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**“SCREWY FEET:” REMOVABLE-FEET CHESTS OF DRAWERS
FROM CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
AND FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND**

by

Laura Keim Stutman

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture

Summer 1999

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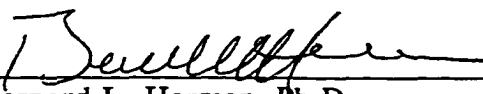
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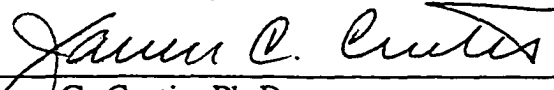
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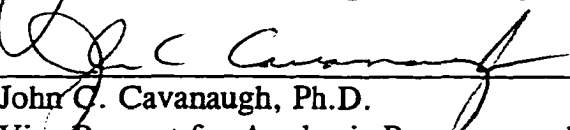
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Laura Keim Stutman

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my paternal grandparents, Marian Todd Keim and Edwin Bernard Keim, who both believed that the study of history and the care and preservation of objects, old and not so old, were noble endeavors.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Frederick County, Maryland, removable-foot chests. The primary questions driving the investigation are: why did the builders of these chests decide to attach the legs to the bottoms of the cases with four wooden screws and what is the cultural meaning of this construction feature? The paper begins with description and the establishment of the form as a type, followed by the creation of context considering makers, owners, attribution, associations, mobility, written period documents, technology, construction, style, design and decoration, as well as previous twentieth-century scholarship of the form by Margaret and Herbert Schiffer. Other furniture studies, Robert F. Trent's *Hearts and Crowns* and Robert Blair St. George's *Wrought Covenant*, are consulted to see how the authors handled the limits of furniture scholarship. The dual definitions of vernacular architecture are applied to the investigation of the removable-foot chests, considering them as indigenous and local forms, part of a design tradition, as well as considering their cultural and practical functions as storage for household goods and as women's dowry furniture.

As folk furniture, the removable-feet chests are absent from the written record because their design was stored in the minds of the craftsmen who made them. The feet easily detach from the chest as does a frame. Whether they do so for ease of movement or because they were cost effective to build, we cannot say for sure. Both reasons may be simultaneously true. What was the significance of the C-scroll design in combination with a reeded, paneled, or lobed spade foot and the screw-joined legs? The form and decoration is distinctive to the trained eye, but to the casual observer, it is simply another plain, tall chest. As twentieth-century observers, we tend to think that something particularly distinctive, must have had a particular meaning in the past. However, we may never know why the removable-feet chests of Pennsylvania and Maryland were created.

Introduction

“The past is a foreign country,” one we cannot reach or explore by getting in an airplane and visiting.¹ Other than by experiencing a culture firsthand, how can we understand it, and as strangers, is that ever possible? Since we can never fully know a culture to which we do not belong, when investigating the past, we make informed guesses at how people thought about their world and the spaces they inhabited. To travel backwards in time we visit museums where the treasures of the past are preserved and available to the public. We connect to the past through artifacts, analyzing and interpreting them by gathering clues to their meaning from many sources. All kinds of artifacts should be included in our study to create a cultural context to interpret the object of our personal fascination, because the objects people create reveal something about their creators’ cultural concepts, giving us glimpses into the life of the past.

For the purposes of this thesis project, I chose to focus just on the removable-foot chests. I have examined fourteen; detailed notes and measurements were sent to me for two more, and I know that another fourteen exist. I suspect that there are still more to be identified. Seven of the thirty did not survive with their original feet, in which case, these chests were easily identified by the presence of four threaded holes in the bottom of the cases close to the corners and the outside edges.

This type of tall chest, in which the feet are held to the case with wooden screws, has fascinated me, and I have centered my investigation of the past around this distinctive form. A contextual web of radiating and interlocking strands must be spun outward from the chests to create as complete a context as possible in which to understand them. These contexts are: makers, owners, attribution, association, mobility, documentary, technology, construction, style, design, and decoration. Other models lead us to consider questions of human behavior, like the physical and cultural function of the chests, design behavior, and embedded cultural meaning. These contexts answer the age-old queries, “who, what, where, when, why, and how?” for the removable-feet chests.

The context I have not considered in any depth is regional practice, through investigation of other furniture forms. There is no reason why the removable-feet chests were the only type used as Quaker dowry chests. Certainly other tall chest forms like the chest-on-frame and the chest with bracket feet were given to young women to outfit them for marriage, some marked with initials and some without inlay. To understand the tall chest as a Pennsylvania dowry chest, more initialed furniture with Quaker provenances should be surveyed. Also, to understand who more of the makers of the removable-feet chest form were, other than Joseph and Benjamin Garrett, comparisons need to be drawn between construction techniques found on these removable-feet chests and those of other forms of case furniture from the two regions considered.

This group of case furniture is an inroad to the past in the Quaker community in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and to those Quakers who migrated south and west to the area of Maryland and Virginia near Frederick, Maryland, when available farmland became scarce in Chester and the other counties close to Philadelphia. Consideration of the removable-feet chests of drawers as a design tradition, with a specific vocabulary for the form and decoration of the legs, suggests that this form had a specific cultural meaning in the Quaker communities in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Frederick County, Maryland, even if that precise meaning remains elusive.²

The removable-feet chest as a type

Understanding an object begins with description, as the physical object is primary data in object-driven material culture research. Thirty known American tall chests follow an easily identifiable form (figures 1 and 2). The single-stage, flat-top cases are built of locally available wood. The case contains nine lipped drawers: three in line, with the center of greater width, above two drawers in line, above four graduated drawers. Supporting the case are cabriole legs about twelve inches high, the inside front edges of which are articulated with modified volutes and open or pierced C-scrolls. The legs terminate in “Spanish” feet of several varieties. The rear legs are flat abstractions of those on the front. The legs are attached to the bottom of the case by means of two battens which run front-to-back on the underside of the

case along the outside edges. The legs are dovetailed to the battens, and each batten is held against the bottom of the case with two rather large wooden screws, the threaded part of which is usually about an inch in diameter.

For almost every criteria listed above, one or several of the chests are variations on the theme. Two are maple. One has two drawers in a line over five graduated drawers. One has paneled sides. One chest has claw-and-ball feet; several have plain, square, spade feet; and one has trifold feet. There are three varieties of the so-called "Spanish" feet, reeded, paneled, and lobed, for a total of six different foot types (figure 23).³ Three chests have floral carving on the front legs. On several examples, the volute and C-scroll are defined by inscribed lines on the knees. Six have corner columns; seven have fluting under the cove molding at the top of the case; one has a pendant skirt; and one has a pendant drop. One is taller than all the others, has a secret drawer behind a bolection molding, and has fully articulated knees on both sides of the front legs and also on the outside of the back legs.

These variations aside, all the chests share a common feature. The removable cabriole legs, dovetailed to battens and held in place by wooden screws, unify them as a group and define the form as a type. This construction feature, not visually obvious at first glance and unique to these chests and one desk with oak secondary wood, is the prime attribute of this group of Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Frederick County, Maryland, case furniture.⁴ This distinguishing feature, which appeared over a span of about fifty years during the second half of the eighteenth

century, is compelling for the twentieth-century imagination because the wooden-screw method of joining the legs to the cases is uncommon in American furniture. The related chest-on-frame is more common and is also found in other regions of eighteenth-century America and the British Isles.⁵

Creating context

The earliest datable example of the form has an integral pendant drop and is inlaid with the initials “H Y” and the date “1752” (figures 4 and 5). This chest has replaced feet. The latest and only other dated chest is a figured maple example in the collection of the Chester County Historical Society. The Society’s chest is signed in chalk on the inside of the second drawer from the bottom, at the back, “Benjamin Garrett.” The signature includes the date “1786” (figure 3).⁶ The spread of these dates indicates that this particular form of tall chest with removable feet was made for at least 35 years and was likely produced repeatedly over the fifty years between approximately 1750 and 1800.

Benjamin Garrett’s signature provides a known maker and some social context in which to position these removable-feet chests. Benjamin Garrett (1771-1856) was the first-born of Joseph Garrett (1743-1792), a joiner, watchmaker, weaver, and farmer working east of Goshen, Chester County, Pennsylvania, and his wife Charity Collins (1751-1799).⁷ Benjamin was about fifteen at the time he signed the drawer back of the maple tall chest and was likely an apprentice in his father’s

shop. Upon his father's death, twenty-one-year-old Benjamin inherited all his father's tools, including a grindstone, joiner's and watchmaker's tools, a box of scales and weights, watch keys and glasses, as well as poplar, maple and walnut lumber. Benjamin also received thirty-eight acres of land and a grist mill along the west branch of Ridley Creek. Benjamin's brother, Joseph (1773-1855), inherited the majority of their father's farm land, 200 acres, adjacent to Benjamin's thirty-eight acres and grist mill. By 1800, Benjamin had added four acres and a saw mill to his property.⁸ Thus Benjamin's signature from the mid 1780s suggests that the Joseph Garrett's Goshen township shop was producing removable-foot tall chests.⁹

Joseph Garrett's place of training remains unknown. However, in the interest of expanding the list of possible makers of these chests, there may have been a close association as well as parallel professional developments between the Garretts in Goshen Township, who had cousins in neighboring Willistown Township, and the Thomas family of watchmakers and joiners also of that township. Isaac Thomas (1721-1802), surveyor, joiner, and clockmaker operated a grist mill and a saw mill on the west side of Crum Creek in the southeastern corner of Willistown Township. Benjamin Garrett was one of the appraisers of Isaac Thomas's goods for the inventory of his estate taken on March 15, 1802. Isaac's son, Enos Thomas (1747-1806), repaired clocks and watches, worked as a farmer, cabinetmaker, and surveyor and also operated a saw mill. Enos' account book survives, documenting that he

made 239 pieces of furniture between 1791 and 1806, including five cases of drawers.¹⁰

Enos inherited a one-hundred-acre farm in Goshen Township from his father. Notably, Benjamin Garrett named his second son Enos, despite that name's previous absence from the Garrett genealogy. Enos Thomas and Benjamin's father, Joseph, were nearly the same age. Enos Thomas' brother, Mordecai Thomas (1767-1837), continued to farm and operate mills along Crum Creek in Willistown and also worked as a cabinetmaker and clockmaker. On May 23, 1810, Mordecai announced in *the Chester and Delaware Federalist* that he had “. . .erected a new machine for Carding Wool into Rolls at his Clover Mill in Willistown Township. . . .”¹¹ “Wool Carding” and a “Join Shop” were also among the items for which Benjamin Garrett was taxed in 1811, and the 1813 tax assessment included “Wool Carding Machinery.”¹² Mordecai and his wife, Lydia Hoopes, were also members of the Goshen Meeting, as were the Garretts. The above associations suggest that the Garretts and the Thomases could have shared business ideas and cabinetmaking skills and techniques through apprenticeships.¹³

The chest inlaid “H Y” and “1752” provides an ownership context for the chests-on-feet. “H Y” is most likely the Hannah Yarnall who married William Griffith at Newtown Meeting October 11, 1752.¹⁴ Newtown (now known as Newtown Square), Willistown, and Goshen are contiguous townships in the northeast quadrant of Chester County (figure 16). This region is a likely origin for

some of these chests. Adding to the argument for eastern Chester County as a point of origin for some of these chests is that the removable-feet chest in the collection of the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum may have descended in the Hoopes family, who were also members of the Goshen Meeting. Winterthur Museum's chest closely follows the signed Garrett chest in construction methods, measurements, the pattern of the legs, and it has the same white chalk numbers inside the drawers.

Although eastern Chester County is the source of at least some of these chests, they were not all built in that vicinity. Close scrutiny of the chests indicates that they are not all made using the same construction methods, tools, and patterns.¹⁵ In fact no two examined are exactly the same, although some are related. There are the five Maryland chests that share design and construction methods, and there are another seven that may be products of the Garrett joiners from Goshen or other craftsmen trained in their shop. Another three have pierced knees, paneled spade feet like those on the only Maryland chest that survived with its feet intact, but do not have the other Maryland characteristics of two-flute corner columns, applied mitered moldings to cover the dovetails on the top, vertical, nailed-on backboards, or battens that are hidden up under the bottom molding. On two of these three examples, the outer edges of the battens are chamfered. The remaining chests have some features that relate to other chests or are anomalous in some way so that they do not fit neatly into any of the three groups. How do we place these in the landscape? Perhaps some are from Quaker settled areas closer to Baltimore as well as western Maryland.

Differences may be the result of customer preferences, or the result of whimsy on the part of the maker. Within a shop, a maker might not have chosen the same plane each time he made a cornice molding.¹⁶ Certainly cabinetmakers and joiners other than the Garretts also produced these removable-feet chests.

The form and style of the inlay on the “H Y” may also provide further maker and Quaker associations. Lee Ellen Griffith discussed the “H Y” in her pioneering study of Chester County line-and-berry inlaid furniture.¹⁷ Two sets of parallel lines, with square-shaped, end-grain inlay between them, are connected by a perpendicular line, with a dropped half-circle, forming the “H.” The dot of the compass line for the half circle is also part of the design. The same “H” with a dropped half circle and dot appears on a 1744 spice box inlaid with the initials “T H E” for Thomas and Elizabeth (Harry) Hutton who were married at London Grove Meeting in 1739. The initials and date are circumscribed by a tombstone shape that includes end-grain dots. Another box also made in 1744 for George and Margaret Passmore, also married at London Grove Meeting in 1742, is decorated with their initials circumscribed by a tombstone shape made up of inlaid parallel line filled with end-grain dots (figure 6). Lee Ellen Griffith loosely associates these two spice boxes with Joel Baily (1732-1797) because of the construction of an arched door inside a desk signed by him, which resembles the construction of the arched doors on some spice boxes.¹⁸

Baily was a Quaker farmer, joiner, clockmaker and surveyor. He was a member of New Garden Monthly Meeting, located in the southern part of Chester

County, in 1744. In 1759 as preparation for his marriage to Elizabeth Marshall, he relocated to Bradford Monthly Meeting, just west of Goshen. A 1775 deed lists Baily as a gunsmith, and he was also a maker of mathematical instruments and a member of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. The inventory of his possessions, taken after his death in 1797 included “screw plates” and “wimblebits.”¹⁹ The center bit and wimble were used to create the round holes which received the end-grain inlay, characteristic of the “H Y” chest and the screw plates may be references to a metal plate held between two pieces of wood, used to thread wooden screws.²⁰ Perhaps the wooden screws in the legs of these chests were the invention of a man with a reputation for ingenuity, such as Joel Baily. While the variety of joinery techniques and patterns of leg design suggest that there are multiple makers building removable-foot chests, it is possible that one craftsman invented the form.

The line-and-berry inlay tradition continued on two examples of the Maryland removable-foot chests. The end-grain dots inside the parallel lines which form the letters are round and smaller than those on the Pennsylvania “H Y” chest (figure 8). Another difference is that the letters on the Maryland chests are further embellished with trailing vines terminated by a single, small “berry,” which is absent from the Pennsylvania “H Y.” The initials on the Maryland chests are “C W” and “A S.” “A S” was later adapted to “M B.” The end-grain dots fill only those lines which form the “A” and the “S.”

These letters suggest possible owners because dates, presumably of marriage, are not included with the initials as was the case with the “H Y” chest. “C W” could be Cassandra Wood who married Robert Miller on October 21, 1779, at Bush Creek Meeting in Maryland. Robert was the son of Solomon and Sarah Miller of Frederick County, Maryland, and Cassandra was the daughter of William and Margaret Wood, of Chester County, Pennsylvania, who were deceased at the time of their daughter’s marriage.²¹ “A S” may be Ann Shepherd, daughter of Solomon and Susanna (Farquhar) of Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting in Frederick County, Maryland, who married William Cox of Deer Creek Monthly Meeting in Harford County, Maryland, on November 17, 1802, at Pipe Creek.²²

That Cassandra Wood, a Maryland resident’s parents are noted as residents of Chester County is indicative of another association which helps us to understand the removable-foot chests. One reason it is so difficult to precisely locate the removable-foot chests on the map of Chester County is that mobility was central to eighteenth-century, rural life, first in Europe and the British Isles as well as in the American colonies and United States. As part of their religious awakening, Quaker ministers traveled “in twos and threes. . . throughout England [and Britain] and to Europe and to New England to confront evil and gather the ‘convinced,’ the ‘Children of Light’. . .” beginning in the 1650s.²³ Twenty years of persecution of Quakers followed the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, which motivated many to seek freedom and economic opportunity in William Penn’s Pennsylvania.

