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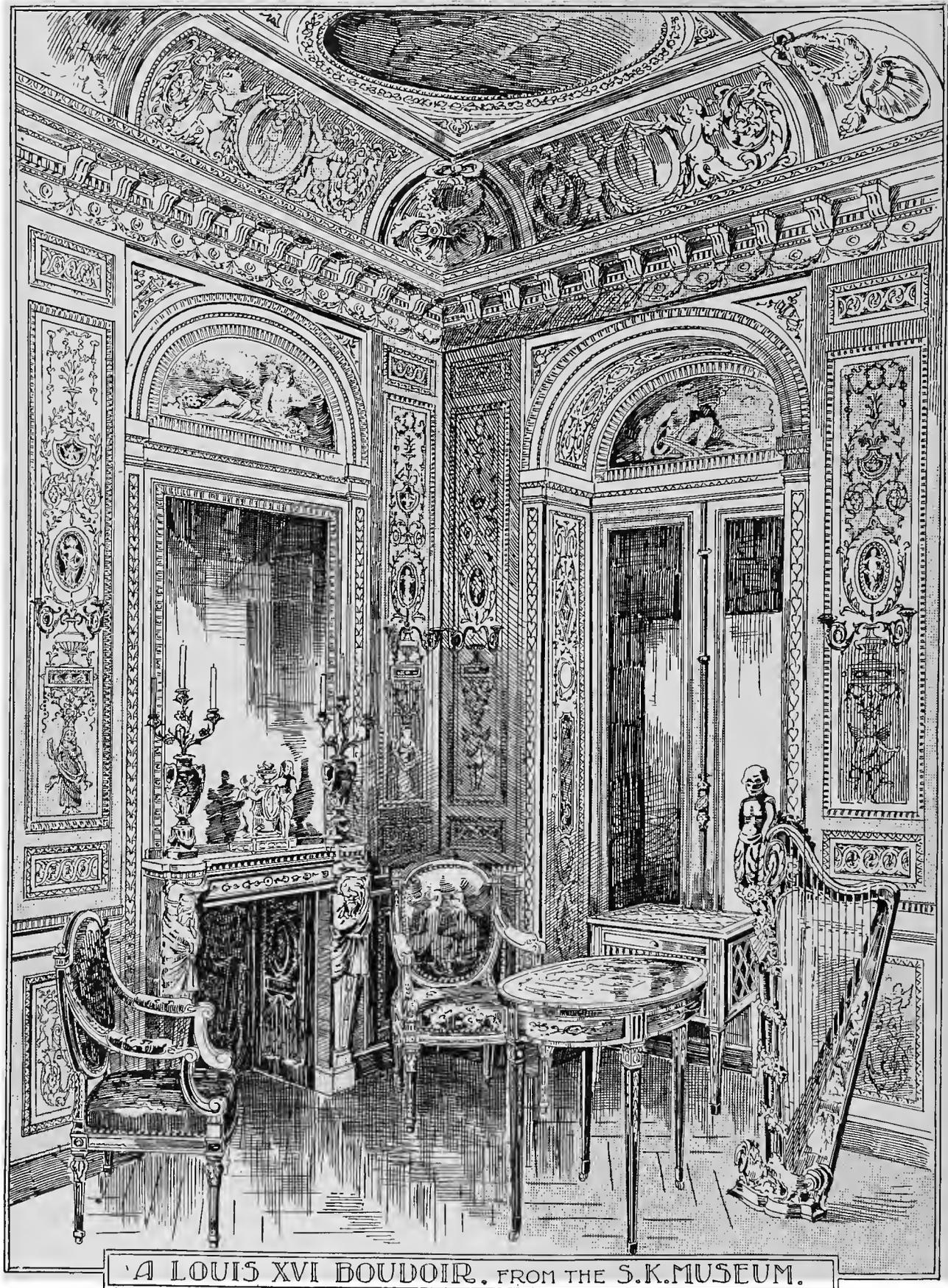
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THE NATION'S
TREASURES.

Companion volumes are issued by the same publishers, entitled "Characteristics of Old Furniture," a complete and informative guide for collectors, containing over 50 plates and numerous illustrations in the text; and "Style Schemes in Antique Furnishing," a volume illustrating and describing in detail how to obtain the dignified effects of the historic styles, while adapting them to modern ideas of comfort. Colour schemes, hygiene, lighting and heating are discussed.





A LOUIS XVI BOUDOIR. FROM THE S.K. MUSEUM.

THE NATION'S TREASURES

MEASURED DRAWINGS OF
FINE OLD FURNITURE
— IN THE —
VICTORIA AND ALBERT
MUSEUM.

BY

H. P. BENN

AND

H. P. SHAPLAND, A.R.I.B.A.

LONDON:

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & Co., L^{td}.
AND BENN BROTHERS, LTD

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PREFACE.

THE enormous number of the Nation's Treasures stored in the national museums is possibly one of the reasons why they are so little known. Their very number makes a thorough acquaintance with them a wellnigh impossible task. We have with infinite care formed one of the largest and finest collections which the world possesses, but, judging from the people met with in the galleries, it is better known to American and Continental tourists than to the people of this country.

There was some excuse for this lack of appreciation until the wonderful collection was properly housed, but now, with ample floor-space in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the various pieces can be seen in the greatest comfort. These collections were formed at great cost in order to raise the standard of public taste, and constitute a storehouse of reference in which the materials, methods of workmanship, and the styles of the past could be studied. To a limited extent they fulfil their purpose, and on student days numbers of talented young designers may be seen studying the models made by the masters of other times. The treasures of the nation should have an educative value, not only for the few but for the nation as a whole, otherwise craftsmen who are intent on doing the best work suffer, not from a lack of knowledge, but from a lack of patronage and appreciation.

The cry of the craftsmen of the twentieth century is, "We can make beautiful things, but the public is not sufficiently educated to appreciate them, and we are forced by competition to cater for uneducated tastes."

It is with the idea of interesting a far wider circle in the standards of beauty which the nation has bought and paid for, and of which it knows so little, that we publish what is, after all, merely an elaborate catalogue of beautiful old furniture which every one has a right to closely examine for himself—a right which is unfortunately exercised by so few. By the irony of things and the inexorable character of time and space, it is often those who most desire to study in the nation's treasure-house who are debarred the privilege. To those so circumstanced the plates in this book will prove of the greatest interest. Many will, on perusing them, get a first sight of beautiful things which have been carefully preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum for the pleasure and instruction of each individual citizen.

Preface.

From an economic point of view, to educate the producing units of a nation and leave the great body of the public without appreciation of beauty is to breed despair in those who know what is right and indifference in those who do not. It is only necessary to visit the workshops of this country to find hundreds of men engaged in work which they themselves know to be bad, but if remonstrated with they say, "This is what the public wants." We admit the difficulty of raising the general standard of taste, but because the task is so heavy there is all the more reason to tackle it manfully, the subject being not only one of individual culture but of wide economic importance.

The names of the great cabinet-makers have been used by unscrupulous makers as mere catch-words. Their reputations have been "defamed by every charlatan and soiled with all ignoble use." The public, therefore, wants some work of reference in order that it may be able to judge what is and what is not permissible in certain styles. There is one infallible standard which has been formed at an immense cost, and which is by no means appreciated at its true worth, and in publishing drawings of these historic pieces of furniture we shall be amply rewarded if they serve the useful purpose of arousing widespread interest in the Nation's Treasures.

THE NATION'S TREASURES.

A LOUIS SEIZE BOUDOIR.

Frontispiece. To visualise the beauty and luxury of the Louis XVI. period in France, one must see this charming little boudoir with its painted ceiling and walls, its marble mantelpiece, and gilt furniture covered with panels of Beauvais tapestry. The gilding here is all pale in colour, and although it is freely used, there is no gaudy effect. Very beautiful is the ormolu decoration running across the frieze of the mantelpiece, the whole of the applied metal looking as if it might have been the work of a skilful goldsmith.

The frontispiece gives some idea of the richness of the decoration, but readers should visit the museum itself to get an adequate idea of the exquisite colours which are employed.

This Louis Seize boudoir is from a house in Paris of the latter half of the eighteenth century. It was decorated by Rousseau de la Rottière, Lagrenée (dit le Jeune), Clodion, and Gouthière. The whole interior fittings of this room were removed in 1869 from Paris. It is in excellent preservation, has been carefully re-erected, and offers an interesting specimen of decorative domestic architecture of the period immediately anterior to the French Revolution. The superficial measurements of the room are 14 feet by 10 feet 6 inches, and the height is 16 feet.

The sides are formed into four arched recesses, the pilasters of which are decorated with paintings in panels, as are likewise the lunettes within the sweep of each arch. These last-named spaces contain single figures of deities from the Grecian mythology. The side opposite the fireplace shows a figure of Juno, attended by her peacock; opposite the entrance the lunette is filled by the figure of a water-god, seated on a rock down which a stream of water pours from his urn. The rudder in his hand is emblematic of a navigable river, and the figure probably represents the genius of the Seine.

Above the fireplace rests Pomona, fruits filling her cornucopia; while over the door a youthful figure of Vulcan is seated near his anvil, hammer in hand. Lastly, a medallion figure of Jupiter rides on the clouds in the centre of the low domed ceiling. These paintings were executed by Jean Jacques Lagrenée. The pilasters are ornamented with painted arabesques and figures in low relief supporting the chief compositions.

Notice may be drawn to the candlesticks in relief which project from the walls, filled seemingly with freshly extinguished wax lights, which are merely a trick of the artist. These decorations are the work of Jean Simeon Rousseau de la Rottière. The chimney-piece in grey marble is supported by two muffled terminal figures, the work

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of Claude Michel Clodion ; and the gilt metal ornaments are by Gouthière, who was probably the best worker in that particular branch of art.

This room is said to have been constructed under the special superintendence of Queen Marie Antoinette herself and her friend and lady-of-honour, Madame de Serilly, during a temporary absence of that lady's husband, who was Paymaster of the Forces under Louis XVI.

The room was bought by the Museum authorities for the sum of £2,100.

AN OLD NORWEGIAN CHAIR.

Plate 1, page 27. The original of this chair is in the Museum of the University at Christiania ; it is of carved and stained pine, and a copy of a Norwegian chair of the ninth or tenth century found in an old farmhouse. The carvings are reminiscent of early Celtic work still to be seen in wayside crosses in Ireland, and indicate the warlike propensities of the Norsemen, those roving sea-kings who caused the early inhabitants of this country so much anxiety. In one of the panels a chieftain is seen in mortal combat with a dragon, the coils of which bid fair to envelop him.

A TYROLEAN CABINET.

Plate 2, page 28. This Tyrolean cabinet is in pine with flat incised decoration and beautiful wrought-iron mounts. The work is Gothic in inspiration and the background of the carving is heightened with colour. There is no attempt at modelling in the decoration, the effect being obtained by intricacy of line. This is a comparatively plain piece, and it gains greatly by the broad spaces which contrast with the decorative frieze and plinth.

TYROLEAN CHESTS.

Plate 3, page 29. These chests are remarkable for the beauty of their flat carved enrichment. Such patterns could be evolved only by men who were deep in love with natural forms and who had made an intimate study of them. The enlarged detail which is given shows the freedom of the draughtsmanship. The incising is quite shallow, and the sunk background of the pattern is either painted or filled with a black composition. Such work is generally executed in pine.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ITALIAN COFFERS.

Plate 4, page 30. The small coffer of walnut wood sketched at the top is an example of vigorous Italian carving. It is supported on four crouching lions, and was executed about 1550. The angles are broken by masks, and considerable thought

has been given to obtain a pleasing outline for the whole coffer. It is about 2 feet 6 inches wide and 18 inches high, and a very rich effect is obtained by the carving of the mouldings. A not uncommon material for making Italian chests or cassoni was a species of cypress which has a strong aromatic and pleasant smell. The style of decoration, however, was entirely different from that shown. The ornament consisted of patterns etched or lined in with a pen, or incised, worked with punches, and sometimes filled in with a black pigment. This example was bought by the Museum for £10.

The coffer below of chestnut wood is of North Italian workmanship and was made about 1560. Such chests were often made in pairs to furnish the galleries of Italian palaces. The front is divided into four compartments, each carved with a mythological subject. Two cupids support the shield of arms in the centre. The chest is 5 feet 7 inches long, 2 feet 3 inches high, and 1 foot 10 inches wide.

ITALIAN BELLOWS AND MIRROR.

Plate 5, page 31. Italian carvers seem to have lavished their utmost skill on small articles such as bellows as well as on more important pieces of work. The specimen shown in the bottom left-hand corner is covered with delicate arabesques, and masks such as Cellini delighted in. The cartouche and the prominent parts in the carving, are heightened with gilding, and as an instance of the care expended on such work, even the nails which fasten the leather of the bellows to the woodwork are beautifully modelled little lions' heads. The ornament differs on the reverse side, the hole for the ingress of air forming the centre of a cartouche surrounded by folds of drapery and a beautifully modelled mask. The nozzle is of bronze, and represents a skilfully modelled winged monster in the act of springing.

