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# AN ANTIQUE SWAT VALLEY TIMBER DOWRY CABINET,

probably late 19th or early 20th Century,

the rectangular section cabinet raised on four corner posts with knopped finial surmounts, the panelled cupboard carved to the principle façade with repeating relief carved foliate motifs and incorporating a sliding hatch door,

DIMENSIONS: 115cm (45<sup>3⁄4</sup>" ) High, 115cm (45<sup>3⁄4</sup>" ) Wide, 57cm (22<sup>1⁄2</sup>" ) Deep

STOCK CODE: 42934



## HISTORY

The Swat Valley is a beautiful mountainous area of the Hindu Kush that straddles the Afghan-Pakistan border. The population is predominantly ethnic Pashtun or Gujjar. Every household in The Swat Valley traditionally had a number of these chests. They were used for storing jewellery, clothes and food of all kinds, the bride's dowry and stocks of grain. They can therefore be found in many different sizes. The use of the adze, rather than the plane, indicates this is an earlier example.

The upper Swat Valley is the centre of production of this furniture - in Madyan and Behrain where the valley is narrow and steep-sided. Here there is a carving tradition that is borne out in the architecture. With Taliban incursions and security issues generally the Swat Valley has been less accessible in recent years. See Johannes Kalter "The Arts & Crafts of the Swat Valley" Thames and Hudson, 1991 figs 157-162 for illustrations of comparable cabinets.