Examination of Quaker records shows a great deal of movement of individuals from one area of the county to another to obtain suitable farmland or to marry outside one's own township. By the 1760s Chester County had become so highly populated that third generation sons were often forced to move west and south to Maryland, Virginia and Carolina to find adequate acreage for farming.²⁴ Joseph and Jane Hibberd who married at Goshen Meeting in 1767 moved permanently to Frederick County, Maryland.²⁵ The 1790 Census Index for Frederick County includes several Chester County Quaker surnames: Smedley, Pusey, Baily, Griffith, Evans, and notably Garrett. Temporary visits or "receipts of certificate" were prolifically recorded in Meeting Records also indicating a high volume of movement.

Knowing that the removable-feet chests were produced at a time when many Quakers were literally on-the-move raises the question of whether these chests were in fact designed with removable feet for ease of movement. If so, the form was then indeed a practical one. The removable-feet chest or tall chest-on-legs is related to the tall chest-on-frame, which some scholars have speculated was constructed with the frame for ease of movement.²⁶ However, other scholars believe that case furniture in general was too large to have been transported down the wagon road to the Valley of Virginia and even challenges the definition of furniture as movable goods.²⁷ Maryland and Pennsylvania are contiguous territories without any geographic obstacles dividing the two. As a result, people and their possessions did not need to travel over any mountain ranges or large rivers during migration. In contrast, to

reach Virginia, one had to cross the mountains, which may explain why none of the removable-foot chests have been found farther south than Maryland.

Another important context is that of period documents. None of the chests studied have definitive family provenances, and inventories and account books examined fail to specifically define these chests, making it nearly impossible to know who owned them. No references to “screw-joined” furniture have been found in searches of inventories and craftsmen’s accounts in Chester County. However, a Philadelphia cabinet and chair maker’s price book offers a clue to how the chests may have been described in the eighteenth century. Today, a tall chest is defined by furniture scholars as being, “Of single-stage construction and bearing six or more tiers of drawers, . . .” in order to distinguish it from double-stage high chests and lower chests with four or five tiers of drawers.²⁸ In the eighteenth century, the form now known as a tall chest may have actually been called a “low chest.”

An entire page of the 1772 manuscript copy of a Philadelphia cabinet and chair makers’ price book in the archives of the Tyler Arboretum is devoted to descriptions of “high chest[s] of drawers” with a variety of design options and their respective prices enumerated. The top of the following page describes a “Low Chest of drawers with three long and five Small drawers,” costing four pounds, ten shillings. “Ditto with four long and five small” cost five pounds, and “Ditto on a frame 18 inch high with out drawers” cost five pounds, ten shillings.²⁹ The chest with four long and five small drawers is the most common arrangement found on the

removable-feet chests. The average leg height of the removable-feet chests is twelve inches, shorter than the eighteen-inch frame mentioned in the price book. Today, we focus on the total height of chests and number of tiers of drawers to describe them as low, tall, or high. It would seem that the period term “low chest” relates to the height of the chest off the floor.³⁰

The price book description is likely referring to what is today called a tall chest for two reasons. First, there are no prices in the mahogany column of the book, only in the walnut column, and there are no mahogany removable-feet chests. All are walnut with the exception of two maple examples. Second, no descriptions of decorative options like varieties of tops, feet design, carving, or corner columns are included for the “low chests” as with the “high chests,” perhaps indicating that most low chests were plain. And in fact, the removable-feet chests are essentially plain. Low cases of drawers, described as such,³¹ appear in at least five Chester County Inventories between 1784 and 1789.

The plain appearance of these chests, however, did not mean that they were inexpensive. The craftsmen who built these chests used high quality materials such as the highly figured maple and walnut used as primary woods. None examined use any pine as a secondary wood. Poplar, which planes smoothly, is used almost exclusively, with occasional occurrences of chestnut as a second secondary wood in three of the chests. The “H Y” chest and two examples with pierced knees have both

poplar and chestnut secondary woods, and the paneled-side chest at the Read House in New Castle, Delaware, has one oak drawer back.

If the form of the removable-feet chest was not designed for ease of movement, it may have been designed with the battens and wooden screws because it was easy to build. The chest is practical from a craft production standpoint as well as being practical and economical for its owner. Tall chests were less expensive to construct than two-stage high chests or double chests and offered almost as much storage as the two-stage cases.³² The two examples with the pendant drop and the skirt-like drop suggest that the feet were not held on with wooden screws for easy removal because these two would not sit upright with the feet removed (figures 4 and 9).

Using the wooden screws hastened production time because the maker did not need to wait for glue to dry. Ironically, the only craftsman's inventory included in *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania* that actually listed tap borers and a screw box mentions a glue pot in-between the two.³³ The removable feet allowed the builders to make cases in the same manner as they had for chests-on-frame, only affixing the feet to the bottom of the chest in a sturdy way, that did not require glue and visually lent to the chests the stylish appearance of the Philadelphia high chest with cabriole legs.³⁴ Adding to the ease of production, most of the chests were probably finished upside down. The horizontal backboards were slid into grooves in the sides of the case from the bottom end, and nailed-off only across the

bottom. It was then easy to screw-on the legs and upright the case. The exceptions are the Maryland chests with vertical, nailed-on backboards.

Without the frame, the box of drawers appears to soar over the legs. The use of the screws made this appearance possible in a case form that leaves no place for a leg tenon to fit into the case. A third way that using the screws made the process of building the chests easy was by sparing the craftsman the time it would have taken to learn to build a case that incorporated leg tenons. As Margaretta M. Lovell has pointed out, "Making it beautiful and making it well were part of making furniture desirable. Making it quickly and making it efficiently were part of making it profitable."³⁵ A craftsman's signature was the quality of his work. He needed to produce high quality furniture quickly in order to earn a living.

The use of the screws may have been an aesthetic or cultural choice as well as a practical one. There is no distinction between the practicalities of chest design and construction and the "... values of cultural order" Culture is about everyday work.³⁶ Curiously, the "Spanish"-foot types most commonly found on the removable-feet chests, the paneled, reeded and lobed feet, are found only on this form. The design vocabulary used to decorate the insides of the knees with the suggestion of a volute and open or pierced C-scroll is also unique to the form. The linking of a specific design and decoration system for the legs and feet with a specific way of joining the feet to the case, using the battens and wooden screws, is a design vocabulary distinct to these chests. Could the form have had a cultural

significance for rural Quakers because of this distinctive vocabulary? Using the screws was certainly a conscious choice, because the craftsmen making these chests were probably also making chests-on-frame and bracket-feet tall chests simultaneously. In fact, Benjamin Garrett, the joiner who signed the removable-feet chest in the Chester County Historical Society's collection, also signed a clock case that has ogee-bracket feet.³⁷

The screws were easy enough to make with the proper tool, the screw box (figure 24). Wooden screws are an ancient technology and were an everyday item in early America. They are the tension devices for both wool and flax spinning wheels and are used to make adjustable candle stands, linen presses, cider presses, and many craftsmen's tools like marking gauges, clamps, and vises. Because wooden screws were ubiquitous to the cabinetmaker's shop, one would think that the screw boxes used to make them were also relatively common. A number of joiner's inventories in Chester County include "joiner's screws," which may be wooden screws. Wooden screws of a standardized pitch and diameter were easily and endlessly made from the same screw box.³⁸

The screw box was usually produced by the craftsmen himself.³⁹ An imported steel blade was preferable for cutting the threads on the wooden cylinders that would become screws, but a blade produced by a local blacksmith could perform this function equally well. The holes in which the wooden screws fit were threaded with screw taps.⁴⁰ While not included in English craftsmen's treatises, the art of

fabricating wooden screws and the materials required to do so were illustrated and described in Andre Jacob Roubo's *L'Art du Menuisier*, published in Paris between 1769 and 1775. Roubo stated that the primary reasons for using wooden screws were for easy disassembly and to avoid costly metalwork.⁴¹

Style is another important context in which to consider the removable-foot chests as it allows us to situate them in the context of the evolution of eighteenth-century high chests. According to Dell Upton, the form of an object can be ordered by one stylistic principle, while the ornament or decorative details can be of a second style.⁴² The removable-foot chests are ordered by baroque principles of bold proportions and symmetry, while the details of construction and decoration reflect the extended period, 1750-1800, over which the removable-foot chests developed into a tradition.

Early eighteenth-century American high chests in the William and Mary style were usually built on a frame, with or without drawers, of trumpet-turned legs. Closely related to the British form, these early high chests were flat or stepped on top for the display of ceramics or silver. Typically, the top case had two half-width drawers over three or four full-width drawers. The exposed half dovetails joining the cases and the drawer dividers on the fronts of the 1752 "H Y" chest and the chest with two half-width drawers across the top and non-lipped drawers overall are William and Mary features (figure 13). The average height of the William and Mary high chest is about the same as that of the removable-foot chests.

The American “high style” Queen Anne high chest is taller with more drawers, a flat or decorative bonnet top, a scalloped skirt, and cabriole legs. The 1752 chest-on-legs has an integral pendant drop, and another chest has an applied skirt-like drop, allusions to features often seen on chests-on-frame, associated with the Queen Anne style by furniture connoisseurs (figures 4 and 9).⁴³ Those removable-feet chests without any carving or incised lines on the cabriole legs have a Queen-Anne feel because of the plain surfaces (figures 1, 14, 16, and 17). The Philadelphia Chippendale or Rococo high chest, which has no parallel in English furniture of the same period, is essentially the Queen Anne, bonnet-top, high chest with a less pendulous skirt and more elaborate surface carving, finials and cartouches. The top drawer arrangement of the Chester County removable-feet chests and other later, eighteenth-century tall chests-on-frame or bracket feet commonly found in the County parallels the drawer arrangement of the Philadelphia high chest after about 1750. The removable-feet chest owned by the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum has incised flower carving on the knees suggestive of Rococo design (figure 11). In effect, many styles, the Baroque William and Mary, the Queen Anne, the Chippendale/Rococo, and Neoclassical, were used on the form of the removable-feet chest.

The majority of the removable-feet chests were built using blind dovetails to attach the drawer dividers to the case, and the joints were usually pinned. This construction method is typical of the final quarter of the eighteenth century.

Neoclassical ornament or decoration found on some of these cases, like beaded edges on the edges of the cases, corner columns, and fluted cornices, is also suggestive of last quarter of the eighteenth-century, design vocabulary. The chests can be grouped according to style attributes to create an evolution of the form of the removable-feet chest over time. For example, a chamfered edge on the edge of the case is earlier than a beaded edge, which is earlier than a corner column. By engaging in this exercise, we lose sight of the fact that all of these design choices were available simultaneously. This “constrictively linear approach . . . leaves most people and most artifacts out of consideration.”⁴⁴

Because the surfaces of rural furniture tend to be simpler than the highly carved urban furniture, more rural furniture made in the same time period as the high style Rococo is classified as “Queen Anne” by connoisseurs, as is generally the case with the chests-on-legs. This rural furniture certainly is not Rococo, but calling it Queen Anne suggests it was made earlier than it actually was. Most of the removable-feet chests were probably built after 1770. Furniture scholars have traditionally viewed rural furniture in comparison to urban furniture, suggesting that country cabinetmakers could not keep pace with their city counterparts. However, we now know that plain, conservative furniture was made in rural and urban areas alike. The builders and owners of the removable-feet chests were aware of “high-style,” Philadelphia furniture, and incorporated some of its features, like corner

columns and the drawer arrangement into their furniture. However, they consciously chose an alternative expression of a chest of drawers.

Using the urban classification system to discuss furniture made in an area which did not subscribe to urban fashion is inappropriate. An example of how the connoisseurship understanding of style and fashion can be misleading is a chest-on-frame with a pendant drop, thought to have been made by Nathan Garrett, presumably Nathan Lewis Garrett (1799-1875), son of Benjamin Garrett, who married Lydia Cox. This chest descended in the Cox family.⁴⁵ This chest-on-frame can be described stylistically as Queen Anne. Traditional furniture scholarship has assumed that chests-on-frame were unfashionable and therefore no longer produced after about 1760. However, if Nathan Garrett did make the Cox chest-on-frame, it was not until the nineteenth century.⁴⁶

The “C W” chest, an “A S” chest, and three others are from Frederick County, Maryland. This Maryland group has its own characteristics of design and construction which set it apart from the Pennsylvania chests. The end-grain inlay on these chests is round and smaller than that on the Pennsylvania “H Y” chest. The inlaid letters end in tiny trailing vine-and-berry motifs, related to the Pennsylvania tradition. They are easily identified by two-fluted corner columns, fluting or reeding under the cornice molding, pierced C-scroll designs under the knees, long, tongued screws, vertical, nailed-on backboards, and construction of the battens which allows them to sit up under the bottom molding, rather than protruding below it as is the

case with the Pennsylvania chests (figure 7). Also, the dovetails on the top of the case are covered by mitered moldings on the front and side edges. The Maryland builders seem to have been more conscious about hiding construction than their Pennsylvania counterparts.

The corner columns and fluting under the cornice are attributes associated with neoclassicism, and according to furniture connoisseurs, these features place these Maryland chests in the 1780s or later. Yet these aesthetic attributes do not mean that these chests were necessarily built later than the Chester County examples without such details. How do we classify those chests-on-legs in the study which are anomalous, that do not seem to belong to a smaller group of closely related chests? Without documentation, how does one understand a group of objects which actually could have been made over a span of fifty years or more?

Twentieth-century scholarship is another context in which to consider the removable-feet chests when considering how best to name them. Until 1966, when Margaret Schiffer published *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*, no one had attempted to describe or categorize the removable-feet chests. In October, 1948, the “C W” chest, which is now believed to be from Maryland, was advertised for sale in *The Magazine Antiques* by Silvermine Tavern Antique Shops in Norwalk, Connecticut. It was described as an “authentic” American antique, but not attributed to any particular region or state. Curiously, it was photographed with the inlaid drawer on the far left and the plain drawers in the

center and to the right. Within the last ten years, this chest was sold as a Chester County, Pennsylvania, chest because of Margaret Schiffer's publication. Dealers and Museum curators alike call the removable-feet chests, "Spanish-footed Octorara chests," as Margaret Schiffer so designated them. This is somewhat of a misnomer because we now know that at least some of the chests are from eastern Chester County rather than the western border of the County near the Octorara Creek which flows south along the western edge of Chester County into Maryland.

Schiffer's groundbreaking survey of the furniture makers in Chester County from 1682-1850 includes many photographs of mostly marked furniture whose maker is therefore known. Also included are unmarked unique forms or representative examples of types of furniture found in the County. One such type, as designated by Schiffer, is Octorara case furniture, mostly tall chests of drawers and desks, on high ogee-bracket feet, pierced through with a closed circle on the front and sides. Plate 167 of Schiffer's book illustrates a representative example of the Pennsylvania type of Spanish-footed tall chest with removable feet of the reeded type, which she designates as an "Octorara, walnut, high chest" (figure 14). After the section of the book which lists the known cabinetmakers, there are five pages that describe the "Characteristics and Peculiarities of Chester County Furniture." She writes in the section on Octorara furniture, "In this Octorara area a variant of the high chests of drawers is found. . . . The variation lies in the unusual removable Spanish feet which may have the circular cut-out."⁴⁷ Simply because of the possibility of the

pierced foot, which on the removable-foot chests occurs only on the front and which does not occur on all removable-foot chests, Schiffer categorized them as Octorara.

Herbert Schiffer said that forty and fifty years ago, the Spanish-footed chests turned up in house sales in Chester County around the Coatesville area and west of there.⁴⁸ However, because of the movement of settlers throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, how can we be certain that a chest found in one area of the County in the twentieth century was not made at the other end of the county in the eighteenth century? Again, pinpointing this furniture in the landscape is one of the difficulties in studying it. All that aside, the Octorara label is not a complete misnomer in that the Octorara Creek flows in the same direction as the migrating Pennsylvania settlers who moved south and west into Maryland in the second half of the eighteenth century and continued the tradition of the removable-foot chests. However, using the name “Octorara” to describe the removable-foot chests, a group in which there is a great deal of variety in construction techniques, associates them with another group of furniture to which they do not belong.

