Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

Thomas Handford Small Trunk

Thomas Handford

Sold

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REF: 6180

Height: 18.5 cm (7.3")

Width: 41 cm (16.1")

Depth: 25.5 cm (10")

Description

T. Handford was the Patentee of this small 'Light Water Proof Travelling Trunk' (see Brawer, British Campaign Furniture).

It is constructed of leather on a wooden carcass and edged and bound with brass. The brass to the edge of the lid overlaps to ensure it is well sealed and the top has 2 locating teeth, as well as 2 stays to keep the lid open. The embossed brass maker's plate to the front of the trunk states 'Handford Patent Trunk No 7, Strand' around the Royal Coat of Arms and motto Dieu Et Mon Droit. The interior of the trunk has a good paper label, which we have illustrated. Much of the information on this label is the same as that noted in British Campaign Furniture, although the address is given as 'No. 7 The Strand' and it is illustrated with 3 trunks as well as a writing box. Handford made these boxes in several sizes to the same basic design and the few that we have encountered each give different addresses in the Strand for the company on their labels.

The handle plate to the top of the box is engraved with the owner's name of 'Hon'ble C. F. Stuart'. Research indicates that this is probably Charles Stuart (1779-1845), the son of the famous General Sir Charles Stuart and grandson of John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute and Prime Minister. Charles Stuart was a very well known diplomat in his own right being Ambassador to Portugal during the Peninsular Wars. He also held the posts of Joint Charge D'affaires at Madrid and ambassador of King John VI to the Empire of Brazil. He was made a privy councillor in 1812, later serving as minister at the Hague, ambassador to Paris and ambassador to St. Petersburg. In 1828, he was created Baron Stuart de Rothesay of the Isle of Bute. Such a good quality box would have been very useful to a man in Stuart's position. Early 19th century.

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