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Lee, Nancy Ellen

CONNECTICUT CONNECTIONS: A STUDY OF JOINED CHAIRS, 1720-1810

University of Delaware (Winterthur Program) M.A. 1984

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CONNECTICUT CONNECTIONS:
A STUDY OF JOINED CHAIRS 1720-1810

BY
Nancy Ellen Lee

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture

August 1984
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CONNECTICUT CONNECTIONS:
A STUDY OF JOINED CHAIRS, 1720-1810

BY
Nancy Ellen Lee

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CONNECTICUT CONNECTIONS:
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An abstract of a thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture

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Approved: Robert Blair St. George, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis
ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent and nature of cultural interaction between the lower part of the Connecticut River Valley and eastern coastal Connecticut in the years between 1720 and 1810. The style and construction of fifty joined chairs is used as an index of cultural interaction between the two areas which is articulated in part, in an artifactual vocabulary and which was based on the migration of craftsmen, economic and kinship ties among both chairmakers and chairowners.

A stylistic and construction analysis of the chairs is complimented by genealogical research towards family reconstitution and probate inventory research to determine occupation through a careful reading of possessions, such as tools, that are indicative of one's trade.

The study shows that between 1720 and 1760 the two areas shared common ideas of what constituted appropriate seating furniture but that between 1760 and 1810 that commonality disintegrated. This conclusion modifies the dominant belief that New England towns were first insular and closed and then open and culturally fluid.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No project of this scope is ever the work of only one person. I wish to express my gratitude to the several people who have guided and assisted me over the past year. Dr. Christopher Bickford, Director of the Connecticut Historical Society, facilitated the support and funding necessary to undertake and complete this study. The Ross Gregor Nelson family of Manchester, Connecticut, shared their home with me during the months of summer research and made living and working in Connecticut a pleasure.

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in his museum's collection.

Lastly, both Robert F. Trent, Curator of Education and Exhibitions at the Connecticut Historical Society and Dr. Robert Blair St. George, Teaching Associate at Winterthur Museum, gave me an immense amount of encouragement, patience, and sound advice. Their own brilliant scholarship provides a marvelous model for a young student. Robert Trent first noticed the significance of the Lathrop-Royce artisans, and I am indebted to him for bringing many sources to my attention. Robert St. George has guided me through two years of academic and personal development. As a teacher and friend he is incomparable.
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Figure 1: Guide to Nomenclature (Drawing by Kirk J. Nelson)
INTRODUCTION

In 1970 American historians witnessed the culmination of a movement which sought to understand history "from the bottom up". In that watershed year four books were published which were each predicated on the belief that we could only understand colonial America if we laid aside our preoccupation with merchants, ministers, and magistrates and attended instead to the everyday life of the common man. In order to accomplish this goal several historians each chose a town, or a group of towns, and studied that town in depth, primarily through the quantitative analysis of local public records. Although each historian asked different questions of his respective materials, the nature of "community" was the overarching theme of this body of scholarship.

The Oxford English Dictionary offers several definitions of the word "community" which fall into two general categories. The first category, a quality of state, includes definitions based on a common character, a quality in common, social intercourse, fellowship, communion with others, society, or the social state in a broad sense. The second grouping, a body of individuals, includes among its variant meanings a body of persons living together and practicing more or less a community of goods. The historians of the community studies genre tended to assume an a priori connection between the community in which common character and social intercourse necessarily coincided with the body of a people organized into a specific political or municipal
Such an assumption resulted in part from the sources they used -- wills, inventories of estates, land deeds, tax lists, and church records -- and from the fact that these records are commonly organized by specific geopolitical units, such as the town and the county. As Raymond Williams suggests, however, beginning in the seventeenth century there was a growing distinction between "community" and "society" -- a distinction which separates the body of direct face-to-face relationships from the civil organizations of the state.4

The underlying feature of "community" in the first sense is communication. The word "community" and the word "communication" are both derivatives of the Latin word Communis - or common. Therefore, knowing the nature and processes of communication would be helpful in understanding the social ramifications of "community". Ray Birdwhistell suggests that the two, heretofore unquestioned, fallacies of the concept of communication are, first that communication is a "process identified by the passage of information through the transmission of more or less meaningful symbols from one individual to another, from one group or representative to another group or representative," and secondly that ideas are transmitted exclusively through the oral or written word.5 By recognizing that communication can take many different forms we can expand its definition beyond these two fallacies. One form of non-verbal communication is implicit in the visual vocabulary of artifactual style. Communities can and often do exist over large geographic spaces which are not conducive to frequent verbal communication. Because the "community-studies" historians of the late 1960s and
early 1970s focused only on documents which preserve the written word, they were only able to analyze the community of persons living within the same geographic locale. In addition, since each form of communication draws on a different set of concepts and expresses only a part of a total reality, and since the "community-studies" historians only explored a single thread of that reality their analysis did not reach the full depth of human experience.

In the present study, an investigation of joined chairs made primarily in eastern coastal Connecticut and in the lower part of the Connecticut River Valley during the eighteenth century, will serve as a means of exploring the extent and nature of community interaction and cultural exchange between two geographically distinct areas. A relatively high index of stylistic continuity or shared construction techniques reveals, in an artifactual vocabulary, a community of social intercourse based on shared attitudes towards appropriate forms, materials and workmanship, which was transmitted through the migration of trained artisans, their apprentices, and their patrons. Robert Redfield's work, Peasant Society and Culture provides a model for distinguishing between the horizontal axis of community social interaction confined to the locale and the vertical axis of wide spread communities which penetrate geopolitical units. Within the context of Redfield's paradigm the present study examines the vertical axis of a community of chairmakers and their customers in Connecticut's eastern coastal region and the lower part of the Connecticut River Valley.
In recent years scholars have suggested that during the eighteenth century the Connecticut River Valley was characterized by an insular regional culture. Amelia Miller wrote that while related examples can be seen along Long Island Sound, only in towns along the river did the "true" Connecticut River Valley doorway dominate. Similarly, Michael K. Brown believed that the Connecticut River Valley's regional culture could be observed in the scalloped-top furniture of the area. In order to buttress their belief that the Connecticut River Valley was a cohesive cultural entity, scholars often turn to Timothy Dwight's description of the Valley written in 1803:

The inhabitants of this valley may be said in several respects to possess a common character, and in all the different states resemble each other more than their fellow citizens who live on the coast resemble them. This similarity is derived from their descent, their educations, their local circumstances, and their mutual intercourse. In the order settlements most of the inhabitants are natives of this valley, and those who are not yield to the influence of a character which they continually see all around them. In the more recent settlements, where greater numbers, and often a majority, were not born in this tract, the same character has regularly gained ground, and in most of them is already evident to an observing traveler.

As a member of the influential Dwight family, Timothy Dwight was a part of what was once the Connecticut River Valley's political, ecclesiastical, and mercantile elite and which are and were commonly known as the "River Gods". However, by the 1770s the role of the River Gods as cultural mediators was waning and it was all but completely eclipsed by 1803. Dwight's statement may express a nostalgia for the old days of influence and power, and therefore does not necessarily describe with accuracy the social structure of the Connecticut River Valley at any point in its history, either before or after 1770.
Although Connecticut River Valley doorways and scalloped-top furniture may underscore Dwight's vision of an insular regional culture, other evidence, including the chairs in this study, reveal that there was an extensive interaction between the Valley and the coast codified in interregional economic and business relationships and extended kinship networks. Both economic and family relationships functioned as a unifying force until the emergence of urbanization which, in reference to household artifacts, drew people into their own geographically localized community.

Several studies of Connecticut furniture have examined the area from a variety of approaches. The first major exhibition of Connecticut furniture, held at the Morgan Memorial in Hartford in 1935, included two hundred and seventy-three artifacts arranged in six groups according to stylistic periods. In 1967 the Wadsworth Atheneum presented an exhibition of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Connecticut furniture which showed many examples with histories of ownership. This exhibition grouped objects chronologically according to form. Although neither of these two exhibitions was of great interpretative value by current standards, they laid the groundwork necessary for subsequent research.

Six more recent studies of Connecticut furniture concentrate on specific areas within the state, a trend which had made scholars who work with objects fall prey to the same parochial pitfalls as scholars who work with written documents. Patricia Kane contributed two studies of seventeenth-century Connecticut furniture, one on the joined
furniture of Hartford County, and the second on the furniture of New Haven Colony. Minor Myers, Jr., and Edgar deN. Mayhew identified many examples of New London County furniture for their exhibition of New London County furniture, 1640-1840. More sensitive work on Connecticut furniture includes Edward S. Cooke, Jr.'s master's thesis on the furniture of Stratford, "The Selective Conservative Taste," and his later work on Newtown and Woodbury joiners, Fiddlebacks and Crooked-Backs. Cooke placed the furniture and artisans of the towns he studied into their social and historical context and showed how certain eighteenth-century towns responded to changes in furniture fashion. In Hearts and Crowns Robert F. Trent drew on the models of Henri Focillon and George Kubler and, by arranging a group of coastal Connecticut chairs into a formal series, he demonstrated how the chairmakers and their customers responded to the challenges of urban "high style" furniture. His work emphasized the primacy of the object in artifactual study and, by analyzing the objects on their own terms rather than according to preconceived notions of correctness or "beauty", Trent argued against the theory that all style in the eighteenth century was transmitted from London to Boston and New York and then to the hinterlands. His work also showed that masterpieces are not the only proper objects of research and that folk art is not a degenerate version of high style forms.

Before his death in 1967 Houghton Bulkeley uncovered a vast amount of material on a group of chairs associated with the Southmayd and Lathrop families, material which indicated that at least one
"extended" family of woodworkers was operating in both the Connecticut River Valley and in New London County. Bulkeley's notes and correspondence, which are now at the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford, are the foundation upon which much of my research rests. I am indebted to Robert F. Trent, Curator of Education and Exhibitions at the Connecticut Historical Society for bringing the Bulkeley manuscripts to my attention.