The carved walnut mirror frame stands about 2 feet 7 inches high, the mirror itself being very small reckoned by present-day standards, only measuring $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches. It was made at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The brightness of the metal mirror has, of course, long since faded, but even when in use it could hardly have been comparable, so far as utility is concerned, with the silvered mirrors of to-day. The carved detail is minute, but carried out with the greatest accuracy; there is not a square inch on the whole of its surface which is not beautifully enriched with carving in very low relief, the Greek honeysuckle being the *motif* chiefly used. This mirror, upon which no pains or expense was spared, must have been made for a lady in a high position; the daisies carved on the little panels suggest Marguerite of Valois, daughter of Charles of Orleans and Louise of Savoy.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ITALIAN CHEST.

Plate 6, page 32. This Italian chest is interesting as being the prototype of many similar and cruder examples made in this country. The front is divided by four fluted pilasters, surmounted by flat console brackets between which are drawers. In this country the drawers were left out and the top was hinged, to form a deep chest. There is, however, no doubt whatever that this was the prototype of those made here. The bosses forming the door handles are boldly treated as decorative features. The knobs are of metal, the circular patera on which they stand being of wood. The carved claw feet are very well considered, being quite heavy enough to bear the apparent weight of the massive piece of furniture above.

AN INLAID DUTCH CUPBOARD.

Plate 7, page 33. The Dutch buffet or carved oak cupboard with marqueterie panels shows oak work at its best. The beautiful colour and clash of the oak and its quiet tones are accentuated by the black flutings and the spots of black and white inlay. With a capacious cupboard of this kind, it would be exceedingly difficult to be untidy: there is apparently room for the whole of the worldly goods of a family to be stored in its recesses. It was Renaissance work of this character which influenced our Elizabethan and Jacobean design in wood work so largely.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY OAK CHAIR.

Plate 8, page 34. This chair is an example such as was made in Yorkshire or Derbyshire during the seventeenth century. The back is very narrow; here the scrolls face outwards rather than inwards as that sketched on Plate 11. The carving in the back is a crude representation of the rose; the rail above the spindles is all formed of one piece, comprising the semi-circular carving and the arcading.

Another point of interest is that the wooden seat is very thin, not more than half an inch at the outside, and it should be noted that the rails and underpart in all cases are flush with the exterior edges of the legs and not mortised into the centre. This is a feature apparent in many examples of the seventeenth century.

The chair above is wonderfully comfortable, although there is apparently no support for the back. The supports for the arms are square wrought, but the sharp angles have been taken off with a chisel; the outline is thus softened and a very pleasing effect obtained. The flowing scrolls of the back are placed at the top, where they tell most. Note the shape of the seat of the chair; the front is quite straight.

AN INLAID ARMCHAIR.

Plate 9, page 35. In this sixteenth-century inlaid armchair the designer is evidently beginning to study the comfort of the sitter, as it will be seen that the back is inclined at a very considerable angle. Here colour is introduced into the inlay, and the very highly conventionalised floral forms are relieved by the crudest possible representations of birds. The whole of the stems of the ornament are in black, and the effect, in spite of the crudity of the design, is one of considerable richness. The rails underneath the seat are decorated with a running band of boxwood on which alternate squares of black and red wood, are placed diamond-wise. The legs and supports for the arms are fluted, and to preclude any possibility of the chair tipping backwards when used by a heavy person, the bottoms of the back legs are splayed to prevent the overturning of the chair. The arms still look uncomfortable, as they are very narrow; it was not until later that it was considered necessary to form a broad ledge on which to rest the arms.

INLAID OAK CHEST AND DUTCH TABLE.

Plate 10, page 36. We have already seen an example on page 32 of a sixteenth-century Italian sideboard or coffer. It was the endeavour to copy this work which resulted in such pieces of furniture as that shown on Plate 10. Standing about 3 feet high, these copious coffers would hold enough linen for a complete household. The timbers are all of them heavy, and the moulded rails between the inlaid panels are of considerable width. The contrast of colour in the inlaid panels is not nearly so strong as a black-and-white drawing would lead one to suppose, the boxwood having toned down to a rich golden colour. The fluted rail below and the somewhat crudely carved top rail all have their prototypes in the ornamentation of the Italian coffer already described and illustrated.

The draw-table below is of Dutch origin of the first half of the seventeenth century. The line of the bulbous leg is very subtle, and the execution better than in contemporary English work. The widely overhanging top gives this small table a particularly pleasing appearance. In a good deal of Dutch work fluting is suggested by inlaid ebony or rose-wood. This is the case on Plate 7.

INLAID OAK DINING-TABLE.

Plate 11, page 37. This is an oak draw-table of the seventeenth century with carved bulbous legs. Students will note that the old turners refrained from using an immense block of wood for this bulbous effect, getting over the difficulty by building up the leg on four sides; the joints are clearly discernible in this example. The top of the table is very thick, and the method of framing is worth noting.

The carving, though crude, looked at from a modern standpoint, is effective on so bold a piece. The rails underneath the top are elaborately decorated with a black-and-white chequered pattern and diagonal stringing. This table was originally varnished, giving it its rich nut-brown colour. The black-and-white stringing is toned down, the white having assumed a rich yellow, so that the band does not appear too striking, as it might have done when the table was first made.

On the same plate is a seventeenth-century oak chair. The seat here is remarkably small and the back straight. The rails and the front legs project above the seat—a fact which would make it singularly uncomfortable to sit on unless it was provided with a cushion. The inverted scrolls at the top of the back rails are a regular seventeenth-century feature, and the bold turned work of the front legs and cross rail of the underpart and the moulded splats of the back make this a very decorative piece. The impression one gets of the chair is that it is too narrow from back to front for comfort. A side view of the chair, showing the rake of the back, is given in the centre of the plate.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CIRCULAR TABLE.

Plate 12, page 38. This very early gate-leg table is of peculiar construction, having a semi-circular under-framing. One of the turned legs is split down the centre, one half forming the outer support for the flap when extended (*see plan*). The extended leaf does

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not hang down in the usual way when not supported, but folds over and rests on top of the other. It should be pointed out that both leaves are hinged, what would be the stationary one in an ordinary table forming the lid of the semi-circular space enclosed by the deep rail with the carved strap-work enrichment. The circular top is built up of six separate pieces. The carved strap-work frieze is of a single strip of oak about three-sixteenths of an inch thick bent round a massive interior framing and nailed thereto. This is a mode of construction which is well worth noting, and this early example of the bending of wood is very instructive. Of course, the cutting away of the surface in taking out the ground of the enriched strap-work rendered it more pliable. A strong lock is fitted directly over the central leg, and an iron escutcheon is also attached.

CARVED PANELLING FROM WALTHAM ABBEY.

Plate 13, page 39. This panelling is from an old house near Waltham Abbey, in Essex, and is described by the Museum authorities as English, early sixteenth-century work. It may possibly have been carved in England, but it certainly has all the characteristics of the work of Flemish carvers. The shape of the panels, the general treatment, and the modelling all suggest not only the influence but the handiwork of artists from the Low Countries. In this connection it should be remembered that the more gifted members of religious bodies were allowed ample opportunity for travel, and moving, as they did, from one country to another, they imparted knowledge as well as gained experience.

A MASSIVE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CABINET.

Plate 14, page 40. Although the cabinet sketched here looks very much over-decorated in the drawing, this is by no means the effect of the actual piece of furniture. The whole of the ornament is in very low relief, so far as the lower part is concerned merely incised in the face of the framing and panels. The cornice and rudimentary Ionic capitals show how vaguely Renaissance detail was understood by workmen in this country; what would be egg-and-tongue moulding in a piece emanating from Italy here takes the form of a very heavily turned species of bead-and-reel moulding very similar to the old English turning with which the workmen were familiar. In the guilloche pattern running round the three panels at the top, no attempt has been made to finish these geometrically at the corners; it simply runs round indiscriminately, negotiating the mitre as best it may. To obtain the full beauty of a piece of furniture of this kind it should not be placed facing the full light, but with a full light shining on one end; the immense amount of detail then sparkles with light, giving great interest to the piece. The ends are simply framed, being formed of seven panels.

A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CARVED OAK CHAIR.

Plate 15, page 41. In this chair the plain wooden splat back has given place to coarse caning. The increasing desire for comfort is shown by the addition of the upholstery with its decorative fringe. At the present time the top rail is surmounted

by a piece of Gothic foliage, but although this seems to fit in very nicely as regards size, we fail to see exactly what a piece of Gothic carving has to do with a chair of this description. The carving of the stretcher rail below is superior in quality to that of the back, which is kept somewhat flat in treatment; the carved rails of the back are exceedingly thin, and one wonders that such frail construction should have lasted for so great a number of years.

LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SIDEBOARD.

Plate 16, page 42. This oak sideboard shows the application in the late seventeenth century of turned work as a form of decoration. The pattern of the turning was evidently inspired originally by the decoration of contemporary chairs, and a rich effect is given to the drawer fronts, which are panelled in three different patterns. The carved drawer handles and the escutcheons of the key-holes lend this piece of furniture great interest.

veneered CHEST OF DRAWERS (SEVENTEENTH CENTURY).

Plate 17, page 43. This piece of furniture is an example of the decorative use of veneers, the whole of it being covered with a series of what look like oyster-shell patterns, which are in reality veneers cut across the grain. The body of this chest of drawers is of pine and oak, and it is veneered with lignum-vitæ, walnut, and sycamore. All the mouldings are veneered with great skill; the proportions are not very happy, but the treatment of the veneers and the colours is very fine. The top is inlaid with a geometrical pattern with sycamore lines. The method of construction is peculiar; it looks as though the maker of this piece had added the platform beneath as an after-thought, because the chest of drawers was not quite tall enough.

EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRESSING-TABLE.

Plate 18, page 44. The dressing-table sketched here is veneered throughout and possesses some dozen tiny drawers and slides which pull out in all directions, apparently to make up for the lack of space at the disposal of the user. It only measures some 16 inches across; at the sides of the glass are small pilasters, but seeing that they are tilted at an angle when the glass is used, these cannot be regarded as a good feature from an æsthetic point of view. The legs appear somewhat clumsy for the very light upper part of this piece. This is evidently a masterpiece turned out by some patient and capable cabinet-maker who was working for the love of the thing, as it is simply crowded with intricate work in every part. One can imagine an eighteenth-century beauty with her powder and patches finding the numerous little drawers of the greatest service.

A LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CABINET.

Plate 19, page 45. This richly inlaid cabinet is of walnut, the inlay itself being of light wood on a black background, the whole effect being reminiscent of Dutch treatment. The inlaid detail seems to be based on the poppy, and caryatides are used in the upper panels to draw back the curtains from a tent-like structure, displaying a dancing figure in the oval below. The actual outlines are not carefully drawn, but the general effect of the piece is very sumptuous. It looks as if it might be the work of an English cabinet-maker emulating a Dutch design.

A FRENCH WARDROBE (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY).

Plate 20, page 46. The early eighteenth-century French wardrobe sketched on this plate has a carved walnut front, but the body itself is built of oak. The eight medallions in the doors are inlaid with Maltese crosses. It was this style of work which very largely influenced our own eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, and this type of carving was used extensively by Chippendale. The series of mouldings which run round the two doors give a very finished appearance to the whole piece. The bulbous turned feet are worthy of notice, as they are not circular but semi-circular, the one block having been turned, cut in half, and formed into two feet. The pediment is modern.

A HALL SEAT IN MAHOGANY.

Plate 21, page 47. This shaped mahogany hall seat was probably made to fit one of the recesses in the classical halls which were so much affected by architects at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The subtle sweep of the back, causing the light to play on the curved surface, and the rich colour of the mahogany make this one of the most charming pieces of furniture in the collection. If there is a point to be raised in criticism, it is that the carved decoration in the centre of the oval panel in the back is in somewhat high relief, and might cause discomfort to the person using it. It was evidently made for a very wealthy patron, as the shaping of the back makes it a very costly piece of woodwork to produce.

AN EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHAIR.

Plate 22, page 48. In this chair it is difficult to find a single straight line except those of the seat; every piece of the framework is shaped and carved. Here we have the main outline of a Queen Anne chair, but the splat at the back is cut through and carved in the most delicate and skilful way. It is noticeable that the line of the splat does not exactly follow the line of the rails at the sides, but projects slightly to give greater comfort. Another point to be noted is the termination of the front legs, each

of which is finished with carved representations of an uncloven hoof—a form which was adopted by some makers in the early eighteenth century. This chair shows marked French influence in the detail embodied.

MAHOGANY TABLES (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY).

