

64515

Provenience: POLYNESIA New Zealand
(S.S.)

Field No.

People or Culture: Maori

Object: weapon (Hoeroa)

Material: whale-bone, flax fiber

EXTREMELY RARE SPECIMEN

Description: Long, whale-bone weapon with carved knob with two holes piercing it at grip end. General form is spatulate and distal end is rounded. One side of distal end has roughened area near tip. Two loops of flax cord are drawn through the pierced holes in the prox-

Neg. No.

Dimensions: mal end. Midway down the shaft on
(in cm.)
Length: 120.0 each side is an elongated boss that is uncarved.
(over)

Collection: Presented by Capt. A.W.F. Fuller

13 December 1961. Purchased by him at an auction sale at Sotheby's in December, 1958.

Acc. 2756

An old manuscript label is attached to the specimen (now in accession file envelope in Anthropology Department) and reads:

"Hoeroa, which belonged to an old chief, named Poike Hemasa, who lived at Hangamahihi in the Arawere country, New Zealand. These Hoeroa were handed down for many generations, & are considered the rarest of all the weapons of the Maori Chiefs. In time of war it was always lashed by a flax cord passed through the two holes onto the owner, as they did not want to lose these Hoeroa alive. The Hoeroa would sometimes be thrown at the enemy, or used as a double-handed sword, or as a quarterstaff. This Hoeroa is made out of a whale's rib."

The specimen was formerly in the collection of Sir Frederick Selby Chance, Member of Parliament (Liberal) Morton Carlisle, 1908-10. Chance was also a textile manufacturer.