

Attributed to Ammi Phillips

American, 1788–1865

James Mairs Salisbury, circa 1835

Oil on canvas

Painted in Catskill, Greene County, New York

Young boys and girls in early America dressed identically until boys transitioned into male apparel. Although the off-the-shoulder dress may suggest to a viewer today that the sitter is female, this portrait depicts 3-year-old James Mairs Salisbury. From the color of James's dress to his eyes, blue dominates the painting. The red strawberries and stool bring warmth to the composition. This portrait is attributed to the prolific traveling artist Ammi Phillips. Certain traits, such as the sitter's direct gaze and the high contrast of light and dark, are characteristic of Phillips's style.

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Attributed to Sturtevant

J. Hamblin

American, 1817–1884

Portrait of Two Children, circa 1845

Oil on canvas

Probably painted in Boston, Massachusetts

Although the names of these children are unknown, the artist who painted the pair has almost surely been identified. The double portrait contains characteristics associated with paintings by Sturtevant J. Hamblin. Traits of Hamblin's style include frontal poses, framing curtains and lack of shadows. His sitters also typically have tapering fingers with dark outlines. This particular quality reflects the practice of an artist accustomed to lettering signs, as Hamblin also did in East Boston.

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Artist unknown

Girl with Cat, circa 1845-50

Oil on canvas

Painted in New England

The girl in this portrait probably sat for the painter just long enough for her likeness to be drawn. After depicting her face and excusing her, the artist likely finished her portrait, including generalized elements like the cat sitting on her lap. Pets appear frequently in American portraits of children from the 1700s and 1800s. Although cats most commonly accompanied girls, dogs and birds also appeared in these early portraits.

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Jewelry owned by Emily and Clara Lamb:

Earrings, circa 1850
Gold and pearl drop

Necklace, circa 1850
Coral

Gold Brooch, circa 1850
Cut citrine and seed pearl mounted in gold

Ring, circa 1850
Citrine and gold

Mechanical pencil, circa 1850
Gold

All probably made in the United States

This collection of heirloom jewelry was passed down in the Lamb family. It appears in the portraits of Emily and Clara Lamb, attesting to the family's wealth. Emily holds the mechanical pencil and wears the citrine (yellow quartz) brooch, ring and pearl earrings. Clara wears the coral necklace.

From left to right:

Attributed to Daniel G. Lamont

American (born Scotland), 1818–1883

Clara Adeline Lamb, circa 1852

Emily Avesta Bisco Lamb, circa 1852

Josiah Quincy Lamb, circa 1852

Oil on canvas

Painted in Webster, Massachusetts

The drapery, furniture and jewelry in these portraits affirm the social status of the Lamb family. The inclusion of these elements connected the Lambs to an emerging, wealthy middle class. Clara appears to be three in her portrait (on the left), indicating that Daniel G. Lamont completed these paintings around 1852.

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Attributed to John Brewster, Jr.

American, 1766–1854

Portrait of a Girl, 1810–20

Oil on poplar panel

Painted in Maine

Portrait of a Boy, 1810–20

Oil on canvas

Painted in Maine

These portraits by John Brewster, Jr. contain elements based on firmly established gender roles of the period. Several years older than the young boy, the girl holds a rose, an emblem of youth and innocence. The boy's red leather wallet may foretell his worldly future and fortune.

After working in Connecticut from about 1790 to 1795, John Brewster, Jr. moved to Buxton, Maine. Buxton was the base from which he traveled over the next four decades in search of portrait commissions throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York.

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Sheldon Peck

American, 1797–1868

Portrait of a Boy, 1828

Oil on panel

Painted in New York, probably Onondaga County

The portraitist Sheldon Peck relocated to Jordan, New York, from Middlebury, Vermont, in September 1828. After his move to New York, Peck introduced brighter colors and new elements to his work, such as the column, dog, rattle and floor boards seen in this portrait of an unidentified boy. These elements were designed to impress patrons. Peck's New York style appears to have succeeded in generating commissions: more portraits by the artist have been found there than in Vermont.