Plate 23, page 49. The table at the top is of walnut, and possesses a very unusual feature in the shape of a dished tray, formed out of the solid, fixed to the top. It is apparently an addition, as the junction of the corners is awkward. The shape of the foot should be noted here, as it is splayed out into a flat square cushion and not terminated by the usual ball and claw. The shell decoration on the shoulder is the only decoration, but the proportion and line of the cabriole legs in this example make it one of the most charming in the Museum.

The table below is fitted with a drawer. It possesses an unusual feature in the shape of turned stretchers which connect the legs to strengthen them; this undoubtedly detracts from the beauty of line of the cabriole legs. It is probably a country-made piece, as it does not possess the fine characteristics of many of the other tables near which it stands. This is very apparent in the carving of the shell, which is a great deal cruder than those on the table which is sketched above.

A GERMAN CHAIR.

Plate 24, page 50. Our sketch on this plate is interesting as a warning to collectors of one of the things that they have to be on their guard against. The date of this German chair of carved and turned ash appears as 1725, but close inspection shows that it has been altered from 1825. The plaiting of the cane seat is very interesting, as is also the carved and turned decoration of the back. The seat of this chair is placed rather high, and the rail near the floor-line is evidently intended as a foot-rest, as the feet of a person of average height would scarcely rest on the floor when seated in it; perhaps Sophia Wulffs, for whom the chair was made nearly a hundred years ago, was an exceptionally tall lady.

A QUEEN ANNE BEDSTEAD.

Plate 25, page 51. A very beautiful bedstead both as regards colour and form is sketched on Plate 25. The suggestion of strength given by the massive carved ball and claw feet of both the head-board and foot-board shows what vigour of expression was attained by the eighteenth-century carvers. The broad expanse at the back is built up of three mahogany planks without any framing whatsoever; the fact that this has not twisted is a great tribute to the way in which these old makers seasoned their materials. The moulding on the edge is the same height as the surface of the back, the band of delicate carving being formed in the solid, the ground being slightly dished out or sunk to give the requisite relief. The sketches give an admirable idea of the carved legs, but the line of the back is perhaps a little too violent in the drawing, the curves being rather more subtle than portrayed by the draughtsman.

QUEEN ANNE CARD-TABLE AND CHAIR.

Plate 26, page 52. This Queen Anne card-table is of exquisite proportions and beautifully carved. The shoulder of the cabriole leg is decorated with the shell form so largely used by Queen Anne makers. The rich brown of the burr walnut makes a good contrast to the pale green of the cloth with which this card-table is lined. The ball and claw feet are somewhat rudimentary, the claws not seeming to have the grip of the ball which we find in some later examples.

The chair has a rush seat, and is an example of early Queen Anne work. The hollow curve of the splat in the back gives it a most inviting appearance; the uprights of the back, however, are somewhat too near together to allow a fairly broad-shouldered person to rest against the splat. As yet there is no claw foot and no scroll at the top, but the detail at the back of the leg should be noted.

A CHURCH SCREEN IN CARVED OAK.

Plate 27, page 53. This oak screen was acquired for the Museum from a church in Pontoise. It is of the period of Louis XV., as the boldly carved date in the cartouche in the centre panel plainly shows. We usually associate rather small carving of weak outline with this period, but here we have the direct opposite, the work being very boldly and freely designed and skilfully carved. This was the type of carving which influenced eighteenth-century work in England to so large an extent.

A GEORGIAN CARD-TABLE.

Plate 28, page 54. In this very characteristic piece of Georgian furniture, the shoulder of the cabriole leg is covered with delicate carving, a feature which was borrowed from French work. The ball and claw feet in this instance are particularly massive, rather too heavy for so light a table. The top is composed of three hinged flaps: when the first is turned back, plain wood is disclosed; when the second one is reversed, we find a top lined with cloth for cards. The supporting rail is fitted with a small ratchet which is raised to keep the top of the table level when only one flap is extended.

AN EARLY GEORGIAN ARMCHAIR.

Plate 29, page 55. No more comfortable seats have ever been made than the corner armchairs of the early Georgian period; not only so, but they are extremely decorative as well, as the mode of construction gives room for a fine sweep of the back. The seat forms an exact quarter circle, and the top of the back is at a comfortable height on which to rest the arms. The loose seat is covered with a pad of wine-red plush or moquette, a

colour which tones beautifully with the mahogany. The feet are peculiar, containing five claws in front, and the section of the turned work is worthy of notice as being rather out of the common.

A CHIPPENDALE WEATHER-GLASS.

Plate 30, page 56. The man who possessed a weather-glass such as is sketched here would at any rate always find pleasure in this beautiful little piece of furniture, whatever the mercury predicted about the state of the weather during the forthcoming day. The exquisite detail is all very minute—the fret at the sides, for instance, is scarcely one-sixteenth of an inch deep—and the mahogany has assumed a delightful colour with age. Hanging within six inches of this in the Museum is an ordinary thermometer in its business-like white wood frame, and the contrast between the two is, to say the least of it, very marked. The beautiful technique of this piece of furniture suggests that it might have been turned out of Chippendale's own workshop. The maker, whoever he may have been, was evidently something of a wag, as the most prominent word on the dial is "Doubtful," an adjective which when used in connection with the weather in this country is as truthful as it is exasperating.

CHIPPENDALE URN STANDS.

Plate 31, page 57. Standing only about 2 feet high, the beautiful little urn stand, the details of which are given on Plate 31, looks more as if it were made out of beaten silver which has gone dark with age, than of mahogany. The carved decoration is so delicate that it does not break the contour of the mouldings, and passing the hand over it, only the slightest undulations are felt. The eighteenth-century cabinet-makers very evidently expended a good deal of care on these pieces, as they would be used in the drawing-rooms of the wealthy classes. There is no indication that the frets are built up of three-ply wood, but they are thick enough to prevent breakage. The tripod urn stand, sketched on the left, is one of the most beautiful pieces of furniture in the Museum.

A CHIPPENDALE CHAIR.

Plate 32, page 58. Spacious is the adjective which best describes the chair sketched on Plate 32. The seat is 2 feet square, and the back is proportionately broad. The large cup-like castors into which the legs are fitted are probably modern, as one can hardly imagine Chippendale or a maker who was competent of turning out such a chair breaking off the ornament in such a crude way.

A CHIPPENDALE CARD-TABLE.

Plate 33, page 59. In a table such as this, with carved Chinese fret patterns on two sides of the legs, the old makers were always careful to make them stout enough, so that there should be no suspicion of frailty in their appearance. This table, it will be seen,

has three leaves, and can be used either as a tea- or card-table, two of the leaves being lined with green cloth. There is an ingenious little ratchet arrangement on the rail which swings out to support the top when extended. This is used when only the top leaf is turned over.

A SETTEE AND BANNER SCREEN.

Plate 34, page 60. This charming little piece, on account of its small size, looks rather like a music-stool which has blossomed out into a settee with a low back and arms. The legs and under-stretchers are decorated with the Chinese fretwork so frequently introduced by Chippendale, and the piece looks more like a model for a larger settee than one which would be actually used.

The mahogany screen on this plate is in the style of Chippendale; the ball and claw form of foot is somewhat varied here, the ball being oval in shape and the claws very attenuated. The screen itself is rather larger than usual, and the embroidery is silk, wool, and silver-gilt thread; its charm is somewhat detracted from as it is stretched unevenly on the frame, the lines of the texture not being horizontal, this giving a somewhat distorted appearance to the subject.

AN INLAID WALNUT DRESSING-TABLE (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY).

Plate 35, page 61. This piece of furniture was apparently made of sycamore stained grey, but it has turned yellow with age. Its original maker would hardly recognise it on account of the alteration in its colour, which is not altogether pleasing, having a rather dirty or faded appearance. One has to look at it closely to see that it is in reality elaborately inlaid, and the treatment of the veneers on the carved surfaces shows a considerable amount of skill. The framework is of mahogany, round which a thin deal backing is bent, to which the veneer is applied.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HALL CHAIRS.

Plate 36, page 62. Considerable severity of form characterises the late eighteenth-century hall chairs sketched on Plate 36. They are in mahogany and are very beautifully carved, and all of them have wood seats without any upholstery. The bow of ribbon supporting the two festoons of drapery forms as exquisite a piece of carving as one would wish to see.

The chair sketched below on the left, fig. 2, shows the characteristic shield shape adopted by Heppelwhite as a *motif* at the back. The purity of line and nicety of detail to be found in these examples show what trouble the eighteenth-century makers took even on such insignificant pieces of furniture as hall chairs.

Fig. 3 has a painted crest in the shaped panel of the back; the panel itself is slightly sunk, in order that the painting may not be rubbed when the chair is in use. All these three examples may be dated about 1800.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MIRROR-FRAME AND TRAY.

Plate 37, page 63. On this plate there is an example of inlay in the shape of a mirror-frame. The three ostrich feathers were used as a decorative feature by Heppelwhite after he had been favoured with the patronage of the Prince of Wales. From this detail it is only natural to infer that the example emanated from Heppelwhite's workshop. This is evidently an English version of one of the elaborate Italian frames, as will be seen from the attempt at arabesques at the sides. The blending the various woods employed gives a rich golden look to the whole.

In this oval tray one almost regrets the inclusion of the marqueterie in the centre, beautifully executed as it is, the reason being that the mahogany has such a beautiful figure in it. This very finely figured, or feathered, mahogany is difficult to obtain nowadays, the older forests having become depleted owing to the constant demand for the timber. The inlay is for the most part in natural coloured woods, but some of the veneer is stained blue, notably the blue flowers and the ribbon which binds the spray together. The surface of inlay is slightly etched with an engraving tool to heighten its effect. This was bought by the Museum for £16, and is of late eighteenth-century workmanship.

A PAINTED SHERATON CHAIR.

Plate 38, page 64. In this Sheraton chair the woodwork seems to have been cut down to as light a framework as possible, and it hardly looks strong enough for its purpose, although it has survived since the year 1800. It is of beech, painted, but the execution of the painting does not compare with the semi-oval table sketched on Plate 43. Although every line of this chair is beautiful and the proportions are really excellent, it has rather an attenuated look, which detracts somewhat from its other qualities.

AN INLAID SATINWOOD WRITING-CABINET.

Plate 39, page 65. The tiny writing-desk shown on this plate is a masterpiece of cabinet work. It is mahogany, veneered with satinwood, coromandel, and other woods, and dates from the second half of the eighteenth century. The interior contains some half-dozen drawers, tucked away beneath which is a tiny writing-slide lined with green cloth. It will be seen by the scale that this is a very small piece of furniture, and it is doubtful whether the slide could ever be put to any practical use. The tapering legs are cross-banded with satinwood, the angles being veneered with black lines. The black-and-white stringing which is embodied in the work is very subdued in tone. The drawers are formed of very thin wood and run as sweetly as though they were made of satin.

A PAINTED SHERATON CHAIR.

Plate 40, page 66. The chair shown on Plate 40 is of beech, the whole body painted black. The decorations are white and gold. Here too the maker appears to have been very sparing in the use of his timber, and the impression this type of chair gives is a somewhat spidery one. The paintings on the rail at the back are not particularly well executed, being rather loose in drawing and muddy in colour. William Morris was of the opinion that too much modern furniture looked as if it was constructed of walking-sticks. Surely the remark applies with equal force to the chair on this plate and the one sketched on Plate 38.

AN ITALIAN CARD-TABLE.

Plate 41, page 67. Every available space in this card-table is enriched with inlay. It is chiefly of rosewood, and decorated with cast brass mouldings at the junction of the legs with the body of the table. The triangular flap, when open, rests on the fourth leg, which pulls straight out from the centre of the third side. The maker evidently had some difficulty in placing the legs over the acute angles of the triangle on plan. At the angle of 45 degrees the leg is placed diagonally, but in the other three the sides are parallel with the diagonal of the square when the table is open—a somewhat curious solution of the problem.

BANNER SCREEN AND URN STAND (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY).

Plate 42, page 68. This fire-screen is one of the most beautiful little pieces of work in the Museum. The turned and carved base is of gilded wood and the rod surmounted by the urn-shaped final is of brass. The proportion of the oval is exquisite and the needlework is white satin. Supposing this were the only piece of Adam furniture which we possessed to judge of his ability as an artist, we should still hail him as a master.

The urn stand is considerably later in date than those illustrated on Plate 31, and is a typical example of delicate inlaid work.

A PAINTED SIDE-TABLE.

Plate 43, page 69. The top of this table is elaborately painted—honeysuckle, convolvuli, forget-me-nots, roses, passion-flowers, tulips, narcissi, and daisies vie with each other in the beautiful swags round the top. The background for the flowers is pale blue. The pastoral idea is carried on by painted medallions portraying shepherdesses. The medallions are in a field of light salmon-pink, green being the predominant colour

of the oval patera in the centre. This elaborately painted table is supported by a frieze of monochrome ornament on a slate-blue ground, the mouldings and legs being gilded. It is impossible to describe the beauty of this table; it was evidently decorated by some one who was influenced by the classic detail which was so largely borrowed after the discovery of Pompeii.

