Mahogany Campaign Shelves

Sold



REF: 83991

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Height: 66.01 cm (26")

Width: 88.87 cm (35")

Depth: 19.04 cm (7.5")

Description

A set of mahogany & brass Campaign Shelves with cresting rail.

The shelves are a good, standard design but are elevated a little by having a cresting rail and feet. They were also available without. To dismantle them, the cresting rail is first lifted off. It sits in place by three lugs inserted to holes to the top shelf. The brass finials, which are nuts, are then unscrewed from the steel threads to the top of the brass columns below. The top shelf can then be lifted off and the four brass columns unscrewed from the four below them, the next shelf removed and the bottom four columns unscrewed from the domed feet below the bottom shelf.

The Shelves have been fitted with a pair of brass mirror plates to the back of the top shelf to hang them. There are also some holes probably made by a previous pair of mirror plates. Originally the shelves were intended to be used with the cresting rail to the front. A past owner obviously thought it was meant to sit at the back or it suited them to do so and the mirror plates are behind the cresting rail, meaning it has to be hung this way now.

The concept is the same as that seen on washstands and was used throughout much of the 19th century and into the 20th. Most sets of shelves and washstands that you see are from either side of 1900 though. It was a simple, good design that was very practical allowing the shelves to dramatically reduce in size. Most such shelves are a similar size and were intended to sit on top of campaign chest. A number of makers produced such shelves including the Army & Navy CSL and Allen who advertised a set with cresting rail but not feet in their 1855 catalogue for £ 1 18s. The described it as 'A Set of Portable Mahogany Book Shelves, brass standards'.

This form of shelving is always useful and can be hung or sat on a chest. Late 19th Century.

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