

A Maryland Chippendale Piecrust Tea Table, by Process of Elimination

"Perhaps no single piece of American cabinetware of the Georgian period is so universally admired, so eagerly sought after by collectors . . . as a tripod tea table fabricated of rich grained wood, skillfully elaborated with a scalloped top cut from an individual part of solid crotch mahogany, ball and claw feet, and . . . various ornamentations on the pedestal and legs."

– William McPherson Hornor, Jr. (courtesy of Sarah Neale Fayen)



Fig. 1a, image by the author



Fig. 1b, image by the author

In the fall of 2019 this American mahogany tea table (Figs. 1a,1b, and 1c) came up for sale at a regional New England auction house. While scrolling through the online catalogue images, and despite a close resemblance to Philadelphia examples, I was immediately reminded of the Maryland attributed mahogany piecrust tea table in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art (Fig. 2).

There were enough differences between the two that it was doubtful both were from the same shop. Their commonality, however, was that while both were products of unabashed efforts to emulate the finest Philadelphia traditions, each projected enough provincial identity to comfortably place their origin outside the city.



Fig. 2, *Fine Points of Furniture*, Israel Sack, 1960



Fig. 1c, image by the author

The BMA's piecrust table, assigned a Maryland attribution in Maryland Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture of the Eighteenth Century in 1968 (Fig. 5), was later attributed to Maryland or Pennsylvania in American Furniture 1680-1880, published in 1986. Having initially been associated with Joseph Kindig, Jr., who found it in Frederick, Maryland, it (or an identical table) was later determined to have been sold at Park-Bernet Galleries in 1950. This table (or an identical table) was also published in Israel Sack's Fine Points of Furniture in 1960 (Fig. 2).

Perhaps the most noticeable difference between the two tables is the contrast between their respective leg braces or "spiders" (Fig. 3). In the BMA's American Furniture 1680-1880 catalogue entry, the museum's example is described as having "carved gadrooning under the legs at the base of the columnar support. This separate wooden member, heavily nailed to the underside of legs, takes the place of the usual metal brace.". The implication is that this carved component is original to the table. Its' implementation, along with the four-board top, narrower carved feet, and wrought iron tilt-top latch, rather than a typical brass version, might account for a more rural, certainly non-Philadelphia origin of manufacture.



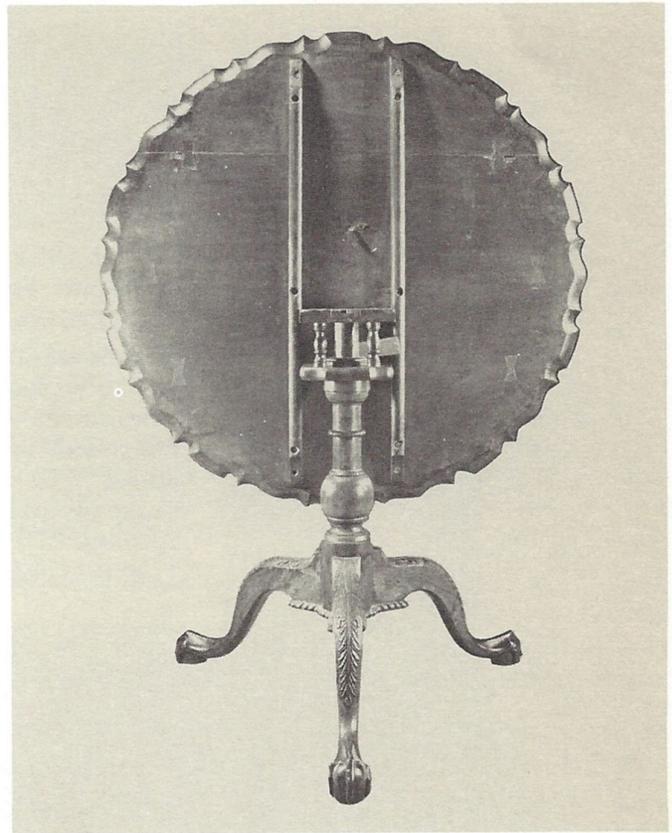
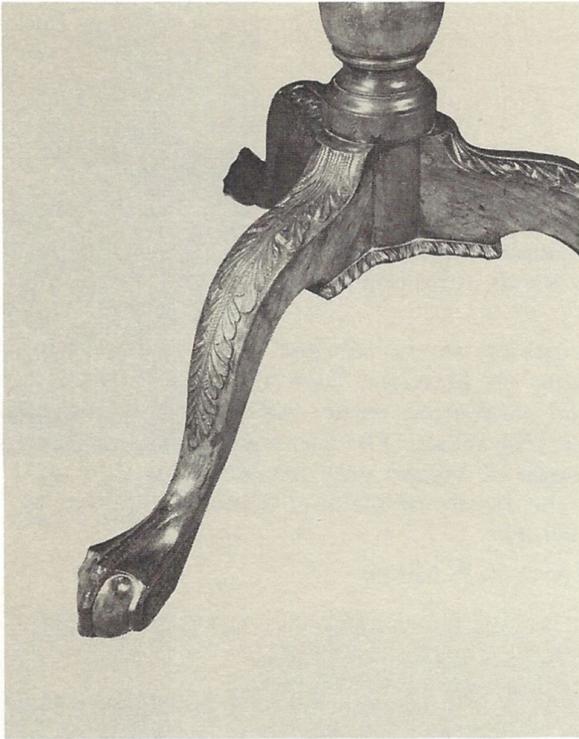
Fig. 3, *Maryland Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*; William Voss Elder, III; *The Baltimore Museum of Art*, 1968, and image by the author, respectively

Another walnut table (Fig. 4), attributed to Frederick, Maryland, is one of but a handful of fully executed Chippendale tilt-top tea tables attributed to the state.



Virginia dealer Sumpter Priddy III showed off a rare Frederick County, Md., piecrust tea table with distinctive pointed lozenge-shaped carvings on its legs and realistically carved talon feet. Walnut throughout, it descended in the Shriver family.

Fig. 4, <https://www.antiquesandthearts.com/the-adahistoric-deerfield-antiques-show/>



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TEA TABLE—Chippendale Style, c. 1765

Mahogany

h. $28\frac{1}{2}$; diam. $34\frac{3}{4}$

This pie crust tilt top table has unusually long acanthus leaf carving in the knee of each leg. The gadrooning at the base is a unique detail seen in few American tea tables of this period. Although a Baltimore origin has been suggested, this table has a Frederick provenance. Four pieces of wood rather than a single piece make up the top.

