

A Response to The Thomas Stanley Bed and a Related *Corpus* of Furniture from Tudor Lancashire, Peter N. Lindfield, *Regional Furniture* 36, 2022

Dear Editor,

Peter Lindfield's study of Lancashire beds does not touch on the important constructional clues revealed in a careful examination of the accompanying images (*Regional Furniture* 2022).

The stylistic evidence of the fifteenth/sixteenth-century origins of both the Thomas Stanley and Lovely Hall beds (Figs 4 & 18) is confirmed by remnants of the original rope base used on beds of that date. Rope-holes in the head-rail in the former image and in the side rails of the latter indicate that both beds had been built in this, the accepted form for the period. Four of these stout surrounding rails tensioned the web of ropes which formed the bed's base approximately 50cm above the floor.

The same images also reveal a large disparity in height between the side-rails and their corresponding head-rails, confirming that the former have been lowered to the level of a Victorian bed-frame. This alteration is typical of the nineteenth-century replacement of the rope

base of an early bed to compensate for the extra 20cm of height created by the contemporary box-sprung base.

Vacant peg-holes in the head-posts indicate that the drilled head-rail in Fig. 4 has itself been raised from its original location. This is confirmed by the narrowed vacant space for the lost pillow-board and its misalignment with the adjacent moulding of the bed-posts. The head-rail's 'opposite number', the original plain foot-rail with its rope-holes, has evidently been lost amidst later modifications.

Form also follows function in the exposed, decorative replacement footboard shown in Figs 3 & 4. While its intrusive shape would compromise the draped bedcoverings used in the medieval period, it neatly complements that other Victorian innovation, the eiderdown which is evident in Fig 3.

*Yours sincerely,
Aidan Harrison*