AN ADAM CARD-TABLE AND WINE-COOLER.

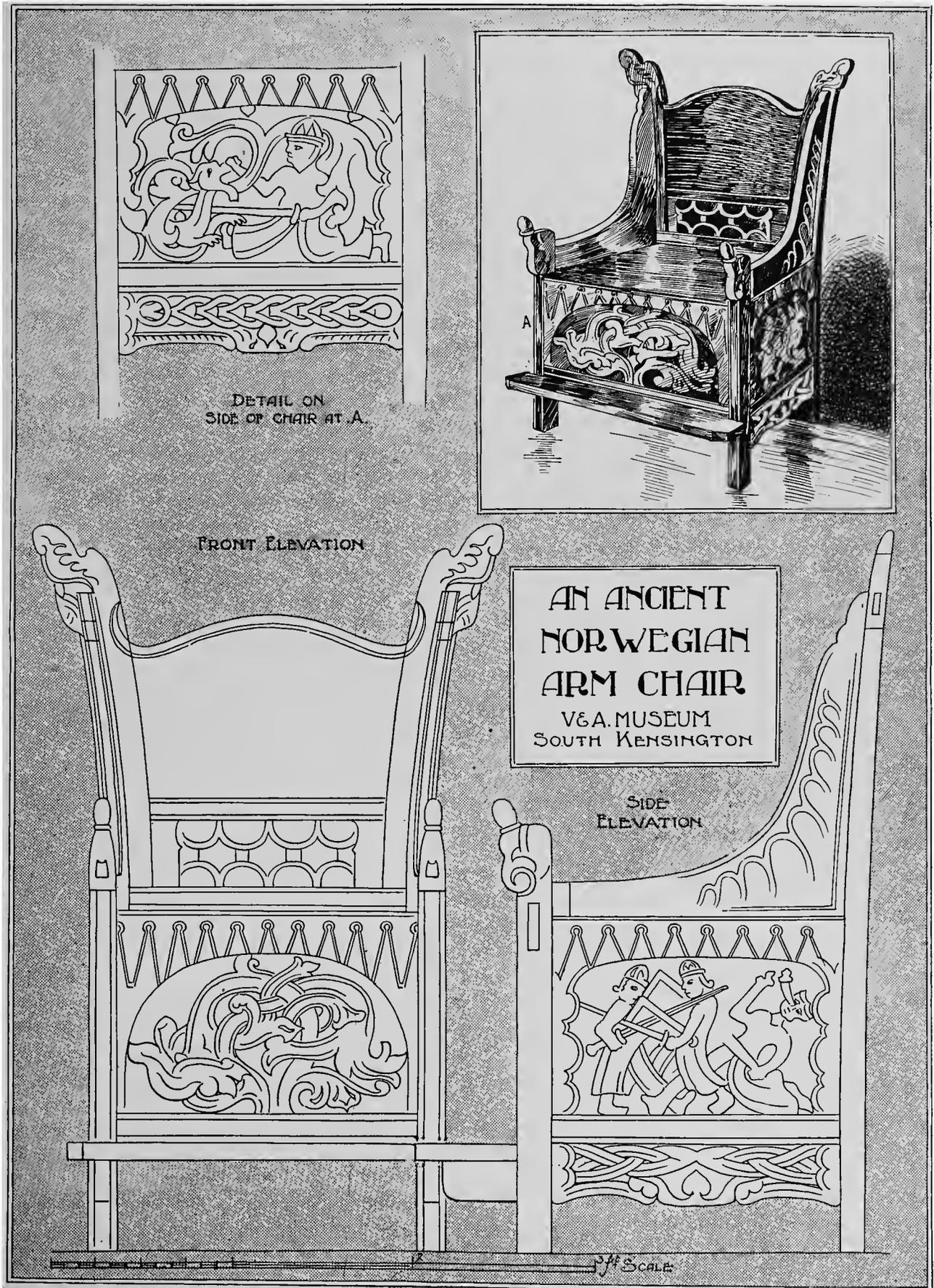
Plate 44, page 70. In the days when a man's character was judged by the number of bottles of wine he could manage after dinner, a wine-cooler was a necessary part of the furnishing of every room. Sideboards usually had a pedestal at each end, leaving a space in the centre for the wine-cooler, which matched the sideboard in character. At the bottom of this particular example is a small drawer which looks as if it were originally intended for a corkscrew, that useful little article without which a bottle of the oldest wine is useless to the thirsty man. Note the beautiful design of the brass handle at the side.

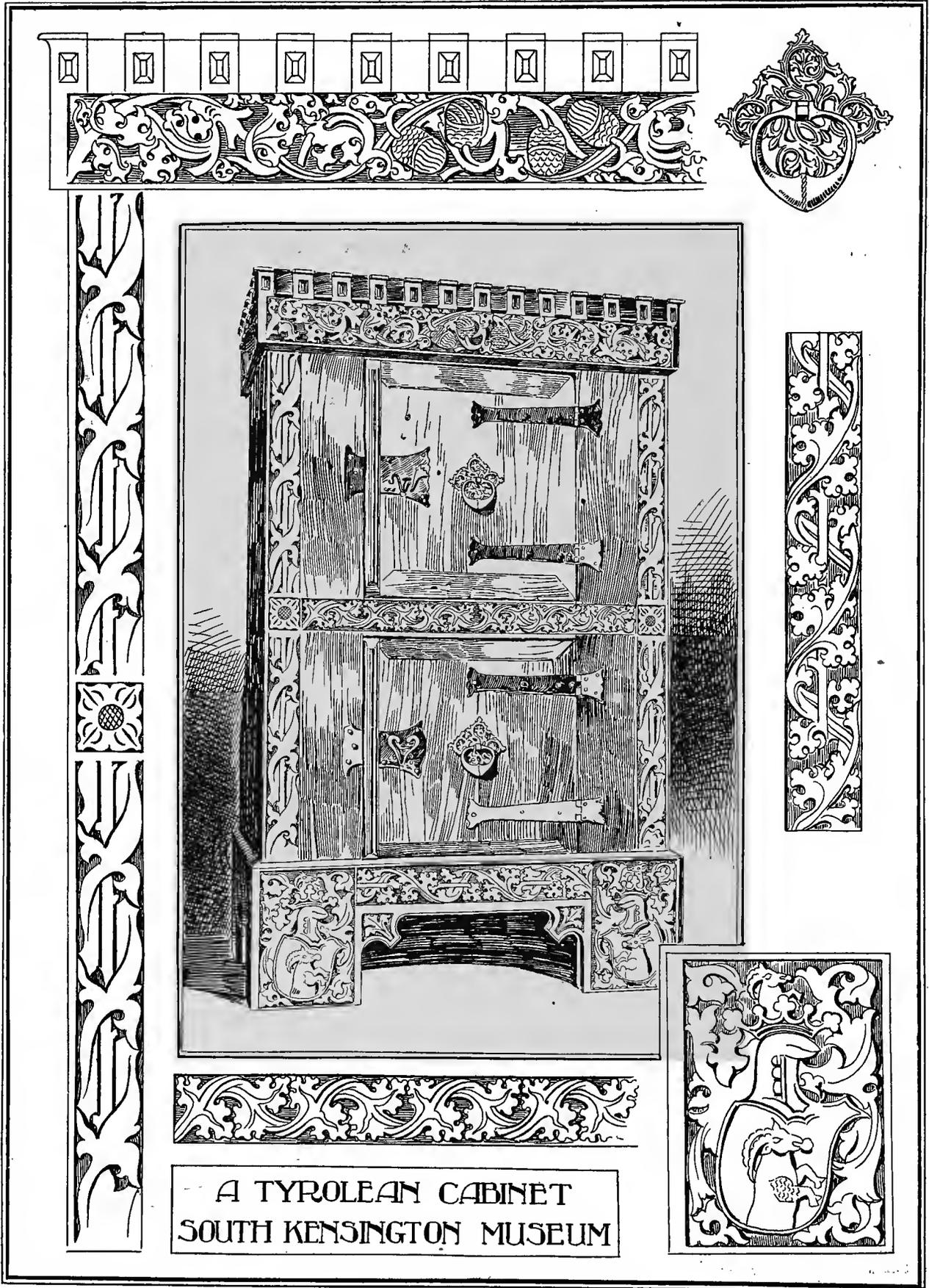
Sketched on the same page is an Adam card-table which shows a quiet phase of this designer's work. It is inlaid with kingwood, and the legs are very daintily carved. The carved oval patera and the husks on the front of the square wrought legs show Adam detail at its very best. This was bought for the Museum for £6 17s. 3d. The table has a plain polished top.

A HEPPELWHITE ARMCHAIR.

Plate 45, page 71. The influence of Louis Seize work is plainly apparent in this oval-backed Heppelwhite chair—the delicate carving, the turning of the legs, and the flutings of the carved frame all suggest the source from which Heppelwhite obtained his inspiration.

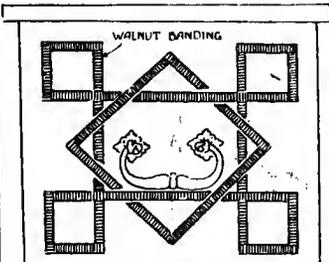
PLATES.





A TYROLEAN CABINET
SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

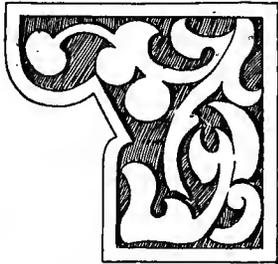
TYROLEAN CHESTS
IN THE V.&A. MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON.



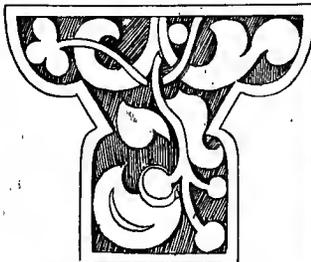
INLAID BANDING ON END OF UPPER CHEST



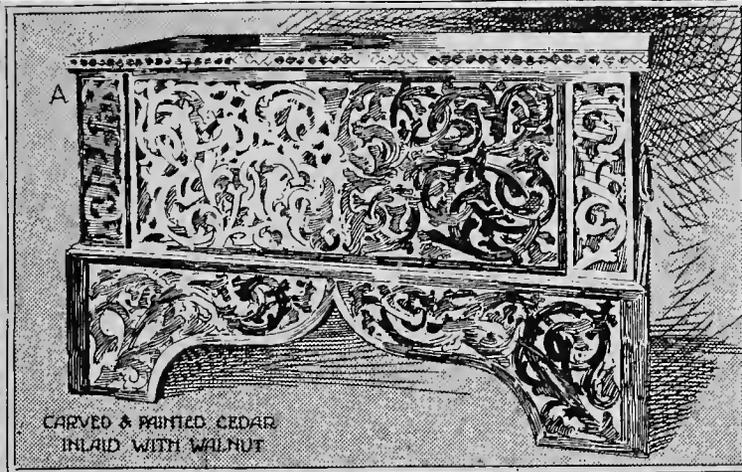
ENLARGED DETAIL OF PILASTER AT A.



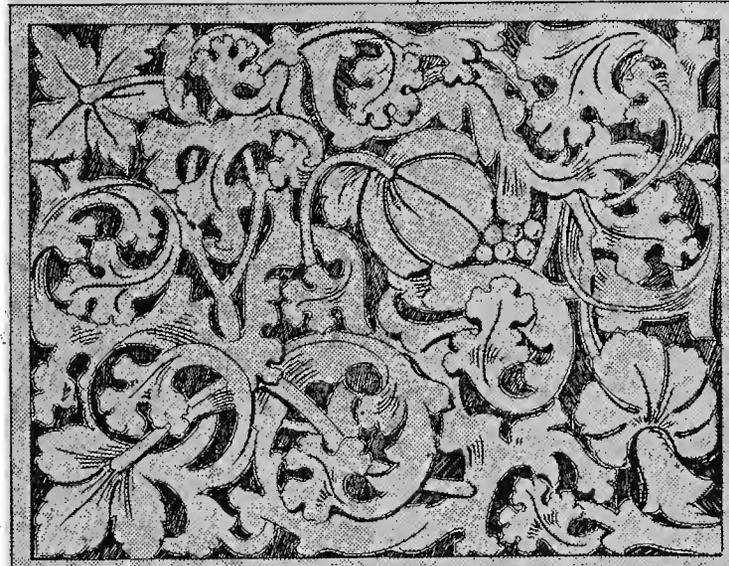
ENLARGED DETAIL OF END FOOT AT B.