Anonymous loan

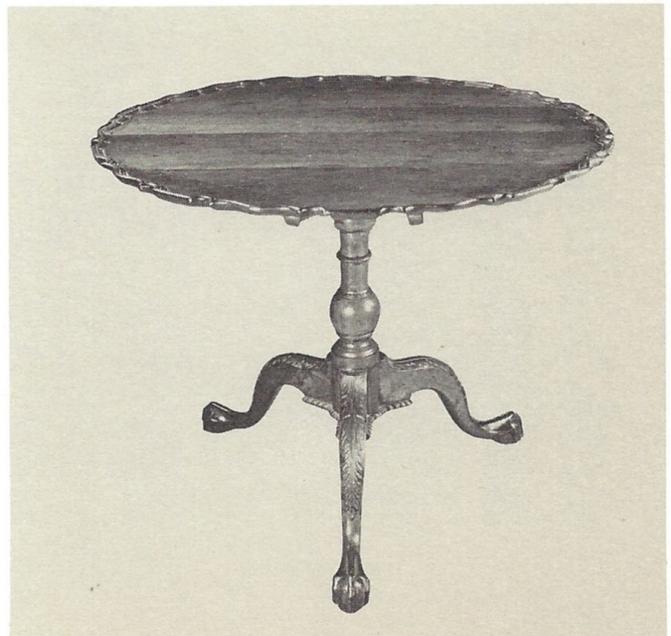
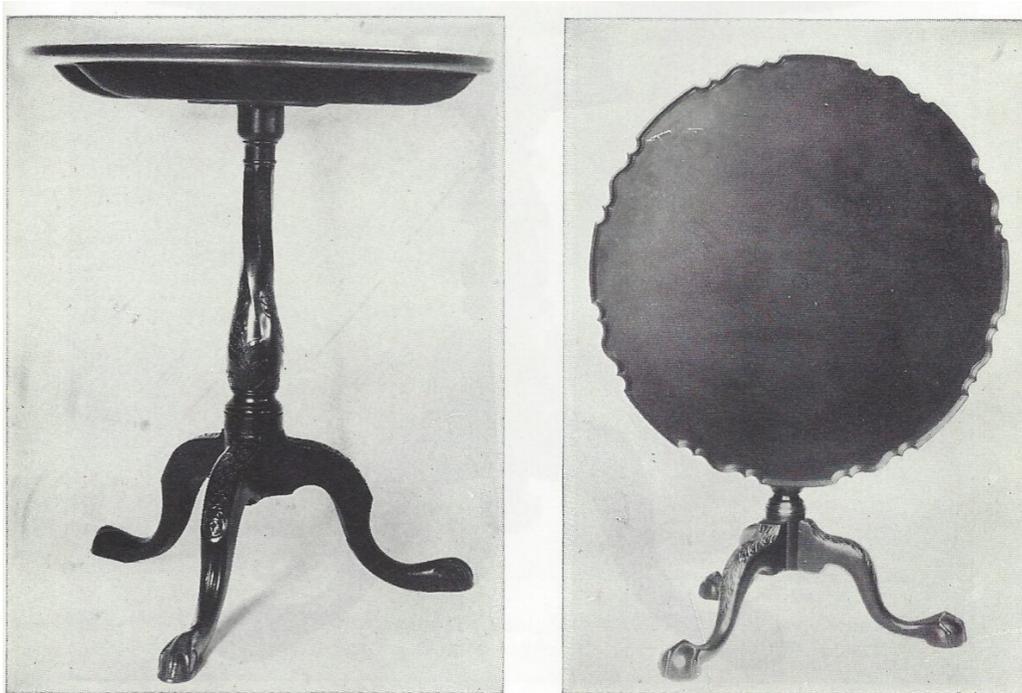


Fig. 5, *Maryland Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture of the Eighteenth Century;*
William Voss Elder, III; The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1968

When there is not much to talk about, not much can be said. In the annals of American furniture studies, Chippendale tilt-top tea tables made in Colonial Maryland have not only been neglected, they have been outright dismissed. Sarah Neale Fayen's Chipstone article, Tilt-Top Tables and Eighteenth-Century Consumerism, while acknowledging the use of these "ubiquitous fixtures" throughout the Colonies, neglects to cite a single example from Maryland. The reasons behind this were numerous, but all contributed to the marked scarcity of this Maryland Rococo aesthetic. The absence of documented examples has always made attribution difficult. Suffice it to say, the challenge lies not so much in identifying what definitively makes this a Maryland table, but rather, in recognizing those factors that eliminate this table from being the product of a premier Philadelphia shop.

The first step in researching the table was to pour over every source available in an attempt to find other examples with similar characteristics. While the beautifully carved top, legs, and feet were all significant, the distinctive profile of the turned pillar seemed the most promising indication toward finding a like example. It was during a final perusal of Wallace Nutting's Furniture Treasury that I happened upon, not a recognizable pillar profile, but an image of a very familiar piecrust top that was in its' tilted position, thus covering said pillar (Fig. 6). It was indeed the same table!



III. SPIRAL AND CARVED STANDARD. SMALL. 1760-75. H. N. CAMPBELL.
 III2. (Right.) ONE BOARD CROTCH MAHOGANY, 35 IN. PHILADELPHIA. c. 1760. H. W. ERVING.

Fig. 6, *Furniture Treasury*; Wallace Nutting; MacMillan, 1928

Unlike virtually every other piecrust top I had encountered, the alternating curved and scalloped arcs comprising the top edge are of nearly identical widths. In most examples, from Philadelphia to Charleston, the curved arcs are almost always significantly narrower than the scalloped arcs, often to the extent of appearing as straight edged crenelations (Fig. 7).