For the present study as many Connecticut joined chairs as could be located in both private and public collections were examined in reference to their style and construction, as well as in reference to histories of ownership and manufacture. In some instances tracings taken from the chairs revealed that two or more chairs were cut from the same master template or a second template produced from measured drawings of the first and this research technique aided in establishing provenance and workmanship habits. Because they at once incorporate workmanship of certainty, risk, and habit, chairs provide an opportunity to discover the relationships between these components of execution. Chairs can incorporate several levels of "production" within a single complex artifact.

Finally, biographies of individual chairowners illustrate the level of the eighteenth-century social structure which found these chairs meaningful. Many of the chairowners traveled widely through Connecticut, New England and the colonies in general where they could observe styles and forms which they chose to incorporate into their own vision of appropriate seating furniture, in particular, as well as into their more general conception of a well-ordered domestic environment.
Introduction


Beeman, "Community in Colonial America", 423-424.


A commendable exception to this generalization is Demos, A Little Commonwealth. Demos opens his work with a discussion of "The Physical Setting" and includes chapters on housing, furnishings, and clothing. Throughout his essay Demos maintains a thoroughly interdisciplinary approach, and organizes his investigation around specific concepts rather than around types of evidence.

Miller believes that the over two hundred surviving eighteenth-century Connecticut River Valley doorways reveal a recognizably distinct style that bears little resemblance to doorways from eastern Massachusetts or Rhode Island; see Amelia Miller, *Connecticut River Valley Doorways* (Boston: Boston University for the Dublin Seminar on New England Folklife, 1983) p. 10.


Three Centuries of Connecticut Furniture, 1635-1935. (Hartford: The Tercentenary Commission of the State of Connecticut, 1935). Many of the date and maker attributions recorded in this catalog have since been revised. See especially entry numbers 78, 121, and 137.

John T. Kirk, *Connecticut Furniture: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. (Hartford: The Wadsworth Atheneum, 1967). This exhibition posed part of the question which the present study both elaborates on and seeks to answer with greater precision. Kirk identified one chair as being from "Middletown or Norwich" (p. 126), and another as originating from "Norwich or Wethersfield" (p. 127).


20 Trent, Hearts and Crowns, p. 91.

21 David Pye defines "workmanship of risk" as work where the "quality of the result is continually at risk during the process of making." In contrast, "workmanship of certainty" takes place when, by means of templates or jigs, the result of the work is predetermined. See David Pye, The Nature and Art of Workmanship (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968) pp. 4-5. To these two categories of execution Philip D. Zimmerman has added the "workmanship of habit" which he defines as a mental template lodged in the mind of the worker through repeated performance of the same action. See Philip D. Zimmerman, "Workmanship as Evidence: A Model for Object Study," Winterthur Portfolio, 16, No. 4, (Winter, 1981): 286-292, especially 287.
CHAPTER I
Trade Connections

In order to organize joined chairs made in Connecticut between 1720 and 1810 in some meaningful way, this study arranges them into six groups according to stylistic similarities. A few additional chairs made prior to 1720 or after 1810 are included because they illuminate aspects of the chairs within the prime date range. The dates are relative, as the chairs in this study have plain or pierced bannisters of the "Queen Anne" or "Chippendale" styles. Most have curvilinear, crooked legs, although some have straight, "marlborough" legs. The earliest reference to the use of a crooked back on chairs in Connecticut is in the 1722 probate inventory of John Mix of New Haven, which lists "Six Crooked back Chairs". Mix also owned "6 Streight back Chairs." Assuming that Mix owned his crooked-back chairs at least a few years before his death, an approximate date of 1720 seems plausible for the initial appearance of the crooked line in Connecticut. The 1738 inventory of Lewis Lyron of Milford includes the first explicit reference to a crooked leg. Lyron owned "one Table Crooked Legs". In addition, the neoclassical or federal style never completely eclipsed the production of chairs with pierced bannisters, and chairs made in a style that was no longer fashionable in 1810 could easily have been made at any time after that date. Thus, the dates 1720 and 1810 provide a general chronological frame to the probable manufacture of "Queen Anne" and "Chippendale"-style chairs in Connecticut.
The chairs are grouped here according to specific formal indices because the purpose of the groupings is to determine the extent of stylistic and cultural interaction between different geographic regions within eighteenth-century Connecticut. Chairs which are stylistically similar sometimes reveal significant differences in construction which suggest that they were made by different artisans, perhaps working in different areas. When experimenting with new designs an artisan usually relied on the construction techniques he learned during his apprenticeship. While customers may have described what they wanted their chairs to look like, the chairmakers decided how to construct and embellish the chair; the artisan was responsible for achieving his customers' wishes. In other words, stylistic features can be transmitted by both customers and artisans, whereas construction techniques are transmitted by the latter alone.

The two groups of chairs to be discussed in this chapter have distinctively-shaped bannisters and are made in the lower part of the Connecticut River Valley and in New London County (see figure 2). The first group of chairs have relatively narrow vase-shaped bannister with a bead silhouette at the neck which joins the short upper section of the bannister with the long mid-section (see figures 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9). The spaces between the bannister and the rear stiles resemble two opened-mouth birds facing one another. Ten Connecticut chairs, and two chairs possibly from New York have bannisters of this design.
The most frequently published examples from this group are five surviving chairs from a set of twelve that originally belonged to Dr. Ezekiel Porter (1707-1775) of Wethersfield (see figure 3). Three chairs from the Porter set are at the Brooklyn Museum, another is at the Yale University Art Gallery, and a final example is at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The Porter family chairs shared several distinctive construction features which set them apart from other examples which are visually similar. The compass seats are constructed with the front and side seat rails joined by a horizontal mortise and tenon. The front legs have round dowel-like tenons which are inserted into a round mortise in the horizontal plane of the front seat rail (see figure 4).

John T. Kirk calls this manner of construction an English technique, while Benno M. Forman argued that the conventional English technique was to orient seat rails vertically. In England the rails were tenoned and pinned into the squared-off upper portion of the front leg. The horizontal seat construction, according to Forman, is a Germanic solution to the problem of creating a curved seat front and leg without using lower rails. It is possible that Forman and Kirk are both correct. The technique may be Germanic in origin, but could have been taken to London by German artisans in the 1720s and adopted by local English chairmakers. Kirk states that in America the horizontal seat construction technique is seen only on chairs made in Philadelphia and Connecticut. At least two Connecticut artisans, Benjamin Burnham and Eliphalet Chapin, are known to have served apprenticeships or journeyman's time in Philadelphia. Although neither of these artisans used the horizontal seat construction technique, other Connecticut craftsmen
may have trained or worked in Philadelphia and brought the horizontal seat construction back to Connecticut with them. It is also possible that the technique was transmitted to Connecticut directly from England or that the technique was widely known but not commonly used until the desire for an uninterrupted curvilinear line prompted chairmakers to search through their repertoire for a construction technique that did not require lower rails. Since no direct links between the German, English, Philadelphia and Connecticut uses of this technique have yet been discovered, the latter possibility seems most plausible.

The Porter chairs also have numerous work marks. The rear seat rail, right side rail, and right knee bracket of the chair marked number four of the set, are numbered with an "X". The left front knee bracket and the adjacent front seat rail are marked "XI". The left rear knee bracket and the left seat rail are numbered "XIX". The other four Porter chairs have similar numbers and each joint in the set has a different number. Numbering all the parts of a chair is an unusual, perhaps unique, practice which raises the question of the nature of shop practices and the organization of labor. Each of the parts of the Porter chairs must have been cut, the joints fitted, and then laid aside for future assembly. Were there two people at work, one making all the parts of the chair, then making all the parts of the next chair and passing them on to an assembler? A similar system of numbering appears frequently on house frame joints, in which the parts were often cut in the carpenter's yard and then transported to the building site for raising. Since there are only six known Connecticut chairs with horizontal seat construction, and all of them are in the same design, one might assume
that the chairmakers were adopting a technique with which they were somewhat unfamiliar. The quality of the workmanship, however, suggests the work of an experienced hand. Perhaps the parts were all cut to templates, marked, and then stockpiled for later assembly. Whether or not this was the case, it seems very likely that at least two, and maybe more, people were involved in the cutting, fitting, and assembly of each of the Porter chairs.

A chair which most closely relates to the Porter chairs is at the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum and originally belonged to Sarah Noyes Chester (see figure 5). The Chester chair has the same construction feature as the Porter chairs but does not have numbered joints; the Chester chair is smaller overall, and the bannister is 3/4 inches broader. While the Porter chairs are made of black cherry (Prunus serotina), the Chester chair is birch (genus Betula). A history of the Chester chair written by a descendant states that it is one of a set of six. It retains its original crewel-embroidered seat cover, which was made by Sarah Noyes sometime between 1740 and 1750 or shortly before her marriage to Colonel John Chester of Wethersfield which took place in 1747. Given the construction and design similarities of the Porter and Chester chairs both sets were probably made in Wethersfield, and perhaps even in the same shop.

A third set of chairs which have a beaded silhouette at the neck of the bannister were made in Saybrook, a town at the mouth of the Connecticut River (see figure 6). Because of the stylistic similarities between the bannisters of these chairs and the Porter and Chester
chairs, these Saybrook chairs have been attributed to Wethersfield. Yet, a table at the Wadsworth Atheneum, which is certainly made by the same artisan who made the Saybrook chairs, has a history in the Saybrook-Lyme area (see figure 7). As on the Porter and Chester chairs, the side seat rails are tenoned through the rear stiles, but unlike the previous examples, the rear seat rails of the Saybrook chairs are placed completely above the side rails (see figure 25). The chairmaker may have felt this placement was necessary for strength when using a through-tenon, even though there are numerous examples of through-tenoned chairs with seat rails fitted flush at their top edges. The fact that the stiles are particularly thin, only 1 7/8 inches, may also have contributed to the chairmaker's decision not to intersect the side and rear rails. The Saybrook chairs also have an applied molding to contain the loose seat. On chairs with horizontal seat frame construction this is common, but on the Saybrook chairs, with vertical seat construction, it is unnecessary. Chairs with vertical seat construction often have a planed molding around the seat which is visually similar to an applied molding, but the Saybrook chairs represent a singular use of an applied molding on a vertically constructed seat frame.

