCRIMSHAW BALEEN AND WALRUS IVORY PAPER KNIFE THE HANDLE IN THE FORM OF A WHALER'S DOUBLE-FLUE HARPOON WITH ATTACHED ROPE

MID 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 32CM LONG - 12½ INS LONG

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**LITERATURE**

THE WHALE-MEN'S PRIDE OF OCCUPATION AND CELEBRATION OF THEIR SEAFARING PROWESS IS REFLECTED IN THE MANY ITEMS OF SCRIMSHAW THEY MADE ONBOARD SHIP. THIS ACCURATE IMAGE OF A HARPOON IS DRAWN FROM THE WHALE-MEN'S OWN EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN BEING COPED FROM PUBLISHED ILLUSTRATIONS. OFTEN AWAY AT SEA FOR TWO TO THREE YEARS, SCRIMSHAW WAS A MEANS OF ALLAYING BOREDOM, FRUSTRATION AND AGGRESSION WITHIN THE CONFINES OF A SMALL SHIP. USING THE UNWANTED BY PRODUCTS OF THE CATCH, THE CAPTAIN WAS TOLERANT OF THE LONG HOURS SPENT 'SCRIMSHANTING'.