

Basic Detail Report



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Title Chest-on-Chest

Date 1785-1795

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Cherry primary wood, tulip poplar, eastern white pine and chestnut

secondary woods, brass hardware

Description Cherry chest-on-chest with a swan's neck pediment in the Chippendale, or rococo, style. The chest-on-chest has local characteristics associated with Colchester style production. 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 with four lobes. At the top of the chest-on-chest, there are three turned finials in the shape of an urn on a reel, with chip carving. The center finial sits on a plinth above a stylized, inverted shell. The side finials sit on fluted, rectangular plinths. The upper case drawer arrangement consists of three drawers in a line over four full-width, graduated drawers. The top center drawer is carved with a shell, and the shape of each side drawer conforms to the upward curve of the bonnet. The lower case drawer arrangement consists of four full-width, graduated drawers. Each front corner of each case has a fluted quarter column with seven flutes. The upper case fits inside the mid-molding of the lower case. Each ogee bracket foot has a simple spur on the knee bracket return. Hardware includes a small brass knob on the bottom center of the carved shell. Each side drawer has a single

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brass escutcheon with a bail pull. Each full-width drawer has a brass lock

escutcheon in the center flanked by an escutcheon with a bail pull; the lock

escutcheons in the lower case are blind. Condition: The wood over the lock

escutcheon on the bottom lower case drawer is gouged and chipped. The

hardware is replaced. Design and Construction Details: Carving and Design. The

pediment molding is decorated with dentils; each dentil has a shaped front with

an astragal flanked by a fillet. The top center drawer is carved with a shell that

has thirty tightly-carved, straight, projecting rays. Each ray has chip-carved

decoration at the outer edge. Case Construction. The back of the bonnet top is

cut straight across the center; the bonnet has no front-to-back vertical supports.

The backboard is nailed into rabbets on the sides of the upper and lower cases.

The left and right side of the underside of the lower case each have an attached

board that runs front to back; each board serves as a block to support the front

and back feet. Drawer Construction. The drawer dividers are tenoned into the

case sides; vertical partitions are visibly dovetailed to the pediment above and

to the drawer divider below. The drawer dividers are tenoned into the

backboard. Each drawer has a lip-molded front with ovolo, or thumbnail

molding. The tops of the drawer sides are rounded. The drawer bottoms slide

into grooves in the front and sides of each drawer and are nailed at the back.

The dovetail pins are narrow and triangular. Please see attached essay by Dr.

Thomas P. Kugelman for more information about this piece.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 82 1/2 x 40 7/8

x 21 1/8in. (209.6 x 103.8 x 53.7cm)