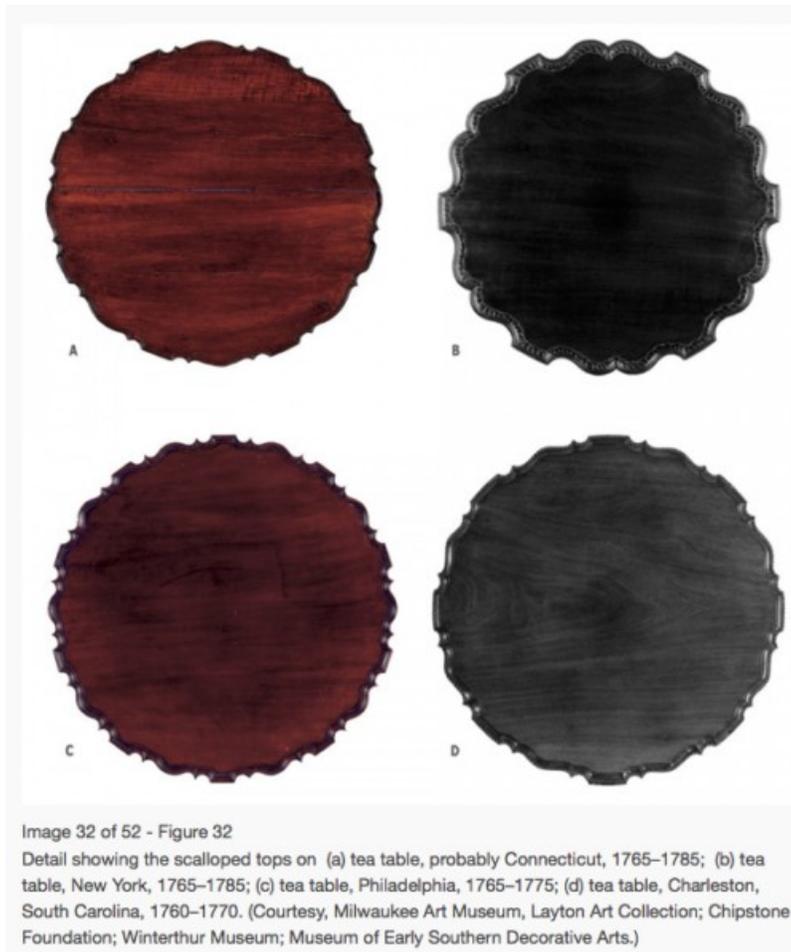


Fig. 7, Tilt-Top Tables and Eighteenth- Century Consumerism; Sarah Neale Feyen; <http://www.chipstone.org/images.php/275/American-Furniture-2003/Tilt-Top-Tables-and-Eighteenth-Century-Consumerism>

Nutting’s accompanying description noted how this “Philadelphia” tea table was from the collection of H. W. Erving (1851-1941) of Hartford, Connecticut. Henry Wood Erving was a pioneer collector and authority on American furniture. He was a member of the Walpole Society, a consultant to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, author of Random Notes on Colonial Furniture (1922), and is credited with discovering and naming the “Hadley” chest. Over one hundred items from his collection were included in Furniture Treasury as well as Lockwood’s Colonial Furniture in America. While his collection consisted primarily of New England antiques, it did include the occasional Southern piece. Nutting’s entry 1080, described as “New England Origin”, was also from Erving’s collection (Fig. 8). Eventually determined to be an Annapolis table attributed to John Shaw, it sold at Sotheby’s in 2007.

The auction catalogue notes Erving's collection number painted on the Shaw table as 229 (Fig. 9). A Connecticut high chest of drawers also owned by Erving and inscribed with the number 27 sold at the same sale. Accordingly, the collection number 206 is painted on the underside of this tea table near its' brass latch (Fig. 10).



1080. SPADE FOOT, HEPPLEWHITE, SCROLLED TOP, MAHOGANY. TOP 30 X 39. MOLDED EDGE. STRING INLAY ON ALL SIDES OF LEG AND FOOT. NEW ENGLAND ORIGIN. 1780-90. H. W. ERVING.

Fig. 8, *Furniture Treasury*; Wallace Nutting; MacMillan, 1928

PROPERTY OWNED BY DESCENDANTS OF HENRY WOOD ERVING

A Fine Federal Inlaid and Figured Mahogany Pembroke Table, attributed to John Shaw, Annapolis, Maryland

Estimate 3,000 – 5,000 USD ▼ **LOT SOLD. 45,000 USD**

Sotheby's EST. 1784



Appears to retain original hardware. Bears the number 229. height 29 in. by width 20 in. by depth 29 1/2 in. (73.7cm by 50.8cm by 74.9cm)

Fig. 9, www.sothebys.com

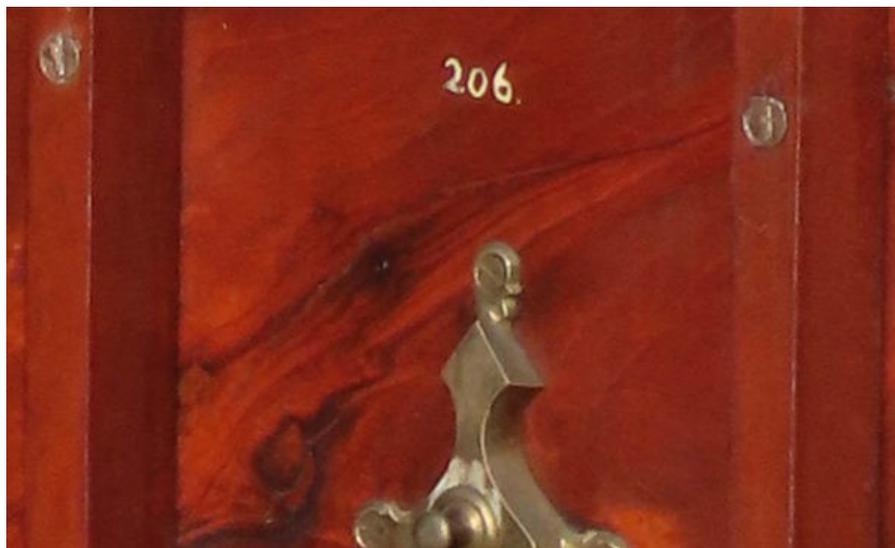


Fig. 10, image by the author

In determining which characteristics and factors indicate this tea table was not made in Philadelphia, one must acknowledge that generalizations are exactly that. There will always be exceptions and alternative opinions. Likewise, there is no singular “smoking gun” supporting the reasoning that this table was probably made in Maryland. Instead, it is the combining and weighing of multiple observations and considerations that culminate in the founded conclusion. There is little question that the maker was well acquainted with Philadelphia versions of the same form. The highly figured, single-board, scalloped mahogany top and well executed ball and claw feet are in keeping with the City’s finest shops. There are, however, four distinguishable features that belie a Philadelphia origin.