The Saybrook chairs lack knee brackets, and the bannister of each example is housed in a shoe which is not a separate piece of wood, but simply an upward extension of the back seat rail. The scalloped front skirt is double-pinned at all the joints, which is common on Connecticut chairs with deep seat rails. More unusual is the double pinning of the narrow bannister at the crest and shoe, which over the years has caused the thin wood to crack. This surface attention to add
to the chairs' sturdiness also indicates that the chairmaker did not quite trust the design he was asked to construct, and that he felt that the chair needed extra pins to stay together.

Two other chairs with bannisters with a beaded silhouette design have no histories of ownership or manufacture, but certain features make a Norwich attribution probable. A chair at the Leffingwell Inn in Norwich has a narrow bannister like the Porter and Saybrook chairs and, like the Saybrook chairs, has a trapezoidal seat (see figure 8). The knee brackets on the Leffingwell chair are not placed between the seat rail and the leg, as is typical, but instead are glued to the face of the skirt. Kirk compared this technique to one found on English chairs, but he failed to notice a striking difference between its use on English and Connecticut examples. English chairs of this type have narrow seat rails with extensions that conform exactly to the shape of the brackets. The Connecticut chairs have seat rails about 2 7/8" deep which makes an extension for the brackets unnecessary, so the shape of the brackets does not correspond precisely to the shape of the skirt. Five Connecticut side chairs, and one Connecticut corner chair share this construction feature. A single notch on the upper inside edge of the front rail on the Leffingwell chair indicates that it was part of a set. The back is crooked and the bannister sits in a separate shoe.

A final chair in this group, at the Joshua Hempstead House in New London, has a bannister with proportions very similar to the Leffingwell chair (see figure 9). The seat has curved side rails but basically straight front rails. Unlike the Porter and Chester chairs, its
seat is framed vertically. Like all the chairs in this first group, the chair at the Hempstead House has side seat rails tenoned through the rear stiles, and a crooked back. The knee brackets have the same sharp points that appear on several Norwich examples (see figures 46 and 48).

The second group of chairs owned both in the lower Connecticut River Valley and in New London County have large cusps on the sides of the bannister about a third of the way up from the shoe (see figures 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15). Chairs with bannisters of a similar design were also made in Philadelphia and in Ireland. Several Connecticut examples of chairs with this bannister exist in a variety of proportions, suggesting that they were not cut from the same template and that they may be the work of different artisans.

The best known chair from this second group is the Governor William Pitkin (1694-1769) armchair (see figure 10). This is the only known armchair with a cusped bannister. Six side chairs are included in this study and many more are in various public and private collections. One side chair belonged to Colonel Gurdon Saltonstall (1708-1785) of New London, and was used in the Saltonstall family's country estate in Branford, Connecticut (see figure 11). Three side chairs (which are all exactly the same) are at the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum and have recent histories of ownership in both Hartford and East Hartford (see figure 12). A fifth side chair, now at Winterthur Museum, is marked "CHENEY" on the loose seat frame (see figures 13 and 14). There were woodworking Cheneys in Hartford, Litchfield, and in New London. The
last side chair with a cusped bannister has no history or distinguishing features.\textsuperscript{34}

Although Connecticut chairs with cusped bannisters are attributed without exception to Norwich,\textsuperscript{35} not one of these chairs discovered to date has a specific history of ownership or manufacture in that town. Nonetheless, a New London County attribution could be generally correct. A chair with a similar bannister (but different skirt) was offered for sale in 1969 by Israel Sack, Incorporated (see figure 15).\textsuperscript{36} The skirt on the Sack chair is similar to one in the Garvan Collection (see figure 16).\textsuperscript{37} Both the Sack and Garvan chairs have knee brackets glued to the face of the skirt, like those on the Norwich chair mentioned earlier (figure 8). This construction feature seems to be more commonly used in New London county, although a Middletown corner chair also shares this technique. In addition, all of the Connecticut chairs with cusped bannisters have three lower rails (one rear and two side) which taper at the ends and have conical stops; the chairs also have very sharply pointed knee brackets. The arrangement of the lower rails and knee bracket shape are commonly found on New London County chairs. In all likelihood Pitkin bought his chair in Norwich or New London,\textsuperscript{38} and Hartford area residents either commissioned local chairmakers to produce similar chairs or went to New London themselves and bought the chairs. The style could also have been transmitted from New London County through an as yet unidentified chairmaker who moved from the former area to the latter.
The chairs in these two groups demonstrate through visual similarities the presence of cultural ties between the Hartford area and New London County. To understand why such seemingly disparate areas should reveal at least partial cultural continuity, we need to look at the settlement history and commerce patterns of the two areas.

The settlement of Connecticut took place in four distinct waves. In the initial phase, which took place between about 1635 and 1675, fertile lands and commercial advantages drew settlers to the coastal region and the major river valleys. The second phase, from roughly 1686 to 1734, witnessed the opening of the interior uplands and secondary valleys. Between approximately 1737 and 1761, Connecticut's extreme northwest corner was settled in what was the third phase of the colony's development. Finally, in the fourth phase from about 1767 to 1789, large towns broke into smaller units and new towns were carved from old.

Wethersfield, Hartford, Saybrook, Norwich and New London were all settled during the initial phase, and thus shared similar advantages of initial opportunity and early development. In addition, the people who settled these towns shared common agricultural motives. According to Bruce Daniels,

although several towns were founded by congregations who specifically moved to enjoy the ministry of one man, and although trade considerations were uppermost in the minds of the founders of a few towns, the overwhelming desire for fertile land motivated the vast majority of these early settlers. 40

Unlike towns settled between 1686 and 1734 which attracted many land speculators and absentee farmers, the earliest towns were established by groups of people from either Massachusetts or England, and not by...
scattered individuals. Norwich, the most densely populated town in the colony by 1756, had the richest land in New London County, while Wethersfield, the second most populous town at that time, had the most fertile land anywhere in Connecticut.\footnote{41}

During the seventeenth century, Wethersfield was the center of commerce for the entire Connecticut Valley; local husbandmen exported grains, cattle, horses, hides, flaxseed, dried fish, pork, beef, tobacco, tar, pitch, lumber and red onions.\footnote{42} By the mid-eighteenth century, sub-regions based on distinctive types of agricultural specialization developed where equally distinctive soil types were better suited for particular crops. Wethersfield soil was particularly well suited for the cultivation of red onions and the town consequently devoted a major part of its agricultural energy to producing them.\footnote{43} The Reverend Samuel Peters, whose satirical \textit{General History of Connecticut} was first published in 1781, said of Wethersfield, "This town raises more onions than are consumed in all New England."\footnote{44} Sometime around 1700, however, the Connecticut River met an obstruction of red sandstone shale and changed its course.\footnote{45} At that time, Wethersfield's natural harbor was transformed into a small cove and Hartford and Middletown replaced Wethersfield as the Valley's leading commercial centers. Nonetheless, Wethersfield continued as a prosperous farming community.

From the beginning of the settlement of the Valley, the Connecticut River was plagued by natural disadvantages that prevented the region from developing an extensive foreign command. The River was blocked by ice for three months of the year, and sandbars obstructed its lower
reaches. Above Hartford the River was virtually unm navigable. Although some Hartford, Wethersfield, and Middletown merchants did participate directly in the West Indies and coasting trades, many ships were sent out from these towns half empty and filled only when they reached New London. On the return trip, ships first stopped in New London and either transferred their cargo to smaller coasting vessels which could travel the river, or simply unloaded half the cargo to lighten the vessel. When Isaac Byington left his Bristol, Connecticut home in 1786 he took a ship from Wethersfield to New London, and from there boarded another vessel bound for Savannah, Georgia.

Although Norwich and New London have always been rival towns, Frances Manwaring Caulkins noted that the rivalry was "restricted to matters and objects of pecuniary concern, never interfering with the cultivation of social intercourse, the establishment of warm friendships, the alliance of families and a hearty, prompt, and efficient assistance in seasons of calamity and danger." In 1734 the Connecticut General Assembly decided that Norwich and New London would share the county court responsibilities and two courts a year would sit in each town. This shared responsibility meant that there was extensive interaction and travel between the two towns. Several families, including the Caulkins, the Edgecombes, the Houghes, and the Lathrops had branches in both Norwich and New London.

