

Basic Detail Report

Title Dressing Table

Date 1770-1790

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Cherry primary wood, eastern white pine and oak secondary woods,
brass hardware

Description Massive cherry dressing table in the Chippendale, or rococo, style.

The top has molded front and side edges above applied compound cove molding at the upper edge of the case. The drawer arrangement consists of three drawers of equal height. The central drawer is wider, and has a large, concave shell with eighteen wide ribs. The front skirt has three flathead arches, one beneath each drawer. The middle of the front skirt has a recessed area that corresponds to the shape of the shell. An acorn-shaped hanging pendant (replaced) is located between each arch. Each side skirt has one flathead arch. The cabriole legs each end in a spherical claw-and-ball foot with long talons. Hardware includes one brass escutcheon with a bail pull on each side drawer. The carved central drawer has one brass knob centered at the bottom of the shell. Condition: The dressing table is quite dark, most likely the result of applying a dark brown stain over a lighter, red-tinted stain. The top and front surfaces have many scratches. The wood around the top of the left vertical partition has split. Some knee returns may have been re-nailed. The drawer runners and surrounding wood at the front show wear that is consistent with use over time. All the drawers have had additional strips of wood added to the

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bottom of each side. The interior of each drawer has been finished. The

hardware is replaced. Design and Construction Details: The large carved shell on

the center drawer has nine pairs of alternating convex and concave ribs. The

center of the shell has a semi-circular fan. An arched, crenellated border around

the shell contains a textured, or stippled, surface. The top is formed from two

boards, joined to each other with a butt joint, and connected to the case with

wooden pins. The case is made with mortise-and-tenon construction. The

lowest edge of the oak backboard is extended by a pair of elongated arched

brackets that are nailed to the bottom edge of the backboard and tenoned into

the leg posts. The cornice molding is nailed to the case. The knee returns are

nailed to the skirts and legs. The rail above the drawers is visibly dovetailed to

the leg posts. The vertical partitions between drawers are visibly dovetailed to

the rail above and skirt below. Drawer runners are tenoned into the backboard

and rabbeted to the front skirt. The drawer guides are nailed to the runners or

the sides of the case. The drawer fronts are lip-molded with ovolo, or thumbnail

molding at the edges; the drawer sides are rounded on top. The front center

drawer is augmented with a semi-circular piece of wood to permit carving of the

deep shell. The drawer bottoms fit into grooves in the front and sides of each

drawer and are nailed at the back. A running strip was added to the bottom of

the drawer sides. The lower back edge of each drawer does not have a Suffield

notch. The drawers have dovetail pins of average size and angle.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 33 x 33 1/2 x 20

1/4in. (83.8 x 85.1 x 51.4cm)