

Basic Detail Report

Title Tea Table

Date 1760-1790

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Walnut, brass and iron hardware

Description Walnut tea table in the Chippendale, or rococo, style. The tea table has a round top with a shaped edge and raised molding. The top is not stationary but rotates and tilts up into a vertical position. The pedestal has two blocks at the top, separated by four turned posts; the top block is square and the lower block is octagonal. The pedestal consists of a wide cylinder, over a band of dentils, over a narrow fluted cylinder, over an ovoid turning, a raised ring, and a cylindrical, fluted base with three cabriole legs and claw-and-ball feet. The ovoid turning has an incised line around the center. Each leg, above the knee, has a raised shell. Each foot is elongated with a compressed ball and three claws. Condition: The top has been reglued recently, and repaired with butterfly dovetails in the past. The cleats have been rescrewed to accommodate significant shrinkage of the top. One section of the raised molding at the edge of the top has considerable breaks and repairs; the molding is missing from two sections of the top. The ovoid section of the pedestal is split; there is one area of insect damage on the same section. One leg has insect damage, on the underside of the ankle. The feet are scratched and worn, and one claw has broken off one foot. The top has light stains and scratches and a worn finish.

Design and Construction Details: The top is constructed of three boards that are

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butted together; the joint between each board is further secured with two

butterfly dovetails (an old repair). A pair of cleats are screwed to the underside

of the top. Between each cleat is a block which is attached to the cleats with

round hinge pins; the top pivots on these pins. A round brass catch holds the top

in the horizontal position. The block is the top of a box, formed of two blocks

that are separated by four upright, turned posts; the top block is square and the

lower block is octagonal. The lower block has a round opening in the center,

which fits over a cylindrical tenon, or pillar, at the top of the pedestal. This tenon

extends up through the top block. The tenon has a small hole through which a

key, or slender rectangular block, is inserted to join the box with the pedestal.

This construction allows the top to rotate at the top of the pedestal. Each leg is

dovetailed into the base of the pedestal. A flat iron plate with three spokes is

screwed to the underside of the pedestal base and legs.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (height x diameter of top): 30 3/4 x 35 1/4in.

(78.1 x 89.5cm) Component (maximum width between two feet): 26 1/4in. (66.7

cm)