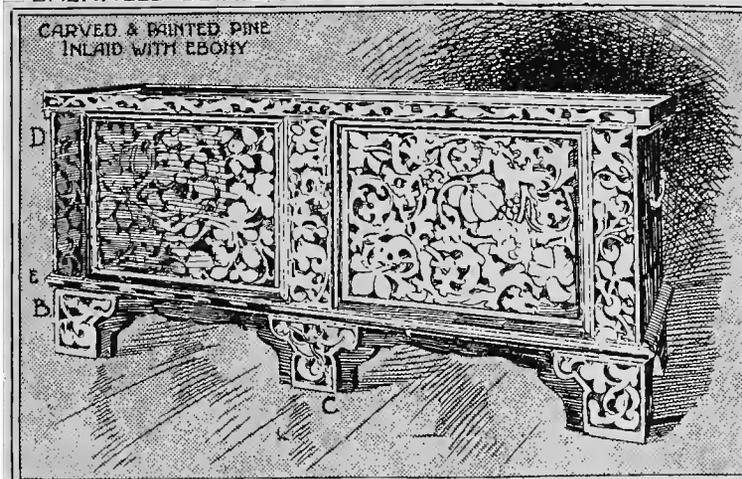
ENLARGED DETAIL OF CENTRE FOOT AT C.



CARVED & PAINTED CEDAR
INLAID WITH WALNUT



ENLARGED DETAIL ON RIGHT HAND SIDE OF LOWER CHEST



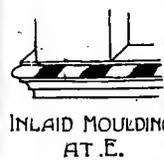
CARVED & PAINTED PINE
INLAID WITH EBONY



ENLARGED
DETAIL OF
PILASTER
ON RIGHT
HAND SIDE
OF LOWER
CHEST



HANDLE OF
UPPER CHEST



INLAID MOULDING
AT E.

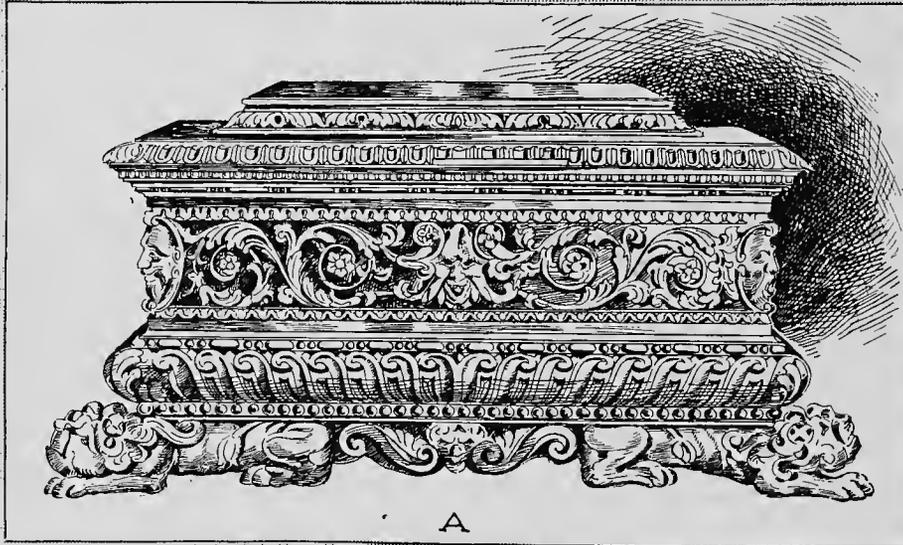
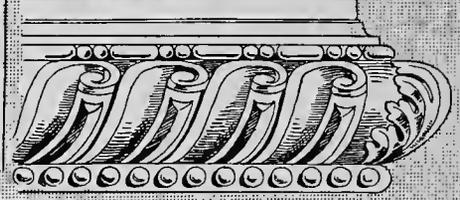
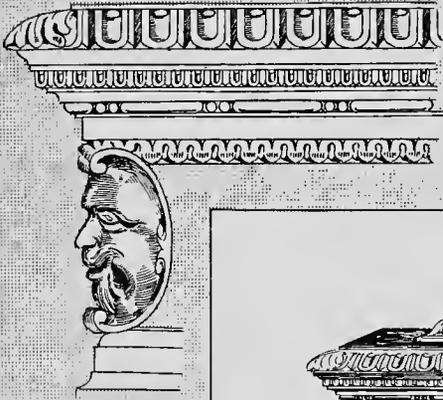


ENLARGED
DETAIL OF
PILASTER
AT D

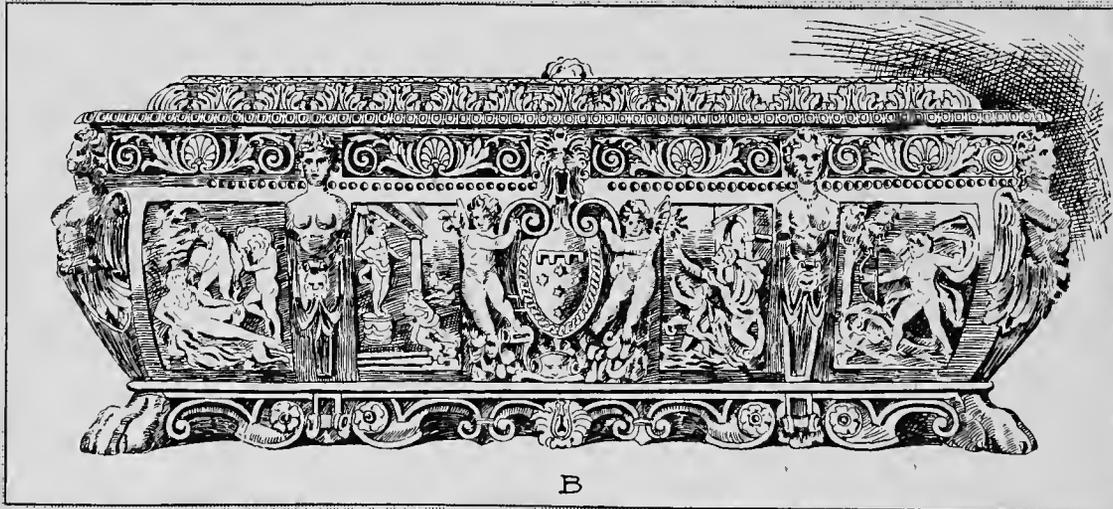


HANDLE OF
LOWER CHEST

16TH CENTURY
ITALIAN COFFERS
S.K. MUSEUM

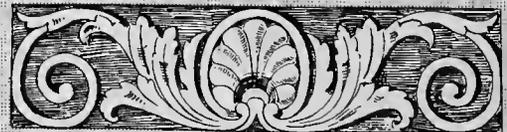


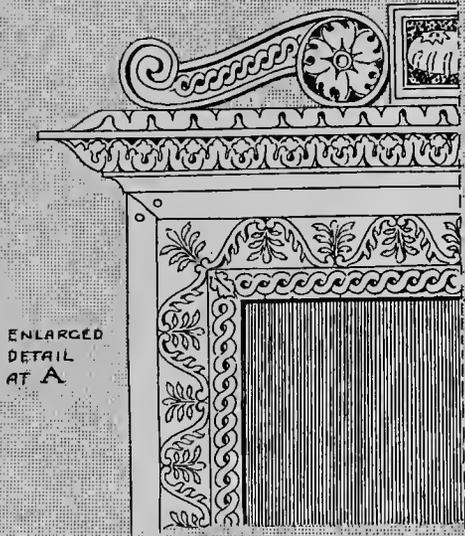
ENLARGED
DETAILS
OF COFFER
A



B

ENLARGED
DETAILS
OF COFFER
B





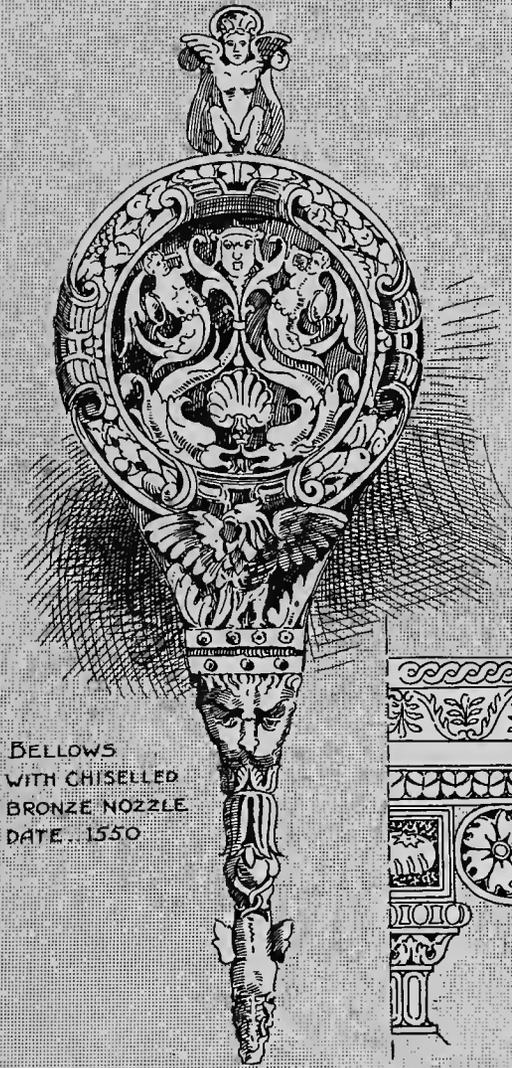
ENLARGED
DETAIL
AT A



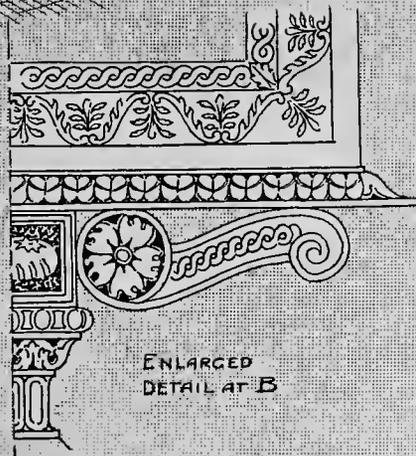
A

B

METALLIC MIRROR IN CARVED
WALNUT FRAME... ABOUT 1540



BELLOWS
WITH CHISELLED
BRONZE NOZZLE
DATE... 1550



ENLARGED
DETAIL AT B

ITALIAN
MIRROR
FRAME
AND
BELLOWS
S.K. MUSEUM.

