Finch & Co

PAIR OF MATCHED SAILORS SCRIMSHAW SPERM WHALE TEETH

A RARE AND UNUSUAL PAIR OF MATCHED SAILORS SCRIMSHAW SPERM WHALE TEETH ENGRAVED WITH WHALING PANORAMAS SHIPS UNDER PLAIN SAIL AND WITH SAILS FURLED A WHALE HUNG UP FOR FLENSING OTHERS HARPOONED AND ATTACHED TO SMALL BOATS

ONE ENTITLED 'KENT WHALEING OFF HORTA'

PROBABLY DEPICTING THE WHALING SHIP 'KENT' OUT OF DOVER BUILT IN 1811 THAT COMPLETED TEN VOYAGES FROM 1820 TO 1853 FOR BRITISH SOUTHERN WHALING

CIRCA 1830 - 1850

SIZES: 7CM HIGH, 17.5CM WIDE, 5CM DEEP - 2¾ INS HIGH, 7 INS WIDE, 2 INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

FROM THE TIME OF THE LATE 18TH CENTURY THE LARGER WHALING SHIPS OCCASIONALLY MADE PORT IN THE PORTUGUESE AZORES. HORTA IS SITUATED ON FAIAL ISLAND. THESE BIGGER SHIPS WERE PERMITTED LONGER VOYAGES AND AFTER AROUND 1800 EXPEDITIONS OF UP TO THREE, FOUR AND FIVE YEARS WERE THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION.

KNOWN AS THE 'ART OF THE WHALE-MEN' WHALING SCENES WERE SCRIMSHAWED BY ACTUAL WHALERS AND ALTHOUGH ARTISTICALLY NAÏVE, THEY ARE CHARACTERISED BY THEIR SOPHISTICATED TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW MANIFESTED IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE MANY DIFFERENT FACETS OF THE HUNT. SCRIMSHAW DEPENDED UPON THE ENGRAVED AND POLISHED WHALE'S TOOTH AND IT WAS THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE THAT PROMPTED THE WHALE-MEN ON BOARD SHIP TO PAINSTAKINGLY DECORATE THEM WITH SCENES FROM THEIR LIVES AT SEA.