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Attributed to Joseph H. Davis

American, 1811–1865

Dr. Nathaniel Grant Family, 1835–36

Watercolor and graphite on wove paper

Painted in Whitefield, Carroll County, New Hampshire

Intense colors and silhouetted figures characterize the family portraits by Joseph H. Davis. While Davis's sitters are usually dressed in somber colors, the painted furniture, baskets of flowers and patterned carpets help create more dynamic images. This painting shows Dr. Nathaniel Grant and his family in New Hampshire in about 1835. Dr. Grant has just returned from visiting a patient. Bottles and packets of medicines are placed on the side table with Dr. Grant's medical saddlebags on the floor. The doctor has just written a new prescription.



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Attributed to Sarah Gardner

American, 1799–1862

Frances Coffin, circa 1830

Watercolor on wove paper

Probably painted in Nantucket, Massachusetts

Portraits that depict young children next to chairs were common in early America. Then, as now, children learning to walk used chairs to stand and steady themselves, like Frances Coffin here. This colorful watercolor was painted by Sarah Gardner. She was one of many women living on the Massachusetts island of Nantucket in the mid-1830s who cultivated a side business while her husband was away on whaling voyages.

Attributed to Mrs. Moses B. Russell (Clarissa Peters Russell)

American, 1809-1854

*Portrait of Henry, Isabelle and
Edith Barry, 1845-50*

Child in Red, 1845-50

Watercolor on ivory

Painted in Boston, Massachusetts

Clarissa Peters Russell was one of the few miniature painters whose primary subject was children. Her works often depict children with bright faces and expressive eyes, like those seen here. The children's hands and feet are small when compared to their bodies, adding a sense of vulnerability. The baskets of flowers and fruit in the foreground of these miniatures may also symbolize the children's innocence. Russell's bright colors and attention to pattern and detail make her work especially appealing. This may explain why a large number of her miniatures still survive.

Paintings attributed to Emeline M. Robinson Kelley

American, 1803-1864

Cabinetmaker unknown

Mary F. Kelley Savings Bank, circa 1830

Mahogany, white pine, watercolor on paper,
glass and brass

Made in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

In addition to chests and cupboards, most families living in early America owned at least one box for storing important or valuable items, such as money, jewelry and documents. This box was made for Emeline M. Robinson Kelley's stepdaughter. Kelley decorated it on all sides with watercolor paintings mounted behind glass.

Artist unknown

Still Life with Basket of Fruit, 1830-50

Oil on canvas

Probably painted in New England

Still life painting was embraced by both highly trained and folk artists in America during the mid-1800s. In this period, still lifes were considered appropriate for decorating dining rooms. This arrangement of a wide array of ripe fruit would have appealed to the senses. Even now, it might stimulate the sense of sight as well as smell, touch and taste.

Additionally, the overflowing basket suggests bounty and prosperity. Both of these qualities reflect popular notions about the United States during the time this still life was painted.

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Daniel McDowell

American, 1809–1884

Still Life with Watermelon, 1860–80

Oil on canvas

Painted in Mount Vernon, Ohio

Watermelons frequently appeared in still life paintings throughout the 1800s. The fruit's complementary red and green colors lend intensity to paintings in which they are featured. Daniel McDowell's *Still Life with Watermelon* emphasizes the lively rhythms of the fruit's seeds. The artist also seems to have delighted in describing the tablecloth, which includes varying shades of white and a subtle dot pattern. As a result, both the watermelon and the cloth become subjects of visual interest.

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Artist unknown

Gameboard, 1880-1900

Wood, paint and iron

Probably made in New England

Although board games were first introduced in America in the 1820s, they were not extremely popular until Parcheesi was introduced around 1867. This board resembles one used for Parcheesi, with a checkerboard on its reverse. It has, however, certain differences in the number of spaces and the placement of the pathways for the players. The artist painted the colorful board leaving the game and its rules a mystery.

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Artist unknown

Dressing Table, 1835-40

Basswood, white pine, maple, brass and paint

Made in New England

Painted furniture has been popular in America since the late 1600s. In the area north of Boston, yellow became the most popular color used to paint dressing tables around 1835. Accents of green and red stood out against the creamy background. This created a setting for personal accessories, such as combs, fragrances, letters and mementos.