The chairs in the first two groups with histories of ownership were all owned by families who were economically successful and who maintained family and business ties in both the river towns and the
and the eastern coastal towns (see figure 2). According to a nineteenth-century historian of Wethersfield, Dr. Ezekiel Porter (the owner of the chair illustrated in figure 3) was "a celebrated surgeon and particularly excelled as a setter of broken and dislocated bones and in difficult cases (was) most remarkably successful." His skill as a doctor took him well beyond Wethersfield, as Caulkins recounts in the fate of Esther Post of Norwich, who "was thrown from her horse, severely wounded in the head, carried to the house of Mr. William Angel, where she lingered for a fortnight in great pain and distress. The whole neighborhood was moved by her sufferings, and several physicians hastened to her relief. Dr. Goddard came from New London, with Dr. Morrison, an army surgeon, just returned from Cape Breton, Dr. Worden from Franklin and Dr. Porter from Wethersfield; but surgical skill was exerted in vain." The Chesters of Wethersfield (who owned the chair pictured in figure 5) maintained extensive family connections in New London and New Haven. Colonel John Chester left the largest estate in the Connecticut Valley which included £1,468 in personal and £11,698 in real property. Sarah Noyes Chester's father, the Reverend Joseph Chester, was born in Stonington where his father was minister. Joseph studied theology with his father and was licensed to preach by the New London Association. He declined an offer to become a colleague with his father in order to accept a call from the church in New Haven. Colonel John and Sarah Noyes Chesters' eldest son, also Colonel John, married Elizabeth Huntington, the daughter of one of the most distinguished residents of Norwich. Sarah, Colonel John and Sarah's eldest daughter, married
Thomas Coit, also of Norwich.\textsuperscript{54}

The Saltonstall family, in which the chair in figure 11 descended, was one of the leading political families in the Connecticut colony. Before becoming governor in 1707, Gurdon Saltonstall had been minister of the church at New London. Saltonstall was governor until 1724, and while holding office in Hartford remained in close contact with family and friends in New London.\textsuperscript{55} Saltonstall's granddaughter was the second wife of Silas Deane, who, until sent to France on a secret mission during the Revolutionary War,\textsuperscript{56} was a merchant in Wethersfield. Deane and his two brothers Barnabas and Simeon, also of Wethersfield, were the sons of a Groton blacksmith.\textsuperscript{57} After reviewing the family and economic ties of the known owners of the chairs in the first two groups, it is clear that during the eighteenth century the Hartford and the New London areas were closely allied through business and personal interests. The owners of the chairs discussed here are representative examples of an extensive network of cultural exchange which existed among the prominent and economically successful families of eighteenth-century Connecticut.
Chapter I


2. In the eighteenth century "crooked" meant curved or ogee. A "crooked back" referred to a chair with a reverse curve to the back. A "crooked leg" meant the curved leg currently known as a cabriole leg. See Robert F. Trent, Hearts and Crowns, p. 60.

3. New Haven District Probate Court Records, Vol. 5, p. 103. I am indebted to Robert F. Trent for bringing this reference to my attention.

4. Trent, Hearts and Crowns, p. 60.


Forman, "German Influences in Pennsylvania Furniture," in Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans, ed. Scott T. Swank (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1983) p. 169. "Lower rails" refers to the horizontal members below the chair seat which connect the legs. Lower rails are currently known as "stretchers". See The Journeymen Cabinet and Chair-makers Philadelphia Book of Prices, p. 79.

Kirk, American Chairs, p. 27.

See Kane, 300 Years of American Seating Furniture, (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1976) p. 79.

For documentation on the practice of stockpiling chair parts in the eighteenth century see Forman, "Delaware Valley 'Crookt-Foot' and Slat-back Chairs" in Winterthur Portfolio, 15, No. 1 (Spring 1980) 45-46.


The Chester chair bannister is 18 1/4" tall and 5" wide at the broadest point. The Porter chairs' bannisters are 20 3/4" tall and 4 1/4" wide at the broadest point.

Registrar’s files, Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum.

Col. Henry E. Noyes, Genealogical Record of Some of the Noyes Descendants. (Boston: Privately Published, 1904) II, pp. 77-83.

Kevin M. Sweeney has argued that the Porter chairs are a local Wethersfield interpretation of the Chester chairs which he thinks were not made in Wethersfield. While this is possible there are no related examples from other towns which would indicate that chairs with this design and construction were made outside Connecticut. See Kevin M. Sweeney, "Furniture and Furniture Making in mid-eighteenth century Wethersfield, Connecticut," Antiques, 125, No. 5 (May 1984) 1161.

Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, Acc. no. 1935.2.1 and 1935.2.2.

Kirk, Connecticut Furniture, p. 126.

21. Chairs in this study with through tenons and seat rails fitted flush at their top edges include figures 3, 5, 8, 9, 22, 27, and 57.

22. "Loose seat" is the term used in Hartford and in Philadelphia for the part of the chair now known as the slip seat. See Hartford, Connecticut Cabinetmakers, At a Meeting of the Cabinetmakers, p. 6; The Journeymen Cabinet and Chairmakers Philadelphia Book of Prices, p. 79. In Boston the same chair part was called a "cushion seat"; see Jobe, "The Boston Furniture Industry," p. 42.

23. For an illustration see Kirk, American Chairs, p. 26.


29. Privately owned.


32. Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 60.107.
Benjamin Cheney (d. 1730) worked in East Hartford. In deeds he is called a carpenter, joiner, and wheelwright. Silas Cheney (1776 - 1821) was a woodworker in Litchfield. See Phylis Kihn "Connecticut Cabinetmakers" in Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin, 30, No. 4, 114. A number of Cheneys in New London County were ship carpenters. See Edgar deN. Mayhew and Minor Myers, Jr., New London County Furniture 1640-1834 (London: Lyman-Allyn Museum, 1974) p. 30.

Privately


Privately owned.

36Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, acc. no. 1930.2416.

37Although there are no known examples of Hartford residents purchasing chairs in New London County it is certainly plausible that they did. See Failey, Long Island is My Nation, p. 161, for an example of eighteenth-century Long Islanders patronizing both local and distant craftsmen.


40Daniels, The Connecticut Town, p. 56.


49. Caulkins, History of Norwich, p. 273


53. Noyes, Genealogical Record, pp. 77-83.


56. Martin, "Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley,

57. Martin, "Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley,"
CHAPTER II
Artisan Connections

In the last chapter, chairs with visual similarities owned in the Connecticut River Valley towns and in New London County demonstrate that members of the economic and political elite in these two areas maintained a common definition of appropriate seating furniture. Kinship and economic relationships kept the people of the two areas in contact with one another and facilitated the existence of a network of communication and cultural exchange. A related network also operated among the woodworking artisans of the Connecticut River Valley and New London County regions. The next two groups of chairs, some with known makers, provide information about the nature and extent of this artisan network.

Narrow bannisters with particularly elongated upper portions above the vase characterize the ten chairs in the third group. In 1946 the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City acquired a set of four maple side chairs, which according to oral tradition had been made by a member of the Southmayd family of Middletown, Connecticut (see figure 17).¹ The chairs, part of an original set of six, were owned in the 1920s by William B. Goodwin of Hartford. Although the chairs were first published with a Southmayd attribution by Wallace Nutting in 1928,² they have no specific history of ownership of manufacture. A daybed in a private collection has also been attributed to a Southmayd of Middletown, but here again, the source of the attribution is unclear. At least one chest of drawers exists with a Southmayd signature, but its style...
suggests a much later date of manufacture than that of the Metropolitan's set of four chairs. As described by the owner in 1964 the signed chest is a "swell front chest in solid cherry in the Hepplewhite style with the original brasses with the cornucopia and sheaf of wheat design. Across the bottom of the piece written in an indelible pencil is the name Southmayde."^4

At least two members of the Southmayd family of Middletown earned a living as woodworkers. The probate inventory of Jonathan Southmayd's (1736-1797) estate included, "7 Gimblets, Spike Gimblet, Four plain, Gouge and Chisels, 1 Iron Square, 1 adze, 3 saws, 2 pit saws, 2 draw shaved and a lathe in the garret."^5 He also owned six fiddleback chairs, one case of drawers, and a desk which may have been his own work. A notice in the 1797 Middletown Gazette states, "Died after a long illness, Mr. Jonathan Southmayd, ship carpenter, age 61. He was a very industrious inhabitant of this town and an honest man."^7 Although the notice only refers to him as a ship carpenter, the tools listed in his inventory suggest that Jonathan Southmayd may also have been a joiner and turner. In the eighteenth century the divisions of labor were not so rigidly defined that a person would maintain only one occupation. A person who called himself a ship carpenter one day might also refer to himself as a joiner or turner the next day. In order to remain in the town with their families, artisans developed several different skills which would make them occupationally and economically flexible. By performing different tasks as the season or the need dictated, artisans could avoid moving to a new location to find work.9
John Bates Southmayd, whose specific relationship to Jonathan Southmayd is unclear, was born in Durham, Connecticut, one town south of Middletown, in 1794. His death date is not known. The precise date of his removal to Middletown can not be determined, but in 1840 he advertised for sale in that town, "Coffins: ready made coffins constantly on hand of different sizes and descriptions which will be trimmed to order on the shortest notice. Inquire of J.B. Southmayd at the Cabinet Furniture Warehouse corner of Main and Washington Streets."\(^{10}\)

The Metropolitan "Southmayd" chairs were probably made between 1735 and 1760. Given that time frame, it seems unlikely that either Jonathan or John Southmayd made the chairs. One other possibility for the origin of the Southmayd attribution does exist. William Goodwin bought the chairs, which all retain their original crewel-worked seats, from a member of the Derby family of Middletown in the 1920s. Each seat, worked in shades of rose, green, blue and brown, depicts a slightly different scene: one shows a shepherdess seated under a tree with abstract hills and flowers in the background and a small white dog; the second, much like the first, lacks the shepherdess and has a small squirrel in the tree; the third shows the same tree with a lion, a deer and a dog; the fourth has no tree, but has a shepherd standing in the center and a woman seated to the right. They are surrounded by hills and flowers, sheep and a small black dog (see figures 18 and 19).

A needlework pocketbook, given by the same donor as the "southmayd" chairs is also in the Metropolitan Museum of Art collections.\(^{11}\) Like the chair covers, the pocketbook is worked in shades of rose, blue,
green, brown and tan. The pocketbook design differs in specific details, and is canvas-work rather than crewel-work, but its overall character is similar to that of the "Southmayd" chair seats (see figures 20 and 21). Sewn into the top of the pocketbook is a paper label probably from the nineteenth century, which reads "1720/no.66/Mrs. Elmer G. Derby, Middletown/Mrs. L.G. Southmayd." The date and "Mrs. Southmayd" are in one hand, while "Mrs. Derby" is in another hand. The "no. 66" seems to have been added later. The Southmayd attribution on the Metropolitan's four chairs may stem from this inscription. If this is the case, then it would seem that the seat covers and not the chairs were made by a member of the Southmayd family who may or may not have owned them. The quality of the needlework makes it unlikely that the chair seats were worked by a professional. The chairs were, undoubtedly, owned in Middletown.

