

# Basic Detail Report

## Title Tall Case Clock

Date 1780-1790

Primary Maker Joseph Carpenter

Medium Case: Cherry primary wood, light wood veneer. Dial: Silver Works: Cast brass and steel.

Description Tall case clock in the Federal, or early neoclassical, style, with a cherry case, a swan's neck pediment, a brass clock movement, and a silver dial that is engraved "Joseph Carpenter/ Norwich". The tall case clock consists of three major components: the removable hood, the removable dial and clock works, and the clock case. The dial and works sit on a horizontal board at the top of the clock case; the pendulum and weights (all separated from the clock) that drive the works would be suspended in the trunk, or narrow body, of the case. The hood slides over the works and sits at the top of the case. At the top of the hood is a finial, consisting of a ball on a cone over an urn. The finial sits at the top of a plinth located between the upper ends of the swan's neck pediment. Each upper end of the pediment molding terminates in rings of concentric molding. The front of the hood has a glass door that is arched and recessed, with a small ivory knob at the left side. The door is flanked by a plain, free-standing column. Each back corner of the hood also has a plain, free-standing column. The trunk of the clock case has deep cove, or recessed quarter-circle, molding at the top and bottom, and a tall, rectangular door with an arched top edge. All four sides of the door are edged with ovolo, or thumbnail, molding. The center

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left side of the door has a keyhole, surrounded by light wood veneer in the shape of a shield. The rectangular base of the clock case has a shaped front skirt consisting of a raised half circle and a large cyma curve, or S-curve. Each side skirt is shaped with a cyma curve and a reverse cyma curve. The board that forms each skirt terminates in straight feet. Construction Details: A single, vertically-oriented backboard with squared top corners extends the full height of the hood to the top of the base. The hood does not have a back; it slides over the clock works to rest on the cove molding at the top of the trunk. Each side of the hood is constructed of a single board, with a projecting board and molding nailed at the top. The flat top of the hood has tapered sides and is nailed down on top of the projecting board at the top of each side. The swan's neck pediment consists of a single shaped board with molding at the top edges. The sides of the hood attach to a horizontal, three-sided frame at the bottom of the hood. Each free-standing column extends between the projecting pediment at the top of the hood and the horizontal, three-sided frame at the bottom. The door is constructed of wooden rails that are tenoned at each corner. The door pivots on a pair of brass hinges at the top right and bottom right corner. The backboard fits into a rabbet on each back corner of the sides of the trunk; this joint is secured with vertically-oriented, rectangular glue blocks on the interior back corners of the trunk. The boards that form the sides of the trunk extend several inches above the bottom of the hood. Each upper interior edge of the side of the trunk has a rectangular block glued in place (later additions). A small board rests at the top of each block, covering the block and the top edge of the side of the

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trunk (later addition). The clock works rest on a seat board, or horizontal board immediately behind the dial. The seat board rests on the top edges of the sides of the trunk. The cove molding is nailed to the front and sides of the top and bottom of the trunk. The front of the trunk consists of a four-sided frame that is tenoned at each corner and nailed to the front edges of the sides of the trunk. The front is also joined to the sides of the trunk with rectangular glue blocks on the interior front corners of the trunk. The front, backboard, and sides of the trunk extend down to the top of the base. The base has a separate, horizontally-oriented backboard that is nailed into a rabbet at the back edges of the sides of the base. The front and sides of the base are joined at the corners with a miter joint. The bottom board is held in place with nails through the lower back edge of the backboard of the base. Dial: The engraved, silvered brass dial is square with an arched top. The center of the dial arch is engraved "Joseph Carpenter/ Norwich". This is flanked by scrolled leaves and vines that extend down onto the top corners of the square dial plate. The middle of the dial plate is engraved with a chapter ring, consisting of a ring of Roman numerals, inside a ring of minute gradations, inside a ring of Arabic numbers from one to sixty in increments of five. In the center of the chapter ring is an arbor, or axle, around which the hour and minute hands pivot (a portion of the minute hand is replaced). To either side of the main arbor is a winding arbor, to wind the clock. A round, recessed seconds dial is engraved above the main arbor, with a hand pivoting around the center. An arched, recessed calendar dial is engraved below the main arbor; the recessed wheel rotates to indicate the day of the month. Additional spirals and

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scrolled vines are engraved in the center of the chapter ring and at each corner

of the dial plate. Clock Works Movement: weight powered Duration: eight day

Materials: cast brass Strike: English-style rack and snail Escapement: recoil The

pillars in the clock works are cylindrical, with a ring around the center. The dial

feet are swaged to the dial. The seat board is original. The works are

accompanied by a pendulum stick, pendulum bob, and two cylindrical cast iron

weights. Condition: Blocks may have been added to the top edge and interior

top of each side of the trunk. A metal hinge is screwed to the interior of the

backboard, at about the height of the lock on the trunk door. The front of the

trunk has split at the upper left corner and at the lower right corner of the frame

around the door. The backboard has split behind the hood. The right side of the

backboard and the front of the base have split. The bottom of the base has

bowed in the front. The door of the trunk does not open; the key is missing. The

hinge at the lower right side of the door of the trunk has pulled away from the

case. The finial and the hardware on the case are replaced. The case is

refinished. A portion of the minute hand is replaced. The pendulum and a pair of

cylindrical weights are separated from the clock works.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 90 x 18 7/8 x

10in. (228.6 x 47.9 x 25.4cm)