As demonstrated above, recreating social and historical contexts for the chests-on-legs depends on the random survival of thirty examples out of who knows how many, placement of a chalk signature, several sets of inlaid initials, plausible associations with other attributed related furniture forms, and some craftsmens’ inventories that mention “screw plates,” “screw boxes,” and “joiner’s screws.”⁴⁹ “Except for its mention in inventories, never in the kind of detail we need, early

American furniture has survived without a behavioral context. . . . The few phenomena that can be observed [in furniture] are suggestive.”⁵⁰ The need to work from known dates and known makers has driven furniture scholarship and defined the methods used to examine furniture for design and construction details that allow attribution to a region or a maker. Perhaps because analysis of construction details is a time consuming process, it has become the goal of many furniture studies. When an attribution is applied to one or a group of objects, the study is considered complete.

For museums, attributions are important. In some institutions, undocumented objects have been sold because they aren’t important enough for the museum’s collection, or in other cases, well documented objects have been sold at auction to raise money for institutions in financial turmoil. In the 1970s, students of Benno Forman at the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, Robert Blair St. George and Robert F. Trent addressed and challenged the limitations of traditional furniture scholarship in their studies, *The Wrought Covenant: Source Material for the Study of Craftsmen and Community in Southeastern New England* and *Hearts and Crowns: Folk Chairs of the Connecticut Coast, 1720-1840, as Viewed in the Light of Henri Focillon’s Introduction to Art Populaire*, respectively.

Before delving into the objects of his study, turned chairs from coastal Connecticut, Trent began with a short essay on “American Decorative Arts Scholarship and Folk Craftsmen.” Trent points out that because of an “obsession

with quality as opposed to historical truth, scholars and tastemakers have focused their attentions on high-style objects,” the urban furniture forms which most closely follow the European eighteenth-century styles, Baroque, Rococo, and Neoclassical. Trent calls this bias in American decorative arts studies, the “‘masterpiece’ approach.”⁵¹ The second “cherished notion of decorative arts scholarship” which Trent abandoned in his study was the idea that styles were disseminated from London to American seaports and then to the hinterlands from there. He found that the Connecticut craftsman Thomas Salmon, “. . . probable master of the entire heart-and-crown tradition” emigrated from Stratford, England to the New Haven area, so he was not London-trained, nor did he settle in Boston or New York.⁵² Thirdly, after reading Henry Glassie’s *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, Trent applied Glassie’s method of structural analysis to the turned chairs and found that the craftsmen were indeed using their own artificial and complex design system. In so doing, Trent challenged the notion that folk art resulted from rural craftsmen’s misunderstanding of urban (or correct) form.⁵³

Robert Blair St. George called his study of the craftsmen of seventeenth-century, southeastern coastal New England *The Wrought Covenant* because it “alludes to the artisan’s deep understanding of the landscape and the moral obligation he felt to insure his neighbors of artificial products.”⁵⁴ St. George is interested in the intersection of local history and folklore, the integration of social history and artifact study, because of his desire to explore the aesthetics of

interpersonal communication. For the purposes of his study, he treats artifacts “as part of a complex communicative process between makers and users.”⁵⁵ He says that before we can understand the ways “. . . networks of craftsmen and community fit together and moved dynamically, expressively . . . ,” artifacts must be related to people.⁵⁶

The section presented in St. George’s study under the heading “Material Remains: Shop Traditions and Local Styles” relies heavily on traditional historical research methods and object connoisseurship. Those are the two techniques which allow him to make attributions to makers and to find owners, relating the artifacts to people, so that he can begin to find out how the artifacts express human behavior, a dilemma he later resolves in *Conversing by Signs*. St. George tells us that attributing objects to makers and owners is a necessary endeavor. Because neither furniture nor architecture can be understood in isolation, how we synthesize information about craftsmen which we learn from looking at artifacts themselves, determines whether we have learned anything new about human behavior in the past. St. George suggests creating a behavioral context for furniture by reconstructing “. . . proxemic relationships in the . . . house to see how . . . furnishings [were used] to structure meaningful patterns of spatial behavior.”⁵⁷ To do so, we must ask, how do the artifacts, in this case the removable-foot chests, function within society and within the house?

Certain scholars in vernacular architecture studies see a similar deficiency in their field. Matthew Johnson uses the analogy of baking a cake to explain that those studying buildings have “surveyed lots of houses, assembled lots of data on carpentry techniques, produced wonderful typologies of crucks and plan types, [and] transcribed huge numbers of probate inventories,” in other words, assembling the best ingredients for baking a cake. “Cooking the cake, in this analogy, is about saying interesting things about the men, women and children who inhabited the houses.”⁵⁸ He argues that vernacular architecture scholars have not cooked the cake well.

The unique form of the chest-on-removable-legs begs for an interpretation beyond the traditional ways in which furniture is classified and attributed according to style, date, maker, and place of origin because so little documentary information can be directly related to these chests. How do we understand a form so unique in its construction, so obviously valued by a particular community over a long period of time, which defies our dominant mode of understanding? What do we call the removable-feet chests, if not “Octorara?” We have examined the chests themselves, looking at form. Outward from the chests, we have woven as complete a contextual web as possible looking at makers, owners, attribution, associations, mobility, documentary evidence, technology, construction, style, design, and decoration. Next we must find a model that allows us to put the chests in motion, resituating them in a behavioral context. How can we “cook the cake” and address questions of human

behavior, such as what are the physical and cultural functions of the chests? How might have the craftsmen who designed the chests conceived of them? What is their cultural meaning?

Vernacular architecture studies as a model

Using vernacular architecture studies as a model, we can begin to address these questions. Because material culture is an interdisciplinary field, scholars must always venture out into other or related areas of inquiry for appropriate models. Within material culture studies, the study of vernacular buildings is more developed than that of vernacular furniture because of some of the very difficulties experienced so far in this study. Houses, the structures in which humans organize their daily lives, are easily researched for several reasons. Those that survive are above ground and are therefore accessible; even those which are known only from archeological evidence are usually located on the piece of ground where they were originally constructed. Documentary information about houses also survives in tax and land records. Because recreating the original context of houses, or “attributing” them, is more easily accomplished than in the case of furniture, houses tell twentieth-century scholars more about the lives of people who lived in them in the past than do chests-of-drawers without provenances.

How is vernacular defined? Dell Upton defines vernacular architecture as regional architecture. He says, “The vernacular buildings of any area display a

mixture of indigenous forms and more broadly distributed folk and academic ones that are combined in a distinctive local manner.”⁵⁹ If we substitute “furniture” for “architecture” in his definition, vernacular furniture is regional furniture. The vernacular furniture of any area displays a “mixture of indigenous forms and more broadly distributed folk and academic forms that are combined in a distinctive local manner.” “Vernacular” is also suggestive of words like, “common,” “ordinary,” and “plain.” To be vernacular in its character, an object is not necessarily plain or conservative, but it must be common in the sense that it must be informed by a shared vocabulary or language.⁶⁰

However, vernacular architecture has two definitions. Bernard Herman reminds us that vernacular can be defined as a particular class of artifacts, as above, or as an “. . . approach to studying and interpreting the artifact. . . ,” that emphasizes form, construction, ornament, function, and setting. “The five elements clearly overlap and are unified by a concern for understanding and interpreting the historic, social and cultural context in which buildings and landscapes were created and used.” Both definitions “. . . share the sense of traditional buildings and landscapes as both the products and agents of common usage and everyday communication.”⁶¹ The removable-foot chests are vernacular in the sense of Dell Upton’s definition. In addition, considering the chests as they functioned in the houses of rural Quaker Pennsylvania and Maryland society allows this study to be vernacular by definition of approach.

A singular occurrence, an object like no other, does have characteristics in common with other objects. By learning the language of a group of houses, or removable-feet chests, through connoisseurship, we can begin to make sense of them in comparison to one another. It is the language, the shared patterns of design, that indicate “vernacularness.” Learning the language of the rural cabinetmaker, we see that it is not a “style lag” that is expressed in his furniture, but rather an alternative aesthetic. The three over two drawer arrangement on the Chester County tall chests as well as the use of corner columns on some examples suggest that the makers of the removable-feet chests were aware of the urban aesthetic.

Using Upton’s definition, the chests-on-legs are vernacular. They are from specific regions, Chester County and Frederick County. They display indigenous or “native” forms, like the removable feet, as well as more academic influences, like the three-over-two drawer arrangement and cabriole legs, found on high chests in Philadelphia at the same time.⁶² The academic and folk forms are combined in a distinctive, local way in the design of the feet. The volutes and C-scrolls, which are design hallmarks of the Baroque auricular style, are suggested and often articulated with incised lines in the shapes of the inner knees of the chests-on-legs. It is intriguing that the language of the forms and decoration of the legs is specific to the removable-feet chests. One does not see chests-on-frame with open or pierced C-scrolls under the knees. The top of the chest-on-legs remains flat and does not have a bonnet, like a Philadelphia high chest of the same period.

The flat top may be indicative of a local preference for continued use of the tops of tall chests as surfaces for storage and display of boxes or ceramics or to place a candle up out of the way. Inventories reveal that “crockery ware,” “Linning [linen],” “tea furniture,” and “China plates Bowles Cups and Saucers.” could be found on chests of drawers in eighteenth-century Chester County homes.⁶³ Like the seventeenth-century, New England court cupboard, the tops of these chests may have been covered by a designated cloth. Two Chester County inventories include specific descriptions: “1Low Case of drawers & Cloth” (Edward Brinton, Birmingham, 1779) and “low Case of Drawers and Cover Cloth.” (John Pusey, London Grove, 1783).⁶⁴

In the way the chests-on-legs exhibit local preferences in function and design, they may be called folk furniture, the product of folk culture rather than popular culture. “Folk culture is traditional and conservative; it exhibits great variation in space and relatively little change over time. [Whereas,] Popular culture changes rapidly in time and shows great similarity over large areas.”⁶⁵ “Folk builders are folk designers.”⁶⁶ One of the reasons why we do not find specific information in documentary sources about the removable-foot chests is that they were created using folk design method, which is stored in the human mind, not on paper, and maintained in its culture through tradition. The ideas are passed from one generation to the next by observation and replication. Folk designers don’t “merely copy old forms.” “. . . they generate design ideas by disassembling. . .existing forms and composing new

forms out of the abstracted ideas of bits and pieces of existing forms.” “. . . new forms are conservatively generated out of old forms and old ideas. . . .”⁶⁷ One can understand the removable-feet chest as a product of a joiner who regularly built chests-on-frame, and wanted to attach legs to the bottom of his case in the most efficient way possible, no longer using the frame. The legs, attached with screws, are the new form added to the old form of the case.

Thomas Hubka discusses primary and secondary design components in his article on folk designers. For the removable-feet chests, the overall form is primary, the case of drawers, and in all but one example the drawer arrangement. The secondary features are the individual elements that create variety in the chests, the design of the cornice molding and the base molding, the finish on the vertical edges on the front of the case, the type of C-scroll in the knee, the type of foot, and any carving on the knees. This method of designing accounts for the fact that the thirty chests appear “unified and homogeneous, and even identical,” but after close examination, one sees their diversity and individuality.⁶⁸

Borrowing the language that vernacular architecture scholars have used to discuss style in houses may work better for classifying the chests-on-legs than traditional furniture style labels. “Georgian” may be a better classification than “Queen Anne” for these tall chests-on-legs, considering the expansive time period of their production. James Deetz describes a new world view, to which Americans began to subscribe by about 1760, as “Georgian, a term that in its specific sense

designates the architectural style that most typifies Anglo-American Renaissance building.”⁶⁹ The Georgian mind was interested in balance, order, symmetry, and greater compartmentalization and specialization in the ways in which space and objects were used, concepts which are realized in the removable-foot chests.

The three small locking drawers across the tops of these chests may be indicators of the Georgian cultural world view. The house and the chest are both boxes that contain smaller boxes, in the case of the house, rooms, and in the case of the chest, drawers. The rooms and the drawers organize space and may be sized differently according to function. In several of the chests, one finds ink stains in the upper drawers, suggesting that the small drawers may have been used for storing writing supplies and papers, while the heavy, deep, bottom drawers may have been used to store bed quilts and other large textiles. Because of the twelve-inch height of the legs, the space under the chest could also be used as unobtrusive but easily accessible storage for items like chamber pots.

Like a house, the removable-foot chests also have a hierarchy of finish in the way they present themselves. The frontal view or forward-facing facade is most important for these chests and for some houses. Like a stone house that has cut ashlar blocks on the front facade and rubble walls on the other three, the chests legs are designed to be seen from the front. In most instances, the back legs are two dimensional abstractions of the front legs, and any design on the knees of front legs is not continued on the side. Another way in which the chests maybe compared to

houses is that the three drawers across the top, with a wider one in the center, may be a response to the Georgian notion of balance, a large shift in aesthetics which manifests itself in house plans. The Georgian house has a central hall, flanked by rooms on either side; the Palladian window is a larger, arched window flanked by sidelights; and the Georgian high chest has three drawers across the top, usually a wider one in the center flanked by two smaller ones.

Architecture can be more than just the physical structure of a house. It is also the spaces within the house and between other houses or buildings that relate to it. Dell Upton uses the term “. . . 'architecture' to stand for the entire cultural landscape, including so-called designed landscapes, urban spaces, and human modifications of natural spaces.” In so doing, he de-emphasizes “. . . the traditional distinctions between vernacular and high-style (or academic, or monumental) building.”⁷⁰ By extension, the interior landscape of a house, while not included in Upton's book, is also “architecture,” a designed space arranged to perform specific functions. Particularly case furniture, which was built by the same joiners who finished the interiors of houses, is easy to conceive of as “architecture.” The form of the tall chest is informed by a familiarity with classical architectural concepts in the overall symmetry of the form; the cornice and entablature; the graduated drawers, suggestive of the entasis of a column; and the base, or feet. Once we see furniture as “architecture,” as Dell Upton understands “architecture,” we can see furniture as a “. . . way of defining relationships--of the self to others, of parts of the community to

other people, and of people to their physical and cosmic environments.”⁷¹ In short, we can see furniture as a manifestation of culture, objects that define the relationship between the individual and the world.

So how do the removable-feet chests define that relationship between the individual and the world? Besides being used to store papers, writing implements, and other small valuables like silver flatware, and certainly textiles, as well as to display household goods on the top, which are practical functions, were there social functions performed by these removable feet chests and other tall chests in rural Quaker society in Pennsylvania and Maryland? In response to his own observation that vernacular architecture scholars do not “cook the cake well,” Matthew Johnson suggested ten principles “for looking at houses in truly historical ways.”⁷² Principle number eight is: “Cultural meanings are embedded in everything else, particularly in the everyday practices of vernacular culture as a whole.” Johnson is talking about carpentry techniques and farming activities, but we can easily apply this principle to the removable-feet chests, their functions, and the use of wooden screws in their construction. These chests “. . . were part of an everyday world that was simultaneously practical and cultural.”⁷³

The three chests marked with women’s initials, “H Y,” “C W,” and “A S,” suggest that the tall chest may have been a form associated with women. Jonathan Ogden of Chester left his daughter “one wallnutt Chist marked with the Two letters of her mothers name before marriage.”⁷⁴ Eighteenth-century women continued to be

identified by their maiden name among their circle of friends, and both Quaker men and women were referred to by both first and last names, or by initials.⁷⁵

While some objects like houses, cupboards, and spice boxes were often marked with the initials of a married couple together, chests and boxes tended to be inlaid with a single individual's initials, suggesting individual ownership. In Lee Ellen Griffith's "Line-and-Berry Inlaid Furniture" appendix, she listed twenty-four chests inlaid with initials. Three were inlaid with couples' initials, thirteen with unidentified individuals' initials, nine belonged to women, and none belonged to men.