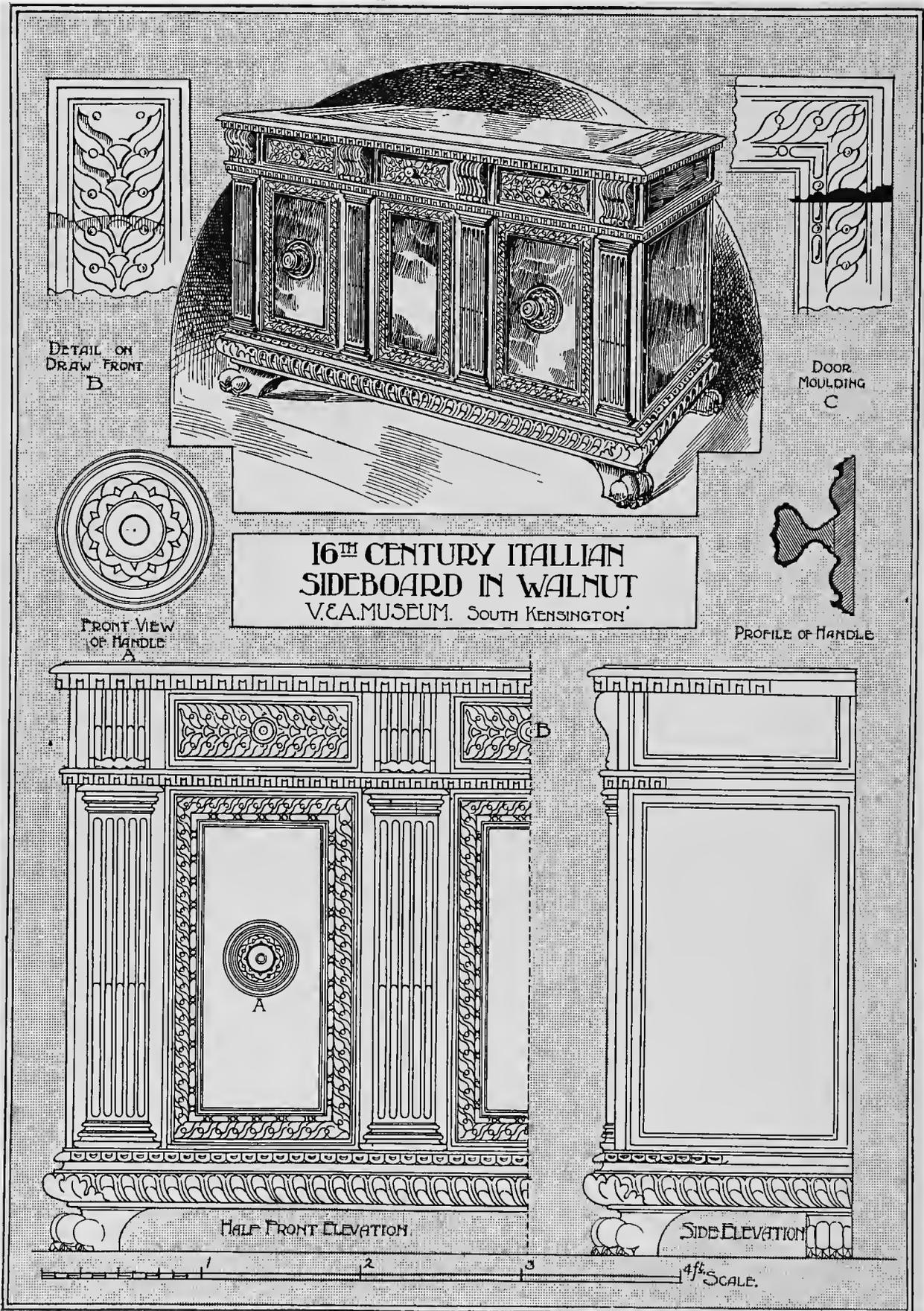
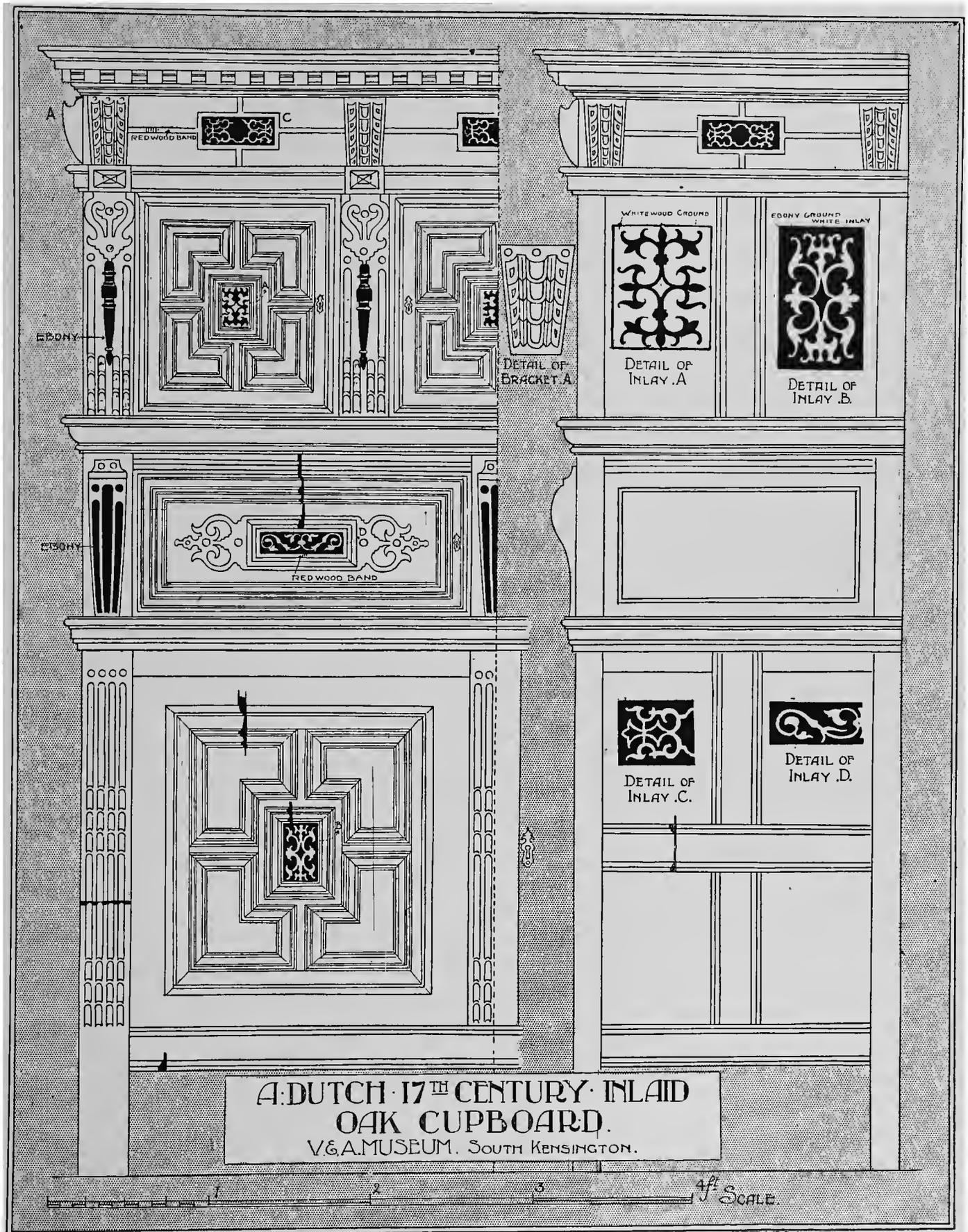
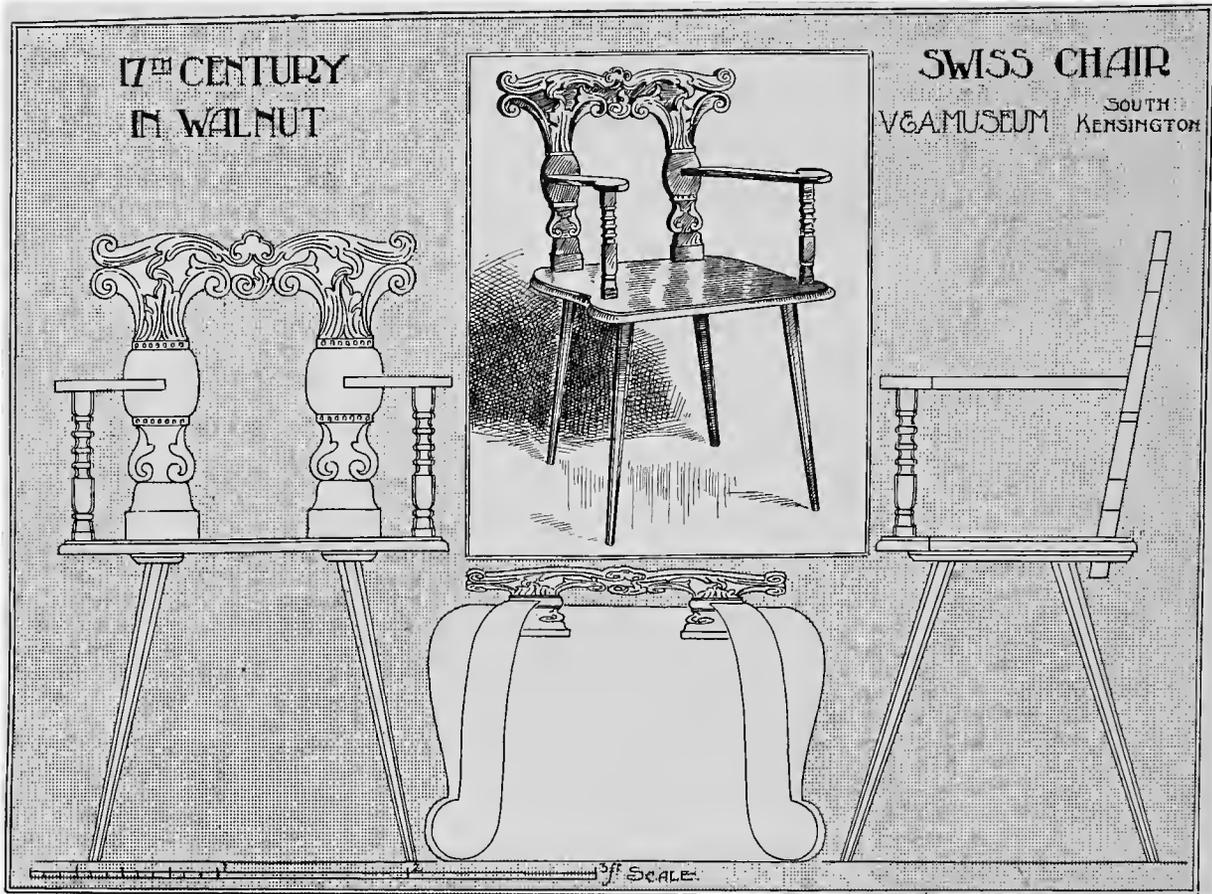


PLATE 6.



A: DUTCH · 17TH CENTURY · INLAID
OAK CUPBOARD.
V.&A. MUSEUM · SOUTH KENSINGTON.



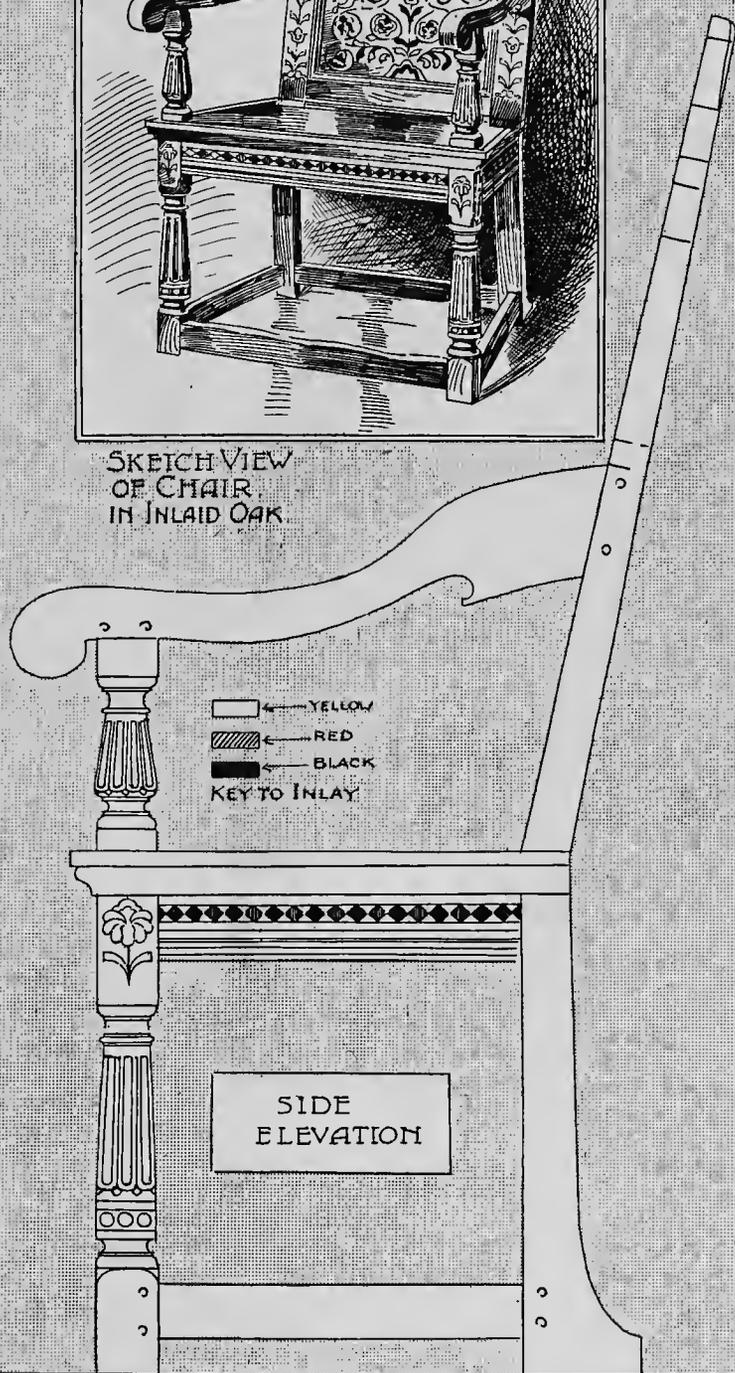
A 16TH CENTURY
INLAID ARM CHAIR
S.K. MUSEUM



SKETCH VIEW
OF CHAIR
IN INLAID OAK.