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Artist unknown

Box, 1800-20

White pine, paint and iron

Possibly made in Maine

Simple in form, the subject of the carving on this box is not fully known. A cat or squirrel crouches on the hinged lid directly over a woman holding a branch with a single apple on the front of the box. To her left is a tree covered in apples, while on her right is a bird and either a rabbit or a dog.

Artist unknown

Wall Box, 1800-20

Wood, paint and iron

Possibly made in Maine

Early Americans used wall boxes to hold utensils. Here, the Great Seal of the United States may have been used as inspiration for the central eagle. A potted, flowering plant unites the two open boxes. Stories about the box suggest that it may have been made to celebrate the wedding of Hannah Brainard. It would have hung in her kitchen in Maine.

Artist unknown

Cutlery Tray, circa 1840

White pine and paint

Probably made in New England

Cutlery trays were common in American households throughout the 1800s. Stored in the open, rather than tucked away in a cupboard, they were often decorative as well as functional objects. This painted yellow tray was decorated freehand. Green wavy vertical lines, dots, circles and star-like emblems embellish its surface. The design gives a common, utilitarian object visual appeal and value beyond its monetary or functional worth.

Charles C. Hofmann

American (born Germany), circa 1820–1882

Views of the Buildings and Surroundings of the Berks County Almshouse, 1879

Oil on tinplated sheet iron

Painted in Shillington, Pennsylvania

Charles Hofmann depicted the Berks County Almshouse in Pennsylvania as an organized and well-regulated community. The hospital and administration buildings are surrounded by several other structures, grazing cows, carriages and people. These details combined with the use of vivid colors help give the painting a cheerful mood. They conceal the difficult day-to-day lives of the residents receiving care there, among whom was Hofmann himself.

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Attributed to John Hilling

American, 1822-1894

The Old South Church, circa 1854

Looting the Old South Church, circa 1854

Burning the Old South Church, circa 1854

Oil on canvas

Painted in Bath, Maine

This trio of paintings by John Hilling depicts an attack on Old South Church in Bath, Maine. The attack occurred on June 6, 1854, during a time when a wave of anti-Irish Catholic sentiment swept the eastern United States.

Hilling painted the destruction of the church unfolding before the viewer, much like popular panoramas of the time that showed scenes in sequence on a single canvas. The clock in the tower advances in each painting. The sky changes from sunny afternoon to an evening lit by the flames consuming the church. Hilling's almost contemporaneous depiction of a newsworthy event reveals both imagination and ingenuity.

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Henry Dousa

American (born Germany), 1837–after 1903

The Farm of Henry Windle, 1875

Oil on canvas

Painted in Washington Court House, Ohio

This view of a thriving Ohio farm captures a time when advances in breeding produced hardier work animals. Farmers such as Henry Windle turned to artists like Henry Dousa for likenesses of their livestock. Here, Dousa showcases a five-year-old, 2,500-pound, prized shorthorn bull identified as “William Allen.” The painting also provides a visual record of the impressive home and estate financed by Windle’s agricultural success. This is the earliest and largest of the nine canvases that have been attributed to Dousa.

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Attributed to Edward Hicks

American, 1780–1849

The Peaceable Kingdom with the Leopard of Serenity, 1835–40

Oil on canvas

Painted in Newtown, Pennsylvania

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

—Isaiah 11:6

Few artists were as dedicated to a single subject as Edward Hicks. It is believed that he painted more than 100 versions of the *Peaceable Kingdom*. Although he took inspiration from the work of the British artist Richard Westall (see the engraving reproduced below), Hicks made the theme his own. The background of this painting features a scene depicting William Penn's treaty with the Lenni-Lenape Indian tribe of the American northeast. This vignette underscores Hicks's desire for peace and harmony motivated by his Quaker faith.

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Richard Westall (1765–1836), *The Peaceable Kingdom of the Branch*. Engraving from *The Holy Bible, Vol. 2* (London, 1815), n.p. Courtesy of Yeoman's in the Fork.

James Bard

American, 1815–1897

Steamboat “Victoria,” 1859

Oil on canvas

Painted in New York, New York

This painting began in James Bard’s New York City studio as a thorough drawing. He made the drawing from measurements taken from the steamboat Victoria itself. Following his client’s approval, Bard transferred the image to his canvas, celebrating the marvel of steam power that had fascinated him since childhood.