In the case of the inlaid removable-feet chests, as previously mentioned, women. Hannah Yarnall, Cassandra Wood, and Ann Shepherd, are the likely owners. The inlay on the "H Y" chest also includes the year of Hannah Yarnall's marriage to William Griffith, "1752." Perhaps these chests were dowry chests, purchased for young women for their "advancement" as preparation for marriage. May 7, 1777, Levis Pennock wrote "an inventory of what goods I gave to Dater Mary att and after marage."⁷⁶ Mary had married George Passmore on April 24, 1776. Levis spent seventy-eight pounds to outfit Mary with a mare, saddle, and bridle, two beds and furniture, two tables and a case of drawers, cattle, two pots and pewter, smithwork, thirteen chairs, woodenware, and sundries.⁷⁷

Samuel Pennock of West Marlborough Township, Chester County, gave his daughter Susanna, "the following property which I consider to be as apart of her

share of my estate,” in March, 1810. Her dowry included: ironware; looking glasses; china and queensware; beds, bedding and table linens; fifty seven dollars paid to a joiner for furniture; thirteen chairs; kitchen furniture and sundries; a horse, saddle and bridle; cows, calves, sheep and lambs: one skillet; and six silver teaspoons. Samuel Pennock subsequently similarly provided for his four other daughters, Sarah, Ann, Elizabeth, and Philena in the types of goods purchased, but not in the amount spent.⁷⁸

Dowries were not always purchased in the year of marriage. Sometimes the gift of goods was spread out over several years. When a young couple migrated away from home, dowry gifts could be withheld until after settlement. Mary, the daughter of William Gibbons of East Bradford Township, Chester County received bed and bedding “when first married” and later, her father “sent the following articles by _____, who lives near my daughter in Virginia”: cash, homemade linen, handkerchiefs, a blanket, worsted hose, and crepe material.⁷⁹

After 1730, the average amount given in movable goods rose from one hundred ninety-two pounds to three hundred thirty-one pounds, reflecting the prosperity of Pennsylvania farms. As land became more scarce, more movable goods were given at marriage, and the goods given reflected an increasingly leisure-oriented and refined way of life.⁸⁰ The typical dowry furnishings included: a bedstead, a dining table, a chest of drawers or bureau, and a doughtray, as well as linens and the essentials for cooking and eating. Sometimes desks, card tables,

candle stands, chests or looking glasses were also included. The average number of chairs given also increased throughout the eighteenth century, so that a set of twelve was not uncommon by 1800. While not spelled out as dowries, cabinetmaker's accounts often include dowry items purchased in the same year for a particular client. Goshen cabinetmaker, Amos Darlington, Sr.'s, account book contained five such groupings between the years 1796-1805.⁸¹

So how does the chest of drawers function within the cultural landscape of the house? In Chester County inventories, cases of drawers are most often mentioned in bedchambers, although they occasionally appeared in parlors, usually in the first half of the eighteenth century.⁸² If women were the primary owners of chests of drawers, does that render the bedchamber a gendered space dominated by the chest, or is only the chest itself gendered? Other than for display and for storage of objects, the chest of drawers is never a center of activity, like a table around which social interaction takes place, or a chair or bed which physically holds the human body. The chest of drawers is a relatively immobile piece of furniture, generally controlled by one person at a time. The height of the removable-feet chests allows the top drawers to be accessible by the average-sized woman without assistance from a taller man. The chest may have represented its female owner's inner world. The drawers were private lockable spaces in which she could store her personal diary and letters, her valuables, her needlework, her precious clothes, and the other textiles that furnished her house and clothed her family. The contents of the chest were hers to

survey, protect, and rearrange. The human chest contains the vital organs, and the chests of drawers in eighteenth-century culture contained objects of vital importance to living properly.

Architectural historians see changes in the form or plan of a house as an indicator of cultural change. We can use that same method or approach to understand the culture which created the chest-on-legs when we examine it in the context of other forms of tall and high chests. What does this change in plan, the use of the wooden screws, mean when compared to a chest-on-frame or a chest with bracket feet? We can further use vernacular architecture studies as a model to ask, what larger cultural behaviors are these chests expressing?

In Pennsylvania, the Quakers dominated the colony politically for the first fifty years. By 1755, they were a minority population, and rural Quakers entered their own period of tribalism, becoming more exclusive and sectarian, relying more on birthright as a means to membership and a focus on the group rather than society at large.⁸³ Is the removable-feet chest a physical result of that tribalism, made and used by rural Quakers as a way of expressing exclusivity, setting themselves apart from the outside world, and reinforcing their tribal identity within the group? Are the chests similar to the elaborate brick plantation houses of Quaker-dominated West New Jersey studied by Michael Chiarappa? As a result of his investigation of the brick houses and their builders, Chiarappa found Quakerism to be “. . . a socially controlling and territorial force”⁸⁴

Conclusion

The exploration of the Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Frederick County, Maryland, removable-feet chests began with description and the establishment of the form as a type. Next in the investigation, we created as complete a context as possible considering makers, owners, attribution, associations, mobility, written period documents, technology, construction, style, design and decoration, as well as previous twentieth-century scholarship of the form by Margaret and Herbert Schiffer. With all the gathered information in mind, we considered other furniture studies, Robert F. Trent's *Hearts and Crowns* and Robert Blair St. George's *Wrought Covenant* to see how the authors addressed the limits of furniture scholarship. We applied the dual definitions of vernacular architecture to our study of the removable-feet chests, considering them as indigenous and local forms, part of a design tradition, as well as considering their practical function as storage for household goods and their cultural function as women's dowry furniture.

The removable-feet chests were useful and functional on both economic and aesthetic levels. As folk furniture, they are absent from the written record because their design was stored in the minds of the craftsmen who made them. Their absence from inventories and account books also reveals that the social function of the removable-feet chests may not have been any different from that of other cases of

drawers, like those on a frame or having bracket feet. The removable-feet chests were traditionally designed for psychological comfort to fulfill the practical function of storage and the cultural or social function of female-owned dowry chests.

The feet easily detach from the chest as does a frame. Whether they do so for ease of movement or because they were cost effective to build, we cannot say for sure. Both reasons may be simultaneously true. What was the significance of the C-scroll design in combination with a reeded, paneled, or lobed spade foot and the screw-joined legs? The form and decoration is distinctive to the trained eye, but to the casual viewer, it is simply another plain, tall chest. As twentieth-century observers, we tend to think that something especially distinctive, must have had a particular meaning in the past. However, because we are strangers to the culture of the past, we may never know why the removable-feet chests of Pennsylvania and Maryland were created.

NOTES

¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, p. xvi, from L. P. Hartley's *The Go Between*.

²George Kubler, *The Shape of Time*, p. 13.

³ In most cases, only the front feet are fully articulated. The exceptions are the chest on long-term loan to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the chest with the "linen drawer" hidden behind a bolection molding. The Read House chest appears to have the designs articulated on the sides of the front and back legs, and appears to have plain spade feet, facing front, on the back legs as well as the front. However, close inspection reveals these features to be later additions of wood blocks to create this more unusual appearance. The paneled and reeded feet are also spade-shaped with these simply carved distinctions. The feet on the removable-feet chests are traditionally labeled Spanish feet by furniture connoisseurs; however, Ireland may be a more direct influence on the forms of the Pennsylvania round, lobed foot. See Ronald L. Hurst, "Irish Influences on Cabinetmaking in Virginia's Rappahannock River Basin," *American Furniture* 1997, Luke Beckerdite (ed.), p. 191, figure 37. Hurst and Jonathan Prown also mention spade and trifid feet as Irish, *Southern Furniture*, p. 345. The author has not examined the claw-and-ball foot chest. It appeared on the cover of an Alderfer auction catalog from October 19 & 20, 1989. Its present whereabouts are unknown.

⁴The author is also aware of a shrank or press cupboard, probably from Chester County, in which the two halves are held together by the same wooden screws. The form of the doors, forming one arch, with a keystone, resembles that of joiner-made corner cupboards.

⁵ The origin of this form may have numerous influences and may be a Pennsylvania invention. The batten as leg support resembles Dutch kasten construction and is also found on Long Island, double-paneled chests with drawers, the original owners of which were often English Quakers. See Dean Failey, *Long Island is My Nation*, pp. 104-105. The design elements of the legs and the foot types relate to Irish furniture. A single-stage, tall chest-on-frame with a bonnet top was a popular Irish form, conversation with Desmond FitzGerald, The Knight of Glin, after his presentation of "Irish Furniture and the American Colonial Tradition" at the 1999 Williamsburg Antiques Forum. See James T. Kirk, *American Furniture and the British Tradition*, plate 561 for an example of this form. While this form is found in Irish country houses of the elite, "chests of drawers never became a typical part of traditional

vernacular furnishings in Ireland.” Claudia Kinmonth, *Irish Country Furniture*, p. 146. Having multiple ethnic influences is not surprising because the Quakers were not an ethnically homogeneous group. Quakers in Pennsylvania were of Irish, Dutch, Welsh, German and English ancestries, and many families moved about northern Europe and the British Isles prior to their arrival in Pennsylvania. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, p.430.

⁶The last digit is not absolutely clear.

⁷Joseph and Charity Collins, both of Goshen, were Quakers by birth. However, they married at Christ Church in Philadelphia on October 8, 1770, for which they were removed from meeting. The family was not reinstated as members of the Goshen meeting until January 11, 1793, after Joseph’s death and just in time for Benjamin’s marriage to Debby Lewis (d. 1827) on October 16 of the same year. Because William Garrett paid Joseph Garrett for weaving in 1776, (Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers*, p. 315.) Joseph Garrett’s family was certainly engaging in other kinds of textile work like spinning. Spinning wheels use a wooden screw as the tension device. If Joseph Garrett had regular contact with spinning wheels, they could have served as an inspiration for use of wooden screws to attach the legs to the cases of the removable-feet chests.

⁸Arthur E. James, *Chester County Clocks and their Makers*, pp. 117-127. Prior to the acquisition of their own saw mill, the Garretts may have used the Thomas family saw mills on Crum Creek in Willistown Township.

⁹Five of the chests have the same leg profile and lobed foot as the Garrett chest. Two others follow the leg profile, and have reeded feet.

¹⁰ Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*, pp. 232-233.

¹¹Arthur E. James, *Chester County Clocks and Their Makers*, p. 202.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 119.

¹³ Joiners who were also clockmakers may be one of the keys to understanding who made this furniture. The ingrain dot inlay on the H Y chest is also found on some of the spice boxes made in Chester County 64.965 in the Winterthur collection, made for George and Margaret Passmore in 1744, is decorated with their initials and the date inside a tombstone motif. The tombstone is formed by parallel lines with end-

grain inlaid dots between them. Other Chester County spice boxes are decorated with inlaid compass motifs and tombstone motifs. The tombstone is the same shape as most clock faces, and the compasses resemble round dials of clocks, although these motifs were common decorative devices in the eighteenth century. See Lee Ellen Griffith, *The Pennsylvania Spice Box*. In her 1988 dissertation on "Line and Berry inlaid Furniture," Lee Ellen also noted that the script of the 1752 on the H Y chest resembled the engraved numerals on brass clock dials, p.76. One spice box with a frame door, which has straight-bracket feet, resembles the removable-feet chests in construction. "The foot blocks are dovetailed onto battens on each side. The battens are pinned onto the bottom board with wooden pegs, and the scalloped facings are attached to the foot blocks." Lee Ellen Griffith, *The Pennsylvania Spice Box*, p. 62.

¹⁴ In 1805, Hannah Griffith of Willistown paid Benjamin Garrett for a coffin, suggesting that she may have had a client relationship with the Garrett family. David Yarnall paid Joseph Garrett for a coffin in 1781. Perhaps Joseph Garrett made the "H Y" chest. Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*, pp. 314-315. The "H Y" chest's construction with exposed half dovetails on the front of the case and an applied, pinned-on top is very different from the pinned, blind dovetail construction and exposed dovetails on the tops of the Garrett chests, possibly because "H Y" is older by thirty years. Lee Ellen Griffith found that some inlaid furniture was marked with a woman's maiden initials even if the furniture was made at the time of her marriage. "Line and Berry Inlaid Furniture: A Regional Craft Tradition in Pennsylvania, 1682-1790." University of Pennsylvania Dissertation, 1988, pp. 114. Using Lee Ellen Griffith's appendix: "List of Artifacts," of the initialed furniture she identified, fourteen items were inlaid with couples' initials, forty one were inlaid with the initials of an unidentified person, eighteen belonged to women, and one chair belonged to a man.

¹⁵ At least five of the chests are from Maryland. Two in this group, "A S" and "C W" are inlaid with the similar style of lettering as the 1752 "H Y" chest. This type of end grain inlay is also found on spice box in the Winterthur Museum, 64.965, attributed to Joel Bailey of London Grove, Chester County and made for George and Margaret Passmore and on another spice box made for Thomas and Elizabeth Hutton. The "H" on the spice box is the same as that on the "H Y" chest.

¹⁶ According to R. A. Salaman's *Dictionary of Woodworking Tools*, a joiner owned ". . . many special planes, including the range of 60 or more moulding planes. . . ." p.114.

¹⁷ Lee Ellen Griffith, "Line and Berry Inlaid Furniture: A Regional Craft Tradition in Pennsylvania, 1682-1790." University of Pennsylvania Dissertation, 1988, pp. 76-80.

¹⁸ "Ibid.," pp. 74-75. Griffith also noted that Joel Baily attended the wedding of George and Margaret Passmore, for whom one of the 1744 spice boxes was made. Lee Ellen Griffith, *The Pennsylvania Spice Box*, p. 100.

¹⁹ Arthur James, *Chester County Clocks and Their Makers*, p.45.

²⁰ Lee Ellen Griffith, "Line and Berry Inlaid Furniture: A Regional Craft Tradition in Pennsylvania, 1682-1790." University of Pennsylvania Dissertation, 1988, p 21.

²¹ Willard C. Heiss, *Certain Friends Meetings within Baltimore Yearly Meeting: Transcript of Births, Deaths, Marriages, Disownments, and Removals Excerpted from Records*, p.204.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 188. . .

²³ Hugh Barbour and William J. Frost, *The Quakers*, p. 5. See also David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, p. 430.

²⁴ James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, p. 92. See also Barbour and Frost, *The Quakers*, p. 154 for a brief outline of post-1760 Quaker migration in America.

²⁵ Willard C. Heiss, *Certain Friends Meetings within Baltimore Yearly Meeting: Transcript of Births, Deaths, Marriages, Disownments, and Removals Excerpted from Records*, p.198-199.

²⁶ William C. Ketchum, Jr., *Chests, Cupboards, Desks & Other Pieces*, p. 133.

²⁷ Michael H. Lewis, "American Vernacular Furniture and the North Carolina Backcountry," p.8. Gerald Ward, *American Case Furniture*, p. 13.

²⁸ Ronald Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture*, p. 373.

²⁹ Martin Eli Weil, "A Cabinetmakers Price Book," *Winterthur Portfolio* 13, p.182. Thank you to Philip D. Zimmerman for bringing this passage to my attention.

³⁰ E-mail conversation with Philip D. Zimmerman, April 5, 1999.

³¹ Margaret Schiffer, *Chester County, Pennsylvania Inventories*, p. 111.

³² Ronald Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture*, p. 373.

³³ Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*, p. 150. Inventory of William McFarlan of East Caln Township, August 23, 1782.

³⁴ The only feature that distinguishes the removable-feet cases from the cases of chest-on-frame is the four threaded holes in the bottom. Otherwise, they can be identical.

³⁵ Margaretta M. Lovell, "'Such Furniture as will Be Most Profitable': The Business of Cabinetmaking in Eighteenth-Century Newport," *Winterthur Portfolio* 26, Spring, 1991, p. 52.

³⁶ Matthew Johnson, "Vernacular Architecture: The Loss of Innocence," *Vernacular Architecture*. Vol. 28. 1997, p. 16. The Translator's Introduction to Henry Focillon's Introduction to *Art Populaire* explains that Henry Glassie's thoughts about folk artists can be found in Focillon's work. One of those concerns is with the simultaneity of practicality and aesthetics. Robert F. Trent, *Hearts and Crowns*, p. 13.

³⁷ Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*, plate 47.

³⁸ The screw types and diameters are one attribute which has helped to group the removable-feet chests. The author did not realize that the actual pitch of the threads could be important for attributing screws to the same screw box until this study was in an advanced stage.

³⁹ Earl L. Soles, Jr. (ed.), *Colonial Williamsburg Historic Trades*, Vol. 1, 1988, pp. 59-63, translation of Andre Jacob Roubo, *L'Art du Menuisier*, (Paris, 1769-1775). Screw boxes are not mentioned by Joseph Moxon in *Mechanick Exercises*, (London, 1677) or by Denis Diderot in the *Encyclopedie; ou, Dictionnaire raisonne des sciences, des arts et des metiers*, (Paris, 1763).

⁴⁰ Charles Hummel, *With Hammer in Hand*, pp. 138-40.

