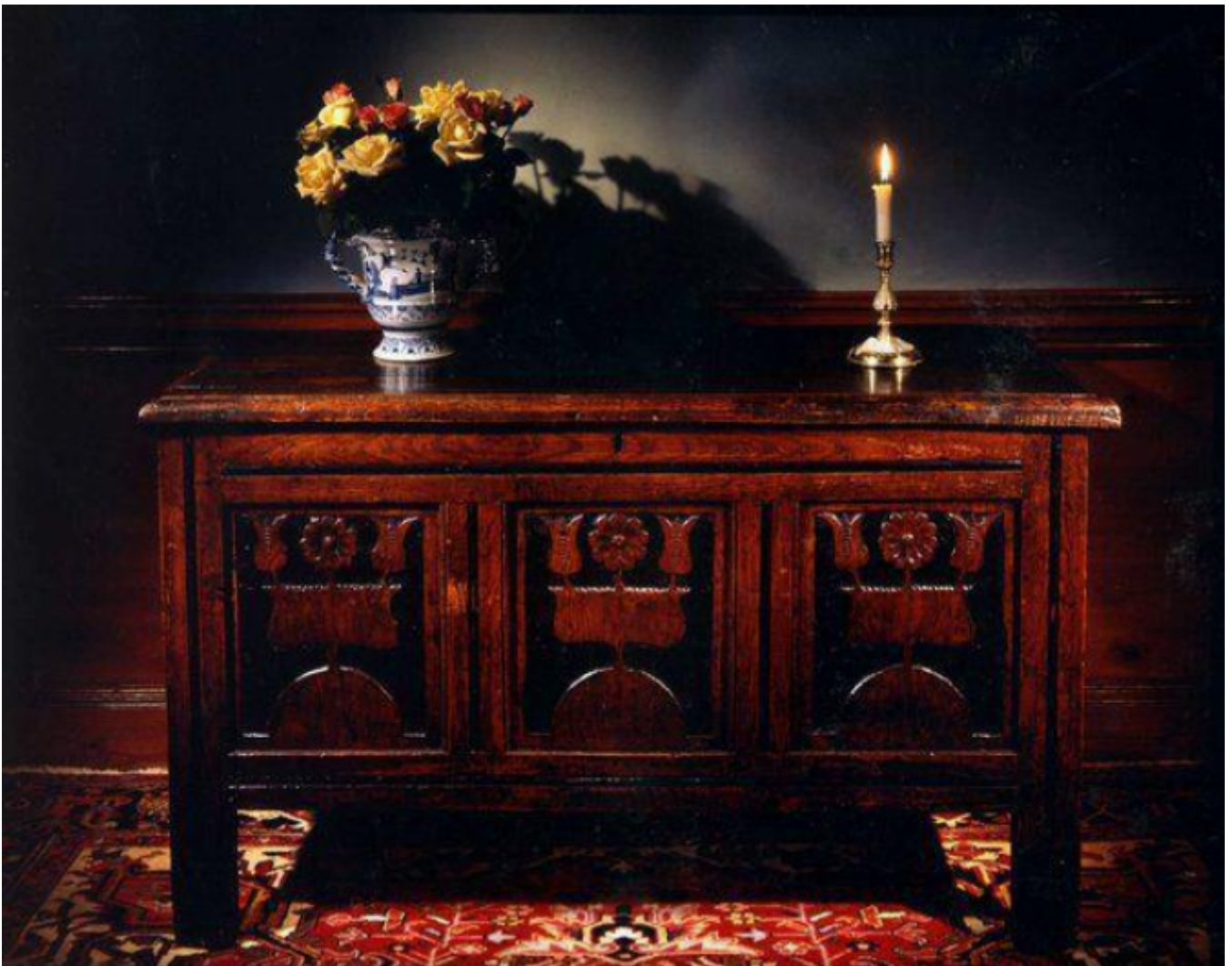


A fine, late-17th century, carved ash chest

Sold



Description

The plank top with a moulded edge. The interior with candle box, later, 18th century hinges and replaced lock. The frieze in three sections, each containing a carved panel decorated with tulips and flowerheads, and retaining traces of the original paintwork. The sides with carved panels decorated with large flowerheads. Standing on stile feet. Excellent original colour and patina. English, probably Devon or Somerset, last quarter of the 17th century.

Width : 122.00 cm./48.00 in., Height : 72.50 cm./28.50 in.

Depth : 4.50 cm./21.50 in.

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This superb piece is beautifully carved, with a simplistic, floral design which has an intrinsic naïve charm. Given its utilitarian use, it has survived in excellent condition having developed outstanding colour and patina over time.

The chest was the principal piece of medieval domestic furniture and served as a table, seat and travelling trunk as well as for the safe keeping of documents, clothing and household items until chests of drawers evolved from this form in the mid-17th century.

The typical English chest of the 17th century is simple in design. The framework is grooved and moulded or carved, while the richest carving is reserved for the panels. The end-panels are usually plain, the top rails however are sometimes carved to correspond to the front. It is difficult to attribute the origin of much of the carving with any degree of certainty.

Chests continued to be made well into the eighteenth century. In the case of carved examples, the decoration is decadent, and sometimes merely incised. However contemporary fashion had its influence and the mule chest evolved from the chest, with the use of fielded panels, shaped under-framing and short cabriole legs, often with drawers fitted in the stand.