

Basic Detail Report



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Title Chest-on-Chest

Date 1780-1800

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Cherry primary wood, eastern white pine and tulip poplar secondary wood, brass hardware

Description Cherry chest-on-chest with a swan's neck pediment and blockfront, in the Chippendale, or rococo style. The chest-on-chest has local characteristics associated with Colchester style production, specifically the Calvin Willey group. 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. At the top of the chest-on-chest there are three spiral-turned finials (replaced). The larger center finial sits on a plinth above an inverted, convex, stylized shell. Each side finial sits on a fluted rectangular plinth (replaced). Both the upper and lower case have blockfront shaping, which consists of a center recessed vertical panel flanked by narrower, projecting vertical panels. The blockfront shaping is topped by three shell-carved drawers, and it extends down through the mid-molding, the base molding, and the front feet. The upper case drawer arrangement consists of three narrow shell-carved drawers of equal height, in a line over four full-width, graduated drawers. The lower case drawer arrangement consists of four full-width graduated drawers. The front corners of each case have a boldly-carved rope-twist column. The upper case fits inside the mid-molding of the lower case. The base molding is

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unusually complex, and the ogee bracket feet project boldly beyond the front

and sides of the lower case. Hardware consists of one brass knob on each shell-

carved drawer, and a brass-lined keyhole flanked by ring-and-bail brasses on

each full-width drawer. Condition: The three finials, both side plinths, and the

bonnet roof are replaced. The right plinth cap is disconnected from the plinth.

The drawer runners and the blocking behind the feet are replaced. Some lower

drawer sides are replaced. Hardware holes in the drawer fronts have been filled.

The finish has been resurfaced extensively. The hardware is replaced. Design

and Construction Details: Carving. Each applied pediment rosette is carved with

four curved, tear-shaped lobes. Between each lobe is an incised circle with a line

connecting it to the center of the pinwheel. Each circular opening flanking the

center plinth has a semi-circular notch immediately beneath the rosette. The

recessed shell on the top center drawer consists of eleven projecting rays with

an incised medial line alternating with ten recessed rays; the rays give the shell

an undulating outer edge. The rays end in the center with a raised, bell-shaped

line that continues below the bottom of the shell. The bell shape contains a

small shell with thirteen rays, also with a bell-shaped line in the center. The two

side drawers each have a projecting shell that consists of seventeen wavy rays

ending with a raised, bell-shaped line in the center. Case Construction. The back

of the bonnet top is cut straight across the center. The backboard is nailed into

rabbets on the sides of the upper and lower cases. The chest-on-chest rests on a

platform base constructed of two horizontal bottom boards. The lower board

extends to form part of the base molding. The ogee bracket feet are constructed

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of molded ogee facing applied to the supporting frame. The knee bracket

returns of the front feet have a distinctive inward-curving scroll, called a

"Colchester curl." Drawer Construction. Each drawer is outlined by cock beading

on the case. Drawer dividers are tenoned into the housing for the rope-twist

column. Vertical partitions are tenoned into the tympanum above and into the

drawer divider below. Behind the third drawer divider, there is a full-depth

dustboard. The central drawer runners for the top three drawers are tenoned

into the backboard. The side drawer runners are nailed to the sides of the case.

Each drawer front is solid, with a flat interior surface. The drawer sides are flat

on top. The drawer bottoms fit into grooves in the front and sides of each drawer

and are nailed at the back. The dovetail pins are small and nearly triangular.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 92 1/2 x 45 1/4

x 26 3/4in. (235 x 114.9 x 67.9cm)