⁴¹ See Earl L. Soles, Jr.(ed.), *Colonial Williamsburg Historic Trades*, Vol. 1, 1988, pp. 58-63 for a translation of the French.

⁴² Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, p. 257.

⁴³ This proves that although the feet are removable, they were not meant to be removed with any regularity, because the drop coming to the floor throws the whole chest off balance. Removing the feet from these chests does not actually make them any easier to transport because all the weight is in one case. However, easy removal of the feet protects the feet themselves from scratches, as when they are attached, they are awkward appendages if the chest is laid on its back. On several examples, the bottom of the open C-scroll has been damaged or repaired at some point in time, indicating that the feet were subject to damage.

⁴⁴ Henry Glassie, "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," *Common Places*, p. 395.

⁴⁵ Priscilla Lewis Cox Richardson, *The Coxes of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1708-1978*, p. 32 (illustration)

⁴⁶ In his 1968 study of the Dominy craftsmen of East Hampton, New York, Charles Hummel pointed out in his discussion of a chest-on-chest, "It is startling to see a piece made in a full-blown Queen Anne style and realize that it was made in 1796." Charles F. Hummel, *With Hammer in Hand*, p. 267.

⁴⁷ Margaret Schiffer, *Furniture and Its Makers*, p. 264.

⁴⁸ Telephone conversation with Herbert Schiffer, March, 1999.

⁴⁹ Screw plates are likely metal dies for threading metal screws. Charles Hummel, *With Hammer in Hand*, p. 194 and R. A. Salaman, *Dictionary of Tools*, p. 449.

⁵⁰ James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten*, p. 166.

⁵¹ Robert F. Trent, *Hearts and Crowns*, p. 23.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 39.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁵⁴ Robert Blair St. George, *The Wrought Covenant*, p. 18.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.16.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ Matthew Johnson, "Vernacular Architecture: The Loss of Innocence," *Vernacular Architecture*, Vol. 28, 1997, p. 13.

⁵⁹ Dell Upton, "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," *Winterthur Portfolio* 17, Summer/Autumn, 1982, p. 95.

⁶⁰ It just so happens that many scholars have concentrated on conservative buildings, because they were made over a longer period of time, a trait which allows for there to be more examples from which to understand the language. Even high-style objects are designed with a shared language that can transcend our notion of local.

⁶¹ Bernard L. Herman, "Vernacular Architecture in North America," *The Dictionary of Art*, Jane Turner (ed.), Vol. 32, p. 304.

⁶² Often described as Rococo, the Philadelphia high chest is a symmetrical, Baroque form onto which Rococo-inspired, decorative carving is imposed. Jonathan Prown and Richard Miller, "The Rococo. The Grotto, and the Philadelphia High Chest," *American Furniture*, 1996, pp. 105 & 119. One could argue that the Philadelphia high chest is a vernacular form.

⁶³ Margaret Schiffer, *Chester County, Pennsylvania Inventories*, p. 112.

⁶⁴ Margaret Schiffer, *Chester County, Pennsylvania Inventories*, p. 111. I could not specifically find genre scenes that included these chests; however, I did notice that in John Lewis Krimmel's paintings from the 1810s, "Quilting Frolic," "Blind Man's Bluff," and "Country Wedding," flat-top cupboards held boxes, baskets, bottles, and crockery on the tops. "Quilting Frolic," and "Country Wedding" both take place in parlors that also include looking glasses and tall-case clocks. Private owners who use these tall chests in their homes today also place extra boxes, lamps or candles, ceramics, and photographs on top of them, and one collector even has a pair of stoneware chamber pots beneath a chest.

⁶⁵ James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten*, p. 65.

⁶⁶ Thomas Hubka, "Just Folks Designing: Vernacular Designers and the Generation of Form," *Common Places*, Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (eds.), p. 427.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

⁶⁹ James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten*, p. 63.

⁷⁰ Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, p. 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷² Matthew Johnson, "Vernacular Architecture: The Loss of Innocence," *Vernacular Architecture*, Vol. 28, 1997, p. 14.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.16.

⁷⁴ Lee Ellen Griffith, "The Line-and-Berry Inlaid Furniture of Eighteenth-Century Chester County, Pennsylvania," *Antiques*, May, 1989, p. 1211.

⁷⁵ This is the case in Elizabeth Drinker's diary. Elaine Forman Crane (ed.), *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker*, Vol. 1, p. xiii.

⁷⁶ Jeanette Lasansky, *A Good Start: The Aussteier or Dowry*, p. 25 and p. 44. Account Book of Levis Pennock, Chester County Historical Society, manuscript number 10549.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48. Family Account Book of Samuel Pennock, Chester County Historical Society, manuscript number 10723.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸² Margaret Schiffer, *Chester County, Pennsylvania Inventories*, p. 112.

⁸³ James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, pp. 19 & 113. See also Susan S. Forbes, "Quaker Tribalism," *Friends and Neighbors: Group Life in America's First Plural Society*, Michael Zuckerman (ed.), pp. 145-173.

⁸⁴ Michael J. Chiarappa, "The Social Context of Eighteenth-Century West New Jersey Brick Artisanry," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, IV, p. 37.

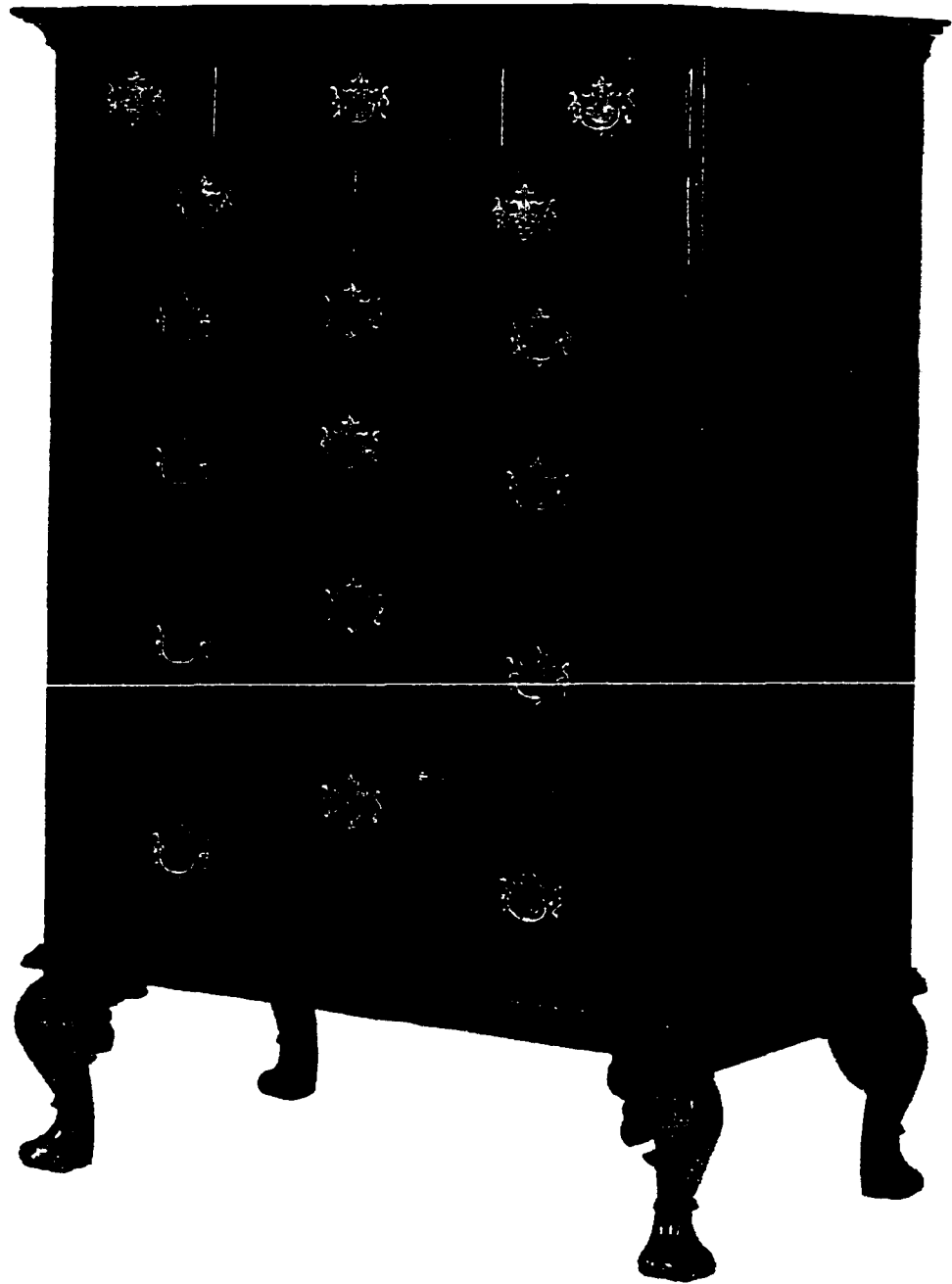


Figure 1. This maple removable-feet chest, signed by Benjamin Garrett, has plain legs and lobed feet. Courtesy, The Chester County Historical Society.

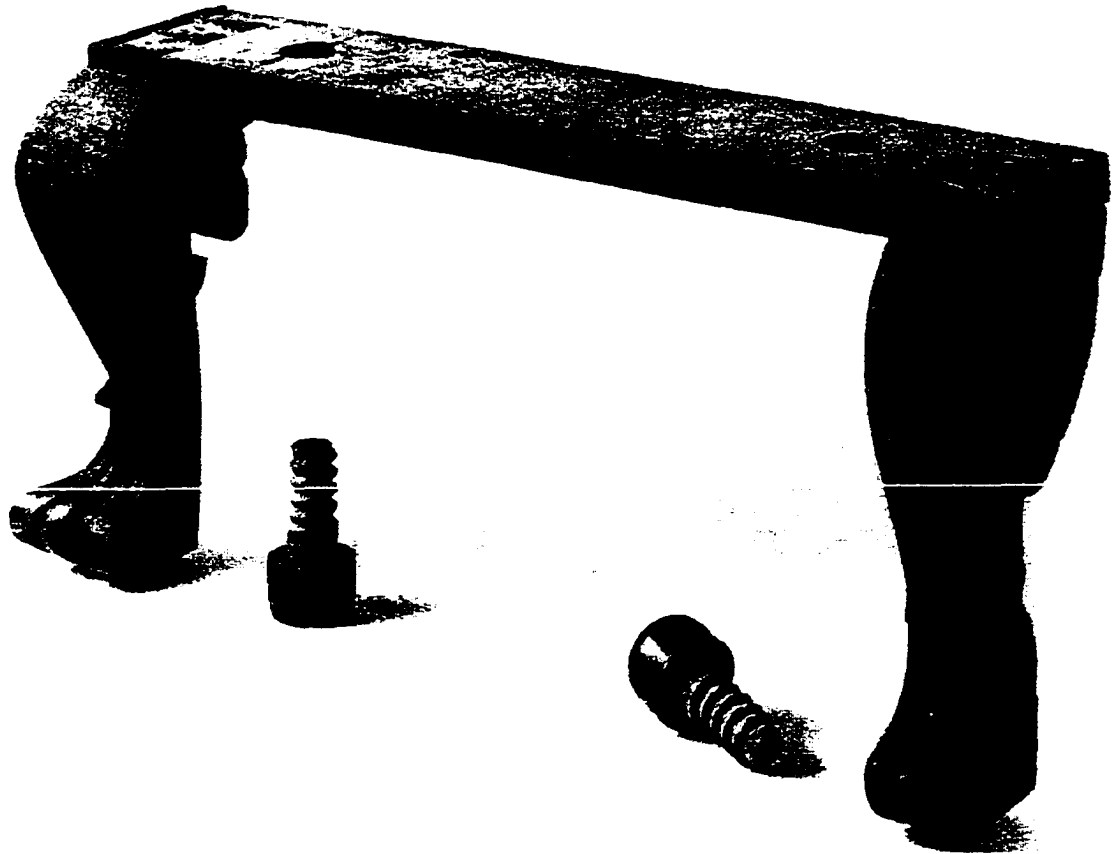


Figure 2. Leg construction and wooden screws. The legs are dovetailed to the batten. The batten attaches to the bottom of the case of drawers with the wooden screws which fit into corresponding threaded holes. Courtesy, The Chester County Historical Society.



Figure 3. Benjamin Garrett's signature and the date 1786, on the inside backboard of the second drawer from the bottom, in the chest shown in figure 1. Courtesy, The Chester County Historical Society.

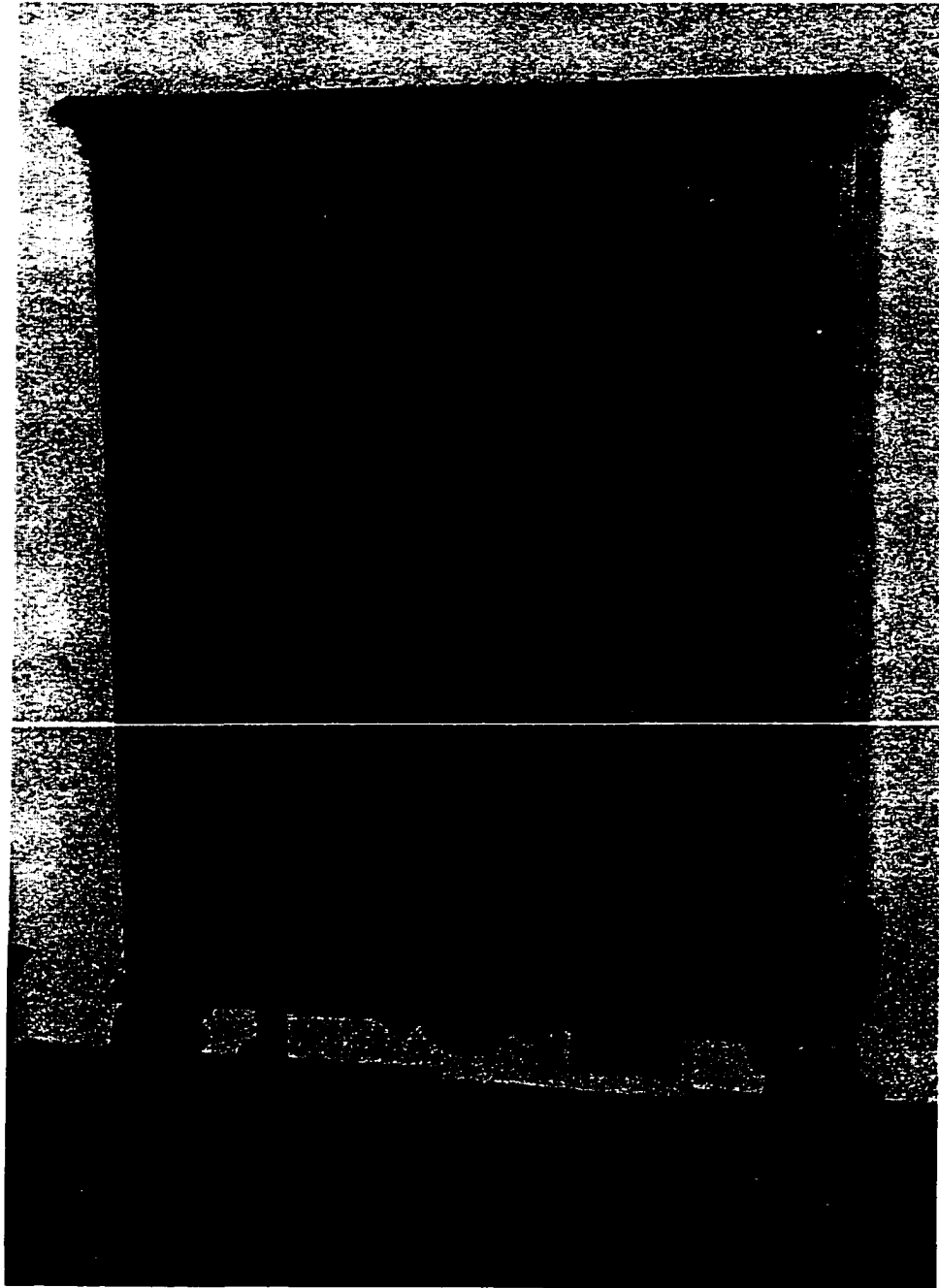


Figure 4. The "H Y" chest has an integral pendant drop, exposed half-dovetails on the front of the case, and an added top that is pinned onto the chest. The secondary woods are both poplar and chestnut. The feet are new replacements as are the brasses. Private Collection.