1. The ball and column pillar is far enough off the mark that it suggests a deliberate effort by the turner to create a more individual, albeit less successful profile than the Philadelphia archetype. The ball itself is more spherical than compressed, and its’ medial ring is incised below the ball’s surface rather than being convex. The stouter column is considerably less tapered, and placement of its’ capitals and/or rings appears more random compared to its’ Philadelphia counterparts (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11, image available at www.sothebys.com, and by the author respectively

While the ball and column pillar might simply be a less than accurate emulation of the Philadelphia paradigm, as seen on countless Pennsylvania examples, it likely represents a decisive mirroring of English design. The columnar component of this Virginia table (Fig. 12), more Georgian in style than many of its' English counterparts, has a strikingly similar profile (Fig. 13).



Fig. 12, attributed to Robert Walker (1710-1777),
Fredericksburg, Virginia; image available at www.mesda.org



Fig. 13, image by the author

2. A more subtle distinction is the molded quarter-round or "ovolo" upper edge on the bottom plate of the birdcage (Fig. 14). While this embellishment might seem in keeping with a highly carved table, it is actually rarely employed on American examples and when so, usually in exurban areas and with no discernible regional proclivity. This shaping of the birdcage is not apparent on any well attributed Philadelphia piecrust tables, least of all the profusely carved Rococo masterpieces. All have either a simple bullnose or straight edge (Fig. 15).



Fig. 14, image by the author



Fig. 15, images available at www.sothebys.com

3. The shoulder steps where the legs join the pedestal are markedly deeper than on Philadelphia examples (Fig. 16), many of those having no discernible ledge but essentially just a quarter-round transition (Fig. 17). A similarly deep ledge is apparent on the BMA Maryland attributed table cited earlier (Fig. 18).



Fig. 16, image by the author



Fig. 18, *Maryland Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*; William Voss Elder, III; The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1968



Fig. 15, images available at www.sothebys.com

4. All three feet are augmented with symmetrically applied side laminations. Each 5/8" wide, they allowed the maker to carve broader, more appropriately proportioned Philadelphia style ball and claw feet (Fig. 19). Instances of originally laminated feet were not uncommon (Fig. 20), including documented examples from the famous Cadwalader "hairy-paw" suite, the seams well camouflaged by the carved "hair". However, when limited by board width, most makers elected to work with what they had, carving the narrower, more "rat paw" like feet seen on many rural and even English-influenced urban examples. The salient point regarding this table is that the same maker who had access to one of the finest single board mahogany tops available, likely did not have access to wide enough stock for the desired foot width. Yet aesthetics were more important than expediency and the laminations were added. This situation seems more likely to have occurred in a secondary urban center like "Baltimore Town", more susceptible to shortages of materials, than the Colonies' most populated and leading commercial city, 1770 Philadelphia (Fig. 21). Bear in mind, during the 18th Century this table was "just furniture", and the business of producing such often required concessions to constraints on supply and time. Even William Horner's "Acme of Perfection" tea table, the McMichael-Tilghman Family table that sold at Sotheby's in 2008 for \$1.8 million, has a two-board top (Fig. 22). Notably, William Elder also points out in American Furniture 1680-1880, when differentiating Baltimore, and specifically Gerrard Hopkins attributed Chippendale feet, "The balls of the feet are "squashed" in the Philadelphia manner and the claws are thin and without talons.". Additionally, while alluding to the influence central Maryland's Anglo-American furniture making traditions undoubtedly had on the likes of individuals like Gerrard Hopkins, in describing a Virginia-made table by Robert Walker, MESDA notes, "The outside edges of the claws were built up of separate pieces attached with hide glue; one of six claws is complete." Such gluing up is standard London practice, but none of the others has this."



Fig. 19, image by the author



Fig. 20, images available at www.sothebys.com



Fig. 22, images available at www.sothebys.com

*Even more important to the marketplace, the Fisher-Fox table has never been refinished. A crack on the top and some warping did not matter. The fact that the McMichael-Tilghman table has a two-board top did not matter much either. When the mahogany board was not wide enough, the cabinetmaker took a piece from the next flitch and matched it exactly. What hurt the McMichael-Tilghman table was that it had been washed down, probably in the 1930's, when it was lent to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Its surface was not darkened by time like that of the Fisher-Fox table, which almost resembled cast bronze. In this thin market at the top, an old surface is worth a lot-in this case nearly \$4 million. (Lita Solis-Cohen, *Maine Antique Digest*, February 14, 2008)*

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SIDE CHAIR—Chippendale Style, c. 1770

Mahogany

h. 37; w. 21½; d. 15

The leaf carving in the form of a cartouche at the top of the splat is related to the carving on the Paca Family Chair which is also included in this exhibition. The carved flowers, or rosettes, on each ear are also found on other Chippendale chairs of Maryland provenance. This chair was traditionally owned by General William Smallwood of *Smallwood's Retreat* in Charles County. Until recently it was owned by a collateral descendant.

In 1789, John Shaw, cabinetmaker of Annapolis, wrote to General Smallwood that the chairs he had sent to Annapolis were repaired and that his sideboard table was done, except for the top which he had sent to Philadelphia for the best piece of mahogany.

Lent by the Maryland Department of Forests and Parks, General Smallwood State Park

