

Basic Detail Report

Title Upper Case of a High Chest

Date 1738

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Yellow pine primary and secondary wood, brass hardware

Description Painted yellow pine upper case of a high chest that has been turned into a chest of drawers, in the Queen Anne, or late baroque, style. The chest of drawers has local characteristics associated with the early Queen Anne group, specifically the paint-japanned group. The chest of drawers has a flat top with applied cornice molding at the edges. The drawer arrangement consists of three drawers in a line over three full-width, graduated drawers; the top center drawer is wider than the top side drawers. Molding is applied at the bottom of the chest of drawers. Each turned foot consists of a narrow cylinder, over a flattened ball, over a round pad. Hardware includes a single brass escutcheon with a bail pull on each top drawer. Each full-width drawer has a blind brass lock escutcheon at the top center, flanked by a brass escutcheon with a bail pull. Painted Surfaces. The chest of drawers has a black painted ground, with white and other light colored paints applied in a fanciful arrangement of figures, trees, and a variety of birds and animals. The original painted surface is faded. Each drawer has a different arrangement of motifs: a woman sitting below a tree; animals; foliage; and birds in flight. Each drawer is outlined with a plain border that is embellished at the corners. The bottom drawer is replaced; its vivid paint scheme replicates the decoration on the other drawer fronts. The sides of the

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case are painted with a large tree, or floral arrangement, and birds. The left side of the chest of drawers has the date "1738" painted near the top back corner.

Condition: The entire bottom drawer is replaced. After the original paint scheme had faded, the chest of drawers was repainted. During later conservation, this newer paint was removed on all but the bottom drawer (because that drawer was not original) to reveal the original paint scheme. The feet are later additions.

The bottom sides of the drawers have been repaired, and the drawer runners are replaced. The hardware is probably replaced. Design and Construction Details:

Case Construction. The top is dovetailed to the sides of the case. The cornice molding is nailed to the top front and sides of the case. The backboards are horizontally oriented and nailed into rabbets in the sides of the case. The base molding, formed from the mid-molding of the original high chest, is nailed to the bottom front and sides of the case. The bottom board is dovetailed to the sides of the case. Drawer Construction. Each drawer is outlined by applied double astragal molding on the case sides, drawer dividers, and vertical partitions. The drawer dividers fit into grooves in the sides of the case; they extend back almost two-thirds the depth of the case. The vertical partitions are nailed into place from below the drawer divider; they extend back the full depth of the case. The side drawer runners (replaced) are nailed to the sides of the case. The center drawer runners (replaced) are nailed to the underside of the full-depth vertical partition. Each drawer front is flat and is slightly taller than the drawer sides.

The drawer sides are rounded on top. The drawer bottoms fit into grooves in the front and sides of each drawer and are nailed at the back. The dovetail pins are

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large. The bottom of each drawer and the dovetails at the back of the drawer

sides extend past the back of the drawer to form drawer stops.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 35 3/4 x 35 7/8

x 21 3/8in. (90.8 x 91.1 x 54.3cm)