Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

Portable Folding Easel

Sold

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REF: 83552

Height: 180.27 cm (71")

Width: 76.17 cm (30")

Depth: 96.48 cm (38")

Description

A teak Portable Folding Easel.

The Easel is made of three legs with the central leg tapered 5 inches from its top. The three legs are joined at this point by a tenon which passes through either side of the central leg and into the two side legs. It is fixed to the central leg by two pegs but to the two side legs by only a single peg each.

This allows them to tip against the chamfered sides of the central leg and so go from being parallel to standing at an angle to it. The middle leg of the Easel is hinged 12 inches from the top with the two ends cut to an angle. This allows the leg to fold back on its hinge but only so far as the two parts butt up against each other, thus making an A frame which stands.

The side legs each have eleven holes to set the position of the two pegs to support a canvas frame or board. A bar could also be set on the pegs to give versality in holding smaller or much larger pictures. Some of the holes are much lower than you would expect them to be of use and some much higher.

The three legs each have a hinge part way along their length so that they can be folded to halve their height. They also have a hinged brass plate with a rectangular hole which bridges the two halves of each leg and can be locked in position using a twist catch, through the rectangular hole, to fix the legs at their full length.

The Army & Navy CSL advertised a similar easel in their 1883 catalogue under the name 'Portable Easel'. They described it as similar to their Closing Easel, which did not have the hinges to allow its height to be halved. It was available in Deal at 10/6 or Mahogany at 15/6. They also noted that they weren't kept in stock but would be procured on ordering, suggesting they were made by a third party.

The Army & Navy CSL's example differs in that it was illustrated with a long bar that was passed through the two side legs approximately 20 inches from the top. We have had a previous example of this form of Easel with this bar and it gave extra support to the top of the canvas but could be removed for packing. It also had two more through tenons further down the central leg which, although not fixed to the side legs, fitted into them to help unite the three legs when packed down.

The Easel is quite plain but does have fine lines incised to the edges to make a cock beading. It would have been very useful in the field to both a soldier and an artist. It could be used not only for painting and drawing but also for displaying maps or plans. Late 19th Century.

Dimensions for use are given.

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