A chair in Winterthur Museum appears, at first glance, to be nearly identical to the Metropolitan's Middletown chairs (see figure 22). A closer examination reveals that the vase turnings at the rear of the side lower rails on the Winterthur chair are much more bulbous in profile than the corresponding turnings on the Metropolitan chairs. When turning the lower rails the chairmaker may have used a measuring stick which would indicate the linear spacing of the design but would not control the character of the three-dimensional shape of the turnings. The profile of the turnings tend, in David Pye's terms, toward workmanship of risk. The turnings on the medial lower rails also differ. The balls on the Winterthur chair are much larger and rounder than the balls on the Metropolitan chairs. There are several possible explanations
for these differences between the lower rail turnings. The chairs could have been made by different artisans working in the same shop or by the same artisan but at different times for separate customers. It is also possible that the chairs were made in different shops and that the artisans in the second shop were duplicating the chairs from the first shop from memory, verbal description or from an imprecise drawing.

Various details of construction also differentiate Winterthur's chair from the Metropolitan examples. The side seat rails of the former are tenoned through the rear stiles, while those on the Metropolitan chairs are secured with blind tenons. X-ray pictures of the Winterthur chair show round tenons where the lower side rails join the front leg, while the Metropolitan chairs have rectangular tenons at the corresponding joint. Although the seat rail tenons were the choice of the customer, the lower rail tenons were a choice of the chairmaker. According to the principle of workmanship of habit, an artisan would probably use the same lower rail tenoning technique on all or most of the chairs he made.

Finally, the Metropolitan and Winterthur chairs reveal differences in the shaping and proportions of their bannisters (see figure 23) which indicates that the bannisters were not cut from the same template. Since the bannister proportions would also be consistent if one set of chairs were made from a measured drawing of the other, or if one bannister template was drawn directly from an existing template or finished chair the alternatives can now be narrowed down to two possibilities. Either one set of chairs was made from a memory of the other, or the
second set was made from an informal drawing of the first. Taken together, these differences indicate that despite their visual similarities the Metropolitan chairs and the Winterthur chair are not products of the same chairmaker.

Although the Winterthur chair does not have a history of ownership or manufacture, it is identical in all details to three chairs in separate private collections. One of the privately owned chairs bears a label stating that it was "Left by Rufus Lathrop in 1805 to Martha Devotion." A detailed history of a second chair in this set traces its ownership from Colonel Simon Lathrop (1689-1774) of Norwich to a recent owner in the twentieth century. "Seven worked chairs" are included in both the probate inventory of Colonel Simon's estate, and in the inventory of his wife, Martha Lathrop's (1696-1775) estate.

Colonel Simon and Martha Lathrop of Norwich, first cousins who married in 1714, were both members of a complex, intermarried dynasty of Norwich and Wallingford woodworkers (see figure 24). The progenitor of the dynasty was Samuel Lathrop, who was born in England in 1623 and moved to New London, Connecticut in 1648. In 1668, Lathrop moved to Norwich where he held several town offices before his death in 1700. In 1678 Lathrop and John Elderkin entered into a contract to build the second, or "Bradstreet" meeting house in New London. Of Lathrop's children, three sons, John (1645-1688), Israel (1659-1733), and Joseph (1661-1740) were woodworkers. Samuel Lathrop's daughter, Sarah (b. 1655) married Nathaniel Royce (d. 1706) a carpenter, joiner and blacksmith of Wallingford, Connecticut; and settled there. The Lathrop
family was intermarried with the woodworking Royces two more times. Samuel Lathrop's son John (1645-1688) married Ruth Royce and John's sister, Elizabeth (b. 1648) married Isaac Royce. Both couples settled in Wallingford. Seven cousins in the third generation of the Lathrop-Royce family were woodworkers. Solomon (1706-1733)\textsuperscript{27} and Joseph (1688-1757)\textsuperscript{28}, both sons of Joseph (1661-1740), worked in Norwich along with William (1688-1778)\textsuperscript{29}, John (1690-1752),\textsuperscript{30} and Samuel (1692-1753),\textsuperscript{31} who were all sons of Israel Lathrop (1659-1733). Samuel (c. 1670-1746)\textsuperscript{32} and John (1680-c.1753),\textsuperscript{33} both sons of John and Ruth Royce Lathrop, worked in Wallingford until 1728 when John moved to Norwich. In the fourth generation five Lathrop cousins worked in Norwich as woodworkers: Ezra (1718-1760),\textsuperscript{34} the son of Samuel (1685-1754); Ezra (1719-1753),\textsuperscript{35} the son of William (1688-1778), Israel (1711-1742)\textsuperscript{36} and Ezekiel (1724-1771)\textsuperscript{37} both sons of Israel (1687-1758); and Zebediah (d. 1783),\textsuperscript{38} the son of Joseph (1688-1757). In the fifth generation only Isaac (b. 1765)\textsuperscript{39} has surfaced as a member of the woodworking trade. In all, there is firm evidence that at least eighteen members in five generations of the Lathrop-Royce family earned a part of their living as carpenters, joiners, turners, or coopers. The Lathrop-Royce woodworking dynasty was active in Wallingford at least until 1746, and in Norwich from 1668 until at least 1788. With three brothers, four cousins, a father and three uncles as woodworkers it is highly probably that the set of chairs owned by Colonel Simon and Martha Lathrop, one of which is in the Winterthur collection, was made by a member of the Lathrop-Royce family. The Metropolitan's "Southmayd" chairs were probably made by a Wallingford member of the Lathrop-Royce woodworking dynasty and owned in Middletown, which is the
Five surviving chairs from a set of six with a history of ownership in the Welles family of Wethersfield, and a chair made in New London County all have bannisters which are very similar to the bannisters on the Lathrop-Royce chairs. The Wethersfield chairs have compass seats with seat rails 2 7/8" deep. The side seat rails are tenoned through the rear stiles and, like those of the Saybrook chairs in the first group, the rear rails are here placed above the side rails (see figures 25 and 26). Work lines on the back of the knees which mark the center of the curve of the front legs suggest that the chairmaker was not very practiced at making crooked legs. The chair backs are crooked and the back feet are sharply undercut which gives the rear stiles a pronounced rear kick.

When viewed from the front the New London County chair looks very much like the Wethersfield chairs, but it varies considerably in its construction details. It has the same deep seat rails and deeply curved ankles as the Wethersfield chairs, but it does not have a crooked back or sharply undercut rear feet (see figure 27). Like the Wethersfield chairs, the New London County chair is through-tenoned, but its seat rails are flush around the top edges. The only work lines on this chair are marks on the rear stiles which delineate the sections of the stiles below the seat which are chamfered. Unlike most Connecticut joined chairs this chair has small corner blocks and the loose seat is a solid plank of wood rather than a frame. Although not identical the bannister on this chair resembles closely that of the Winterthur Lathrop chair.
The Wallingford-Norwich connection, so clearly present in the Lathrop-Royce family, is also discernible in a group of turned chairs made in Wallingford, Groton, and Fairfield. An armchair which has been owned in the same Groton family for over 250 years forms the cornerstone of the fourth group of six chairs which demonstrates the connections between the western coastal town of Fairfield and the eastern coastal town of Groton, and between both of these towns and the Connecticut River town of Wallingford.

The Groton armchair (see figure 28) was probably made by the same turner who trained the Fairfield chairmakers Ozias Buddington (1712-1759) and Edward Buddington (1708-1773); he also made two matching side chairs (see figures 29 and 30). The Buddingtons moved from Groton to Fairfield and brought their Groton training and visual vocabulary with them. The deeply notched undercut arms of the Groton armchair closely resemble the arms of Fairfield slatback chairs attributed to the Buddingtons (see figure 31).44 The turnings on the front lower rails and underarm spindles of the Buddington chairs are identical to those of the medial lower rails on the Lathrop-Royce chairs (see figures 32 and 33). This ball-spool turning is similar to the ball-reeded reel turning of the front lower rails and underarm spindles of the Groton armchair (see figure 28). The only difference between the spool effect and the reeded reel effect is the space between the central reel and the adjoining collar. The Groton armchair and the Buddington chairs also share the short, vasiform turning on the front posts immediately below the arms. Thus, a formal motif was carried from New London County to Fairfield by the Buddingtons, and probably by other artisans who
traveled the route of the Boston Post Road.

The ball-spool turnings on the Buddington slatback chairs and the Lathrop-Royce chairs suggest a pattern of triangular cultural exchange in material forms between New London County (Norwich and Groton) Fairfield and Wallingford. The Wallingford-New London County side of the triangle is even further clarified by a corner chair with a history of ownership in the Royce family of Wallingford and possibly made by a Royce family artisan (see figure 34). According to family tradition the chair belonged to Joash Royce who was born in Wallingford in 1716. Sometime between 1740 and 1750 he moved to Sheffield, Massachusetts and is said to have brought the chair with him when he moved. The distinctive inward sweep to the columns on the posts of the Royce chair are also present on the back posts of the Groton chair.

Chairs in the third and fourth groups are evidence of a cultural link between the Connecticut River Valley and the Connecticut coast which existed on the artisan level and which complements a similar relationship among the agricultural, mercantile and political elite of the two areas (see figure 35). On the level of the artisans, this connection took two forms; first, similar visual forms created in disparate geographic areas linked those areas through their mutual contributions to a formal sequence, and second, a strong kinship network linked cousins working in different areas.

By visually sharing the ball-spool turnings on the Lathrop-Royce medial lower rails and the underarm spindles of the Buddington slatback chairs, the people who saw the turnings in Middletown, Wallingford,
Norwich, and Fairfield were all sharing in the historical event of the form's initial creation, repetition and recreation. When the profile was expanded from the ball-reeded reel of the Groton armchair the artisans in Norwich, Middletown, Fairfield, and Groton became allies in an effort to solve a common formal problem.

