

Finch & C^o



BERING SEA ESKIMO INUIT HARPOON FORE-SHAFT MADE FROM THE UPPER END AND TIP OF A NARWHAL TUSK 'MONODON MONOCEROS'

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EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 59CMLONG - 23¼ INS LONG

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LITERATURE

A LONG FORE-SHAFT ON A HARPOON WAS NEEDED WHEN HUNTING WALRUS OR NARWHAL SO THAT THE HEAD WOULD PENETRATE THE ANIMAL'S THICK HIDE AND BLUBBER. FOR THE INUIT HUNTER IT IS VERY IMPORTANT NOT ONLY TO UNDERSTAND HUNTING METHODS AND EQUIPMENT DEVELOPED OVER MANY GENERATIONS BY HIS ARCTIC ANCESTORS, BUT ALSO TO GIVE GREAT ATTENTION TO THE 'INUA' OR SPIRIT OF THE HUNTED ANIMAL. THOROUGHLY TRAINED BY HIS FATHER AND OTHER MEN IN THE METHODS OF HUNTING, LEARNING THE RITUAL PRACTICES AND HAVING THE COUNSEL OF THE SHAMAN AND ELDERS WHO SPECIALISE IN CALMING AND PLACATING THE SEA MAMMALS SPIRITS IS ALSO ESSENTIAL. FAILING TO PERFORM CERTAIN RITUALS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE HUNT ENDANGER NOT ONLY THE HUNTER'S SAFETY BUT COULD BRING MISFORTUNE ON THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE NETHERLANDS COLLECTION

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