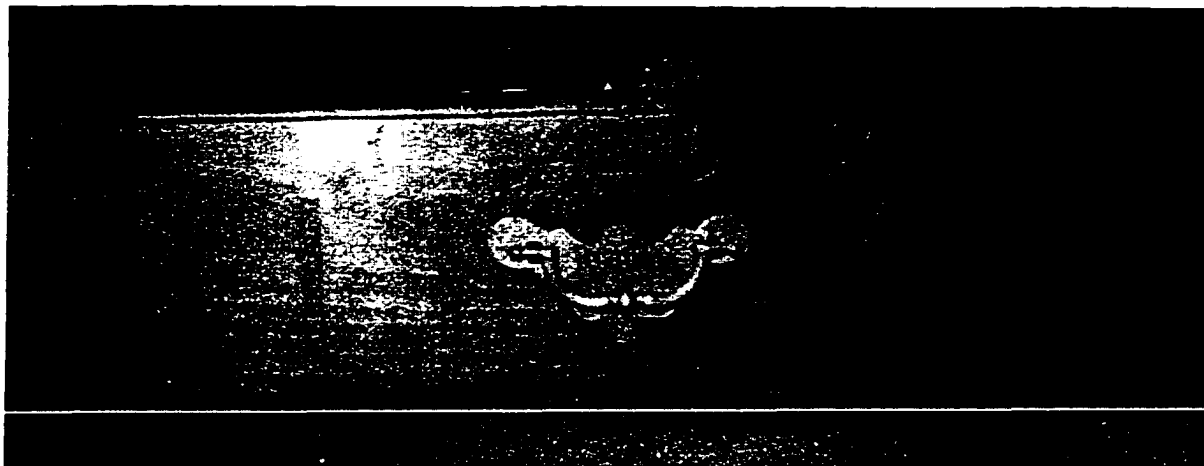


Figure 5. The “H Y” and “1752” inlay on the top central drawer in figure 4. “H Y” is most likely Hannah Yarnall who married William Griffith at Newtown Monthly Meeting on October 11, 1752. Private Collection.

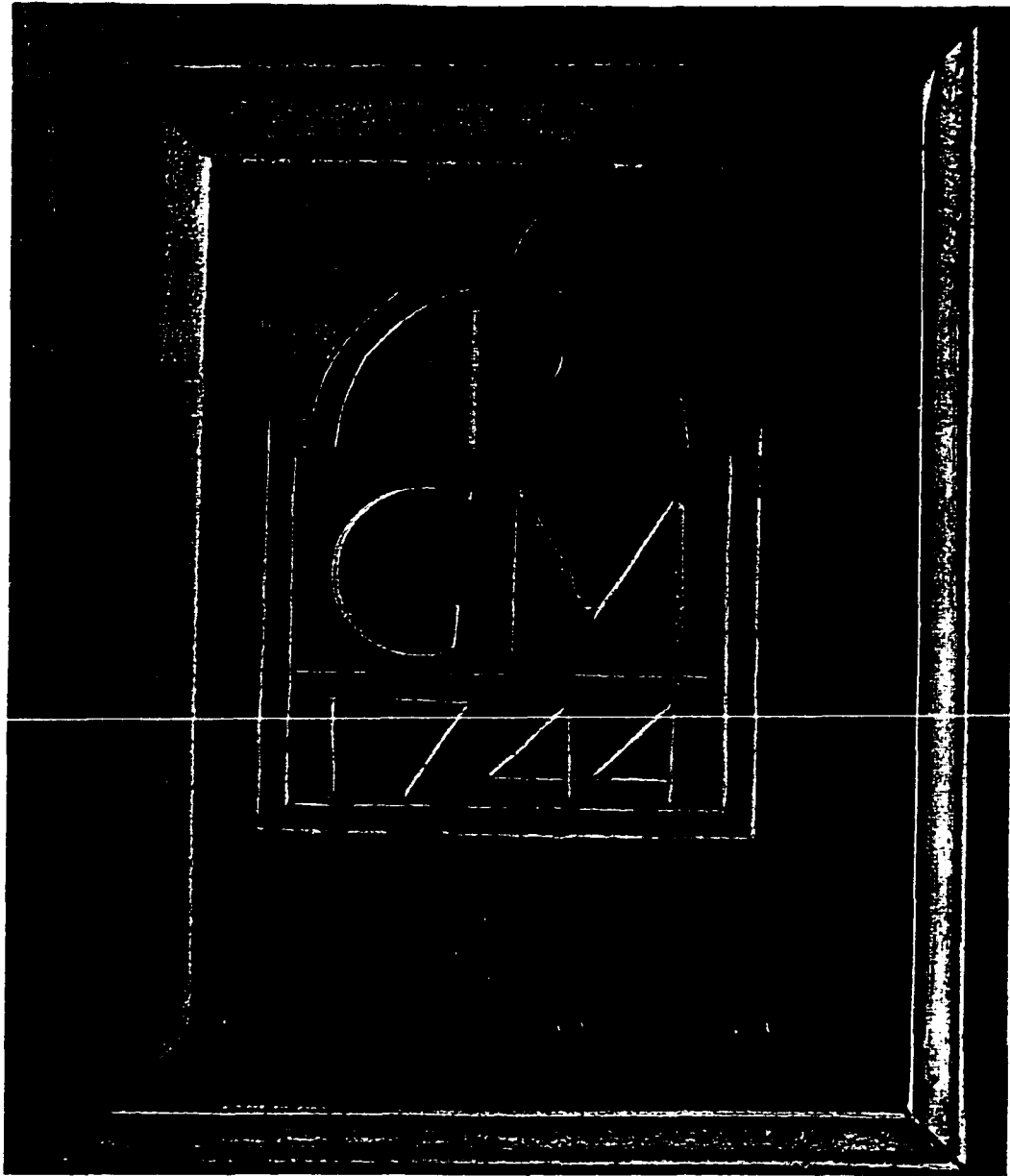


Figure 6. Door of Spice box attributed to Joel Baily. The inlay forming the tombstone outline is similar to the inlay on the "H Y" chest. This box was made for George and Margaret Passmore who were married at London Grove meeting in 1742. Joel Baily signed their marriage certificate. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum. Gift of Henry Francis DuPont.

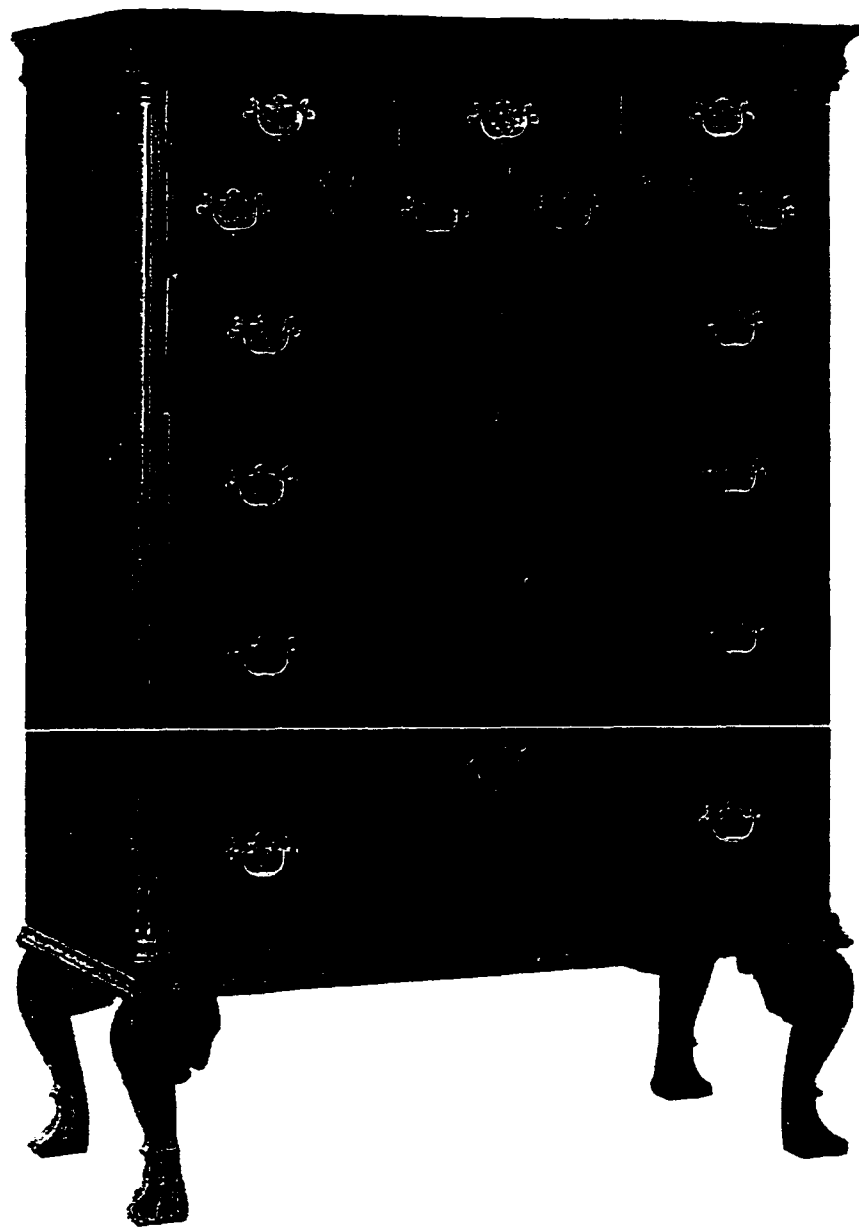


Figure 7. The Maryland-type chest has two-flute corner columns, reeding below the cornice, applied mitered moldings to cover the dovetails on top, vertical, nailed-on backboards, battens that are hidden up under the bottom molding, and long chamfered screws. This is the only Maryland example with its original paneled spade feet. In this case, the back legs are slightly shaped, rather than flat like the Garrett back legs in figure 2. Private Collection.



Figure 8. The "C W" inlay on the Maryland chest in figure 7. The dots are round and finer than those on the Pennsylvania "H Y" chest or in the tombstone inlay on the spice box door. Note the trailing lines and "berries." "C W" may be the initials of Cassandra Wood who married Robert Miller on October 21, 1779 at Bush Creek Meeting in Maryland. Cassandra was the daughter of William and Margaret Wood of Chester County, Pennsylvania. Private Collection.

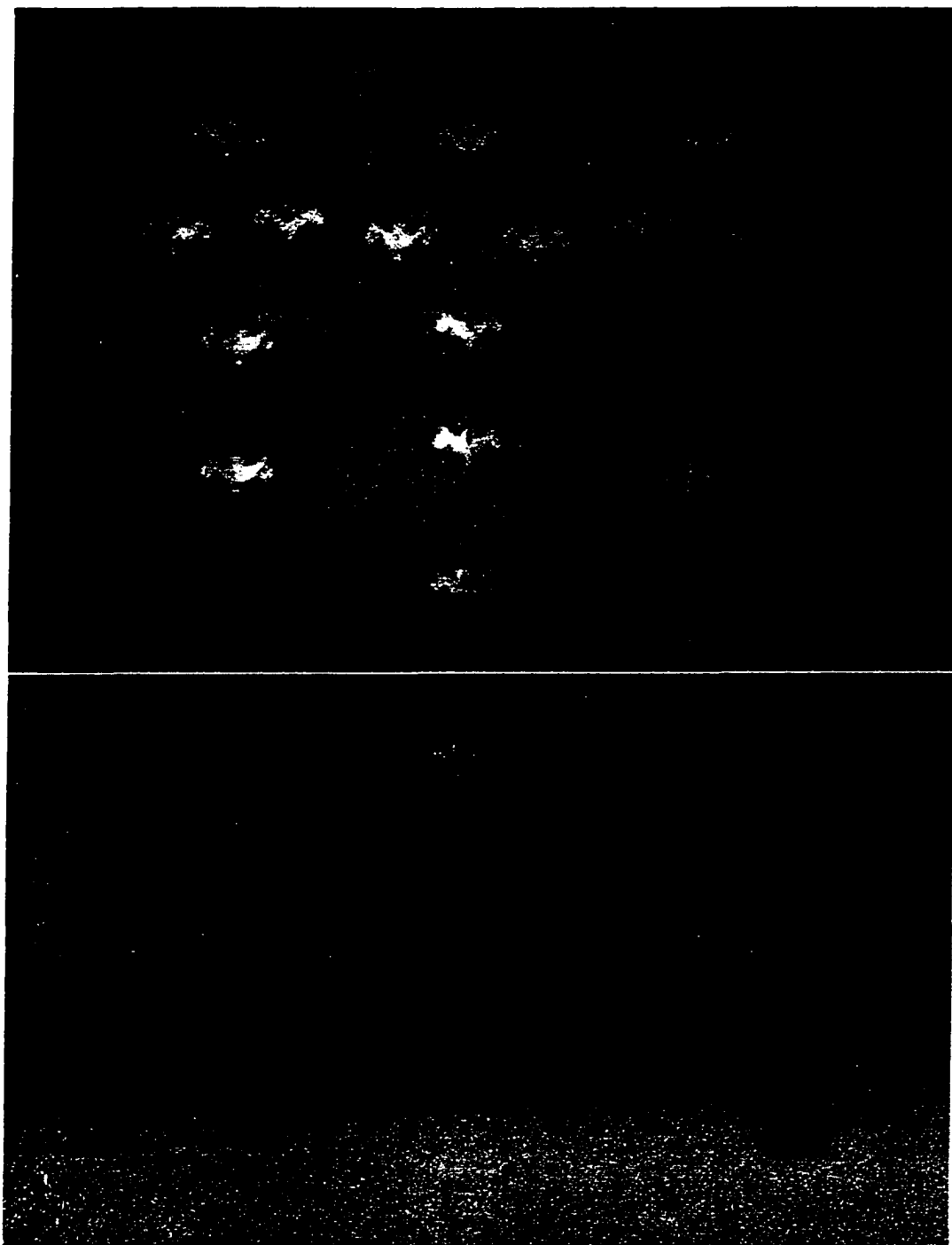


Figure 9. Chest with applied pendant skirt, pierced C-scrolls, and paneled spade feet.
Courtesy Kindig Antiques.



Figure 10. Chest attributed to Benjamin Garrett with incised floral carving on the knees, open C-scrolls, and reeded spade feet. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum.



Figure 11. Detail of legs and incised floral carving on figure 10. Notice how the “stem” defines the C-scroll, similar to the other examples with simple incised lines. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum.