Bonds of kinship created a network which operated on both personal and economic levels. By consistently following in the woodworking trades of their fathers and uncles, the Lathrops and Royces underscored their natural, personal relationships with a second relationship both economic and occupational in nature. As members of the same trades the Lathrops and Royces shared common knowledge and skills along with their mutual personal experiences and blood ties. The distinction between the economic and personal aspects of the Lathrops' relationships were at best blurred and in many cases a distinction simply did not exist. After his brother Isaac's death in 1778, Hezekiah Lathrop (1742-1784) contributed to his sister-in-law's financial support by paying her to do needlework for him and buying some of her surplus corn, meal, pork and butter. In 1739 John Lathrop put his daughter Bethia to an apprenticeship with his brother Benjamin and his wife Martha. During the term of her apprenticeship Bethia was contracted to faithfully serve her master and mistress who, in return for her labor, would teach her to "spin, knit and do ordinary household work." Bethia's apprenticeship to her aunt and uncle brought her into closer contact with them personally while at the same time she provided them with her labor and they provided her with the skills that could economically support her after the term of her apprenticeship had expired.
The kinship network which functioned as the underlying force of the Lathrop-Royce woodworking dynasty also formed a dialectical relationship between the artisan network, exemplified here by the Lathrops and Royces, and by the Buddingtons, of the Connecticut coast and the Connecticut River Valley, and the network among the economically elite inhabitants of the two regions. In addition to their extensive participation in the woodworking trades, the Lathrop family joined the Huntington, Saltonstall, Jeffingwells and Tracys as members of New London County's economic and political elite. Colonel Simon Lathrop (1689-1774), the owner of the chair pictured in figure 17, was one of the first Norwich men to receive permission to build a wharf at the Landing Place. In 1734 he was granted permission to build a warehouse opposite his dwelling house. In addition to being a prosperous businessman, Colonel Simon was several times a representative from Norwich in the colony General Assembly. He was also one of the first Norwich men to own a chaise, which was certainly a distinctive sign of wealth and prestige during the period. Colonel Simon's nephew, Dr. Daniel Lathrop (1712-1782) also owned a chaise.

Dr. Daniel Lathrop graduated from Yale College in 1733 and subsequently studied medicine in London. He returned from England with a large store of medicines and other mercantile goods and opened the first apothecary's establishment in Connecticut. His was the only drug store on the route from New York to Boston and he frequently filled orders sent from hundreds of miles away. In 1744 Daniel Lathrop married Jerusha, the daughter of Governor Joseph Talcott of Hartford. After 1743 Lathrop was
joined in business by his brother (d. 1807). For a short time they im-
ported not only medicines, but also fruits, wines and European and Indian
goods directly from England. In 1757 the Lathrops formed a partnership
with Solomon Smith, a former apprentice. Smith went to Hartford and
the firm of Lathrop and Smith maintained stores both in Hartford and in
Norwich.  

The two networks of cultural exchange between the Connecticut
River towns and the coastal towns, one existing among the economic and
political elite, and one existing among the woodworking artisans were
related and mutually supportive. Bonds of kinship must have kept the
mercantile Lathrops in touch with the woodworking Lathrops and the family
probably patronized each other's shops and stores.
Chapter II

1 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. nos. 46.194.1-4


3 The daybed is mentioned in Houghton Bulkeley's research notes now at the Connecticut Historical Society (hereafter referred to as "Bulkeley Manuscripts")

4 Letter from private collector to Houghton Bulkeley, November 10, 1964, "Bulkeley Manuscripts."

5 Hartford District Probate Court Records, file number 3217 (hereafter HDPCR).

6 HDPCR, no. 3217.

7 "Bulkeley Manuscripts"


10 "Bulkeley Manuscripts".

11 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 53.179.15.

12 Needlework pocketbooks were popular between 1760 and 1780. They were rarely made before 1740 or after 1790. The inscription on this pocketbook seems to be an estimation of its probable date of manufacture and not contemporary with its creation. See Susan Burrows Swan, "Worked Pocketbooks," Antiques, 107, No. 2, 298-303.

13 Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 58.2220.

15 For six pence extra, a Philadelphian, in 1795 could request that his chair be constructed with through tenons. Therefore the same chairmaker might make one set of chairs with through tenons and a second set with blind tenons, depending on his customer's preference. See Kirk, American Chairs, p. 31.


17 Houghton Bulkeley saw these three chairs in 1964 and his manuscripts contained detailed notes on each of them as well as a comparative analysis. As yet, I have been unable to locate these chairs.

18 When Martha Lathrop died she left three chairs to her daughter Martha Lathrop Devotion Cogswell and the remainder of the set to another daughter, Eunice Huntington, Norwich District Probate Court Records, file number 6707, (hereafter NDPCR). Rufus Lathrop, Martha and Eunice's brother, outlived them both and some of the chairs probably passed to him after his sisters' deaths. Rufus Lathrop died without any children and part of his estate went to his sister Martha's heirs, NDPCR, file number 6725. Among the heirs was a daughter, Martha Devotion.

19 "Bulkeley manuscripts"

20 NDPCR, file number 6738.

21 NDPCR, file number 6707.

22 Caulkins, History of New London, p. 191. Samuel Lathrop's probate inventory taken in 1700 includes "five planes, seven chisels, two small gouges, two augers, one great gouge, one holdfast, one adz, broadaxe, one lath hammer, one frae, spokeshave, one narrow chisel, one henant saw, one handsaw, one iron dog, one small broad axe, one narrow axe." NDPCR, file number 3293.

Israel Lathrop may have been a tailor as well as a woodworker. At his death he owned several pieces of marked linen and a pair of tailor's shears as well as: 500 shingles, one broad ax, one hammer, a jointer plane and a pair of chisels. NDPCR, file number 3288.

Joseph Lathrop owned six jointer's tools, twenty-two turner's tools, a small gauge, a frae, two jointers, two fore planes and a smoothing plane. NDPCR, file number 3290.

See Huntington, Lathrop Genealogy, p. 472.

Solomon Lathrop owned: four axes, a pair of chisels, two augers, a jointer, and a gouge and chisels. NDPCR, file number 3295.

At the time of his death Joseph Lathrop owned: 2,360 oak boards, 270' plank; 3,500 chestnut shingles, 600 oak clapboards and 1,008' white wood boards. He also owned a handsaw, two nail gimblets, one pair of pincers, nine awls, an axe, a frae and a shave. Included in his inventory is a note, "Mrs. Mary Lathrop's account of what she provided toward the building of a house at Waterbury which sd deceased was bound to do in his lifetime: 2,500 of nails 1/8, 2,000 of nails 1/2, 4,500 of shingles nails, 17,000 chestnut shingles, 100 oak clapboards, 40 feet of glass, about 500 pounds of shingle nails, 2,370 feet oak boards, 270 feet plank, 58 feet slitwork, 3,500 chestnut shingles, 600 oak clapboards, 1,008 feet white wood boards and six pounds drawn lead. NDPCR, file number 6689.

William Lathrop owned a cooper's shop valued at 2/0/0. NDPCR, file number 6745. He is also credited in an account book dated 1720 for making a chest and a cradle. See Mayhew and Myers, New London County Furniture, p. 120.

John Lathrop's inventory lists 2,284 feet of Board, 500 feet of inch plank, 314 feet inch and a quarter plank, and 4,000 chestnut shingles. NDPCR, file number 6678.

Samuel Lathrop owned part of an axe, two chisels, two augers, one gouge, one shave, one frae and a gimblet and hammer. NDPCR, file number 6726.

Samuel Lathrop's inventory includes: a chisel, an inch and a half auger, turning chisels, turning gouges, taper augers, a handsaw, a shave, a gouge, a mortising chisel, a carpenter's chisel, a hammer, a crosscut saw, a frae and a mallet. New Haven District Probate Court Records, file number 6460.
33. John Lathrop had: two percer bits, three chisels and gouges, a square and compass, a tap borer, a handsaw, an adz, a hatchet, a broad ax, a frae and a breastplate. NDPCR, file number 6680.

34. Ezra Lathrop's personal property included: a drawing knife, a saw, a pair of chisels, a gouge, two augers, a hammer and a pair of nippers. NDPCR, file number 6630.

35. Ezra Lathrop owned: two pairs of nippers, a chisel and awl, a square and a handsaw. NDPCR, file number 6629.

36. Israel Lathrop's inventory includes: four hundred ten penny nails and a gimblet. NDPCR, file number 3289.

37. Ezekiel Lathrop had: one 3/4 auger, one pair of compasses, and four axes. NDPCR, file number 6628.

38. Zebediah Lathrop's inventory includes: 2 Broad axes, one adze, two squares, a grooving plough, a sash saw and a back saw, a fore plane, smoothing plane and four sash planes, two pairs of hollows and rounds, a gimblet, a half round file, three square files, two paring chisels and a duck bill chisel, a plane iron, a hammer, a whetstone, a bit stock, a jointer, a fore plane, and a smoothing plane, a drill and four bits. NDPCR, file number 6751.

39. In 1788 Isaac Lathrop advertised for an apprentice in shop-joining. See Mayhew and Myers, New London County Furniture, p. 120.

40. Privately owned in two separate collections.


42. Privately owned.

43. The first chair is at the Buckingham House, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut, acc. no. 54.1603; the second is privately owned.

Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, acc. no. 1969.55. An identical corner chair is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 30.120.43.

The history of the chair is in the registrars' files at the Connecticut Historical Society.


NDPCR, file number 6653.


Caulkins, History of Norwich, p. 304.


Caulkins, History of Norwich, p. 325.