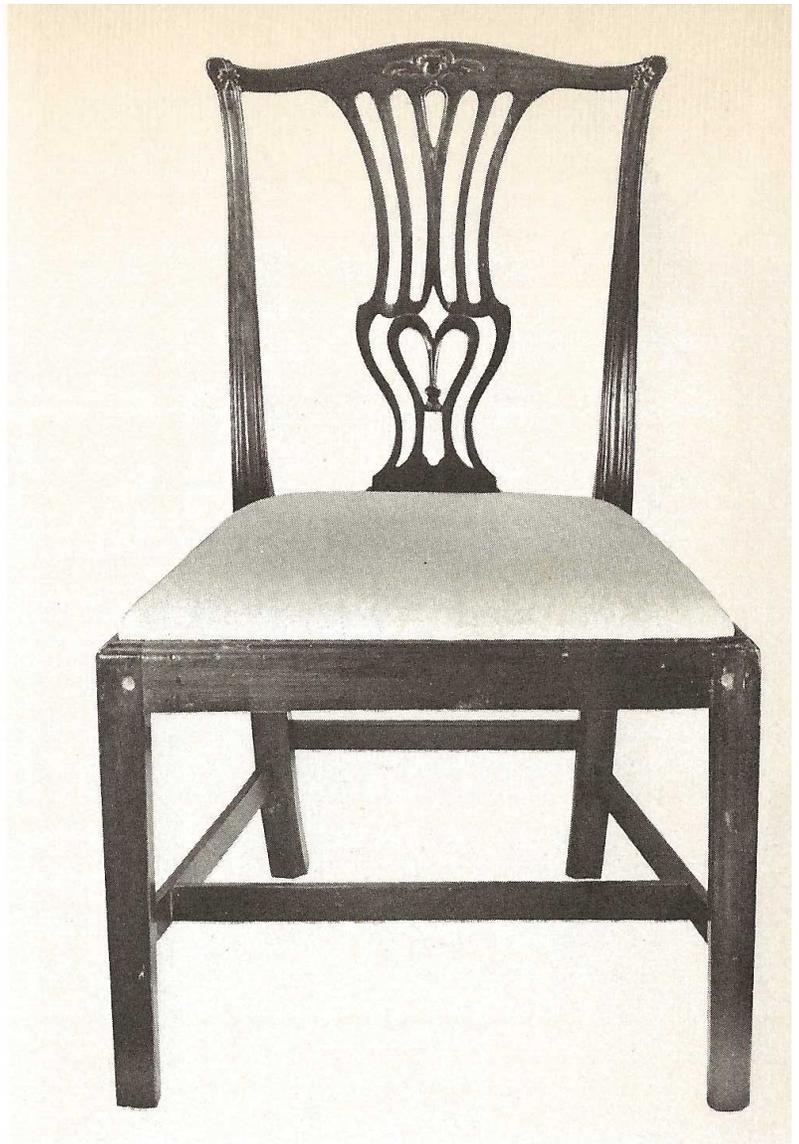


Fig. 21, Maryland Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture of the Eighteenth Century;

William Voss Elder, III; The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1968

Part and parcel to examining the carving of the legs are several observations made by William Voss Elder in the two previously cited BMA publications. He concedes "Our knowledge of Maryland, and specifically Baltimore versus Philadelphia tea tables of the Chippendale period, is indeed still scanty, as there are no documented and but a few attributed Maryland examples. Like the other furniture forms known to have been produced in Baltimore during this period, tea tables would have been imitative of or strongly influenced by the Philadelphia example."

His findings, however, did result in the identification of several local attributes, pointing out that “What is more common in Maryland is the deep acanthus-leaf carvings on the knee” and the “unusually long acanthus leaf carving in the knee of each leg”. Both characteristics aptly apply to our table (Fig. 23).



Fig. 23, images available at www.brunkauctions.com and www.sothebys.com respectively, right image by the author

If willing to concede that the Erving "Philadelphia" table is likely not a product of Philadelphia, the next step is to determine whether it can be attributed to Maryland, probably Baltimore or Annapolis, or another more rural Philadelphia-influenced origin. While provincial versions of Philadelphia ball and column pillars are evident from Chester County, Lancaster, Delaware, and even the Valley of Virginia, the fact that this table incorporates such a fine quality mahogany top essentially precludes a rural origin. A country-made table with a single-board piecrust top, together with well executed leg carving, would be rare enough, but in conjunction with the use of imported mahogany rather than local walnut would be almost unheard of.

Based on its' proximity, Delaware is certainly a possibility. Cabinetmaker John Janvier of Elkton, Maryland, who relocated to Odessa, Delaware in 1777, advertised on his label, "tea tables.....equal in neatness and strength to Philadelphia work". However, very few mahogany examples attributed to Delaware towns exist. The Sewell C. Biggs Collection includes two mahogany armchairs and one candlestand but no tea tables. All three are tentatively attributed to either Odessa (Janvier) or Dover. Much of the furniture attributed to Delaware is made of walnut and often indistinguishable from nearby Philadelphia and environs but for provenance.

In her book *Maryland Furniture, 1740-1940*, Gregory Weidman refutes the misconception that Baltimore did not prove to be a commercial source of furniture until after the Revolution. In 1770 there were two "principal" cabinetmakers in Baltimore, Gerrard Hopkins and Robert Moore. Both Philadelphia trained, Hopkins set up shop "at the sign of the Tea Table and chair" in 1767. His past employer, Moore, followed suit four years later. Furniture attributable to either is scarce, but a labeled Hopkins mahogany high chest has led to the attribution of at least three armchairs, a set of six side chairs at the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, a dressing table, and a card table recorded by MESDA. William Elder notes, "The single known labelled high chest by Gerrard Hopkins proves that, given the client, a Baltimore cabinetmaker could produce a high chest in the grand Philadelphia style, but there are certain characteristics specifically related to Chesapeake furniture of Maryland provenance" (Fig. 24). Gerrard Hopkins was a native Marylander, born and raised in Anne Arundel County. Coming from a well-to-do family, he was undoubtedly exposed to the English and Anglo-American furniture styles prevalent south of Philadelphia, especially in and around Annapolis. Baltimore was both geographically and stylistically between the two.



Fig. 24, Chippendale high chest labeled by Gerrard Hopkins; image courtesy of sothebys.com

Since the inception of this article, there have been two rather significant developments made concerning the “labeled” Gerrard Hopkins high chest. Firstly, its’ entire upper section has been determined to be “later bench-made”, the implication being that the base is indeed of the period and in good condition but for “patches to lower drawers around keyholes and two side knee returns replaced” (Pook & Pook catalogue, Feb. 8, 2024).

Secondly, since coming under greater scrutiny, the label's origins are now up for debate. Based on its' larger size and the lighter paper stock it was printed on, it appears that the "label" was in all likelihood, probably a repurposed advertisement broadside or even a Philadelphia newspaper insert that was cut out and applied to the lower case's inside top drawer bottom (Fig. 25). Its' text is very similar to Hopkins's advertisement placed in the *Maryland Gazette* in 1767 (Fig. 26). Most labels of the period were considerably smaller, printed on heavier paper stock, and contained less verbiage. Additionally, there appears to be no variation in oxidation to the wood where the paper has been removed over the years.

