

‘For a neat Doll’s Bed Stead’
and ‘6 neat Mahogany Dolls
Chairs’ by Gillows of
Lancaster

Two entries in Gillows’ account ledgers (City of Westminster Archives Centre, Gillows Archive, Lancaster Waste Books 1771–97) give details of dolls’ furniture made in mahogany, supplied with textile bed

hangings and upholstered chairs inclusive of covers, commissioned by Lancashire clients.

The Waste Book entry dated 26 October 1778 (344/6, folio 502) lists the dispatch of various items of furniture and furnishings to a John Livesey, probably the Blackburn cotton manufacturer, and the following items 'as a Present':

For a neat Dolls Bed Stead of Mahogany wth Arched Top Bottom Hy	£0 .. 12 .. 6
For a Compleat Sett of Chints Hangings for Do trimmed wth fringe etc	1 .. 4 .. 0
To 6 neat Mahogany Dolls Chairs	0 .. 12 .. 0
wth Chints Covers & Stuffing	2 .. 8 .. 6

Miles (Myles) Pennington, upholsterer, of Church Street, Lancaster, with premises next door to Gillows,² ordered a different, cheaper design on 23 June 1781 (344/8, folio 105):

For a neat Mahogany Dolls Bed wth Hipped Tent and Turned Pillars Lath Bottom	0 .. 6 .. 9
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Has such miniature furniture always been considered to be an apprentice piece or salesman's sample?

John Boram

² Susan Stuart and David Jones, 'Eskdale Chairs', *Regional Furniture*, vol. IX (1995) p. 28.