

Basic Detail Report

Title Sideboard

Date September 1807

Primary Maker Rudolphus Colton

Medium Mahogany veneer, tulip poplar and pine secondary wood, brass

hardware

Description Mahogany veneer sideboard in the Federal, or early neoclassical, style. The sideboard has six legs and a shaped front consisting of a serpentine center section, flanked by a projecting flat section and a wider, recessed, flat section. The top has a veneered, shaped front edge with two parallel light wood inlaid lines at the front and side edges. The arrangement of the sideboard consists of five drawers in a line over a cabinet with two doors, flanked by a projecting, quarter-round, figured, vertical panel, a narrow bottle drawer, a leg post at the front, a second cabinet, and a leg post at the front and back corners. Each drawer and door has a figured mahogany veneer on the front, and is outlined with a thin line of light wood inlay. The center drawer front is veneered to imitate two separate drawers. The lower center cabinet, and flanking panel is recessed slightly. The lower side cabinets are significantly taller than the center cabinet and bottle drawers. Below each bottle drawer is a curved bracket that connects to the bottle drawer above and the side cabinet at the outer edge. The leg posts extend the full height of the case, and taper below the case down to a slender foot. The front of each front leg, just above the foot, has a geometric band of light and dark wood inlay. The ankle of each foot is recessed, then

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tapers to form the slender foot. The interior arrangement of the center cabinet consists of one full-width shelf with a curved, recessed front edge. Each bottle drawer has three vertical dividers on the inside; these create four square compartments in the drawer. The interior arrangement of each side cabinet consists of two full-width shelves with a curved, recessed front edge. Hardware on the sideboard includes a single round, brass, knob on each of the drawers at the top of the sideboard (one is missing); the center drawer has two knobs to maintain the appearance that there are two drawers. Each cabinet door has an oval, brass lock escutcheon on the interior edge. Each tall, vertical drawer has an oval, brass lock escutcheon at the top edge. Condition: The top is detached from the case. Portions of the mahogany veneer have been conserved in the past, and continue to need repairs. This is most evident on the top row of drawers, the rightmost cabinet door, the right center cabinet door, and the right center leg. The lower quarter of the two center legs and left front leg have been replaced. Some drawer runners and guides have been replaced, or are missing. There are two long cracks on the top of the sideboard; each has been repaired and reinforced from the underside. The rightmost cabinet is locked; there is no key. The top portion of the vertical partition immediately to the left of the center drawer is missing. The sideboard has been refinished. The hardware appears to be original; one brass knob is missing on the inside right drawer. Design and Construction Details: Top Construction. The top is constructed of a single board that is reinforced from beneath by a simple frame system. The edges of the frame and board conform to the shape of the front and sides of the sideboard.

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The frame is further supported by three full-depth braces, one in the center and one where each center leg post would meet the top. Four thin boards (a later addition) are applied to the underside of the top, across the width of the top, between the braces; this is probably a later repair to reinforce cracks in the top.

The front and side edges of the top are finished with thick, applied molding decorated with a light wood inlay. The underside of the top, but not the wood frame, is painted red. At one time the top attached to the case with screws that would be inserted through the backboard (four total) and the front rail (six total). Case Construction. The front rail of the sideboard is formed from a single board with a shaped front edge that extends the full width of the case. Behind each leg post and vertical partition at the front of the sideboard is a full-depth, vertical partition. The top rail is cut out to accommodate the center leg posts and vertical dividers behind the center leg posts; a tenon from this rail fits inside a mortise at the top of each center leg post. At each end it is dovetailed to the front corner post and to a block of wood immediately behind the corner post that is glued to the side of the case. Three glue blocks are adhered to the top interior edge of each side of the case. The backboards are horizontally oriented. They are held in place using two methods. There are two vertical columns of nails applied through the backboards to the full-depth vertical dividers between the center cabinet and its flanking drawers. The second method of securing the backboard is with through tenons from the full-height, full-depth dividers behind the two center legs. The two side cabinets are taller than the center cabinets, therefore the backboard extends down further at each side. The lower

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portion of the backboard is dovetailed to the interior side of each of these

cabinets. The sides of the sideboard fit into grooves in the interior edges of the

corresponding leg posts. The bottom of the sideboard is formed of three

sections. In the front of the center section, a board with a shaped front edge is

joined to the leg posts. In the back of the center section, a thinner board slides

into a groove on the back edge of the front board and is nailed to the underside

of the back board at the back of the case. In each side section, two boards, each

with canted edges, are nailed to the underside of the case. The curved brackets

below each bottle drawer are held in place with glue blocks at the interior top

and side edges. Each interior cabinet shelf rests on thin strips of wood applied to

the side of the case or one of the vertical partitions. Drawer Construction. The

drawer divider consists of a single board that extends the full width of the case,

much like the rail at the top front of the sideboard. The drawer runners for the

top row of drawers are not constructed consistently. The drawer guides for the

left and right drawers are screwed or nailed to the sides of the case or the

vertical partition. The drawer runners for the outer left and outer right drawers

slide into a groove or are tenoned into the side of the case or the vertical

partition. There is no drawer runner for the left side of the inner left drawer. The

drawer runner for the right side of the inner left drawer is nailed in place

between the boards that form the vertical partition, as is the drawer runner for

the left side of the center drawer. The drawer runner for the right side of the

center drawer is missing. The drawer runner for the left side of the inner right

drawer is nailed down between the vertical partitions. The drawer runner for the

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right side of the inner right drawer is nailed to the vertical partitions. The vertical partitions form the drawer guides for the center drawer and the drawers immediately to the left and right. Each of the drawer runners for the bottle drawers consists of a thin strip of wood that is applied to the bottom of the case. Each of the drawer fronts are veneered and has a shaped or flat front, as is appropriate for their location on the sideboard. The drawer sides are flat on top. Each drawer bottom slides into grooves at the sides and front of the drawer, and is nailed at the back. Each bottle drawer has three vertical partitions that are held in place with nails through the drawer sides.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 42 1/4 x 78 3/16 x 25 3/4in. (107.3 x 198.6 x 65.4cm)