



Fig. 7  
A Regency mahogany bow-front chest of drawers  
42 1/2 ins w., 21 ins d., 36 1/2 ins h. (Christie's King  
Street, 2 February 1995, lot 65)

Since publishing details of a bow-front chest of drawers made by Timothy Walford and son of Colchester in Newsletter no. 19 (Winter 1993), a further chest has appeared on the market with a number of similar features but by another Colchester maker, John Taylor (figure 7). Despite being one drawer lower, the bow-front shape flanked by engaged columns at the corners, in this case spirally reeded or cabled, is unusual and distinctive. Subject to further examples surfacing, the similarities could be construed as rivalry in a country town to copy a sophisticated and fashionable London model. Colchester is only some sixty miles from London and, being on the main Ipswich road, would have been linked to the capital by a coaching route, as well as by sea round the coast.

Taylor's paper label, which is fixed on to the back-boards (figure 8), depicts a settee, a dining chair and a bookcase draped by swagged curtains surmounted by a large eagle - not an uncommon motif in such a position - and supported at one side by a bed post, part spirally-turned like the corners of the chest. It is interesting that the label was printed in London at 93 Strand. It gives Taylor's address as No. 40 High Street, Colchester, where he is recorded in 1812. He lived from 1775 to 1845 and was an alderman in 1820, 1830 and 1831, thus being of some standing locally. Like Walford, he called himself a cabinet maker, upholsterer and appraiser, and also an auctioneer and more modestly in 1796, a carpenter. In Colchester Museum houses a chiffonier, a Pembroke table and another circular table made by him.

In the same Christie's sale turned up a mahogany and ebonised card table also labelled by Taylor on the underside (fig. 9). Once again there are distinctive features such as the turned wooden roundels on the canted corners and at the tops of the legs, the four turned column supports and the brass castor caps which continue the moulded top surface of the legs. The label is identical to the last except that the address reads No. 27 High Street. More recorded pieces have this

address than the other, but a third address at 27 Fish Street found on a gothic-glazed rosewood bookcase might perhaps be a mis-reading on a damaged label.

Perhaps a member local to the Colchester area might like to continue this research?

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Fig. 8 Trade label of John Taylor, Colchester (on chest of drawers).



**Fig. 9** A Regency mahogany and ebonised card table by John Taylor

35  $\frac{1}{2}$  ins w., 28  $\frac{1}{2}$  ins h.

(Christie's King Street, 2 February 1995, lot 368).