James Bard and his twin brother John’s precise depictions of watercraft were incredibly popular. They painted several thousand portraits of steamboats and other vessels.

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Ralph F. Reed

American, 1884-1966

View of the Schuylkill County Almshouse Property in the Year 1881, 1908

Oil on canvas

Painted in Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania

Ralph F. Reed was unknown before the discovery of this painting of the Schuylkill County Almshouse in Pennsylvania. An almshouse typically provides housing to elderly people who have no income. This painting was based on an almshouse painting by Charles C. Hofmann (whose work is on view nearby). Although Reed's work was influenced by Hofmann's, his life did not include the personal problems that brought Hofmann to the almshouses that he painted. Instead, Reed was a professional painter. He primarily painted houses but also worked as an artist.

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Jurgan Frederick Hugel

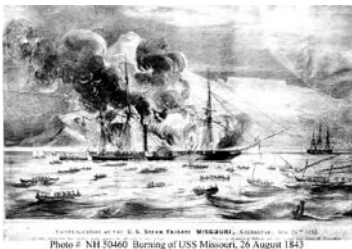
American (born Germany), 1809–1878

Conflagration of the U.S. Steam Frigate “Missouri,” 1851

Watercolor on paper

Probably painted in Bridgeport, Connecticut

On August 5, 1843, the USS Missouri caught fire. Its crew was saved just before the steamship’s powder magazines exploded. Printmakers soon capitalized on the event by marketing images of the steamship ablaze. A lithograph produced by Thayer & Co. (see below) inspired Jurgan Frederick Hugel, a painter and grocer from Bridgeport, Connecticut. Instead of depicting the ship’s dramatic end, both the print and the painting evoke the terror felt by the sailors awaiting rescue. Hugel departed from the print, however, by arranging the rescue boats in a radiating pattern. This decision directs the eye toward the doomed vessel.



Burning at Gibraltar, 26 August 1843.

Lithograph by Thayer & Co.

The original print bears the text "Conflagration of the U.S. Steam Frigate Missouri, Gibraltar, Aug. 26th 1843."

At the moment the order was given to abandon the ship. From a drawing taken on the spot by Geo. B. Souder."
Collection of the New York Naval Shipyard.

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Attributed to Wilhelm Schimmel

American (born Germany), 1817–1890

Animal figures, 1875–85

Pine or tulip poplar, gesso and paint

Made in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania

Wilhelm Schimmel produced over 1,000 woodcarvings while traveling throughout Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. He sold these carvings for a few cents or traded them for a meal, liquor, or a place to sleep.

Schimmel found inspiration in many sources, including his imagination. His travels provided opportunities to observe both wild and domestic animals, such as squirrels and roosters. He was also likely influenced by inexpensive, popular chalkware animals made of gypsum (like the cats elsewhere in this exhibition). Schimmel's man-eating tiger may reveal his knowledge of well-repeated stories of gruesome attacks. The poodle might reflect memories of similar carvings made in his native Germany.

Artist unknown

Conductor Whirligig, possibly 1900–25

White pine and paint

Probably made in Pennsylvania

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a “whirligig” referred to a stationary figure mounted on pivots whose whirling appendages were activated by the wind. These carved figures were produced in large numbers and amused both children and adults.

This whirligig is thought to represent a railroad or street-car conductor. It was mounted on a post at eye level and used as a lawn ornament. The angle of the figure’s arms efficiently caught the wind and recalled a conductor’s use of flag signals to communicate to a train’s engineer.

Attributed to John Scholl

American (born Germany), 1827–1916

Snowflake Table, 1907–16

White pine, wire and paint

Made in Germania, Pennsylvania

Working in Germania, Pennsylvania, the farmer and house carpenter John Scholl created painted wooden sculptures that seem to twirl and move. The *Snowflake Table* is constructed of small pieces of carved wood that are attached and painted to engage viewers in a magical world. Originally from Germany, Scholl immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1853. He did not start making sculptures until 1907, when he was 80 years of age.

