

Philadelphia Chest-on-Chest, 1765–  
1775

Mahogany with tulip poplar and white cedar  
1996.170

Just before the American Revolution, a highly skilled artisan made this dramatic chest with fluted quarter-columns and a scrolled pediment. The three-dimensional carving on the top was unusually difficult. The chest's owner probably used the multiple drawers to store family valuables, increasingly necessary as more consumer goods became available.

Samuel Seymour

B. England, fl. America, 1796–1823, after  
Thomas Birch, American, 1779–1851

*Philadelphia in the State of Pennsylvania in  
North America*, ca. 1800

Engraving

1988.2

Charles Willson Peale  
American, 1741–1827  
His Excellency, Benjamin Franklin, 1787  
Mezzotint  
1973.3

Attributed to Ephraim Tinkham II  
American, 1649–1713 or associate  
Plymouth, Massachusetts Great Chair,  
1680–1700  
Maple and ash; traces of original red paint  
1992.4

Carving possibly by John Pollard  
American, 1740–1787  
Philadelphia Rococo Side Chair, 1765–1775  
Mahogany with oak and pine  
1961.8

Attributed to John Dunlap  
American, 1746–1792  
Goffstown or Bedford, New Hampshire Side  
Chair, 1770–1790  
Maple  
1965.12

London Four-Part Food Warmer, ca. 1770  
Buff earthenware, bluish-white tin glaze  
1965.19

Donyatt, Somerset Chamber Pot, ca.  
1680–1700  
Buff earthenware, lead glaze  
1999.7

Staffordshire Coffeepot, ca. 1755  
White stoneware, salt glaze  
1983.2

Providence, Rhode Island, Jabez-Bowen  
Family Coat of Arms, ca. 1780–790  
Silk with gold and silver metals and  
metallic threads  
1984.11

Some well-to-do colonists, who wanted to be considered like British nobility, displayed heraldic devices. Between 1760 and 1800 noted Boston schools taught girls to make such coats of arms in the hatchment (diamond) shape with lavish silk and metallic threads.

Boston Side Chair, 1760–1770  
Mahogany with maple and white pine  
1971.3

The Boston merchant William Phillips imported several chairs from England, which Boston artisans copied and modified. Although English workers carved ornaments separately and attached them, this American worker carved the floral volutes on the back from the solid wood.

Carving attributed to Nicholas Bernard  
American, b. England, d. after 1783 and  
Martin Jugiez  
American, b. England, d. 1815  
Philadelphia Scroll-foot Side Chair, 1765–  
1770  
Mahogany with pine  
1990.3

Although Americans usually modified  
chair designs for local customers, on this  
chair the legs exactly copy Plate XII in  
Thomas Chippendale's design book, *The  
Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*.

Norfolk, Virginia or Edenton, North  
Carolina Armchair, 1745–1765  
Mahogany; yellow pine slip seat  
1997.11

Workmanship and design suggest that a recent Irish or English immigrant tradesman must have made this chair. Scholars can identify many furniture makers only through their products. Norfolk merchants routinely shipped furniture to eastern North Carolina, but shops may have produced furniture there as well.

Attributed to shop of Thomas Dennis  
American, b. England, 1638–1703  
Ipswich, Massachusetts Carved Chest,  
1665–1700  
Oak with oak and pine  
1992.11

This shows similarities to painted and carved work from rural England, especially Devonshire. It was originally painted greenish-black, white, and red; the panels filled with sinuous carving show the Netherlandish influence introduced to England in the sixteenth century. The stiles, rails, and panels show the riving technique.

Attributed to workshop of Ralph Mason  
American, b. England, 1599–1678/79 and  
Henry Messinger

American, b. England, ? –1681

Boston Carved Chest, 1660-1680

Oak, Spanish cedar, and walnut with oak  
and pine

1994.9

Many different woods make up this chest:  
the glyphs, arch moldings, and appliques  
on the center panel are made of Spanish  
cedar; the spindles and flat appliques of  
the center panel are walnut; the base of the  
chest is made of oak and pine.



