

Basic Detail Report

Title Chest of Drawers

Date 1803

Primary Maker Ebenezer Williams

Medium Cherry primary wood, eastern white pine secondary wood, brass

hardware

Description Cherry chest of drawers in the Federal, or neoclassical, style. The front and side edges of the top have a thin line of incised molding at both the top and bottom edge. The drawer arrangement consists of four full-width, graduated drawers. There is base molding at the bottom of the case above four straight feet, each with a knee bracket return that has a deep C-curve, small spur, and an ogee curve, or S-curve. The chest of drawers has an overall red stain. Hardware on each drawer consists of a center, octagonal brass lock escutcheon flanked by a round stamped brass escutcheon with a round pull.

Condition: The top has worm damage, which has been patched. The case and backboards have been realigned. An extra strip of wood has been added to the top of the backboards. The base molding and feet have been repaired. Some glue and corner blocks have been replaced. The drawer runners have been replaced. The chest of drawers has been refinished. The hardware is replaced.

Design and Construction Details: Case Construction. The top sits above two struts that extend the full width of the case and are dovetailed to the tops of the case sides; the top is screwed to the struts from below. The backboards are horizontally oriented, have chamfered edges, and fit into grooves in the sides of

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the case. The bottom is dovetailed to the sides of the case. The bottom front

drawer divider extends down to the bottom of the bottom board; the base

molding is attached to this and the bottom edges of the case sides. Each foot is

constructed of two facings that are supported by a vertical corner block; the

knee bracket returns are supported by glue blocks as well. The rear of the back

feet are supported by a brace that fits into a groove on the side foot facing.

Overall, the wood chosen for the chest of drawers is knotty; many knots have

fallen out. Drawer Construction. The drawer dividers fit into a groove in the sides

of the case; the joint is concealed behind a facing strip. The drawer runners are

nailed into the same groove (now replaced). The drawer fronts have incised

molding at all four edges. 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.

Some dovetails are reinforced with nails. The dovetail pins are small and of

average angle. Please see attached essay by Dr. Thomas P. Kugelman for more

information about this piece.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (height x width x depth): 33 7/8 x 44 1/8 x 18 5

/16in. (86 x 112.1 x 46.5cm)