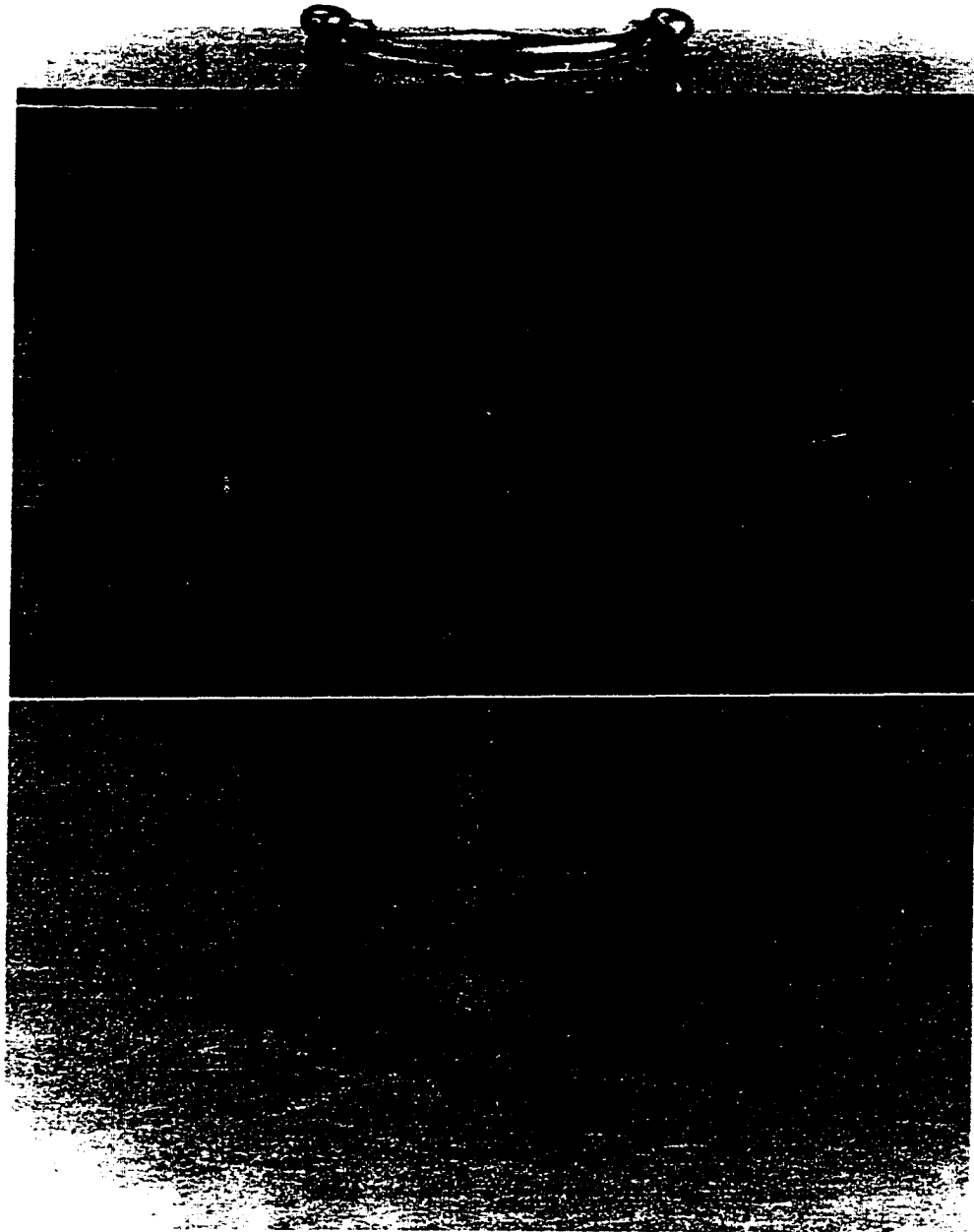


Figure 12. Tapered finger lock on the bottom of one of the two outside top drawers. The lock that tapers nearly to a point, as this one does, is a characteristic of the Garrett group of chests. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum.



Figure 13. Chest with two drawers across the top, exposed half dovetails on the front of the case, simple incised lines defining the volute and C-scroll, and reeded spade feet. This is the only chest that does not have lipped drawer fronts. Courtesy, Philip H. Bradley Co.



Figure 14. The walnut chest illustrated as plate 167 in *Furniture and Its Makers of Chester County, Pennsylvania*. The overall appearance suggests that it could be attributed to Benjamin Garrett.

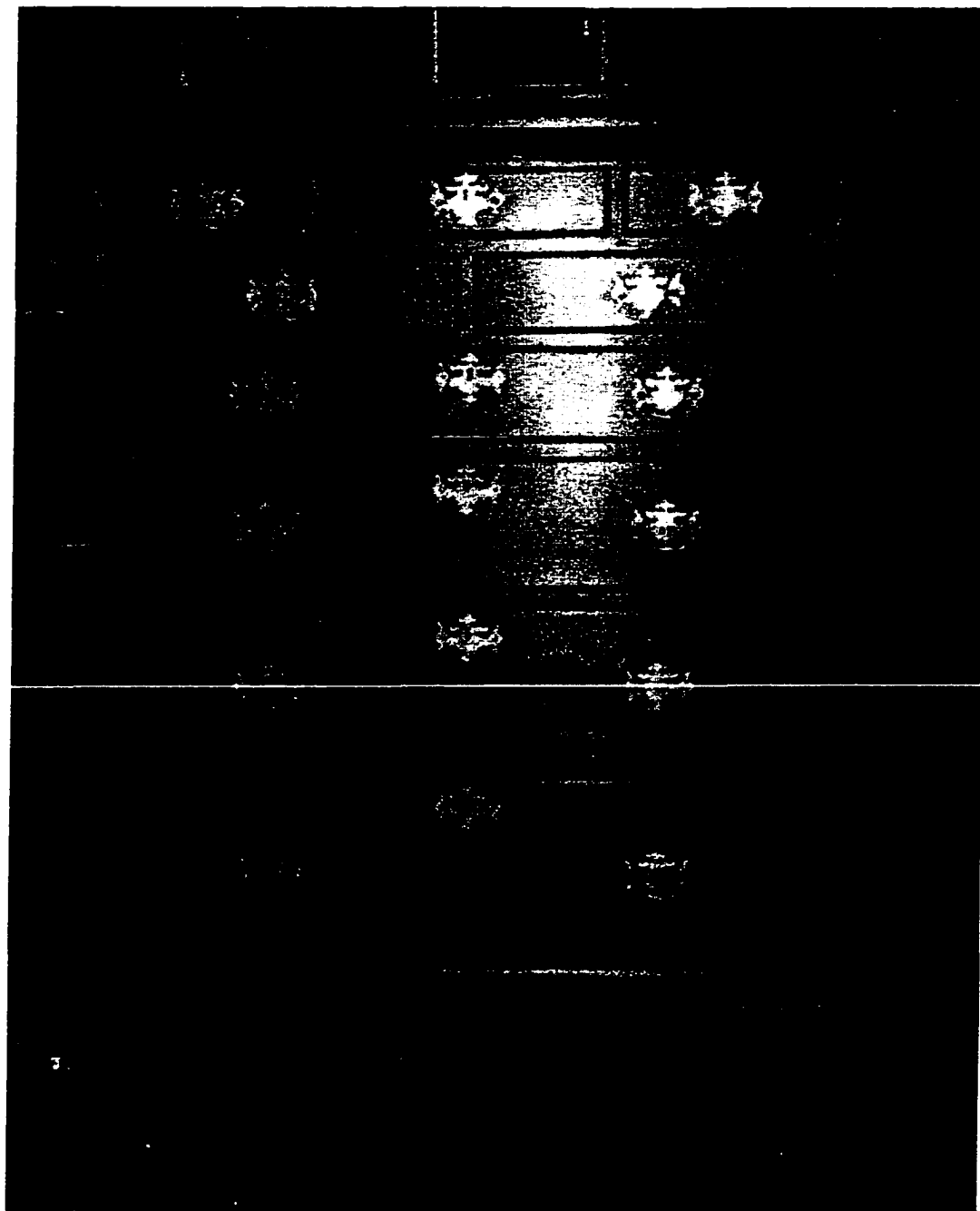


Figure 15. A Garrett-type chest with volutes and open C-scrolls in the knees articulated by incised lines. Cornice, including reeding, restored. Courtesy, Philip H. Bradley Co.

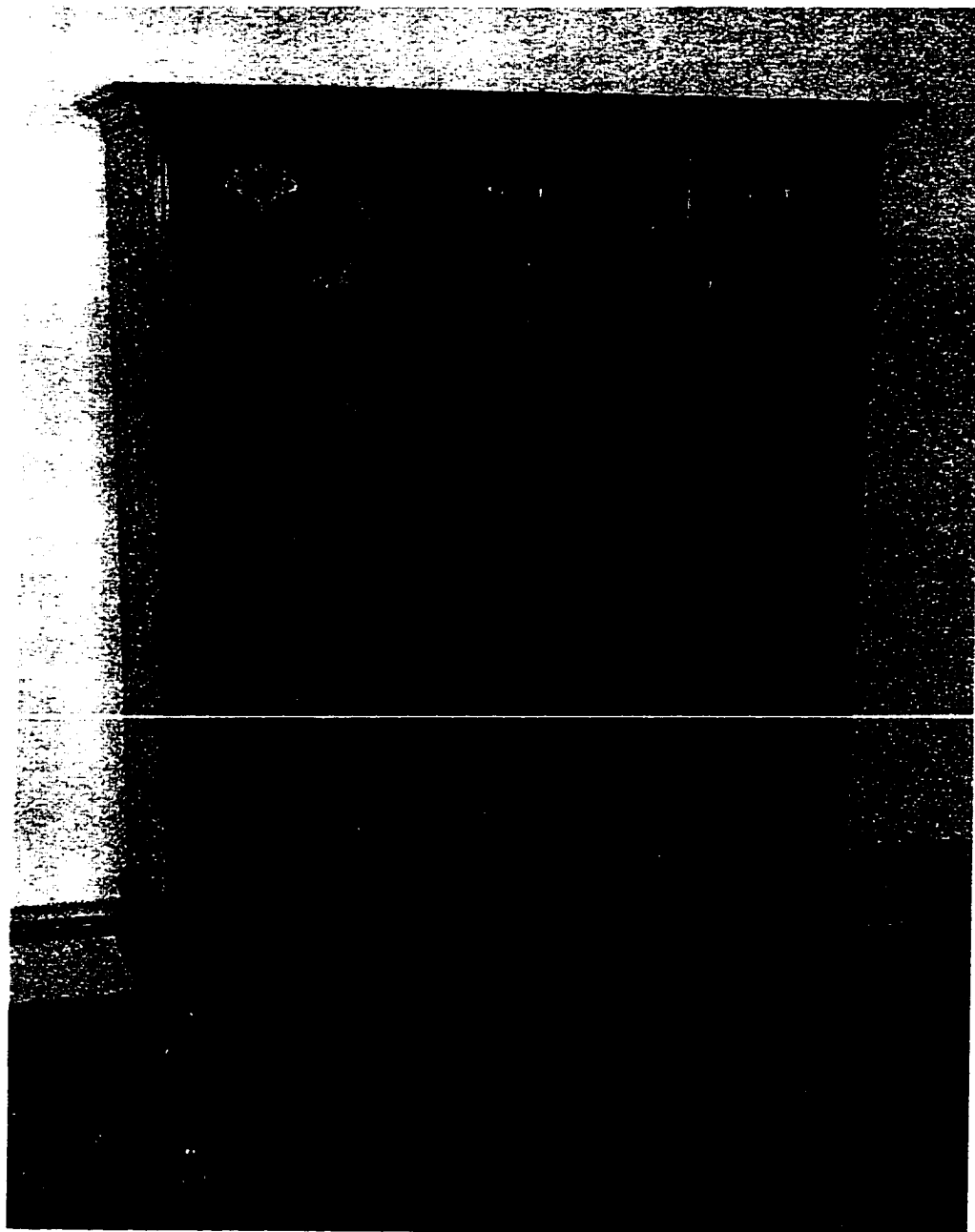


Figure 16. A Garrett-type chest with plain legs and lobed feet. Courtesy, Chris A. Machmer, Antiques.

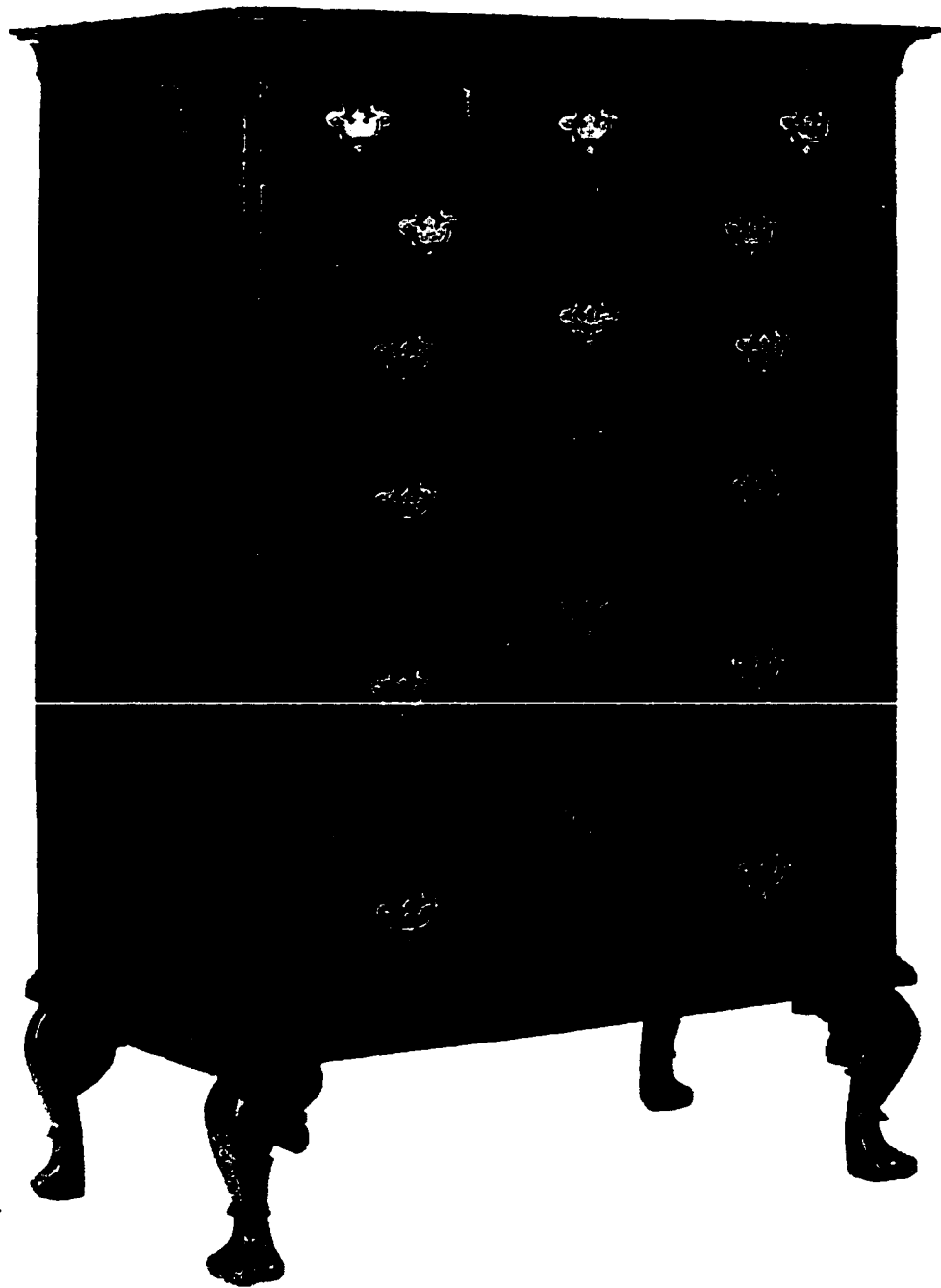


Figure 17. A Garrett-type chest with plain legs and lobed feet. Private Collection.

