



Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture  
& Travel Items

## Brown Bros. Packing Case Antique Campaign Chest

Brown Bros.

Sold



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REF: 81339

Height: 106.5 cm (41.9")

Width: 76.5 cm (30.1")

Depth: 45.5 cm (17.9")

## Description

The carcase of this Packing Case Chest is made of oak edged in tin with the smarter wood for the drawer fronts made of mahogany.

Originally it would have had a pair of slide on cover boards to complete the 2 packing cases for travel. These were made with the one for the top sliding up and the bottom one sliding down on grooves to the sides of the chest. These boards would each have had two pins to locate them with one overhanging edge to bolt them to the cases. There are large, iron carrying handles to the sides. The drawers are lined in ash and each is stencilled Brown Bros, 165 Piccadilly to the inside back. The replaced, turned feet are removable and are made to the same design as others seen on Brown chests. Brown Bros. were good makers, although not prolific judging by the number of their items that appear on the market. From the listings in the London Directories the company were active for a fairly short period between 1851 and 1872 and kept the same address. This chest has 2 owners' details to it. To the sides, in black paint, is PHE with a crucifix and 58th Regt. There is also a long ink inscription to the top of the bottom half of the chest and although barely legible starts with PHE and 58th which ties in with the stencils to the sides. The chest belonged to Philip Henry Eustace Cross, a surgeon in the regiment.

The second owner's details are also painted in white to this part of the chest and are Capt. W. Holmes 9 K.R.R.C. Holmes became an Honorary Lieutenant in April 1886 and the Quartermaster of the 9th Battalion of The King's Royal Rifle Corps (Formerly the North Cork Militia). By 1899 he progressed to the rank of Honorary Captain and then Major in January 1903. It is likely that he was a regular soldier before transferring to the Militia as he took part in the Afghan campaign of 1878 to 1880, fighting at Ahmed Khel and Ghuznee. In 1880 he took part in the Marri expedition and also served with the Natal Field Force in the first Boer War. He also fought in the Boer War of 1899 embarking on the R.M.S.S. Nile with the K.R.R.C. to South Africa. Holmes' dates are later than Brown Bros. which would suggest he purchased the chest from the original owner or at a battlefield auction. This is a smaller sized chest with good maker's name and intriguing history. Circa 1862.