Portable Equilibrium Desk Chair

John Alderman / Chapman & Alderman

Sold



© Christopher Clarke Antiques

REF: 83807

Christopher Clarke Antiques
The Fosseway, Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire, GL54 1JS
clarkeltd@btconnect.com • 01451 830 476 • www.campaignfurniture.com

Height: 100 cm (39.4")

Width: 60 cm (23.6")

Depth: 70 cm (27.6")

Description

A mahogany Portable Equilibrium Carrying Chair by John Alderman.

Although designed as a chair for carrying somebody that would also be a practical, portable desk or easy chair, it properties were very useful for travel.

Alderman wrote of the chair that it 'enables an invalid, however weighty, to be carried up and down stairs with perfect ease and safety; the chair always adjusting itself, enables the two persons who carry to walk up and down stairs in the usual way, quite erect, with their arms straight down, which avoids any strain upon their muscles. It is also a perfect Easy Chair for the patient to sit in during the day, carrying handles being made to hook on and off in an instant.'

The chair packs down comprehensibly when not in use and so would have also appealed to an officer or traveller. First a split pin is removed from the hinge at the end of the arm, where it meets the back; second, the trigger under the arm is pulled and it release the horizontal arm rest from its upright post. The post, in turn, will drop on its hinge to lie parallel to the seat frame. This method of dismantling the arm means that the chair can also be used with only one arm up. This would be a benefit to someone needing more space to get off the chair as well as an officer wearing a sword. Although not designed for the officer, it is a coincidental benefit. With both arms removed, the back will drop on its hinges to lie against the seat, with the cushion removed.

The back and seat frame are separate to the legs and will lift off once their fixing bolts have been removed to leave you with a frame with four legs. To each side of the top half of the chair are a pair of iron plates with holes to receive a bolt which also fits through iron plates on rods to the underside of the bottom half of the chair. These bolts fix to the two parts firmly but the chair can be used without them as the weight of the sitter keeps the two parts together. It is likely Alderman corrected his design of this chair as most that we have seen either only have the iron fitting to the top or don't have them at all. The second use for the iron plates to the top is to fix the iron carrying frame for the two bearers. Few of these carrying frames remain with their chairs, having no use for later generations. The legs unscrew from their frame to further reduce the packed size.

Strictly speaking this was not conceived as a campaign chair but it is very probable that the odd officer found it practical to travel with. It was made in a period when items made for the soldier or for domestic use merged with good design allowing it to be marketed to both. As a chair, it is very comfortable. The caning to the back has been replaced as have the buttoned leather cushions and arm pads. The large brass castors allow the chair to move easily.

This is a very comfortable chair which is a good height for a desk or to be used as an easy chair. Circa 1865.

The height to the top of the leather seat cushion is 17 3/4 inches.

Christopher Clarke Antiques
The Fosseway, Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire, GL54 1JS
clarkeltd@btconnect.com • 01451 830 476 • www.campaignfurniture.com