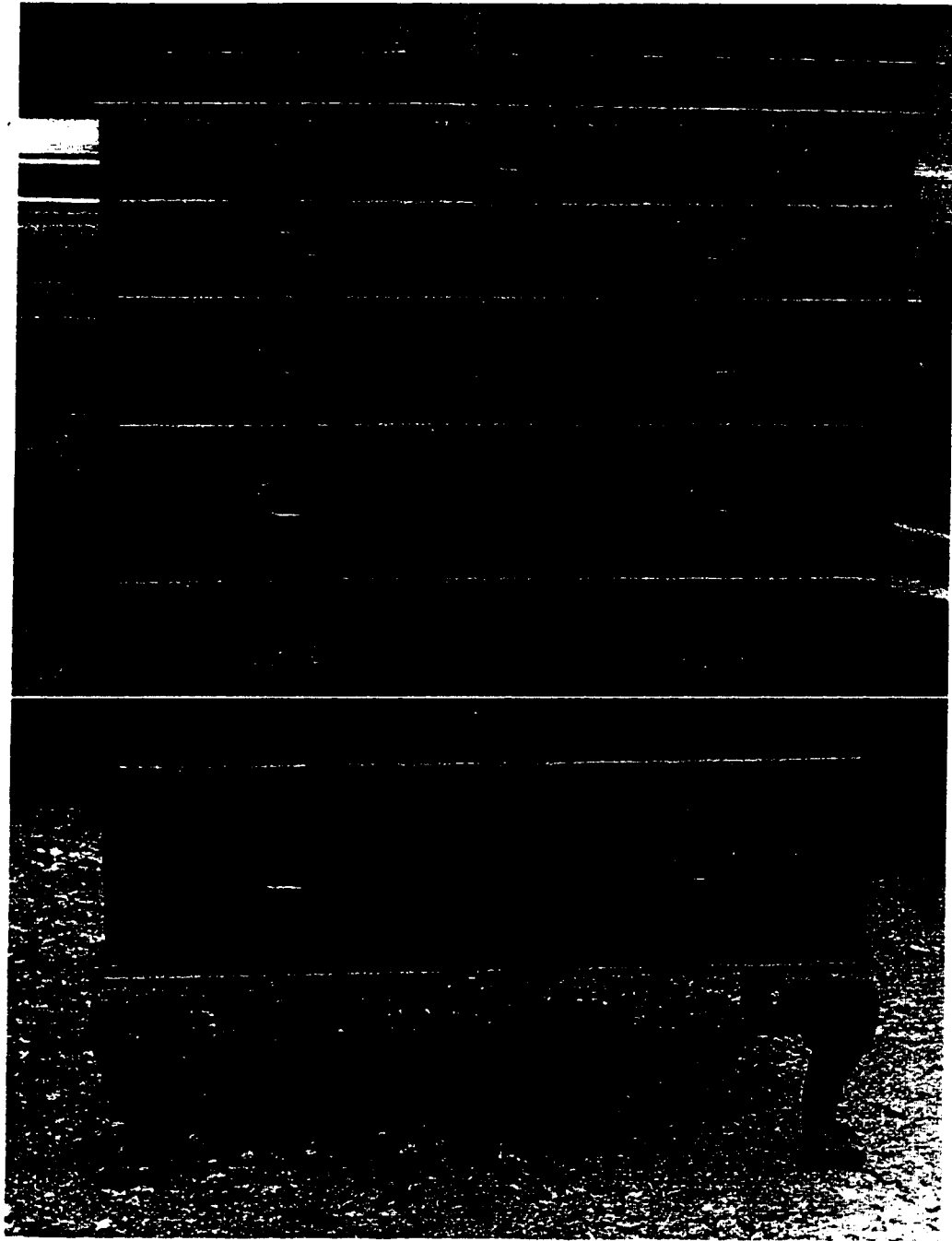


Figure 18. A chest with a reeded frieze under the cornice, pierced C-scrolls, a flower carved within the "C," and paneled spade feet. Courtesy, Trevor Lindsey Antiques.



Figure 19. This chest's lobed feet, small C-scrolls, and leg profiles are different from all the others considered. A slight chamfer finishes the edge of the case. Private Collection.

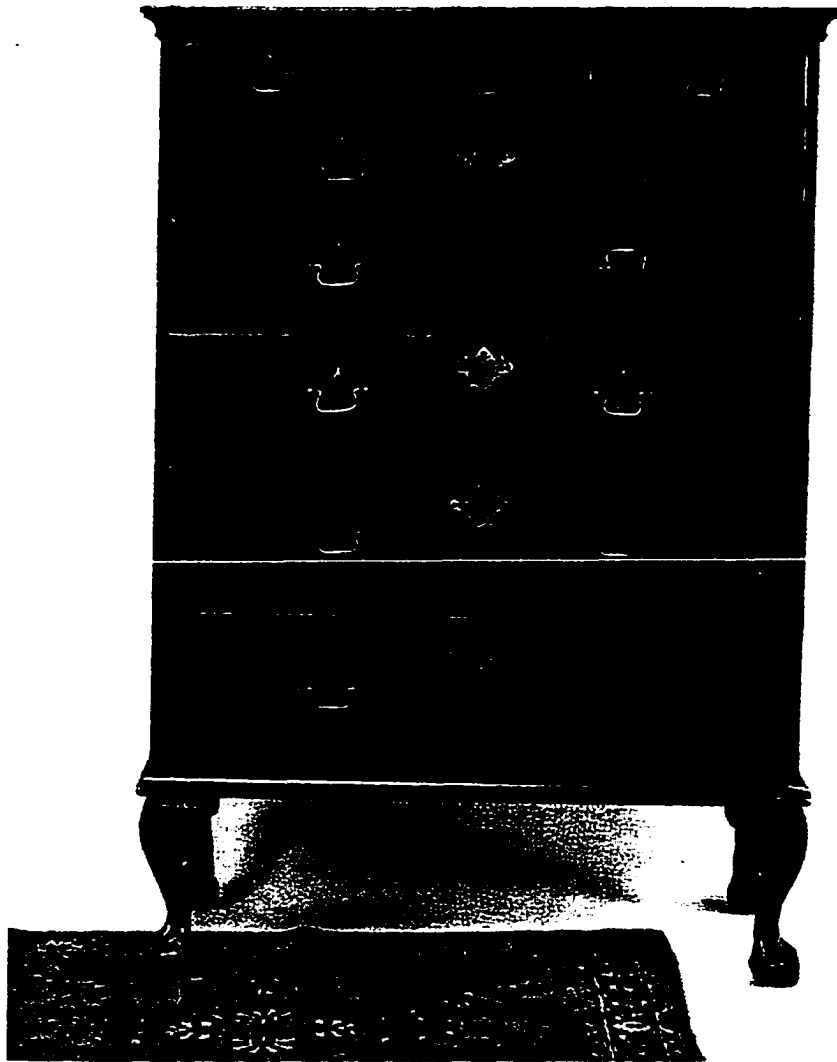


Figure 20. This chest is unique among the removable-feet chests as it appears to have claw-and-ball feet front and back, and pierced C-scrolls, as well as an atypical drawer arrangement. The chest was sold by Alderfer Auction Company, October, 1989. Present whereabouts unknown.

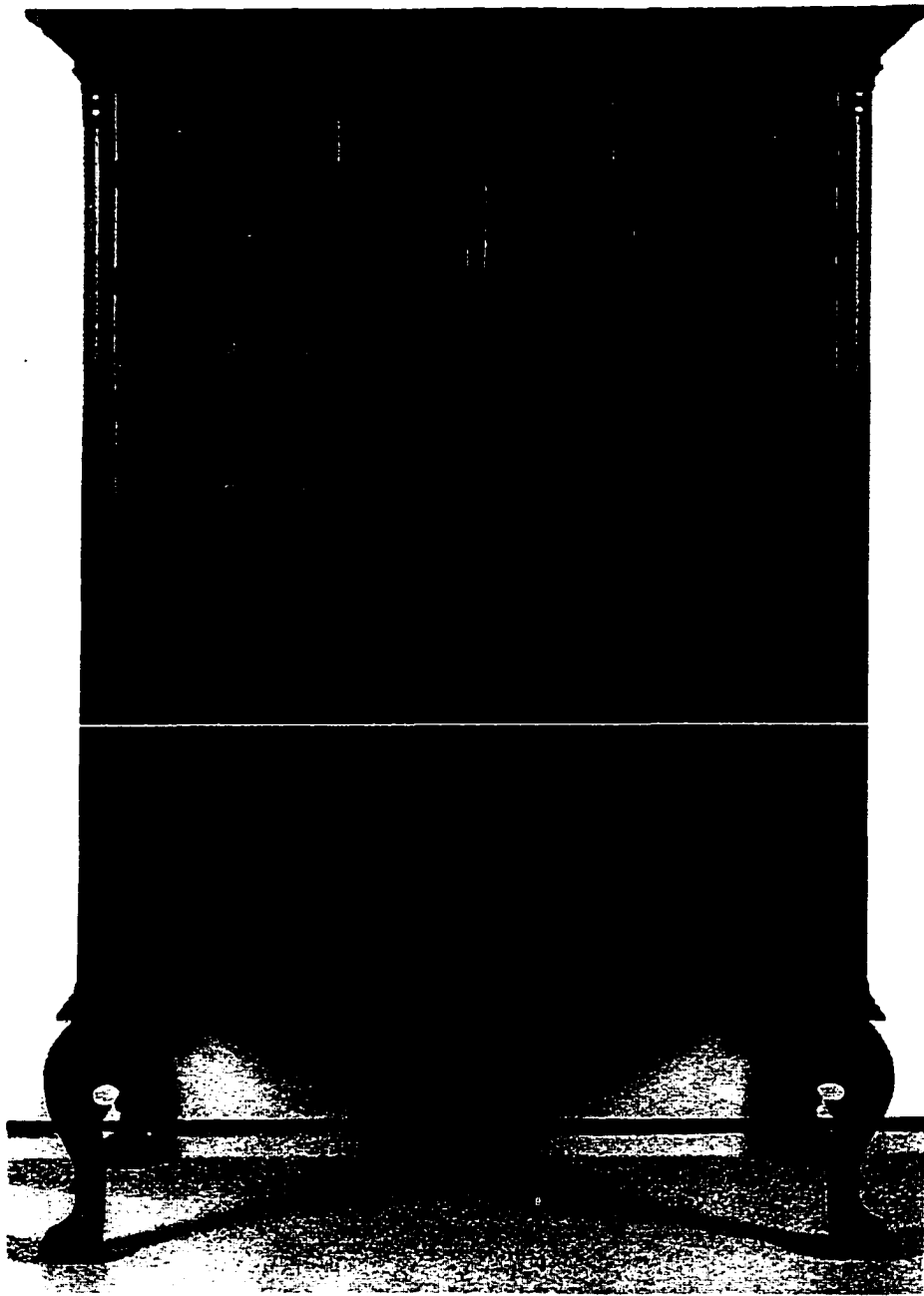


Figure 21. The leg profile of this chest appears to follow the Garrett-type. However, unique to this chest are the three-flute corner columns. Not visible in this view, the design of the articulated volute and C-scroll is repeated on the sides of the front legs, and the back legs are slightly shaped. Courtesy, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.



Figure 22. Detail of figure 21, showing the repeat of the decorative design on the sides of the front legs, the lobed foot, and the slightly shaped back leg. Courtesy, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

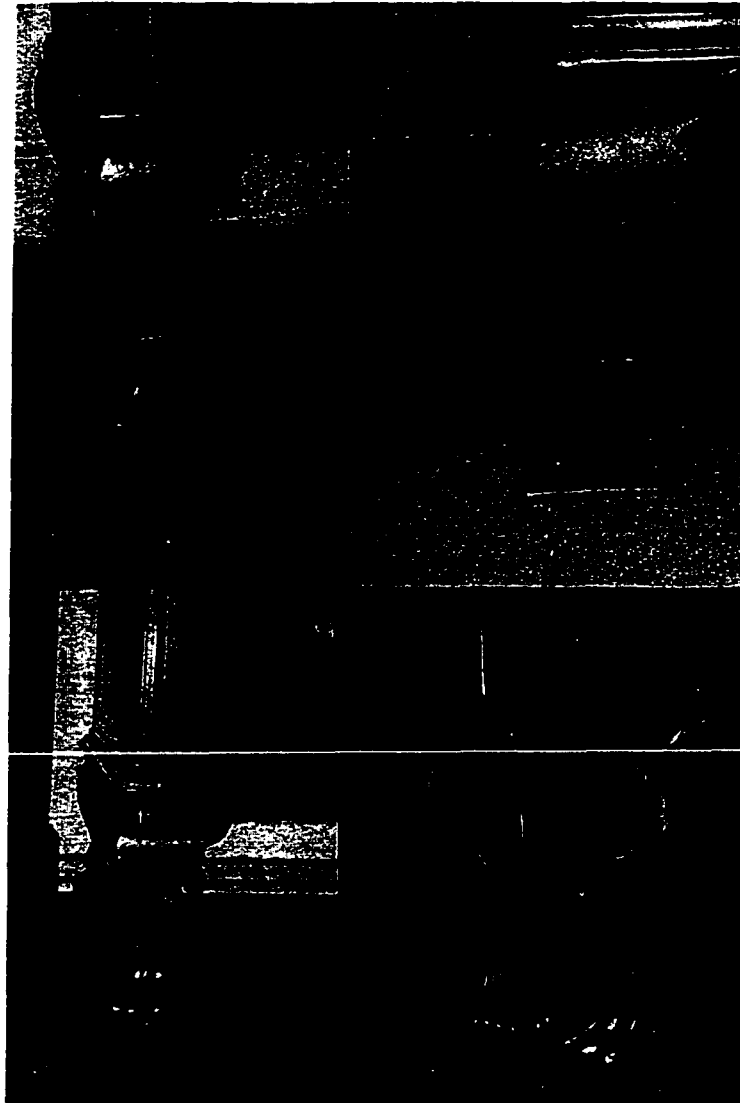


Figure 23. Comparison of foot types and designs. Top left, a pierced C-scroll with a paneled spade foot. The knee return is straight, rather than flowing up toward the bottom molding as is the case for the other examples shown here. Private collection. Top right, a plain leg with a plain spade foot. Courtesy, Chris A. Machmer, Antiques. Bottom left, a plain leg with a lobed foot. Courtesy, Chris A. Machmer, Antiques. Bottom right, two examples with incised lines defining the volute and C-scroll. The left foot is a reeded spade foot, while the right one is lobed. Courtesy, Philip H. Bradley Co.

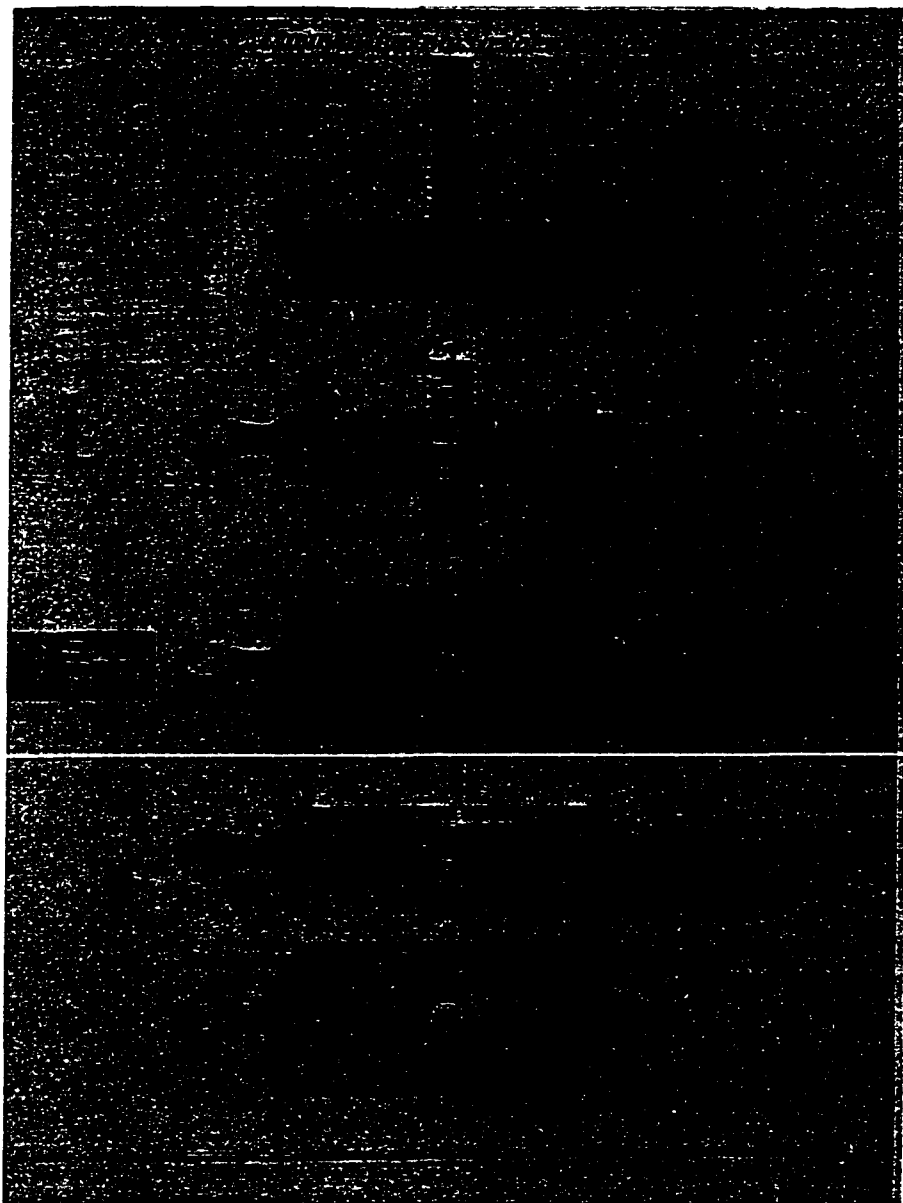


Figure 24. Screw box and screw tap. From Andre Jacob Roubo, *L'art du menuisier* (Paris, 1769-1775), Vol. 3, Plate 311.

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