

FAKE SCRIMSHAW

PART II: Manufacturers and Distributors

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In Part I, a review of both fake and real scrimshawed objects was done, with the emphasis placed on the various types of fake scrimshaw that have been produced. They included museum reproductions and fake scrimshaw, better known by collectors of ivory as "Fakeshaw"¹. I failed to include contemporary products in the first article, but these boards do need to be included in order to complete the listing. In short, contemporary pieces are simply polymer scrimshawed cribbage boards that have no historical meaning attached to them.

The known manufacturers or distributors of the various kinds of scrimshaw, and the cribbage boards that they have manufactured or distributed, are listed here, along with the source of the information. All catalogs are from my archives.

FAKE SCRIMSHAW (FAKESHAW)

Grooveport, Ltd.: Cirencester, Gloucestershire England (Stuart M. Frank)

SJ40: Baroque building, compass rose, fruit, flowers, palm trees. 13". Initials "JHTA" on underside. Two very similar boards are reported, with photos included. This board is .5" longer than the other, and it has a small 'fence' scrimshawed at the end. The manufacturer of the other board is not known.

Historycraft: Cirencester Gloucestershire, England (2000 catalog)

Established in the early 1970s to make replica historic pieces for museums and churches. The base used is polyester resin mixed with stone powder. It is not clear if this manufacturer, which is in business at the present time, is the current name for Grooveport They are both identified with the same town.

SC23: Ship portrait at each end. Inscribed "Ship Beatrice - 1797". 14" SC231: Cribbage and Card Box: The cover slides off. 8.5"

Juratone, Ltd.: London England (Stuart M. Frank)

518: Tusk, no description. 13"

109MTW: Inscribed "The Ship Nolan". Dated 1832-1836. Underside inscribed "Taken in the Arctic Ocean/ July 22nd 1832" "P. Aixle". 19"

Manufacturer Unidentified: (Could be Grooveport SJ40)

Plantation Scene: Plantation manor house, floral and geometric scenes, compass rose with fleur de lis.

Initials "JHTA" on underside, No 'fence' at end. 12.5"

Manufacturer Unidentified:

Pan Bone: "Whaler Topaz off Marquesas Island Jan 1840"

MUSEUM REPRODUCTIONS

Artek, Inc.: Antrim, NH (1988 catalog)

Artek was established in the early 1970s, and to my knowledge, remains in business at the present time. They have been considered the leading manufacturer of scrimshawed reproductions of ivory and bone pieces found in maritime museums. The complete line is known as the "Save the Whale Collection".

MUSEUM REPRODUCTIONS (contd)

Artek, Inc.: Antrim, NH (1988 catalog)

Polymer blanks are first molded by hand, and then hand finished. All museum reproductions are identified with the imprint of the museum where the original can be viewed. For instance, reproductions which are copied from originals located at the Peabody Museum, Salem, MA, are stamped on the underside with "pms".

M532: Small Fish Cribbage Board with Tail (3 dimensional). 8" X 1"

M534: Large fish Cribbage Board (3 dimensional). 14" X 1.5" X 2.5"H

M538: Walrus Cribbage Board (3 dimensional). 11" X 1.5" X 1.5"H

M540: Whale shaped Cribbage Board on hardwood base (flat board). 12" X 4"

M540A: Whale shaped Cribbage Board w/o hardwood base (flat board). 11.5" X 3.5"

M542: Tusk Cribbage Board (3 dimensional). (Scrim. Fish, walrus, bug). 10" X 1.25"

The Boone Trading Co., Inc.: Brinnon, WA (2000 catalog)

In business for nearly 25 years, this company originally specialized in natural products of nature, such as the various ivories, bone, antlers and horns. Today, their focus is on cast cultured ivory reproductions of museum pieces.

SR08: Scrimshawed walrus tusk created by Yupik Eskimo Judy Pelowook, who is considered the finest scrimmer living today. Polar bear,, seal, walrus, sperm whale, bowhead whale, killer whale, narwhal, ribbon seal, harpoon. 18" X 2"

House of Global Art: Moorestown, NJ (1987 catalog)

This company distributed reproduction scrimshaw that was handcrafted in England, possibly by one of the companies listed under Fake Scrimshaw. Their 1987 catalog listed no cribbage boards, but did list walrus tusk `reproductions' that could have eventually been used to make them. Their products were cast from polymer, then engraved and antiqued by hand.

CONTEMPORARY

History Art USA: Orleans, MA (1999 catalog)

Originally called Nye Overseas Trading Enterprise, this company was founded in the early 1980s. Although I bought cribbage boards from the original company in the 1980s, the history of their probable involvement at that time as distributor of Juratone products, the British manufacturer of 'Fakeshaw', is no longer available.

At the present time, History Art USA specializes in reproduction scrimshaw made from a resin composite. All work is first hand engraved, then CONTEMPORARY (contd)

History Art USA: Orleans, MA (1999 catalog)

reproduced, using a cold casting technique. Their catalog includes several styles of cribbage boards, including one model which is probably a reproduction of an early authentic scrimshawed piece.

