



Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

Water Colour - Cabin on HMS Winchester

REF: 81031

Height: 11.43 cm (4.5") Width: 11.81 cm (4.6")

Sold



This pair of small watercolours show two views of the interior of a ship's cabin on HMS Winchester.

The Winchester was a 52 gun Southampton class frigate. One shows what we can presume to be a campaign chest with a full secretaire drawer open. It is squeezed in between a chest which is fitted for washing to the top and a sofa bed. Above is a mirror with candle arms and three pictures. Above the pictures are two telescopes. A floor covering, which is probably an oil cloth, decorated with a pattern of flowers gives the cabin a more homely feel. The second drawing shows the sofa bed with its red cushions and covers in front of cupboards and with part of an armchair to the side. The title written to the card the watercolours are mounted on is inscribed Mr C A's cabin - HMS. Winchester. There could be some doubt as to whether the first two letters are Mr or W: but in probability it is more likely the former.

The size of the cabin would fit in with that belonging to the ship's Captain. Following this line of investigation the only Captain of the Winchester with these initials was Charles Austen, who took command in 1828. Austen served on the Winchester in the West Indies, which was where he met his wife Fanny. If this is Austen's cabin then it likely to be her portrait on the bulkhead. His time commanding the ship was short and he was invalided home after falling from the mast in December 1830. After a period of recuperation he

returned to the navy and continued to enjoy a successful career going on to become a Rear Admiral. However, he will perhaps always be over shadowed by his sister, the novelist Jane Austen. These two drawings give an insight of the type of furniture used on board ship. The campaign chest is shown without its legs, as you would expect, and the look of the secretaire ties in with the date of the picture. The washstand and sofa are dual purpose pieces of furniture which would be practical in a confined space. Circa 1830.

Image Size is given.