Attributed to John Elderkin  
American, b. England, 1616–1687  
Eastern Connecticut, Rhode Island, or  
Massachusetts Great Chair, ca. 1640  
Oak, cherry, and ash  
1992.2

This is the only known example of an American-made three-post chair. Attributed to the millwright John Elderkin, this chair displays many woodworking techniques typical of workers in the building trades. The hanging pendants were similar to overhanging posts on New England houses, and the bracing of the back equalized construction tension in a manner common to house builders.

Paul Sandby  
English, 1725–1809  
*A View of Bethlem, The Great Moravian  
Settlement in the Province of  
Pennsylvania*, 1761  
Hand-colored engraving  
1964.12

New York Trunk, 1740–1780  
Gum, leather, nails, wrought-iron  
hardware, paper lining  
1997.17

The dovetailed box, the use of decorative nailing, and the geometric panels, vines, birds, and animals were ornaments common on Dutch, German, and Swiss decorative arts.

Attributed to Philip Dawe  
English, fl. 1750–1785  
*The Bostonians Paying the Excise Man or  
Tarring and Feathering*, 1774  
Mezzotint  
1985.11

By the eve of the American Revolution, British taste had become less acceptable. With each confrontation between England and her colonies, satirical prints demonstrated procolonial sympathies in England; colonists soon copied them to fuel dissent.

Attributed to Benjamin Frothingham, Jr.  
American, 1734–1809

Charlestown, Massachusetts Card Table,  
1755–1775

Mahogany with maple and pine; original  
needlework playing surface  
1972.9

The ball-and-claw feet, with the two side  
talons sharply raked back, mark this table's  
Massachusetts origins. It is rare for  
needlework to survive as well as this.

Newport Card Table, 1755–1775

Mahogany with maple and white pine  
1970.15

A blocked and recessed front rail on this  
card table suggests the center tablet and  
friezes of chimney pieces. Below, long  
curving legs (known as the cabriole style,  
resembling the foreleg of a capering horse)  
with angular knees, pad rear feet, and the  
semidetached talons of its front ball-and-  
claw-feet further constitute fine Newport  
features.

Philadelphia Card Table, ca. 1765  
Mahogany with oak, tulip poplar, and  
white cedar  
1991.4

The elaborate rococo carving, deep rails, and rounded corners illustrate typical Philadelphia features. The naturalistic carving that cascaded down and around the rounded corners required skills found in few American towns.

Paul Revere  
American, 1735–1818  
*A View of the Town of Boston with Several  
Ships of War in the Harbour*, 1774  
Hand-colored engraving.  
1996.3

Immortalized by Longfellow for his patriotic midnight ride, Paul Revere was better known to his contemporaries for his artistic and business skills. Although he considered himself foremost a silversmith, he also worked as an engraver, a hardware store owner, and even as a dentist.

Probably Boston Leather Chair, 1700–  
1710

Maple and oak; leather upholstery with  
wrought-iron and brass nails  
1992.6

Artisans used patterns and shortcuts to  
produce the ornately turned posts, mortise-  
and-tenon joints, and high backs in this  
chair. Such innovations helped give  
Boston craftsmen a financial advantage  
over their competition.

Carving attributed to John Welch  
American, 1711–1789

Boston Side Chair, 1735–1740  
Walnut and walnut veneer with maple and  
white pine; maple slip seat  
1993.2

Boston merchant Charles Apthorp  
purchased this chair from Samuel Grant  
with parts supplied by local chair makers.  
Its carving is attributed to John Welch,  
Boston's most important and prolific  
prerevolutionary carver. Welch carved the  
same shell and acanthus leaves on the crest  
rail on several gilt frames for Boston artist  
John Singleton Copley.

Boston Side Chair, 1745–1755  
Mahogany; maple slip seat  
1952.9, 1

Unlike the more highly embellished  
Apthorp chair, standard Boston forms  
were uncarved or had simple shells on the  
crest and knees.