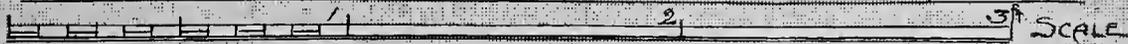


FRONT
ELEVATION



— YELLOW
— RED
— BLACK
KEY TO INLAY

SIDE
ELEVATION



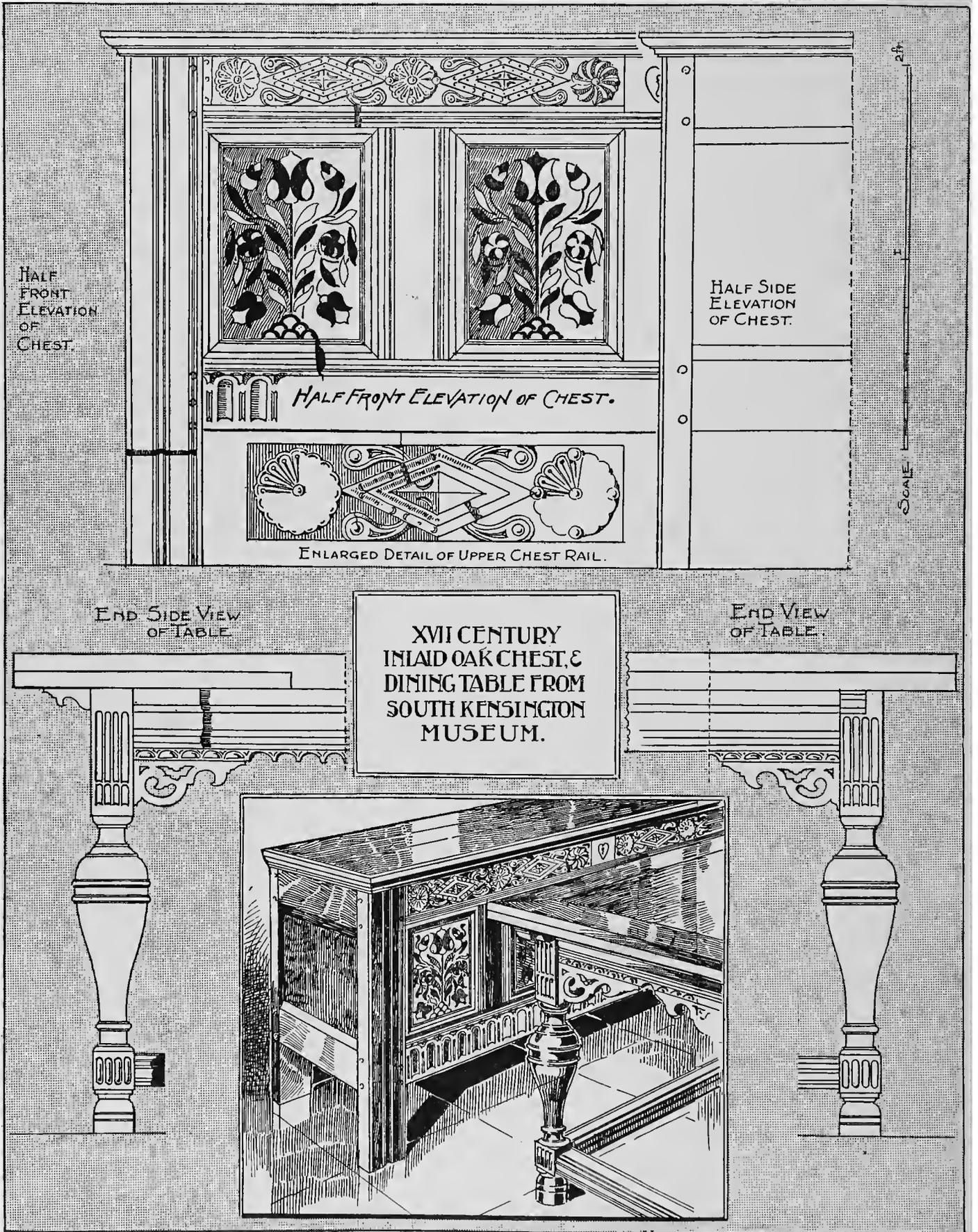
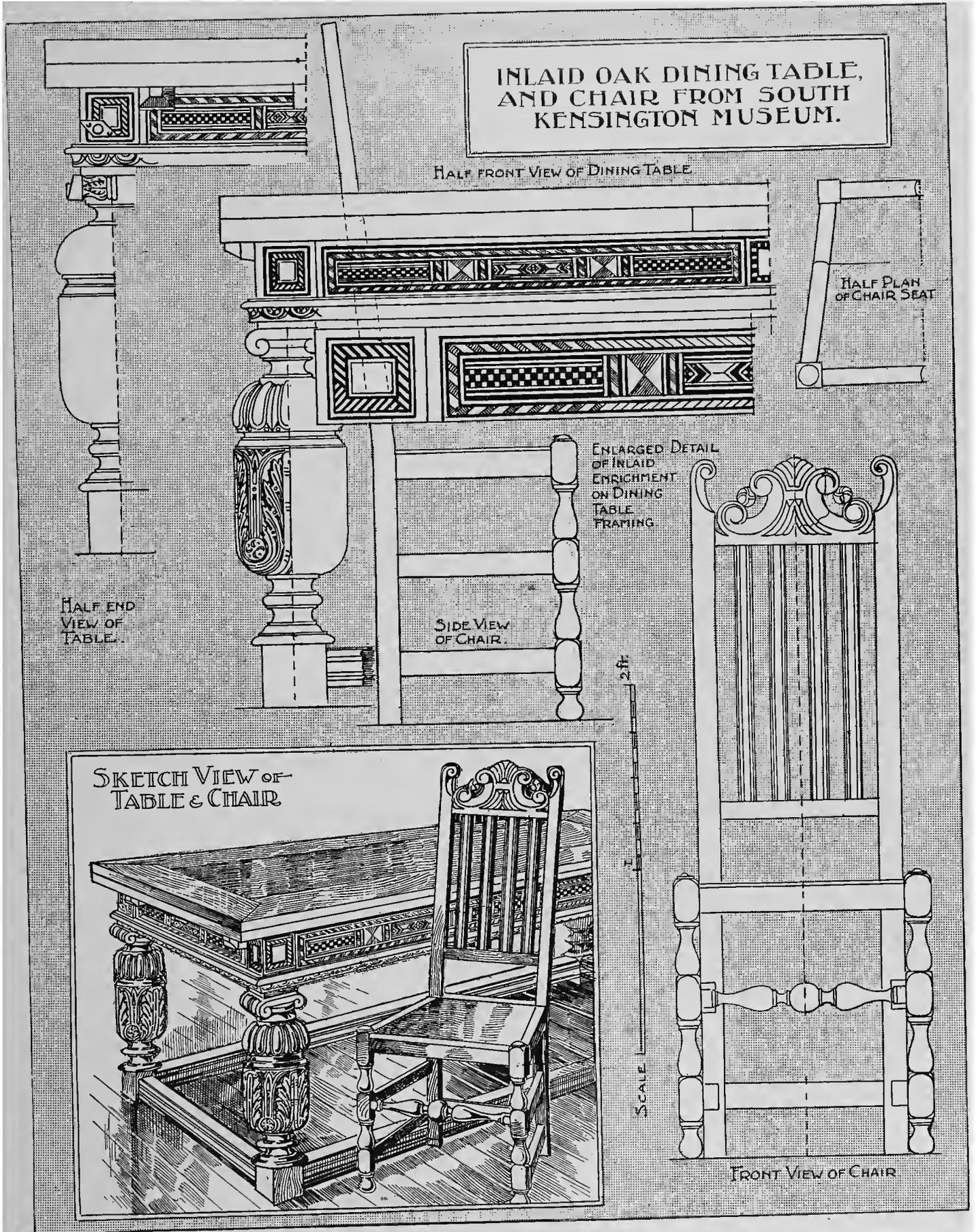
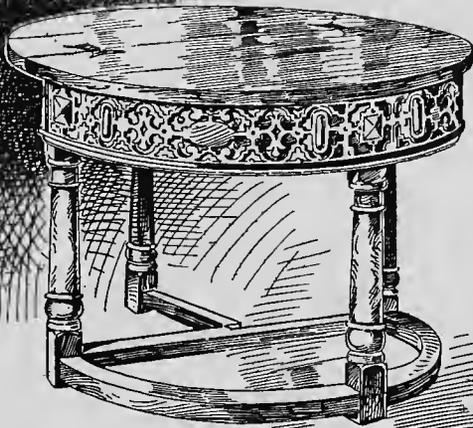


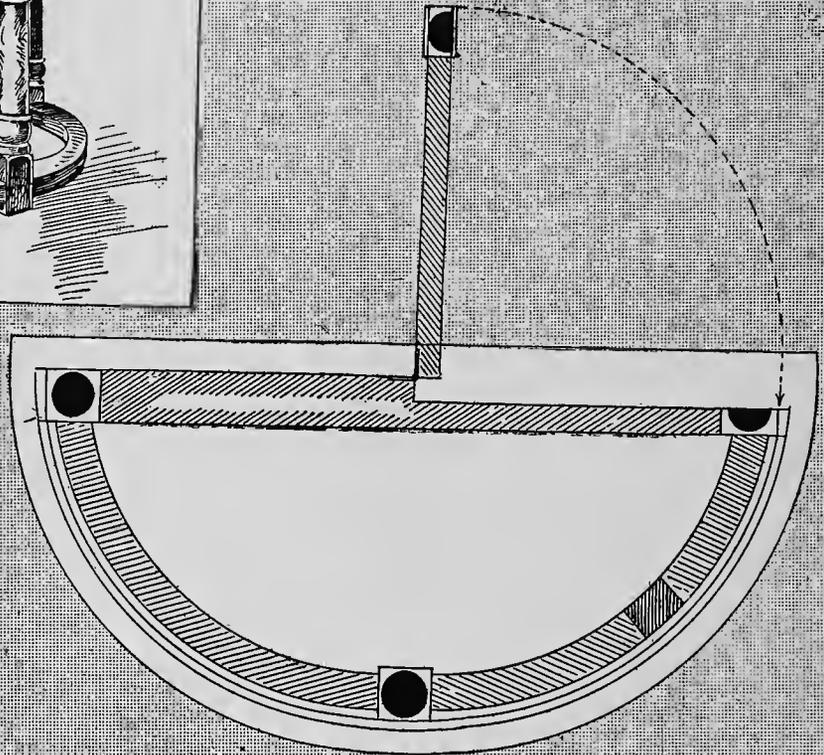
PLATE 10.