Caulkins, History of Norwich, p. 326-27.
CHAPTER III
Boston and Newport Connections

The formal relationships which characterize eighteenth-century Connecticut River Valley and coastal Connecticut chairs are also part of a larger sphere of influence which includes both Boston and Newport. Later examples of eighteenth-century Connecticut chairs with solid banisters show a much stronger influence from both of these cities than the earlier chairs from the groups already discussed. Because New London was Connecticut's center of trade throughout the colonial era, formal concepts from trade centers such as Boston and Newport entered the Connecticut regions through the port of New London. The Boston influence was also evident in other types of New London County artisans. Jennifer Goldsborough found in her study of New London County silversmiths that New London silver was influenced exclusively by Boston work. She states,

the relationship between New London and Boston was so strong that no other influences can be found in New London. Although New York characteristics can be found in silver made as nearby as New Haven, no evidence of New York tradition is found in New London silver. Nor does New London silver reveal close contact with Hartford or Newport. 2

In contrast with Goldsborough's findings in New London silver, many Newport features are found on New London chairs. A corner chair in a private collection which has a history of ownership in New London incorporates a Newport lower rail system and a broader bannister than is usually found on New London chairs. The shell carving on the knee of the front leg is a very common Newport element (see figure 36). 3

48
A side chair originally owned in Norwich incorporates a bannister in the "bird of prey" design also associated with Newport (see figure 37).

Six chairs which are all derived from a standardized Boston prototype (see figure 38) constitute the fifth group of chairs in this study. The first chair in this group is currently in the collections of the Wadsworth Atheneum and once belonged to General Israel Putnam (1718-1790) of Brooklyn, Connecticut (see figure 39). The turnings on the lower side rails of the Putnam chair repeat the bulbous vase turnings on the lower rails of the Lathrop-Royce chairs. Although the maker of the Putnam chair has adopted the broader Boston bannister, a heavier leg, and narrower seat rails, the cusps at the bottom of the bannister are similar to later New London County fiddleback chairs (see figures 40 and 41). Another chair with the same lower rail design as the Putnam chair is in the Winterthur collection (see figure 42). While the overall shape of the bannister is the same as the Putnam chair, the bannister on the Winterthur chair is much narrower. A Newport chair pictured in the 1965 John Brown House exhibition catalog also has vase turnings on its lower side rails, but the vase is oriented in the opposite direction than that on the Putnam, Winterthur and Lathrop-Royce chairs. On the Brown House chair the bulbous part of the vase is closer to the front of the chair, whereas on the Winterthur, Putnam and Lathrop-Royce chairs the bulbous shape is at the back of the chair. Vase turnings are also sometimes seen on Massachusetts and Rhode Island easy chairs.
General Israel Putnam was born in Danvers, Massachusetts, in 1718 and moved to Pomfret (later Brooklyn) Connecticut in 1739. In 1767 Putnam married as his second wife Deborah Lathrop Avery Gardiner (1717-1777). Deborah was the daughter of Samuel Lathrop (1685-1754) and the niece of Colonel Simon and Martha Lathrop; in short, she was a member of the mercantile and woodworking Lathrop-Royce family. Deborah Lathrop was married twice before she married Israel Putnam, first in 1738 to Reverend Ephraim Avery of Brooklyn, and second to John Gardiner in 1755. The Putnam chair was probably made by Deborah Lathrop's relatives for her second marriage, in 1755, and passed to the Putnam family after her third marriage.

Two chairs, each very similar to the Putnam chairs are in a private collection (see figure 43). Both chairs have histories of ownership in Norwich families. One chair is identical to the Putnam chair, and the bannisters match exactly. The second chair has thinner lower rails and cushioned pad feet where the others have plain pad feet. Since it is fairly common to see pad feet, the cushions of which have worn off, all the feet on chairs of this design could have had cushion when they were new. These chairs were probably quite common in Norwich at one time.

Finally, a chair which has a history of ownership in New London is smaller than the Putnam and related chairs, but the overall shaping, particularly of the bannisters is the same. The front legs of this chair do not have the same sharp knees as the Putnam chair and the lower rails have the more common tapered column, rather than the Lathrop-Royce type.
In addition to the fact that New London was a large trading center and therefore exposed to several other regional influences, New Londoners also came into contact with other styles and designs in their personal travels. The diary of Joshua Hempstead (1678-1758), a New London farmer, surveyor, house and ship carpenter, joiner, attorney, stonecutter and trader chronicles the extent of his involvement in each of his trades as well as his extensive travels in New England and Long Island. Between 1711 and 1758 Hempstead made numerous trips to Hartford, usually on court business. When going to Hartford he usually stopped overnight in Colchester. Up to the 1740s he made an average of three or four trips trips to Hartford a year. Hempstead owned land in Southampton, Long Island and frequently traveled across Long Island Sound to spend a few days there. In 1716 Hempstead's wife died, and his daughter, Elizabeth, was taken to live in Easthampton, Long Island where she remained for fifteen years. Although Hartford and Long Island were his usual destinations, Hempstead also traveled to New Haven, Boston, and Newport. After 1740, by which time he was sixty-two years old, Hempstead traveled much less frequently but by that time he had a son who was married and living on Long Island and a daughter who was married and living in Boston. Because his children came to New London on a regular basis, his awareness of aspects of both Boston and Long Island cultures must have continued.
Although this study concentrates on the influences from other areas present in New London County, the relationship between New London and other colonies was a dialectical one. Dean Failey makes numerous references to Connecticut features on New York furniture in his study *Long Island is My Nation.* In noting the presence of New England furniture in Virginia, Barry Greenlaw expresses considerable surprise at finding records of shipments of furniture to Virginia from New London. He states, "More substantial and more surprising (than shipments from Salem, Massachusetts) are the records of shipments from New London, Connecticut... As early as 1736 five desks entered Hampton on board the New London registered Hannah, and five dozen chairs entered the same port on December 16, 1751." At the same time that New Londoners were absorbing aspects of other regional styles into their own furniture designs, aspects of their furniture were being exported to other areas and absorbed into other regional designs.


3. Privately owned.

4. Privately owned.

5. Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 54.523.


7. The first chair is at the Thomas Lee House, East Lyme Historical Society, Niantic, Connecticut and does not have an accession number. The second chair is on loan at the Lee House from the Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, Connecticut, acc. no. 1952.76.

8. Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 54.544.


10. Downs, figures 71 and 72.


12. Privately owned.


16 Diaries of Joshua Hempstead, p. 236.
17 Diaries of Joshua Hempstead, p. 304.
18 Failey, Long Island is my Nation, p. 51 and p. 76.
CHAPTER IV
Changes Wrought by Urbanization

The foregoing discussion of Connecticut River Valley and coastal Connecticut joined chairs, their makers and their owners, suggests that an underlying cultural unity characterized a particular facet of the artifactual vocabulary of the two areas. With the introduction of the pierced bannister design around 1760, the unity between the areas seemed to disappear from the artifactual vocabulary. The emergence of a pierced bannister was soon followed by a switch from a yoked crest rail to an eared crest rail. Twelve New London County chairs demonstrate this development and constitute the sixth group of chairs in this study. These chairs were made between 1760 and 1810 and have a variety of pierced bannister designs not seen on chairs from other areas of Connecticut.

A pair of chairs at Historic Deerfield, once owned by the Skinner family of East Hampton, Connecticut, was probably made in Norwich. They have the same triple lower rail system, knee brackets, and crests as the chairs in the second group, and they have a diamond and heart-shaped piercing on their bannisters (see figure 45). The silhouette of the bannister shape is also new. Nonetheless, the chairs are still quite conservative. The bannister design is not an intricately worked lacy pattern, but simply a basically solid bannister with a few voids cut out. In Hearts and Crowns, Robert F. Trent introduced the concept of stylistic "challenge", a phenomenon which prompts an artisan to choose
aspects of a new style or design and graft those chosen features onto a fundamentally familiar object.² On the Skinner chairs, the concept of a pierced bannister has been grafted onto a traditional early eighteenth century frame. A double-backed corner chair which once belonged to Governor William Pitkin (1694-1769) of Hartford has a smaller version of the same bannister design as that on the Skinner chairs (see figure 46).³ This chair was probably also made in Norwich.

New London County chairmakers also modified an eastern Massachusetts "owl's-eyes" bannister design for use on their chairs with three lower rails, sharply pointed knee brackets and yoked crests. Two chairs of this description are at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford (see figure 47).⁴ These chairs are part of a set which also belonged to Governor William Pitkin. A third chair, which is identical to the two at the Wadsworth is at the Winterthur Museum (see figure 48).⁵ Although the Winterthur chair does not have a documentary history of ownership in the Pitkin family it may also be a part of the Pitkin set and was certainly made by the same chairmaker who made the Pitkin chairs. The mylar templates from all three chairs match and the chairs are all numbered with a series of crescent shaped marks, not the more ordinary straight lines or notches. Features which distinguish New London County "owl's eyes" chairs from eastern Massachusetts chairs include the placement of the eyes closer to the crest rail and the addition of a quatrefoil on the lower portion of the bannister.
Six of the "owl's eyes" chairs have straight, marlborough legs with moldings run along the outside edges of the front legs, and outside upper edges of the lower rails. They are smaller than the Pitkin chairs, have eared rather than yoked crest rails and are made either with loose or upholstered seats. One of the six chairs has ears with spiral carvings which are a visual though not structural continuation of the rear stiles (see figure 49). This chair has a bannister which appears to have been cut from a template intended for a larger chair. To accommodate the extra length without sacrificing the pattern, a portion of the crest rail was cut away and the crest rail fits around the bannister which is pinned in like the bannister on the Saybrook chairs. In his study of Philadelphia Chippendale chairs, Philip D. Zimmerman found one armchair which seemed to have unusually large voids between the bannister and rear stiles. By comparing the template of the armchair with a few side chair bannister templates, Zimmerman found that the chairmaker had used a side chair template to cut an armchair bannister. Naturally, the proportions did not seem quite right, but by using an available template instead of creating a new one the chairmaker was able to save time and money. It seems that the Connecticut artisan who made this chair also made this choice.

