



Maori KURUKURU Nephrite Pendant

A very fine and early kurukuru ear pendant made from an old carvers chisel. Maori, New Zealand, Polynesia. Nephrite. 10,7 x 1,1 cm. 16th/18th century.

" The most difficult part of the work is to drill the hole for the thong in the handle. For this, pieces of sharp flint are obtained from the Pahutani cliff, forty miles to the north, and are set in the end of a split stick, being lashed in very neatly. The stick is about 15in. or 18in. long, and is to become the spindle of a large teetotum drill. For the circular plate of this instrument the hardened intervertebral cartilage of a whale is taken. A hole is made through, and the stick firmly and accurately fixed in it. Two strings are then attached to the upper end of the stick, and by pulling them a rapid rotatory motion is given to the drill. When an indentation is once made in the pounamu the work is easy. "

Illustration and text from :

On the Working of Greenstone or Nephrite by the Maoris. By F. R. Chapman. Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand 1868-1961 Volume 24, 1891.