Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

Secretaire Military Chest

Sold

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REF: 83201

Height: 119.97 cm (47.2")

Width: 106.64 cm (42")

Depth: 52.05 cm (20.5")

Description

A Victorian mahogany, short drawer Secretaire Military or Campaign Chest. The top section of the chest has four short drawers with the secretaire being on the lower right-hand side. This deeper drawer has a fall front released by a single brass push button to the interior side. The secretaire has a single long drawer to the bottom with three short drawers above to the right and three pigeonholes next to them to the left. There are no dividers within any of the drawers. The secretaire drawer has a Bramah lock, without key, which is also stamped VR for the monarch.

This chest is unmarked by the maker but has a number of attributes that suggest it maybe Irish. Gregory Kane of Dame Street and Ross & Co. of Ellis Quay, both in Dublin, did things a little differently to the English makers and this chest has some of those factors but not enough to point directly to either of them. Such features include the single release button for the fall of the secretaire, the round escutcheons to all the drawers, the shaped corner straps to the top, the dimensions of the chest, the way the two sections meet to the front to give a more natural appearance and the unusual sledge runners to the bottom section to take the removable, screw in feet.

Aside from Ross and Kane, Dublin had a number of other makers of camp equipage including Bradshaw Brothers, Henry Evans, George Lynch and Robert Whitestone. Not enough is known about their work to identify one as the maker of this chest but it is conceivable that cabinet makers moved between the different businesses taking the working practises of their previous employ with them.

The origin aside, this is an interesting and well-made campaign chest. The mahogany is a rich dark colour and the brass strapwork is good. Circa 1860.

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