Packing Case Campaign Chest

Sold



REF: 84070

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Height: 109.18 cm (43")

Width: 83.79 cm (33")

Depth: 43.16 cm (17")

Description

An oak and mahogany Packing Case Campaign Chest.

The 'packing case' carcass of this military chest is made of dark stained oak, edged and capped with tin. The drawers, being the area most viewed, are made of mahogany to give them a smarter appearance and have good brass, skeletal flush handles. The drawer linings are also mahogany but do not have quadrants to the interior corners. Originally this chest would have had a cover board for each section which would slide down from the top on a tongue and groove joint with a lock to fix it in place. Both are now missing.

The chest has a very innovative way of uniting the two sections when set up for use. To the middle of the side top edges of the bottom section are a hinged brass lug. This square lug, one each side, will stand upright on a sprung bar to the casing to fit into the mouth of a corresponding brass fitting to the top half, thus uniting the two sections. The third photo illustrates it. During travel it will fold down neatly into its casing, protected and out of the way. The removable turned feet are fitted with round steel plates with a steel bolt to the centre. These screw into similar steel plates screwed in place to each corner of the bottom section of the chest.

We have seen this type of lug on two other campaign chests that could well be from the same workshop as this one. One belonged to George J Huband Esquire of the 8th Hussars and dates to between 1837 and 1843. The other belonged to George Donovan who enlisted on the 2nd October 1855 as an ensign in the 49th Regiment. Our accompanying video, below, illustrates and compares the three chests.

This chest is the smallest in width of the three at 33 inches, not including the iron carrying handles. With the handles, the width is 34 inches. The size is 6 inches less in width than a standard campaign chest of the second half of the 19th century and perhaps makes it more practical for modern living. It is a very interesting variant of the campaign chest and a type that is not easy to find. Circa 1850.

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