

REPORT  
January 6, 2022

On December 20, 2021, Graham Arader asked me for my written opinion on the identity and authenticity of a Queen Anne walnut side chair, furniture inventory number 19.

**Side chair**

Eastern Pennsylvania or Southern New Jersey, 1750-80  
Walnut  
38-1/4 x 22-3/4 x 20-3/4

This walnut side chair with a solid, cored splat and serpentine crest rail stands on front cabriole legs that end in lathe-turned pad feet. The feet are formed as a wide ring and retain most of the half-reel turning below. (Cloth pads applied to the foot bottoms ensure no additional wear.) The crest rail has outflaring ears, which represent the latest feature of the chair. In keeping with its generally early appearance, a scratch-bead outlines the rear stiles and crest that form the chair back. Also consistent with manufacture after mid-century, the seat rails are undercut like those on chairs with pierced splats. The stump rear legs have through-tenons. Chamfering of the leg itself produced its octagonal shaping.

This chair may represent a “simple city” product or something made in the areas surrounding Philadelphia. In support of the latter, the splat lacks a chamfered edge, which creates a sharp line along the front. This near-universal practice was occasionally omitted in more rural furniture-making shops. The shaping of the turned feet serves as another non-urban indicator. In almost all Philadelphia urban chairs of this sort, feet described in manuscripts as “plain” were carved, usually in a trifid form but sometimes with a single bulbous toe.

The knee brackets flanking the front legs appear to be appropriately shaped replacements. Inside the seat frame, all of the corner blocks are also replacements. The slip seat has been remade of old wood.