Henry Fletcher  
English, fl. 1729 after Pieter Casteels II  
Flemish, 1684–1749  
Subscribers, 1730  
From *Twelve Months of Flowers*,  
published by John Bowles  
Hand-colored etching  
1959.10, 13

This set of prints depicting months of the  
year was accompanied by this list of  
prominent patrons. The publisher used this  
endorsement to boost future sales.

Henry Fletcher  
English, fl. 1729 after Pieter Casteels II  
Flemish, 1684–1749  
*August*, 1730  
From *Twelve Months of Flowers*,  
published by John Bowles  
Hand-colored etching  
1959.10, 8

Carving attributed to Nicholas Bernard  
American, b. England, d. after 1783) and  
Martin Jugiez  
American, b. England, d. 1815  
Philadelphia Tea Table, 1765–1775  
Mahogany  
1953.4

According to family tradition, Michael and Miriam Gratz, prominent members of Philadelphia's Jewish community, commissioned a dressing table, a set of side chairs, and an easy chair, after their marriage in 1769. They soon added this tea table.

Attributed to Thomas Affleck  
American, b. Scotland, 1740–1795  
Nicholas Bernard  
American, b. England, d. after 1783 and  
Martin Jugiez  
American, b. England, d. 1815  
Philadelphia Fire Screen, 1770–1775  
Mahogany with embroidered panel  
1990.5

For their opulent Philadelphia townhouse, John and Elizabeth Lloyd Cadwalader ordered four fire screens, attributed to the cabinetmaker Affleck and the carvers Bernard and Jugiez. The skillful modeling of the feet and acanthus leaves show the greater time and attention taken by the carvers of this fire screen. This new form is used for blocking heat to the face while sitting by the fire.

Hadley/Hatfield, Massachusetts Joined  
Chest, 1700–1710  
Oak with oak and pine  
1988.21



Johannes (Jan) Janson

Dutch, 1588–1664

*America pars Meridionalis*, ca.1640

Hand-colored engraving, gilding

1954.12

Maps of this period often define areas as trade centers and emphasize navigable waterways, metropolitan centers, and ports. Such popular maps often depicted European naval vessels, caricatures of native populations, vegetation, and indigenous animals.

Artist unknown

*The Hongs at Canton*, ca.1840

Oil on paper

1962.14

The Hong warehouses of Canton (Guangzhou), China were the point of departure for Chinese exports to Western markets. Their image was popular on exported paintings and ceramics beginning in the late eighteenth century.

Boston Japanned Looking Glass, 1700–  
1730

White pine  
1954.6

The popularity of japanned frames (imitating Asian lacquerwork) on mirrors demonstrates both new craft techniques and a new interest in the refraction of light. While British examples flooded the colonies by the end of the seventeenth century, this mirror was made in America to imitate Asian exports.

Philadelphia Late Baroque Side Chair,  
1735–1745

Walnut with walnut and pine  
1973.5

The “S-curve” shape of a cabriole leg paired with the bent back of this fashionable side chair has design origins in Chinese furniture imported into Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Boston High Chest, 1700–1710  
Walnut and burl walnut veneer with white  
pine  
1953.2

Peking Teapot, 1736–1796  
Porcelain, enamel, bronze  
1965.27

Three Chinese Snuff Bottles, mid-18th  
century  
Porcelain, enamel  
1996.118, 1996.119, 1996.120

London Octagonal Plate, ca. 1685  
Buff earthenware, bluish-white tin glaze  
1984.6

Staffordshire Hexagonal Teapot, ca.1760–  
1780  
Unglazed red stoneware  
1990.11

English or Netherlandish Bowl or Basin,  
ca. 1710  
Pale buff earthenware, white tin glaze  
1984.5

Johannes (Jan) Janson  
Dutch, 1588–1664  
*America Septentrionalis*, ca. 1640  
Hand-colored engraving, gilding  
1954.11

James Hopwood

English, 1752–1819 after Peter Henderson

English, fl. 1799–1829

*The Quadrangular Passion-flower*, 1806

From the book by Robert John Thornton,

*The Temple of Flora* (London:

Thornton, 1807)

Color aquatint

1952.27

The print exemplifies the English interest in unusual New World species as well as the graphic sophistication employed to record them accurately. Originally printed in 1806, this print eventually illustrated the famous botany text *The Temple of Flora* (1807).

