Chinese Export Ship's Table

Sold



REF: 84124

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Height: 81.25 cm (32")

Width: 79.34 cm (31.2")

Depth: 48.24 cm (19")

Description

A China Trade Ship's Pembroke Table probably made of Narra wood.

This is an unusual table that was made to be multi purpose. Above the pair of short drawers, two replaced ebonized knobs pull out a slide with a baized surface for writing; the long drawer below was made to take a wash bowl and jug; not only does the table have hinged leaves to the side to increase its length by 20 inches but it also has one to the back to further increase the top by 9 inches in depth.

This table has a simple elegance with the Chinese cabinet maker inspired by English furniture design. The edges of the top are cut with a reed moulding and a fine moulding is applied to the bottom edge. The drawers are cut to their edges with a cock beading line and have brass skeletal campaign handles.

It also has a well considered practicality to it. The long drawer needs a greater depth to take a wash bowl and so it has a faux bottom edge with the bottom of the drawer disguised as the board the drawer would normally sit on top of. The interior of the drawer has side runners to support a cutout board to hold the bowl, with the inside edge of the drawer front cut with a small scoop to allow for the bowl. The back right hand corner of the drawer has a hole cut to the base board for a water jug to drop in and extend below the drawer. We have made a removable round insert to fill this hole to make the drawer practical for modern use. The small shaped blocks to the inside edge of the front legs give extra support to the drawer when pulled out to wash but also add to the simple elegance. Whereas the side flaps have rounded corners, the back flap has square corners as it would be used against a bulkhead. The lopers to support the leaves fold neatly away when not in use. The pullout slide has a lip to the bottom edge so it can't be pushed in to far but gives a neat finish to the front when closed.

The multi purpose use of this table along with the two iron rings, one set to each side between the legs, point to this table being made for shipboard use. It would have been made by a Chinese cabinet maker in one of the many ports in the east that catered for Western ships passing through. This is proved by the ink characters to identify left and right underneath the two short drawers as well as the way the dovetails are made and set to the back of the drawers.

This is a good table that can be used against a wall or opened to its larger size and used in the centre of a room or behind a sofa etc. The closed size is given but the size of the top when extend is 51 inches by 28 1/4 (129.5 x 72 cm). Circa 1810.

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