Three "owl's eyes" chairs with marlborough legs have ears which are both a visual and structural continuation of the crest rail. Two of these chairs have bannisters whose templates match except in the length between the quatrefoil and the shoe (see figures 50 and 51). On one of these two chairs the bannister is seated in the rear seat rail and
passes behind the shoe.

The last examples of New London County "owl's eyes" chairs are a pair of chairs at the New Haven Colony Historical Society (see figure 52). These chairs have a slightly varied bannister design. The piercing just above the eyes on most "owl's eyes" chairs is not present on this set and the uppermost central piercing is partly cut out of the crest rail and partly out of the bannister. Both chairs in this pair have had extensive repairs, including replaced feet.

Three chairs with frames and crest rails like the three "owl's eyes" chairs whose ears are a visual and structural continuation of the crest rail have more intricately worked bannisters than the "owl's eyes" chairs. One of these chairs is at the Leffingwell Inn, in Norwich. (see figure 53). A set of chairs with the same bannister design but which are upholstered over the rails is at Historic Deerfield, Inc. (see figure 54). A set of four chairs with the same bannister design once belonged to Jabez Huntington of Norwich. They were offered for sale by Israel Sack, Inc. in 1967.

A further variation of this crest and frame design is found on three chairs which share a simplified back design and which may have been made in Colchester (see figures 55). These slat-back chairs may have been made in response to the lacy slatback chairs of the federal period. As with the early pierced bannister chairs, they incorporate the lightness and openness of federal furniture without giving up the old and familiar.
New London County chairs from this sixth group are unlike contemporary Hartford area Chapin chairs. The Chapin chairs have very lacy bannisters, swept ears, trapezoidal seat frames, and often have ball-and-claw feet (see figure 56). True to their maker's training they adhere more closely to Philadelphia mid- and late eighteenth-century chairs.

After 1760, largely due to the entrepreneur Christopher Leffingwell (1734-1810) Norwich blossomed into a manufacturing city. As the eighteenth-century progressed, Norwich, New London, Hartford and Middletown became increasingly more urbanized. In their definitions of appropriate seating furniture, the inhabitants of these towns seemed to direct their energies inward and these artifacts no longer manifest strong formal relationships. In characterizing the emergence of an urban society in rural Massachusetts between 1760 and 1820, Richard D. Brown stated that,

These conditions withered the old corporate insularity of towns. Tied by commerce, politics and communications to the world outside its boundaries, the preeminence of the town as the focus of secular concern declined. Weakening of purely local allegiances and development of supra-local interest groups made the old compulsion to achieve consensus anachronistic. Townspeople were now members of many communities -- their own organizations as well as the state and nation. 15

From the present study of eighteenth-century Connecticut chairs we might be led to believe that the exact opposite is true in urbanizing Connecticut, that towns were first open and culturally fluid and then insular and closed; that townspeople first had supra-local and subsequently locally defined interests.
Like many historians, Brown used only literary and documentary evidence to arrive at his conclusions. The fact that artifactual evidence leads us to very different conclusions about the way Connecticut men and women made the transition from rural to urban society may say more about the differences in forms of expression and the way people order and balance their lives than about any historical differences between eighteenth-century Massachusetts and eighteenth-century Connecticut. While politically and culturally the men and women of eighteenth-century Connecticut were being pulled into the statewide and national arena they may have chosen to look inward into their own geographic communities for objects which would fill the personal spaces of their own homes. The same drive which earlier in the century prompted them to seek a contrasting view from beyond their own geographic communities, now pulled them inward to contrast the array of new and unfamiliar experiences which accompany urbanization.
Chapter IV

1 Ashley House, Historic Deerfield, Incorporated, Deerfield, Massachusetts, acc. nos. 57.238 A and B.

2 Trent, p. 60.


5 Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 55.133.1.


7 Zimmerman, "Workmanship As Evidence," 299.

8 The first chair is at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut, acc. no. 1978.58; the second chair is at the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, acc. no. 1968.15.2.


10 Leffingwell Inn, Norwich, Connecticut, acc. no. 193.

11 Ashley House, Historic Deerfield, Incorporated, Deerfield, Massachusetts, acc. nos. 2039 A and B.

12 Israel Sack, American Antiques from the Israel Sack Collection, II, p. 375.

13 Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, acc. no. 1983.10.50; and Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 57.103.4.

14 Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 54.21.

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Figure 2: Map of Connecticut River Valley and coastal Connecticut highlighting towns where chairs in groups one and two were owned.
Figure 4: Detail of seat construction on Porter chairs.
Figure 7: Tea Table, Saybrook, Connecticut, 1740-70, maple. 
OH: 27 1/4", OW: 30 1/2", OD: 26 1/4". Wadsworth Atheneum, 
Figure 8: Joined chair, probably Norwich, Connecticut, 1735-60, cherry. OH: 41", SH: 17", OW: 19", OD: 15". The Leffingwell Inn, Norwich, Connecticut, acc. no. 63.
Figure 10: Joined chair, probably New London, Connecticut, 1735-60. Cherry. OH: 41", SH: 17", OW: 25", OD: 17 1/2". Privately owned, may have originally belonged to Governor William Pitkin of Hartford (1694-1769).
Figure 14: Detail of loose seat frame of chair in Figure 13.
Figure 15: Joined chair advertised for sale by Israel Sack, Inc. in 1967. Photograph from American Antiques in the Israel Sack Collection, Vol. II, p. 526.
Figure 16: Joined chair, probably Norwich area, Connecticut, 1735-60, cherry. OH: 40 1/2", SH: 17", OW: 20", OD: 16". Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, acc. no. 1930.2416.
Figure 18: Detail of crewel work chair seat cover. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 46.194.3.
Figure 19: Detail of crewel work chair seat cover. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 46.194.4.
Figure 20: Front view of canvas work pocketbook, 1740-60. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 53.179.15.
Figure 21: Back view of canvas work pocketbook, 1740-60. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 53.179.15.
Figure 23: Tracings taken from chairs in figures 17 and 22.
Samuel Lothrop * (1631-1700)
Carpenter/Joiner

Ruth—John
Reyes (1667-1688)
Carpenter/Joiner

Elizabeth—Isaac
Reyes (1670-1732)
Wallingford

Sarah—Nathaniel
Reyes (d. 1706)
Carpenter/Joiner

Martha—John
Royce (1639-1733)
Wallingford

#Abigail—Anna
Rise (1683-)
Carpenter/Joiner

#Joseph
(1641-1760)
Carpenter

Wallingford

#John
(1680-c.1753)
Joiner/Turner

Daniel Joshua
(1707-1796)
Druggist

Joseph
(1688-1778)
Cooper

Israel
(1711-1721)
Carpenter

Ezekiel
(1724-29)
Carpenter

Ezekiel
(1746-29)
Carpenter

Solomon
(1706-83)
Turner/Joiner

Joseph
(1696-1760)
Joiner/Turner

John
(1690-1752)
Carpenter

Solomon
(1696-1737)
Carpenter

** Indicates extant probate inventory with woodworking tools

Figure 24: Genealogical Chart Showing the Lothrop-Royce Family
Figure 25: Joined chair, Wethersfield, Connecticut, 1735-60, cherry. OH: 40 1/2", SH: 17", OW: 18 1/2", OD: 15 1/4". Privately owned. Descended in the Welles family of Wethersfield.
Figure 26: Back view of chair in figure 25.
Figure 29: Turned chair, Groton, Connecticut, 1710-50, maple. OH: 44 1/2", SH: 18 3/4", OW: 19 1/2", OD: 15". Buckingham House, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut, acc. no. 54.1603
Figure 32: Detail of lower rail on chair in figure 31.
Figure 33: Detail of lower rail on chair in figure 17.
Figure 35: Map of the Connecticut River Valley and coastal towns showing the pattern of networks 1720-60.
Figure 36: Corner chair, New London, Connecticut, 1740-60. Privately owned.
Figure 37: Joined chair, Norwich, Connecticut, 1735-60, OH: 33 1/4"; SH: 17 1/2", OW: 19 1/2". Privately owned.
Figure 38: Joined chair, Boston, Massachusetts, 1730-50, walnut. OH: 40"; SH: 17"; OW: 21 1/4"; OD: 16". Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 54.523
Figure 42: Joined chair, Norwich, Connecticut, 1745-70, maple. 
Figure 44: Joined chair, Norwich or New London, Connecticut, 1745-70, maple. OH: 40", SH: 16 3/4", OW: 20 1/8", OD: 16 1/4".
Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, Connecticut, acc. no. 1968.74

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Figure 45; Joined chair, Norwich, Connecticut, 1760-95, cherry. OH: 40 1/2", SH: 17 1/4", OW: 19 1/2", OD: 17". Ashley House, Historic Deerfield, Incorporated, Deerfield, Massachusetts, acc. no. 57.238B.
Figure 52: Joined chair, Norwich or Colchester, 1770-1810, mahogany. OH: 36 7/8", SH: 18", OW: 20 1/2", OD: 17 1/2". Morris House, New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, Connecticut, acc. no. 1971.305A.
Figure 53: Joined chair, Norwich, Connecticut, 1780-1810, cherry. 
Leffingwell Inn, Norwich, Connecticut, acc. no. 193.
Figure 54: Joined chair, Norwich, Connecticut, 1780-1810, cherry. OH: 37 5/8", SH: 17 1/4", OW: 20 1/2", OD: 17 1/4". Ashley House, Historic Deerfield, Inc., Deerfield, Massachusetts, acc. no. 2039A.
Figure 55: Slatback chair, probably Colchester, Connecticut, 1790-1810, cherry. OH: 42 7/8"; SH: 16 1/2", OW: 20 1/4", OD: 15 3/8". Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware, acc. no. 57.103.4