Mark Catesby

English, 1679–1749

*Parrot of Paradise*, 1731–1734

From the book by Mark Catesby, *The  
Natural History of Carolina, Florida,  
and the Bahama Islands* (London:  
Catesby, 1734)

Hand-colored engraving

1952.36

Catesby, an accomplished English naturalist and engraver, published this print in a book for both European and American colonial consumers. Popular examples of European printmaking often came to the Americas in the form of picture books and individual prints.

Peter Pelham

American, b. England, 1697–1751

*Cotton Mather*, 1727

Mezzotint.

1969.12

Born and apprenticed in England, Pelham immigrated to the colonies around 1726. He is best remembered for being the first American producer of mezzotint prints, a graphic technique of creating gradations of tone on paper as opposed to simple lines.

Charles Willson Peale

American, 1741–1827

*His Excellency, George Washington*,  
*Esquire*, 1787

Mezzotint

1975.4

Peale's prints of famous Americans demonstrate the lasting influence of Peter Pelham on the genre of American portraiture in mezzotint. Peale manipulated shadow and light with rare fluidity, imbuing portraits with a more naturalistic quality than much American line engraving of the time.

Nathaniel Coverly, Jr.  
American, ca. 1775–1824  
*The Launch of the Huzza for the New  
Seventy-Four*, after 1813  
Woodblock and typeset  
1971.9

Broadsides, available to the American people as early as 1685, represented an important form of public communication. Coverly printed these popular ballads of American victories in the War of 1812.

Paul Revere  
American, 1735–1818  
*The Bloody Massacre Perpetrated in King  
Street Boston*, 1770  
Hand-colored engraving  
1969.7

A celebrated figure of the Revolutionary War, Revere also ran flourishing businesses in goldsmithing and printing. Capitalizing on the colonial need to understand current events, this image records the incidents that were later remembered as the Boston Massacre.



Attributed to Amos Doolittle

American, 1754–1832

*The Columbus*, 1800

Hand-colored engraving

1977.8

As the Revolution shifted to battles largely fought at sea, such naval scenes as this symbolized national pride and eventual victory over England for many Americans.

Abel Bowen

American, 1790–1854 after William Lynn

Fl. ca. 1800–1818

*U.S. Frigate Constitution, of 44 Guns.*,  
ca.1813

Hand-colored engraving and aquatint.

1987.2

Amos Doolittle

American, 1754–1832

*The Prodigal Son Reveling with Harlots*,  
1814

Hand-colored engraving

1991.14,2

With a nod to popular moralistic observations of contemporary life by such English artists as William Hogarth and Thomas Rowlandson, Doolittle illustrates the biblical story of the Prodigal Son for Americans.

Ralph Toft (British, born ca. 1638)

Staffordshire (possibly Shelton or Hanley)

Dish, ca. 1677

Buff earthenware, lead glaze

1993.23

Probably John Simpson (British, 1685–  
1774)

Staffordshire (probably Burslem)

Octagonal Dish, ca. 1715

Buff earthenware, lead glaze

1993.16

English (probably Bristol) Plate, ca. 1745

Buff earthenware, bluish-white tin-glaze

1992.23

Staffordshire Plate, ca. 1760

White stoneware, salt glaze

1962.9

Staffordshire Plate, ca. 1765

White stoneware, enameling and salt glaze

1983.14,2

British (possibly Liverpool) Plaque, 1799–  
1805

Transfer print after Gilbert Stuart,  
American, 1755-1805

Cream-colored earthenware, lead glaze,  
transfer printing

1998.13

London (probably Southwark) Fuddling  
Cup, 1635–1650

Buff earthenware, slightly translucent or  
pinkish-white tin glaze

1991.5

Attributed to Thomas Ifield (British,  
d.1689)