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Attributed to
George Robert Lawton, Sr.
American, 1813-1885

Two Horses, 1840-50

White pine, horsehair and paint

Made in Scituate, Rhode Island

When viewed together, the horses' different sizes and unique proportions seem to give them a playful quality. The good condition of the horses, however, indicates that they were created as sculptures rather than toys. The painted surfaces are well-preserved. The delicate legs are intact and the bases are undamaged. These figures were made by the Rhode Island farmer George Lawton, Sr., who painted extravagant ornamentation on various types of domestic objects between about 1840 and 1883.

Attributed to Peter Brubaker

American, 1816–1898

Two Spotted Horses, 1875–85

White pine, sheet iron, horsehair and paint

Made in Clay Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Peter Brubaker's livelihood depended on the work of horses on his Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, farm. Fittingly, his sculptures celebrate these animals. He carved the bodies and legs of these figures separately before joining them together. Brubaker cut the horses' ears from sheet metal that he crimped at the bottom and inserted into small holes in the wooden figures. After he painted black spots on their white bodies, he added horsehair tails to complete the sculptures.

**Attributed to
“Schtockschnitzler” Simmons**

American, active 1885-1910

Bird, 1885-1910

Tulip poplar and paint

Made in Berks County, Pennsylvania

Attributed to “Schtockschnitzler” Simmons

American, active 1885-1910

Bird Tree, 1885-1910

Hardwood (possibly sassafras or dogwood),
tulip poplar, white pine, iron wire, and paint

Made in Berks County, Pennsylvania

“Schtockschnitzler” Simmons was an itinerant peddler who traveled through Berks County, Pennsylvania, selling carved canes and birds made from tulip poplar, white pine, iron wire and paint. This vibrant example is his most ambitious. Simmons carved ten songbirds of various species perched on a sapling. The legs of his birds are wire rather than wooden dowels to ensure that they would not be broken from their branches. Simmons inserted this sculpture into a base that he likely salvaged from a piece of furniture.

Artist unknown

Chalkware Cats, 1850–1900

Gypsum and paint

Possibly made in Pennsylvania, Great Britain or Europe

The first step in making a chalkware figure is to mix the mineral gypsum with water to create a semi-liquid mixture. That slurry is then poured into a mold, baked and painted. Quick and inexpensive to produce, chalkware figures were accessible for people at many economic levels.

They were

often used to add color and decorative interest to their

homes. “Image peddlers” traveled door to door selling the popular figures.



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Attributed to the Evans Decoy Company

American, 1921-1936

Pintail Decoy, probably 1921-36

White pine and paint

Probably made in Ladysmith, Wisconsin

The Evans Decoy Company of Ladysmith, Wisconsin, produced hollow-body decoys like this one. The decoys were made on a duplicating lathe (a machine used to reproduce a shape from a master model), then finished

and painted by hand. Extremely large wooden decoys,

like this example, are incredibly effective in attracting the attention of high-flying real ducks. Like many of the Evans Company decoys, this one was cut in half horizontally after it was shaped. It was then hollowed out to decrease its weight before the two halves were rejoined.



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Artist unknown

Eagle and Flags Plaque, 1875-1900

White pine, paint and gold leaf

Probably made in New England

The colors red, white, blue, and gold emblazon this plaque

of an eagle clutching a shield in its talons while perched

on draped flags. From before the Civil War into the early 1900s, versions of this popular national symbol appeared in a variety of media throughout the United States. This carved, painted wooden plaque was likely used as a sign or decoration on a public building, firehouse, or fraternal lodge.



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Artist unknown

Dentist's Trade Sign, circa 1890

Tulip poplar and paint

Made in New England

In an era when the most common remedy for a toothache was extraction, this dentist's trade sign promoted dentures as an aesthetically pleasing alternative to a mouth characterized by missing teeth. The sign maker who carved these dentures was quite adept. The teeth convey convincing three-dimensionality. They recede in size, creating an illusion of depth. The combined effect is impressive, considering that the poplar board from which these dentures are made is only one inch thick.

Possibly workshop of Samuel Robb

American, 1851-1928

Girl of the Period, 1870-85

White pine and paint

Made in New York, New York

This sculpture is an example of what trade figure carvers called the “Girl of the Period.” The figure wears a fringed polonaise (draped overskirt with a pleated edge and tassels) worn over a walking skirt and an ostrich-feather hat. Sculptures such as this advertised tobacconist, milliner (hat maker) and dressmaker shops. Although it was taboo for women to smoke cigarettes in the 1880s, a sculpture of a stylish young woman holding a cigarette placed outside a tobacconist shop may have enticed male customers. It may have also appealed to progressive women.