G-02: Flat Sperm Whale with scrimshawed Steamboat. ± 12" G-03: Golf course

G-05: Flat Whale with the Sailing Ship "The Constitution" scrimshawed. ± 12"

G-06: Hand cut Wooden Box w/ G-05 Inlay

G-07: Portland Head lighthouse. 11" X 3.25"

G-08: Map of Massachusetts scrimshawed on oblong polymer board

G. H. Cook Company: Arlington, WA (1989 catalog)

Founded by Gordon H. Cook in the early 1980s, the company is internationally known for their detailed scrimshaw, which is created on "cultured ivory". The manufacture of cribbage boards ceased in 1993. Identical in shape, the cribbage board featured a once around track, three starter holes each player, and one peg-out hole. Signed `Cook' in lower right corner. 12" X 3.5".

GC1-0150: Sailing Ships

GC1-0250: Humpback Whales

GC1-0350: Walruses

GC 1-0450: Eagle with Salmon

GC 1-0550: Killer Whales

GC 1-0650: Moose

GC 1-0750: Grizzly Bear with Cubs

GC 1-0850: Alaskan

North Coast Trading Company: Seattle, WA (1992 catalog)

Founded in 1976 by Pete Lange and two friends. Many North Coast Trading cribbage boards are marked with the initials `NCT' within the scrimshawed area. The company creates contemporary pieces as well as reproduction pieces from cultured marble and simulated ivory. The materials are a combination of cararra marble powder and manmade materials.

F201: Reproduction walrus tusk, with two carved-in-relief walruses at one end which are encircled by a geometric design. 10"

501- 549 Series: rounded rectangular board, scrimshawed with various designs of wildlife, ships, and other scenes. 7" X 3.5"

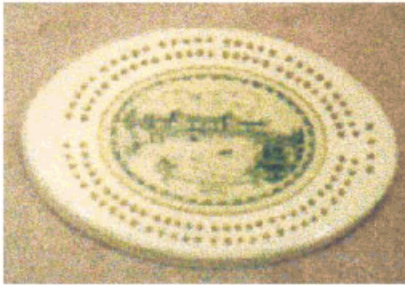
OCB 301- 322 Series: Oval cribbage board: white engraved marble top of various scenes, with faux coral or black marble bottom. 7" X 5"

SUMMARY: This concludes an overview of the known manufacturers/distributors of fake scrimshaw. Although there is still much not known about this elusive subject, the information which was printed in Part I, along with the identification of many boards which are included in Part II, should enable the collector to make a more qualified evaluation of the authenticity of so-called `ivory' boards. Unless a dealer is willing to provide a money-back guarantee on a board which is advertised as being authentic, the buyer should `BEWARE'? A reputable dealer isn't going to jeopardize his reputation for the sake of one sale gone wrong.

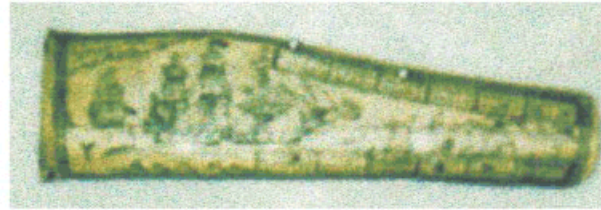
Should you have information on boards that you don't see listed in these articles, I would appreciate hearing about them.

Bette

¹Attributed to Stuart M. Frank, Author of "Fakeshaw: A checklist of Plastic "Scrimshaw"



NCT: OCB 300 Series
Mount Washington Hotel



Whaler Topaz... Photo R. Lemeir (#106)



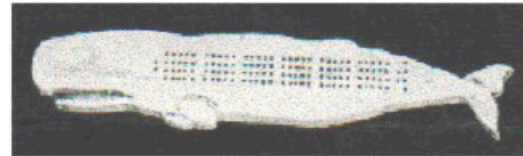
Historycraft: SC23



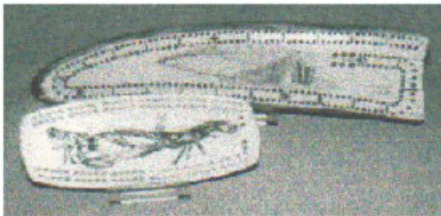
Artek: (T) M534 (M) M532 (B) M538



Artek: M540: Photo Courtesy of S. Stevens (#070)



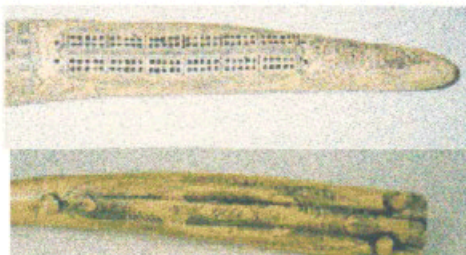
History Art USA: G-02



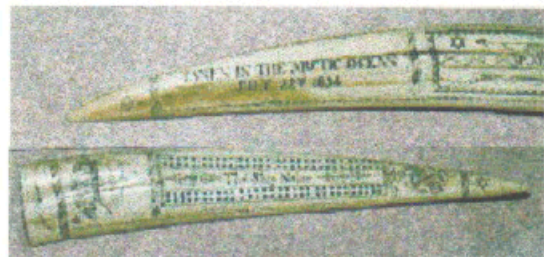
T: G.H. Cook:Whales
B: NCT: 500 Series



Boone Trading Co. SR08



Grooveport, Ltd.: SJ40



Juratone, Ltd.: 109MTW

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