Wrotham, Kent Tyg, 1649

Red earthenware, lead glaze

1963.15

German (probably Cologne or Raeren)  
Jug, ca.1680–1700  
Grayish-buff stoneware, salt glaze  
1964.2

Probably John Dwight  
British, ca.1635–1703  
Fulham, Surrey Jug, ca. 1685  
Brown-speckled white stoneware, salt  
glaze  
1994.6

English (probably London) Jug, 1690–  
1710  
Buff stoneware, enamel, gilding, salt glaze  
1994.7

English (probably Bristol) Puzzle Jug,  
1771  
Buff earthenware, bluish-white tin glaze  
1990.7

Thomas Rowlandson  
English, 1756–1827  
*A Kick up at Hazard Table*, 1790  
Hand-colored engraving  
1964.20

English (possibly Sussex, Somerset, or  
Nottingham) Coffeepot, ca. 1755  
Red-brown earthenware, lead glaze  
1985.6

Possibly Aaron Wedgwood  
British, fl. 1751–1759 and/or  
William Littler  
British, 1724–1784  
Burslem, Staffordshire Coffeepot, ca.  
1750–1765  
White stoneware, enamel, salt glaze  
1983.6

Staffordshire Teapot, ca. 1760  
White stoneware, enamel, salt glaze  
1997.19

British Teapot, ca. 1770  
Cream-colored earthenware, lead glaze  
1997.23

Staffordshire Covered Jug, 1750–1770  
Agate earthenware, lead glaze  
1987.5

Attributed to William Greatbatch  
British, 1735–1813, Lower Lane Factory  
Fenton, Staffordshire Teapot, ca. 1779  
Cream-colored earthenware, enamel, lead  
glaze  
1996.8

English (probably Staffordshire) Tea  
Canister, ca. 1765  
Cream-colored earthenware, green lead  
glaze  
1997.7

Staffordshire Sugar Bowl, 1750–1770  
Agate earthenware, lead glaze  
1996.169

New England Board Chest, 1675–1725  
White pine  
1997.15

Common white pine board chests were often painted to resemble more expensive woods. On this chest, the red and ochre graining still visible may have been intended to mimic mahogany.



Attributed to John Norman, Sr.  
American, b. England 1612–1672 or  
John Norman, Jr.  
American, 1637–1713  
Manchester or Marblehead, Massachusetts  
Joined Chest, 1650–1680  
Oak with white pine  
1950.4

Attributed to Christopher Townsend  
American, 1701–1773  
Newport High Chest, 1740–1750  
Mahogany with tulip poplar  
1985.12

The drawers of this high chest could store newly available consumer goods, while its upper shelves displayed valuable luxury items such as china figurines. Finely carved ball -and- claw feet below and refined mahogany cabinetry throughout may suggest that a wealthy person owned it.

John Townsend  
American, 1707–1787  
Newport Document Cabinet, 1756  
Mahogany with white pine  
1964.4

This cabinet's blocked front with deeply carved shell motifs is a distinctly Newport treatment. The ball feet are unusual, perhaps demonstrating a client's wish to match another piece.

English (probably London) Shoe Figurine,  
1709  
Buff earthenware, pale bluish white tin  
glaze  
1989.5

English (possibly Midlands) Monkey  
Figurine, ca. 1750–1800  
Buff earthenware, tin glaze  
1984.3

Staffordshire Bear-Baiting Jug, 1720–1770  
White stoneware, salt-glaze  
1970.1

Staffordshire Bagpiper Figurine, ca. 1755  
Cream-colored and red earthenware, lead  
glaze  
1985.13

English or American Pocket, 1750–1790  
Linen with wool thread (crewel stitch)  
1996.113

Clothing was always an important means of distinction. Women often wore detachable pockets beneath or within the folds of their dresses to keep personal belongings safe, close, and hidden. Most women made and decorated their own pockets, producing high-quality embroidery on clothing not meant to be seen.