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Artist unknown

Dude, 1885-1900

White pine and paint

Made in New York, New York

Carvers of trade figures often created caricatures of an urban type known as a “Dude.” Stylish dudes of the late 1800s sported sizable moustaches and fashionable clothes. This dude is unique in comparison to others, because he appears haggard and lacks a broad smile. He may depict a portion of the American population that was now struggling despite previous success. As such, this quality makes this particular dude both an advertisement and a commentary on contemporary urban life.



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Artist unknown

Goddess of Liberty, circa 1875

White pine and paint

Made in New York, New York

Among the most familiar allegorical subjects for public

sculpture was the Goddess of Liberty, depicting a standing woman wrapped in a Roman palla or draped robe. The image personified the United States, and it was used for a variety of purposes, including architectural decorations for courthouses and other civic buildings, ornaments for schools and colleges, in gardens, cemeteries, and even on boats.



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Artist unknown

Indian Tobacconist Figure, 1875-95

White pine and paint

Made in New York, New York

Tobacconist shops frequently used images of American Indians to market tobacco. Tribes in the South, Woodlands and Plains smoked tobacco and introduced its cultivation and use to Europeans in North America.

Trade figure depictions of American Indians were often both iconic and generic. Some trade figure carvers exploited negative stereotypes about Indians, catering to popular notions aimed to justify westward expansion. This example, although not without its generalizations and inaccuracies, represents a more sympathetic and dignified portrayal.

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Artist unknown

Gentleman with Top Hat, circa 1830

Tulip poplar and paint

Probably made in New England

This carved figure had a long history of ownership in in the family of Littleberry and Martha Andrews of Tennessee and Kentucky. Family lore held that this figure was carved by an enslaved person and depicted a plantation owner. With its top hat and ruffled shirt, however, the figure resembles sculptures of mariners made at about the same time in New England. If this figure was made in New England, it remains to be determined how it migrated to the South.

Attributed to the Dentzel Company

Manufacturer, American, 1867–1927

Rabbit Carousel Figure, circa 1910

Basswood and paint

Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attributed to the workshop of Charles I. D. Looff

American (born Denmark), 1852–1918

Elephant Carousel Figure, circa 1882

Basswood and paint

Made in Brooklyn, New York

Although horses were the most familiar animals used in carousels, more unusual animals were also included in these popular family attractions. The large elephant here was part of a carousel in Sulzer's Harlem River Park in New York City.

The Dentzel Company was well-known for using steam power so that many of the figures went up and down as well as around. Like many carousel carvers, Charles I. D.

Looff and Gustav Dentzel emigrated from Germany. They brought with them traditional German carving techniques.

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Artist unknown

Miniature Chest, 1820-35

Basswood, iron and paint

Made in Albany County, New York

Painted chests like this were common in Germanic homes in Albany County, New York, in the early 1800s. These chests were part of a broader group of cultural traditions brought to the region by German immigrants in the 1700s. Painted decoration like the blue background, leafy vine and basket of flowers would remind the owner of his or her German heritage. Chests such as this helped preserve distinctive cultural traditions in New York for over a century.

Artist unknown

Chest over Drawers, 1803

Tulip poplar, brass, iron and paint

Made in Lehigh or Northumberland County, Pennsylvania

This elaborately painted chest is typical of examples from Pennsylvania German communities during the 1700s. It is simply constructed and decorated with painted parrots, tulips, flowers, arches and stars. The hearts wrapping around the corners are a motif particular to this area. These chests are thought to have been made to celebrate marriages. They may have held textiles and other costly items.

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Artist unknown

Chest over Drawers, 1803

White pine and yellow pine; brass, iron, and paint

Made in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania

The painted inscription states that the chest was made June 17, 1803, for Anna Maria Hammen (1783-1843) of Dauphin County whose name is also inscribed on a *fraktur* (decorated manuscript) glued to the underside of the top. The craftsman who built this chest was a vital member of the community who could have also supplied tables, cupboards, chests of drawers, and other items to meet local needs.

