

Basic Detail Report



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Title High Chest

Date 1780-1800

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Cherry and mahogany primary wood, with tulip poplar, eastern white pine, chestnut, oak and birch secondary woods, brass hardware

Description Cherry and mahogany high chest with a swan's neck pediment in the Queen Anne, or late baroque, style. The high chest has local characteristics associated with Colchester style production, specifically with the Lord and Samuel Loomis groups. The swan's neck pediment has a steep slope and a conforming roof, or bonnet top, which is open at the center. Each upper end of the pediment molding terminates in a pinwheel rosette. The pediment molding is decorated with dentils. There are three finials at the top of the high chest. The center finial is in the shape of an inverted shaving brush; it sits atop a stylized, inverted, projecting shell. The side finials are in the shape of rope twists, and sit on square, fluted plinths. The upper case drawer arrangement consists of three drawers in a line over four full-width, graduated drawers below. The center top drawer is carved with a shell over horizontal reeding; the top side drawers are shaped to conform to the upward curve of the pediment. The front corners of the upper case each have a stop-fluted pilaster, or fluted flat column with reeding on the bottom half. There are applied half-shells at the top and bottom of each pilaster. The top case fits inside the mid-molding of the lower case. The

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lower case drawer arrangement consists of one shallow, wide drawer over three deeper, drawers in a line. The lower center drawer has a complex carved shell above horizontal reeding; this reeding continues onto the center of the front skirt. The front skirt has an elaborate center arch flanked by smaller elaborate arches. The side skirts each have a high center arch flanked by a cyma curve, or S-curve, and a quarter circle. The cabriole legs each have a scrolled knee return and a pad foot. Hardware on each full-width drawer in the upper and lower case consists of a center brass lock escutcheon flanked by matching brass escutcheons with bail pulls. The side drawers in the upper case each have a brass knob. The shell-carved drawers in the upper and lower case each have a brass knob in the center of the shell. The side drawers in the lower case each have a brass escutcheon with a bail pull. Condition: The finials appear to be original. The caps and drop pendants are missing from the front skirt. The bonnet skin has been repaced. The hardware is replaced. Design and Construction Details: Carving. Each pinwheel rosette is carved with a circular fan around a recessed circle. The carved shell on the upper case drawer has twenty wavy, projecting rays with an incised midrib in each ray. A punched decoration is located in a semi-circle around the shell. The carved shell on the lower case drawer consists of ten projecting rays, each with an incised midrib, alternating with nine concave rays; the edge of the shell undulates and is outlined with a carved line. Case Construction. The back of the bonnet top is cut straight across the center. Each circular opening flanking the center plinth has a semi-circular notch immediately below the rosette. The upper-case backboard fits into

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grooves in the case sides. The lower case is formed with mortise-and-tenon

construction. The scrolled knee bracket returns are applied over the front skirt.

Drawer Construction. The upper-case drawer dividers are tenoned into the case

sides; a portion of the front corner of each drawer divider is cut out to

accommodate the pilaster. The lower case drawer divider is visibly dovetailed

into the leg posts; the vertical partitions are visibly dovetailed into the drawer

divider above and the skirt below. The drawer fronts are lip-molded with ovolo,

or thumbnail, molding. The tops of the drawer sides are rounded. The drawer

bottoms fit into grooves in the front and sides of each drawer and are nailed at

the back. The drawers have small, triangular dovetail pins; the dovetails are

reversed at the back of the drawers.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 84 1/4 x 39 1/4

x 40in. (214 x 99.7 x 101.6cm)