This, of course, does not condemn the labeling to spurious intent. There are all sorts of scenarios where its' application might be considered entirely legitimate; anything from Hopkins himself placing it there at the time of manufacture (oxidation evidence aside), to a subsequent owner wanting to acknowledge the maker after the fact, to consideration by the later top section's maker, wanting to place credit where credit was due. When all is said and done, it still remains highly likely that Gerrard Hopkins was indeed the maker of the high chest's base.

Regardless of who is indeed responsible, there is little question as to the attribution of three Chippendale armchairs (BMA, Sotheby's, and Leland Little Auctions), six side chairs (U.S. State Department), a card table (MESDA files), a dressing table (Sotheby's), and said high chest (MCHC), to the same manufacturer, or certainly at least, the same "school".



Fig. 25, www.bidsquare.com

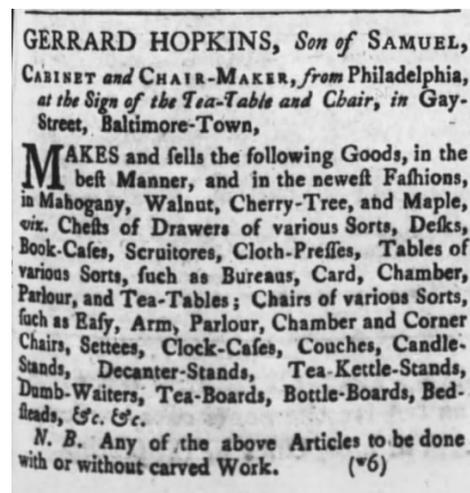


Fig. 26, *Maryland Gazette*,

Luke Beckerdite points out in his 1986 MESDA Journal article, A Problem of Identification: Philadelphia and Baltimore Furniture Styles in the Eighteenth Century, “all of the details which have been considered hallmarks of Maryland work occur with equal frequency on Philadelphia pieces in the late Baroque and Rococo styles”. Ironically, his observation both bolsters and questions the reliability of those hallmarks. Scholars William Elder and Gregory Weidman stipulated that their combined deduced stylistic characteristics were features indicative of potential Maryland furniture, not unique to it. After all, what better way to confirm Maryland’s emulation of Philadelphia style than to systematically list the commonalities between the two. In the end though, it is not so much the employment of those individual characteristics themselves, so much as how they are used in concert with one another and most importantly, with other non-Philadelphia, more English inspired attributes.

In his earlier 1982 MESDA Journal treatise, William Buckland Reconsidered: Architectural Carving in Chesapeake Maryland, 1771-1774, Beckerdite attributes the joinery and carving for the James Brice House in Annapolis to Gerrard Hopkins and William Bampton, respectively. The author notes “The carved shells on the (Hopkins labeled) high chest are virtually identical to that on the chimneypiece in the large northwest room.....” (Fig. 27). Bampton was the only carver listed in Brice’s ledger, kept during construction between 1767 and 1774.

Beckerdite surmises that, “Although the chimneypiece in the northwest room could have been purchased from Hopkins and shipped from Baltimore to Annapolis, it is also possible that Bampton was employed by Hopkins either before or after his work in the Brice House.”. He also attributes the Brice House’s carved leaf mantel consoles to William Bampton (Fig. 28).



Figure 2d. Detail of a carved shell on the high chest.



Figure 3a. Detail of the carved shell on the chimneypiece in the northwest room of the Brice House.

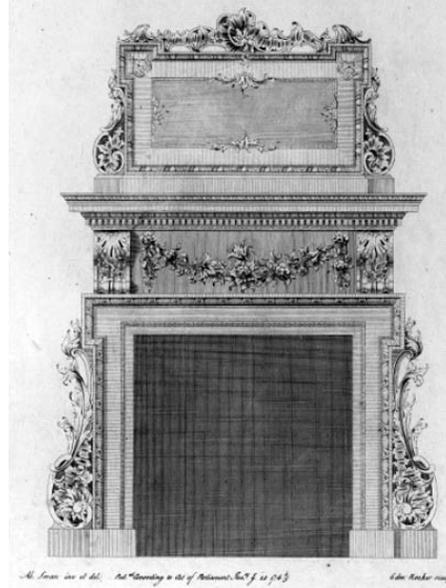


Figure 36. One of the shelf consoles of the chimney piece in the first floor northwest room of the Brice house, carving attributed to William Bampton. MESDA research file S-11401.

Fig. 27, *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, May, 1986, Volume XII, Number I

Fig. 28, *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, November, 1982, Volume VIII, Number II

Beckerdite notes that the Brice House chimneypiece is based on plates 50 and 51 of Abraham Swan's *British Architect* (Fig. 29). However, neither plate includes the taller consoles flanking the outside of the fireplace surround (Fig. 30). These side brackets were probably a one-time design change undertaken by Brice's architect and likely not based on published drawings. Whether their carved acanthus leaf motifs were prescribed by the architect, or left up to the artistic license of the carver, is a matter of conjecture



304. Model for the Dining Room fireplace in Abraham Swan's *British Architect*, Plate 50 (courtesy Avery Library, Columbia University)

All from one of del. All according to del of Plate 50, No. 1 of 182

Fig. 29, images available at www.sothebys.com



Fig. 30, *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, November, 1982, Volume VIII, Number II

The carving on the Erving table's legs is strikingly similar to that on the Brice House consoles (Fig. 31, see below). The styles of the paired, double acanthus leaves, plain over fiddle-head, are very similar but for the inclusion of the two crescent cinches in the console's larger field. Both compositions have the same symmetrical format, from the top: initial leaf carving above one pair of acanthus leaves (plain over fiddlehead), then spacing, then one pair of leaves, then spacing, then one pair of leaves, then spacing, then one pair of leaves, then spacing, then terminating in a splayed leaf array.



Fig. 31, by the author and *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, May, 1986, Volume XII, Number I

Each example also has similarly executed flared endings with chiseled concave terminals, to the deeper of the carved grooves between leaf groupings (Fig. 32). A larger version of this certainly not unique practice can be seen on virtually all of the carved legs attributed to Gerrard Hopkins and/or William Bampton (Fig. 33). When taking into account variations due to constraints of size, shape, contour, and wood species (hardness) of the two carved elements, it is not beyond conjecture that both might well have been by the same hand. The discernible differences are certainly commensurate with those between the cited high chest and mantel carving, especially regarding the detail and embellishment of each shell's encompassing streamers (Fig. 27). In both comparisons, the carvings of the larger, softer wood architectural examples are more fully executed than their mahogany counterparts.