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Artist unknown

Chest, 1815-25

Tulip poplar, white pine, brass, iron and paint

Made in Centre County, Pennsylvania; possibly The Forks (now Coburn) area

This chest combines both urban and traditional designs. The bracket-shaped feet indicate that the maker was aware of current styles popular in urban furniture making. In contrast, the painted decoration continues the German-American traditions of painted flowers, hearts and stars in bright colors.

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Artist unknown

Dome-Top Box, 1800-40

Poplar, white pine, tin-plated sheet iron and paint

Made in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Boxes were the basic storage containers of early America. Often local taste and tradition, rather than specific function, determined a box's shape, size and appearance. Dome-top boxes were common throughout New York and New England, but less popular elsewhere. This particular box is part of a group from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The group is unified by the maker's use of a drafting compass to create the circular and scalloped ornamentation on its exterior. Such an eye-catching, colorful and functional object found a ready market in the local community.

Artist unknown

Box, 1820-30

White pine, iron, brass and paint

Probably made in Somerset County, Pennsylvania

The maker of this wooden box probably also decorated its exterior. The crescents, circles and leaf shapes on its surface were cut into the wood with carpentry tools, including a compass and straight edge. Hinges located at the narrow end of the box may indicate that it served a specific function. There is no lock, making it easy to access to the interior, which is divided into six open compartments.

Artist unknown

***Corner Cupboard*, circa 1820**

Tulip poplar, brass, iron and paint

Probably made in Berks County, Pennsylvania; possibly Morgantown area

Corner cupboards could be the most impressive and important pieces of furniture in a room. They stored and displayed tableware such as china. This large cupboard was probably integrated into the wall paneling of its original room. In rural areas, cabinetmakers were aware of the current styles made in large cities, but they did not have access to expensive materials. Here, the poplar wood has been painted to imitate richly patterned mahogany, not easily available in rural Pennsylvania.

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Artist unknown

Corner Cupboard, 1815–35

Tulip poplar, brass, iron and paint

Made in Pennsylvania

Although simple in construction, this corner cabinet would have stood out in any room. The bright yellow and green paint, painted wood graining, and applied elements helped catch the viewer's eye. As rooms of the early 1800s were lit only by windows, candles and gas lights, pieces of furniture were enhanced with paint and carving to create visual centerpieces.

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John Mayer, cabinetmaker

American, 1794–1883

Chest of Drawers, 1829

White pine, yellow pine and paint

Made in Northumberland County, Pennsylvania

An inscription, “Jenner [January] 1829,” is painted on the front edge of the top of this chest of drawers. It may indicate the date the piece was finished by John Mayer. It might also mark another important event. Decorated with pairs of birds symbolizing fidelity, the chest may have been given as a wedding gift. In that case, the date painted on the piece could also mark the month and year of the union. Mayer was a cabinetmaker working in the isolated German American community in Schwaben Creek Valley, Pennsylvania.

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Attributed to the “Record Book Artist” LEGAL SIZED LABEL

Laing Family Record Book, circa 1804

Ink and watercolor on wove paper

Painted in the Winchester, Virginia, area

The Laing family record book provides information about individual family members' key life events from 1801 to 1821. The unidentified artist who created this book found inspiration in a variety of sources. Its design and inscriptions connect the Laing family's Scottish heritage with Germanic culture.

The birds, stylized trees, flowers, butterflies, suns and moons that decorate these pages also appear on German-American *fraktur* (decorated manuscripts). Unlike traditional *fraktur*, however, this book commemorates deaths as well as births and marriages. Documenting the end of life in books like this was a common practice among Anglo-American families.

The Laing family lived in Winchester, Virginia, which also had a large Germanic community. This might be the reason the Laing book includes a mix of traditions from both cultures.

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Attributed to John Scholl

American (born Germany), 1827–1916

The Wedding of the Turtle Doves, 1907–15

White pine, wire and paint

Made in Germania, Pennsylvania

Working in Germania, Pennsylvania, the farmer and house carpenter John Scholl created painted wooden sculptures that seem to twirl and move. *The Wedding of the Turtle Doves* is constructed of small pieces of carved wood that are attached and painted to engage viewers in a magical world. Originally from Germany, Scholl immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1853. He did not start making sculptures until 1907, when he was 80 years of age.

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