William Hogarth  
British, 1697–1764  
Characters and Caricatures, 1743  
Engraving  
1964.38

Western culture's preoccupation with human typology was a source of scientific interest as well as entertainment. Referred to as the "comic history painter," Hogarth here depicts a profusion of facial types and expressions, views that many of his audience regarded as historically and socially accurate.

John Faber

British, b. Holland, 1684–1756 after

Willem Verelst ,Dutch, d. 1756

Tomo Chachi Mico or King of Yamacraw

and Tooanahowi His Nephew, Son to

the Mico of the Etchitas, 1734

Mezzotint

1989.2

An example of Western contact with and interest in other cultures, this print depicts two representatives of the Iroquois people in London in 1734. The artist used the mezzotint technique to show the furs and soft eagle feathers. Both the subjects and the artist may have fashioned these appearances.

English (probably London) Dispensing  
Pots, 1760–1790

Darkish-buff earthenware, bluish-white tin  
glaze

1993.12, 1993.13

Apothecary dispensing pots such as this pair had many uses. These likely held rouge, as part of a woman's toilette. They may originally have been filled with medicinal or scented substances.

English (possibly London) Barber's Basin,  
1706

Buff earthenware, white tin glaze

1965.8

English, Charles I and Henrietta Maria  
Needlework Picture, ca. 1640  
Linen canvas with wool, silk, and metallic  
threads (tent stitch)  
1964.26

This commemorated the wedding of  
England's King Charles I and Queen  
Henrietta Maria. Although a professional  
designed the piece, a woman trained in  
embroidery stitched the needlework in a  
domestic setting. Such training was  
common for young women and considered  
a valuable skill for marriage.

Boston Work Table, 1790–1800  
Mahogany, mahogany and birch veneers  
with pine; textile  
1975.12

With a pouch for storing sewing projects,  
a drawer to hold inks, pens, and paper,  
and an adjustable writing surface for  
correspondence and diaries, this work  
table would have been a welcome, intimate  
space for a woman to express her identity.

Boston Spice Cabinet, 1680–1700  
Mahogany and Spanish cedar with white  
pine  
1992.14

The drawers of this cabinet retain the  
aroma of the once-fragrant spices. Such  
expensive specialty cabinets were used to  
store valuable items.

American (probably Massachusetts) Easy  
Chair, 1760–1790  
Mahogany and maple with maple and  
cotton damask  
1989.8

In early American houses, easy chairs  
were located in bedrooms, primarily for  
the elderly and the infirm. The slightly  
tilted back, side wings, and padded  
upholstery made the occupant more  
comfortable and calm and possibly eased  
pain. Easy chairs were also used for  
women in labor or nursing mothers.



After workshop of Ralph Mason  
American, b. England, 1599–1678/79 and  
Henry Messinger  
American, b. England, ? –1681  
Boston Folding Table, 1650–1680  
Oak, black walnut, Spanish cedar, and  
ebonized maple with pine  
1991.16

A sophisticated craftsman in Boston made this folding table in the latest London style. It was a sign that the new colonies were up-to-date, flourishing and an important part of a commercial and military empire that had conquered the world.

New York City Tea Table, 1760–1770  
Mahogany  
1968.1

In the century between the manufacture of these two tables, both style and function had evolved. The folding table had many uses, the tea table one. Production methods had changed from a single worker to many workers per object. The successful crafts-person changed with the times—and changed the times.

John Hockin

British

Barnstaple or Bideford, North Devon

Harvest Jug, 1748

Pale reddish-brown earthenware, lead  
glaze

1994.10

The harvest jug was used in the annual agricultural celebration when friends working together shared drink together. Completely suited for its function, such jugs were made and used for two hundred years. Notice the humorous poem inscribed on the side.

Newport Dressing Glass, 1770–1800

Mahogany with chestnut, poplar, and  
white pine

1976.10

Personal objects such as dressing mirrors and shaving bowls may express the increased social importance of looking the part, thus representing a means to assert or reveal one's identity to others.