Two consoles from the nearby Hammond Harwood House display more typically rounded groove terminals between the leafage.

Fig. 32, by the author, three consoles from *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, May, 1986, Volume XII, Number I

The final attribution as to the the origin of this Chippendale tea table can only be an educated guess, perhaps with a bit of biased optimism thrown in. Simply put, the table is overly provincial to be from downtown Philadelphia. It is too sophisticated, including being made of top quality mahogany, to likely be from any rural area. Its' scalloped one-board top is certainly among the finest. The table is not Georgian enough to be from Williamsburg, Fredericksburg as cited earlier, or Charleston. It is also too Philadelphia in style to be from Norfolk or the South. As cited by Sarah Neale Fayen, tea tables were popular throughout all the Colonies, including Maryland. Surely, some higher end examples had to have been made there. It might be from Annapolis, but once again, inordinately Philadelphia looking to be a product of the most British influenced city in America. Baltimore's only possible makers, Philadelphia trained Gerrard Hopkins and Robert Moore, both had tea tables painted on their trade signs. All of the furniture "labeled" by and attributed to Hopkins is made of mahogany. The carving looks intriguingly similar to William Bampton's at the Brice House. Curiously, one of the few furniture forms James Brice did not order from Philadelphia to furnish his new house was a tea table, much less a "scallop'd" one.

A certain *je ne sais quoi* regarding the final analysis, is that this tea table successfully deviates from being the Philadelphia representation it is based on, to the same degree, and in its' own way, as does every other example attributed to Hopkins. So, in the end, there is as good a chance as any that this piecrust tea table was made in Baltimore, at the shop of either Gerrard Hopkins or Robert Moore, and likely carved by William Bampton or a contemporary familiar with his work, sometime around the year 1770.

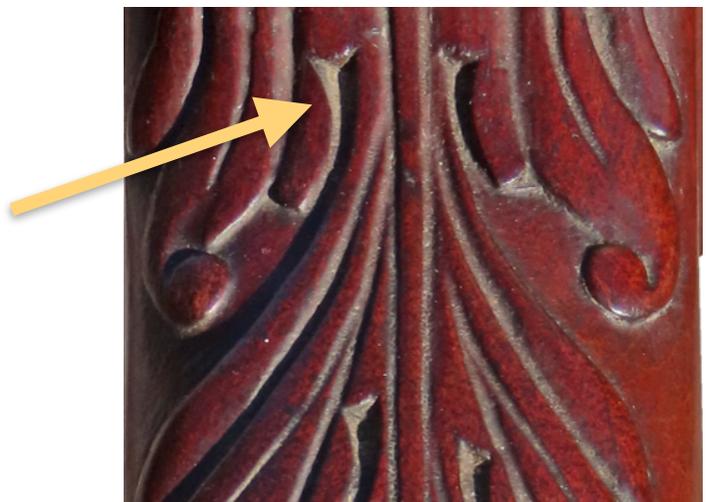
Figure 33





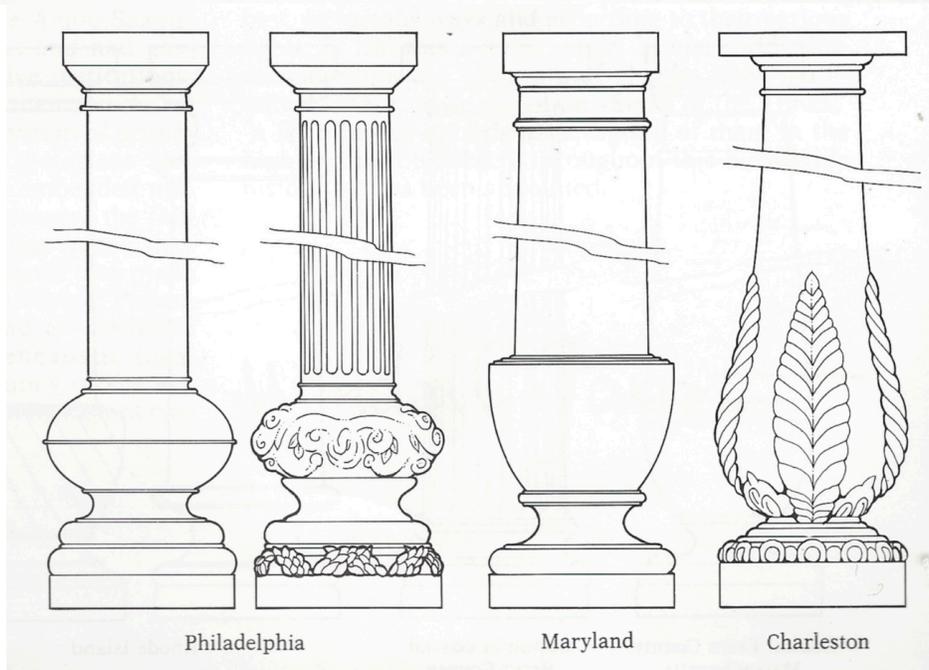


**carving attributed to Bampton, chair probably not by Hopkins*



Regionalism in early American tea tables

BY ALBERT SACK



Maryland

Round tilt-top tea tables from Maryland share many features with their Philadelphia counterparts, although these features tend to be somewhat exaggerated: a heavier baluster with an urn or a ball and rings, and unusually long acanthus leaf carving on the knees. One surviving Maryland Queen Anne tea table has a square top;²¹ another, from the Chippendale period, has a piecrust top (Fig. 15).

