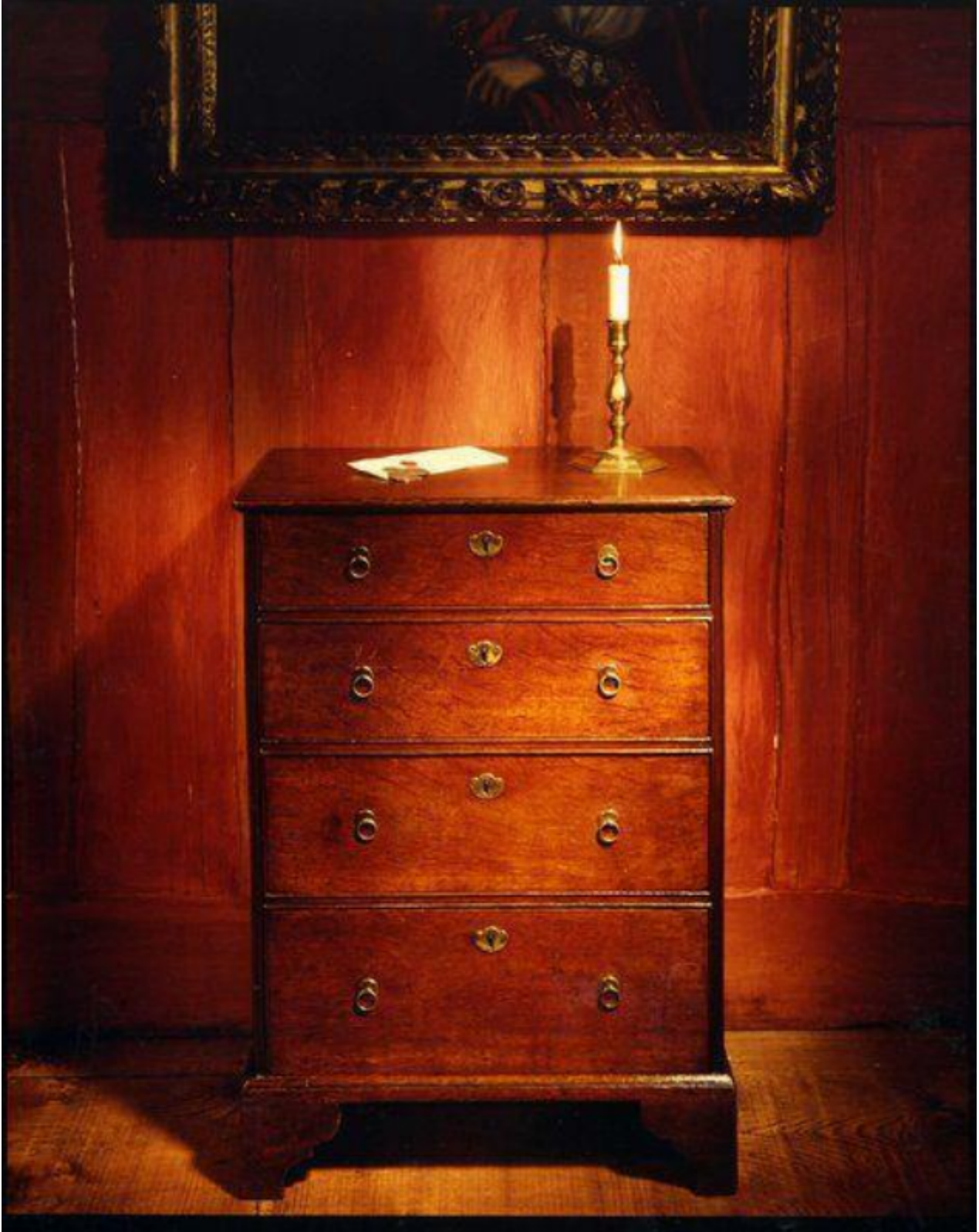


A rare, small, Queen Anne oak chest of drawers

Sold



REF: 10367

Height: 73 cm (28.7")

Width: 51 cm (20.1")

Depth: 32 cm (12.6")

Description

The plank top with moulded edge above four long drawers with original escutcheons, locks and handles. Standing on bracket feet. Replaced side mouldings. Good colour and patination. English, circa 1710. The rarity of this chest of drawers lies in its fine, petite proportion. It is also remarkable to find an early, utilitarian piece of furniture retaining its original locks, escutcheons and handles.

More sophisticated standards of living on the Continent inspired both Charles II and Royalist exiles, in addition to travellers, returning home to England with a desire to increase the comfort in their own homes. Chests of drawers began to replace chests and coffers, which became almost obsolete by the end of Charles II's reign, in bedrooms. The disappearance of the earlier fashion for bone and mother-of-pearl inlays, left geometrical mouldings and applied balusters as the major decorative elements on oak chests of drawers. References to chest of drawers in inventories and correspondence of this period are comparatively rare, since they were mainly made for the wealthier classes.

The quantities of chests of drawers under construction significantly increased during the reign of Queen Anne, and further still under George I as their price became within the reach of people of moderate means. In the early-18th century they evolved by adapting to the prevailing fashion of simplicity in design. During 1700-1715, they were divided by semi-circular mouldings, then by two such moulding laid side-by-side. From about 1725 a cock-bead was worked around the edges of the drawers.

Small pieces were made called bachelor chests, sometimes in pairs, with a folding top for writing supported on runners. This petite, chest of drawers has similar proportions to the bachelor chest, although it was not made to accommodate a folding top, and is probably a provincial adaptation.