

Basic Detail Report

Title Slant-front Desk

Date 1790

Primary Maker Amos Bradley

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

hardware

Description Cherry slant-front desk in the Chippendale, or rococo, style. The drawer arrangement consists of a slant front above four graduated drawers. The top drawer is slightly narrower than the others and is flanked by a loper, or thin board that pulls out to form a support for the slant front when open. The desk has shallow base molding and ogee bracket feet that splay slightly. The interior arrangement of the desk consists of a shell-carved prospect door in the center, flanked by four pigeonholes over two drawers in a line; the door, pigeonholes, and drawers are all over two wide drawers in a line. The wide drawers are deeper and project further out than everything above them. The prospect door opens to two drawers stacked one over the other. At the top of each pigeonhole is a valance with a lower edge shaped with a downward-pointing peak, flanked by a raised half circle, a small horizontal, and a hanging quarter circle. Hardware on the desk includes an oval brass lock escutcheon at the top center edge of the slant front, and two hinges on the bottom edge. Each drawer has a brass-lined keyhole in the center flanked by a ring-and-bail pull. Each interior drawer and each loper has a small brass knob. The prospect door has two hinges on the right side and a locking mechanism on the left. Condition: The wood above the

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lock on the front edge of the slant front has been repaired. The hanging peak on the pigeonhole valance immediately to the left of the prospect door is broken.

The hardware is replaced. Design and Construction Details: Carving and Design Details. The carving on the center prospect door consists of a shallow, recessed shell with twelve recessed rays over a half circle; the top edge of the shell is scalloped. The top edge of the slant front has ovolo molding. Each loper has carved molding, consisting of a canted bead on the outside edge. Case

Construction: The top is dovetailed to the case sides. The backboards are horizontally oriented and have canted edges; they slide into grooves in the case sides. The base molding is applied to the bottom front and side edges of the case. Each foot is formed with molded ogee facing supported by a triangular quadrant; this quadrant base construction is applied directly to the bottom of the case. The back of each rear foot is supported by a wedge-shaped bracket that is dovetailed to the ogee bracket facing on the side of the foot. The ogee feet are nearly vertical; each rests on an astragal-molded base. Drawer

Construction. The top rail and the drawer dividers are visibly dovetailed to the case sides. The vertical partitions are visibly dovetailed to the rail above and to the drawer divider below. The drawer runners for the top drawer are tenoned into the drawer divider in front and into a rail that runs the width of the case in back. Drawer guides are nailed down on top of the drawer divider to separate the lopers from the top drawer. The drawer runners for the full-width drawers are nailed to the case sides. The exterior drawers are lip-molded with ovolo, or thumbnail, molding on all four sides. The drawer sides have double astragal

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molding on top. The drawer bottoms fit into grooves in the front and sides of each drawer and are nailed at the back. The interior drawers each have a plain front edge, but they are constructed in the same manner as the exterior drawers. The top of the sides of the two widest interior drawers have triple astragal molding. Please see attached essay by Dr. Thomas P. Kugelman for more information about this piece.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 41 1/2 x 40 x 20 3/4in. (105.4 x 101.6 x 52.7cm)