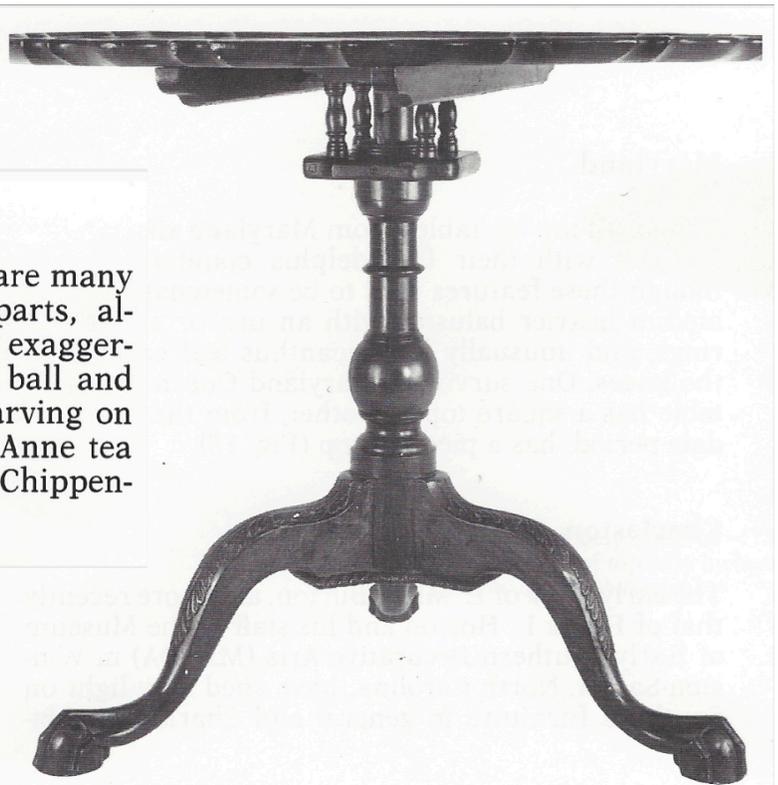


Fig. 15. Tilt-top tea table, Maryland, 1760–1770. Mahogany; height 28½, diameter of top 34¾ inches. *Private collection; photograph by courtesy of the Baltimore Museum of Art.*

Back to Search Furniture > Tables

Previous Lot 0476 Next



Chippendale mahogany table, having large pie crust top
 Estimate \$2,000-\$4,000 Oct 26, 2019

Sold for \$3,000

BIDDER	BID
COMPETING BID	\$3,000.00
INTERNET BID	\$2,750.00
INTERNET BID	\$2,500.00

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[SELL A SIMILAR ITEM](#)

9 bidders are watching this item

Item Details

Description

Chippendale mahogany table, having large pie crust top on turned shaft set on tripod base with scroll carved knees ending in ball and claw feet. height 28 1/2 inches, top: 34 1/2" x 34 3/4". Provenance: A South eastern MA Estate.

Condition

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Lot 284: u - A CHIPPENDALE CARVED AND FIGURED MAHOGANY PIE-CRUST TILT-TOP TEA TABLE, MID-ATLANTIC STATES

Est: \$25,000 USD - \$75,000 USD

Sold: \$75,000 USD

Sotheby's
New York, NY, US
January 19, 2007

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Item Overview ^

Description

PROPERTY APPROVED FOR DEACCESSION BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HISTORIC DEERFIELD, INC.

height 28 3/4 in. by diameter 35 1/2 in. (73cm by 90.2cm)

circa 1770

LITERATURE

Dean A. Fales, Jr. *The Furniture of Historic Deerfield*, New York, E.P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1976, p. 155, no. 325

NOTE

With its scalloped top, carved knees, and claw-and-ball feet, this elegant tea table is modeled after Rococo tea tables made in Philadelphia during the 1760s and 1770s.^{u1} The idiosyncratic interpretations of urban design -- notably the paired scrolls of the piecrust top and unusual acanthus knee carving -- suggest an origin outside of Philadelphia, perhaps in southeastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, northern Maryland or Delaware. The sophisticated design and execution of this table suggests that its maker may have trained in Philadelphia or was familiar with local tables exported from there. James Bordley of Queen Anne's County, Maryland ordered a mahogany tea table with "top scalloped, claw feet, leaves on knees" from James Gillingham of Philadelphia in 1769.^{u2}

A tea table at Colonial Williamsburg with a related Philadelphia-influenced design descended in the Barraud, Wilson, and Marshall families of Norfolk.^{u3} A cherrywood example at Yale University ascribed to the Philadelphia area displays a similar treatment of the top, ankles, and flattened balls under the claws.^{u4}

^{u1} For example, see Joseph Downs, *American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), no. 378, and Israel Sack, Advertisement, *The Magazine Antiques*, vol. 108, no. 4 (October 1975), inside front cover (Logan family table).

^{u2} Gregory Weidman, *Furniture in Maryland, 1740-1940: The Collection of the Maryland Historical Society*, 1984, p. 44.

^{u3} Ronald L. Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture 1680-1830: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection*, (Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997), p. 320-321, no. 101

^{u4} David Barquist, *American Tables and Looking Glasses*, 1992, no. 124, p. 236.

Artist or Maker

Gideon Jacques Denny



MUSEUM of EARLY SOUTHERN DECORATIVE ARTS

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

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Collections > MESDA Object Database > TABLE, TEA



TABLE, TEA

Category	FURNITURE
Object Name	TABLE, TEA
Maker/Artist	Unknown
Place Made	attributed to Norfolk, Virginia
Dimensions	[Overall Ht]not recorded
Description	base only: three cabriole legs with ball and claw feet; vase, ring and column turned pedestal
Object Location	offered for sale by Priddy & Beckerdite, Richmond, Virginia.
Photo Number	S-14942
File Location	VT-12-414
Alterations-Condition	top missing
Joinery	Note leg dovetails notched diagonally down into pedestal. See also S-14917.
Examined	Frank L. Horton -Luke Beckerdite __No __No __03/22/1990



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Collections > MESDA Collection > Tea Table



Tea Table

Artist/Maker	Walker, Robert
Place Made	King George County Virginia United States of America
Date Made	1750-1760
Medium	mahogany, cherry
Dimensions	HOA: 28 1/2"; WOA: 30"
Accession Number	3992
Description	<p>DESCRIPTION: Tilt-top tea table: Has a tripod-base; without a turning (birdcage) top; the outer edges of top, pedestal, and legs are carved; long claw-and-ball feet; interconnecting C-scrolls and S-scrolls along with fans were carved in relief on top.</p> <p>STYLE: The cutting pattern is identical to that used on two existing tea tables, one of which is in the collection of Stratford Hall, home of the Lee family, on the Northern Neck of Virginia. The elongated balls of the feet are cut square on the inside edges like others; however, the Stratford example is carved with webbing which this example does not have. The outside edges of the claws were built up of separate pieces attached with hide glue; one of six claws is complete. Such gluing up is standard London practice, but none of the others has this.</p>

