

REPORT  
April 14, 2022

In March 2022, Graham Arader asked me for my written opinion on the identity and authenticity of a tilt-top “pie crust” tea table, furniture inventory number 302. This report summarizes my observations and opinions

**Tilt-top tea table**  
England, 1750-90  
Mahogany  
28-1/2 x 35 (dia)

The scalloped top (popularly called “pie-crust”) tea table on a tripod base is made entirely of mahogany and lacks secondary woods that are so useful in determining geographical origin. However, it combines different American regional features into a single object—a common indicator of English manufacture. The scalloping of the top superficially resembles Philadelphia work, but it has nine repeats, rather than the usual eight. (A few Philadelphia tables are known with nine repeats, but they have other distinctive features not present here.) Also, the straight sections of the scalloped top are much shorter in length than regularly found in Philadelphia work. The pillar supporting the top is a tapered cylinder above a spiral-ribbed urn—a non-Philadelphia shape. In contrast to Philadelphia practices, the attachment of the top to the base does not employ a “bird cage” or box, as it was known at the time of manufacture, that allowed the top to swivel and hinge into an upward. Other American furniture-making regions, notably eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island, made versions of this design, but those tea tables did not have scalloped tops. The S shape of the legs is difficult to regionalize, but the elongated oval ball feet with similarly long bird talons grasping it readily recall English work.

One leg ankle has been repaired. The base of the pillar is also split and repaired. The top has several surface repairs, and the underside shows to dovetail-shaped “Dutchman” inlays that close and stabilize a split in the top.