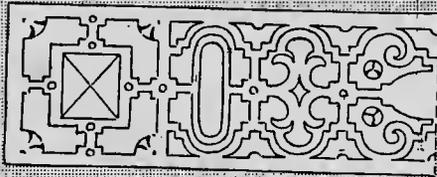
LATE 16TH CENTURY
GATE LEG TABLE
FROM SOUTH
KENSINGTON MUSEUM



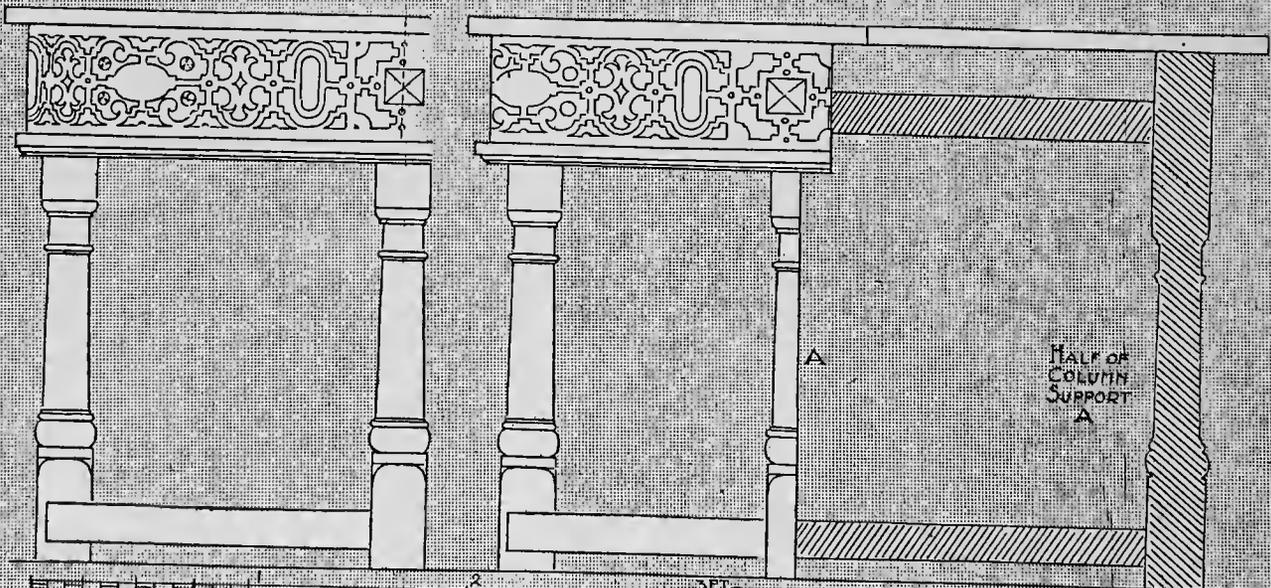
SKETCH VIEW
OF TABLE

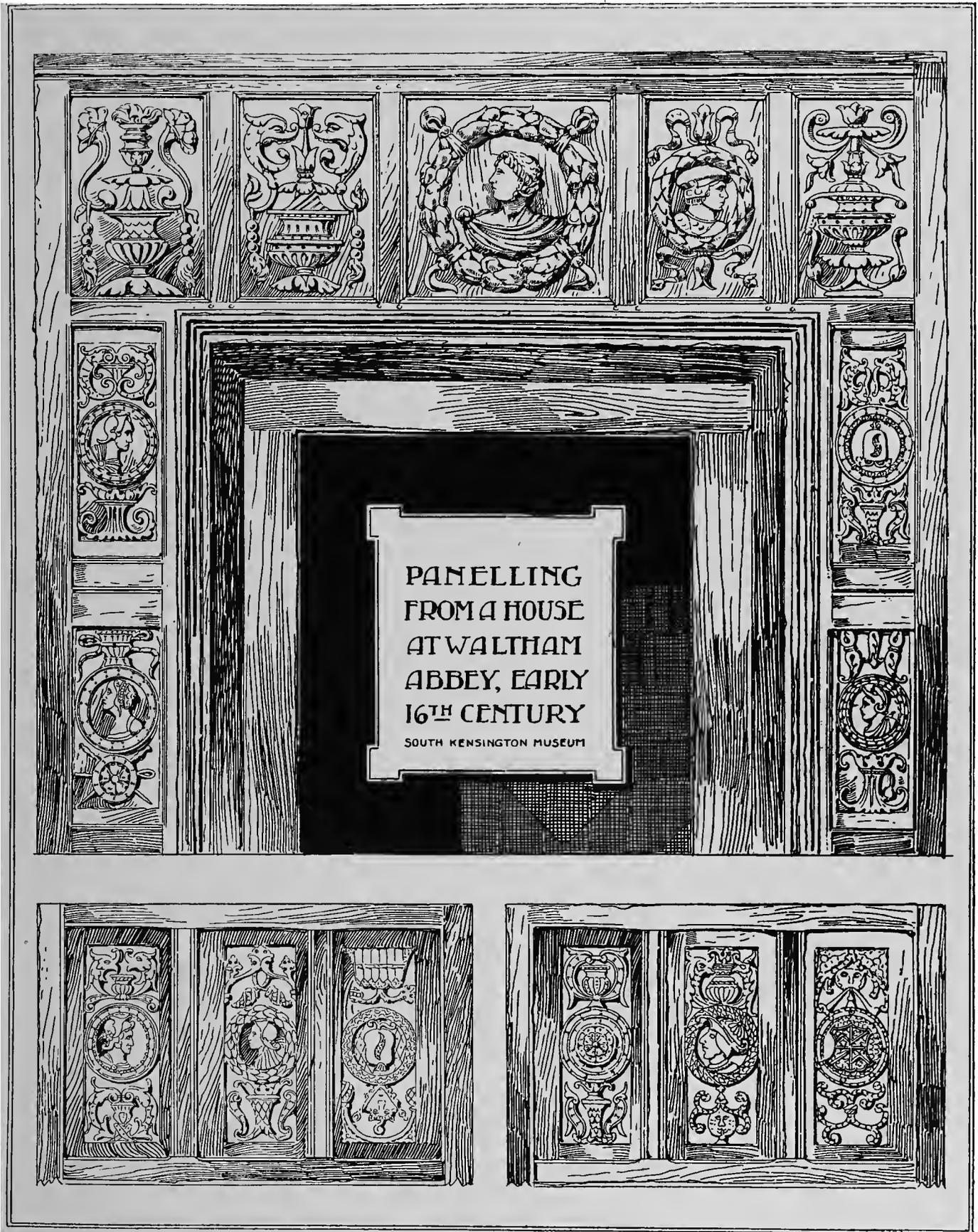


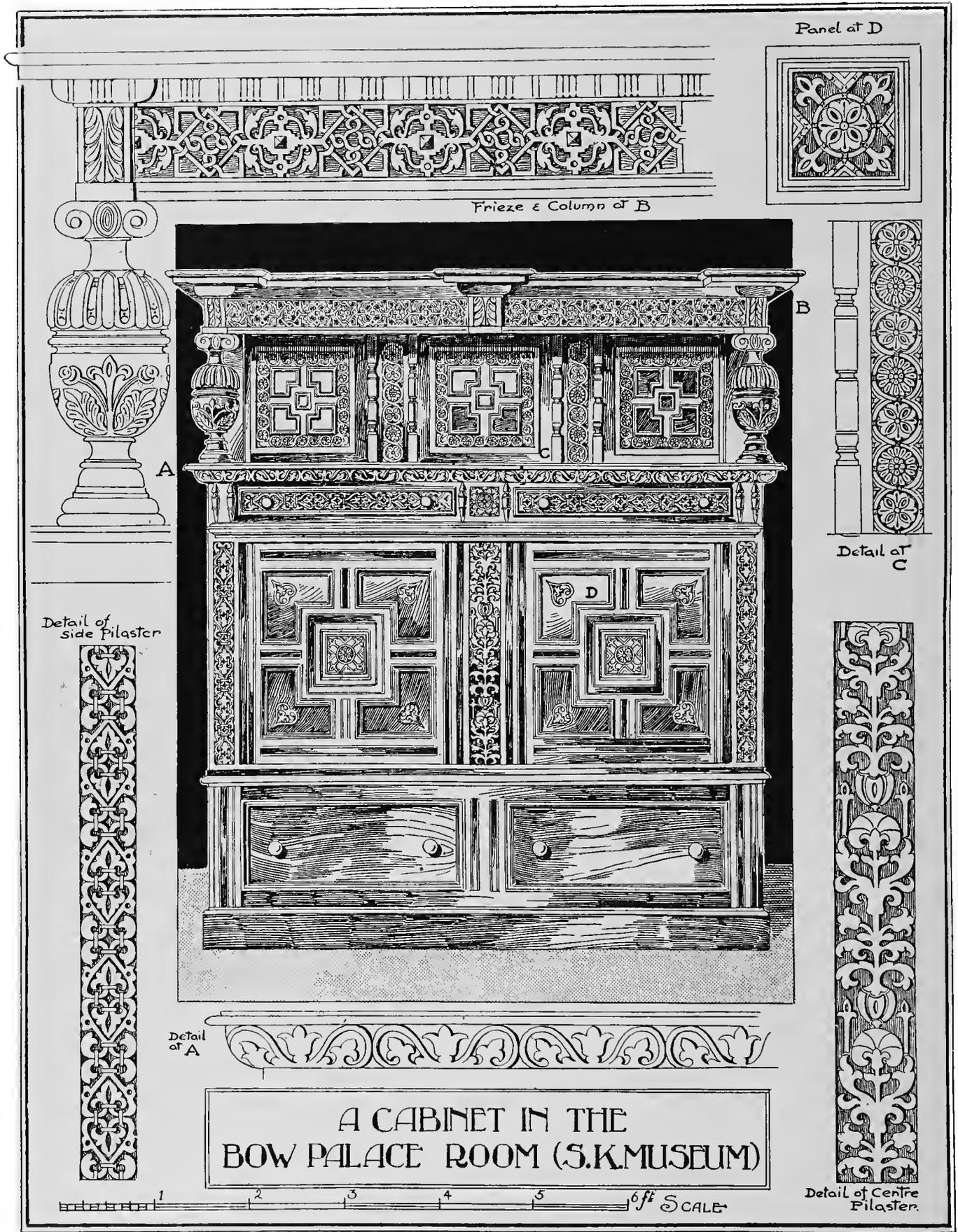
PLAN OF
UNDERFRAMING



DETAIL OF FRIEZE

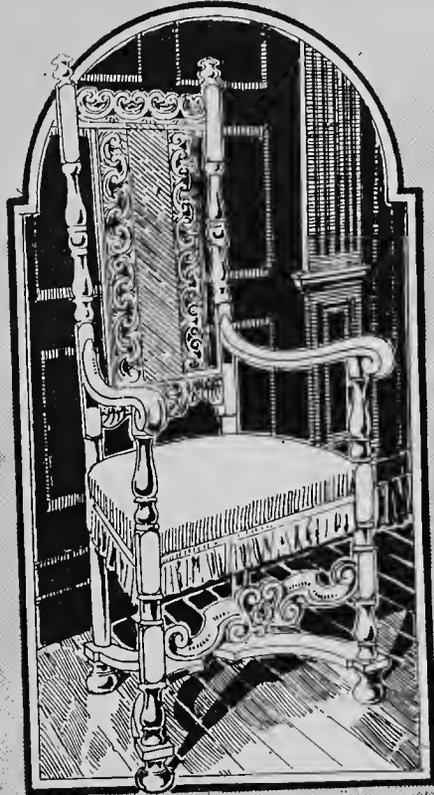






A CABINET IN THE
BOW PALACE ROOM (S.K.MUSEUM)

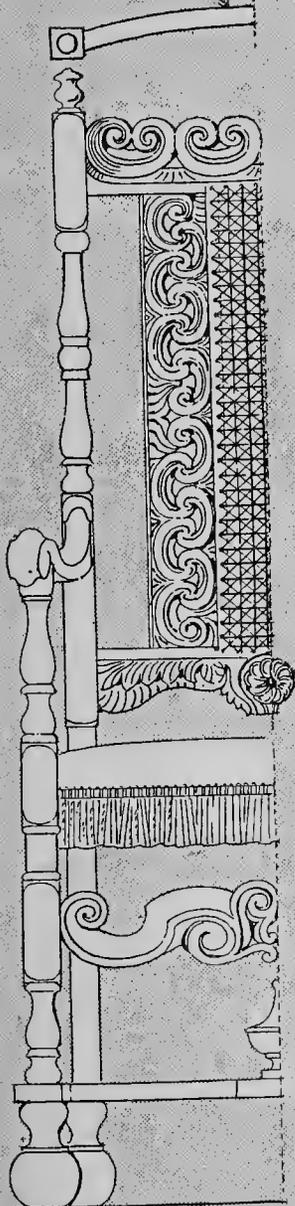
XVII CENTURY
CARVED OAK
CHAIR FROM
SOUTH
KENSINGTON
MUSEUM



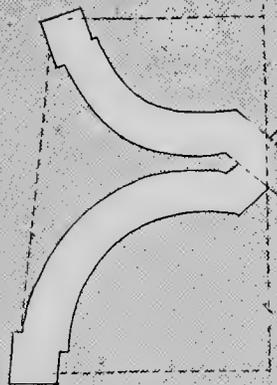
PIERCED SPLAT IN
BACK OF CHAIR.



CURVE OF
BACK.



SKETCH VIEW
OF CHAIR

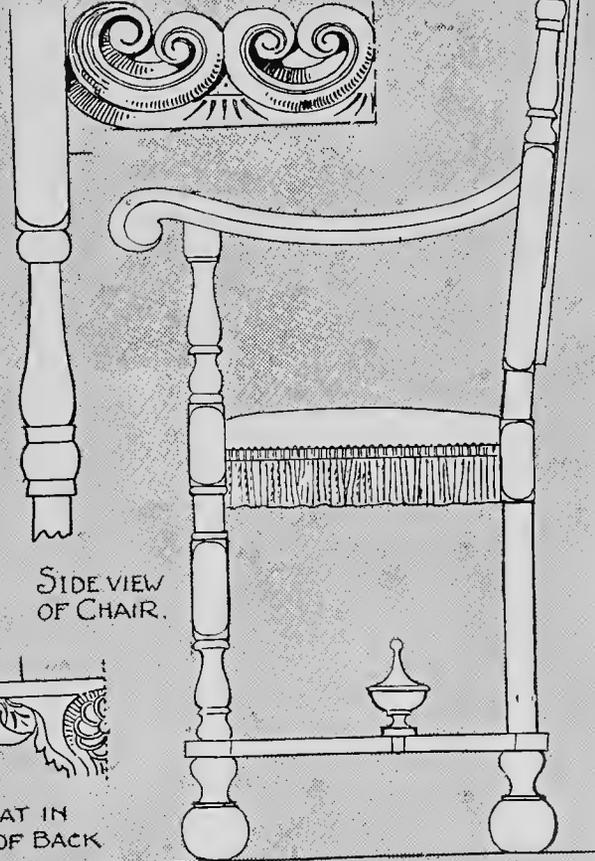


PLAN OF
UNDERFRAMING

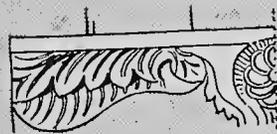


CARVED RAIL AT
HEAD OF CHAIR.

SIDE VIEW
OF CHAIR.



HALF
FRONT VIEW
OF CHAIR.



CARVED SPLAT IN
LOWER PART OF BACK

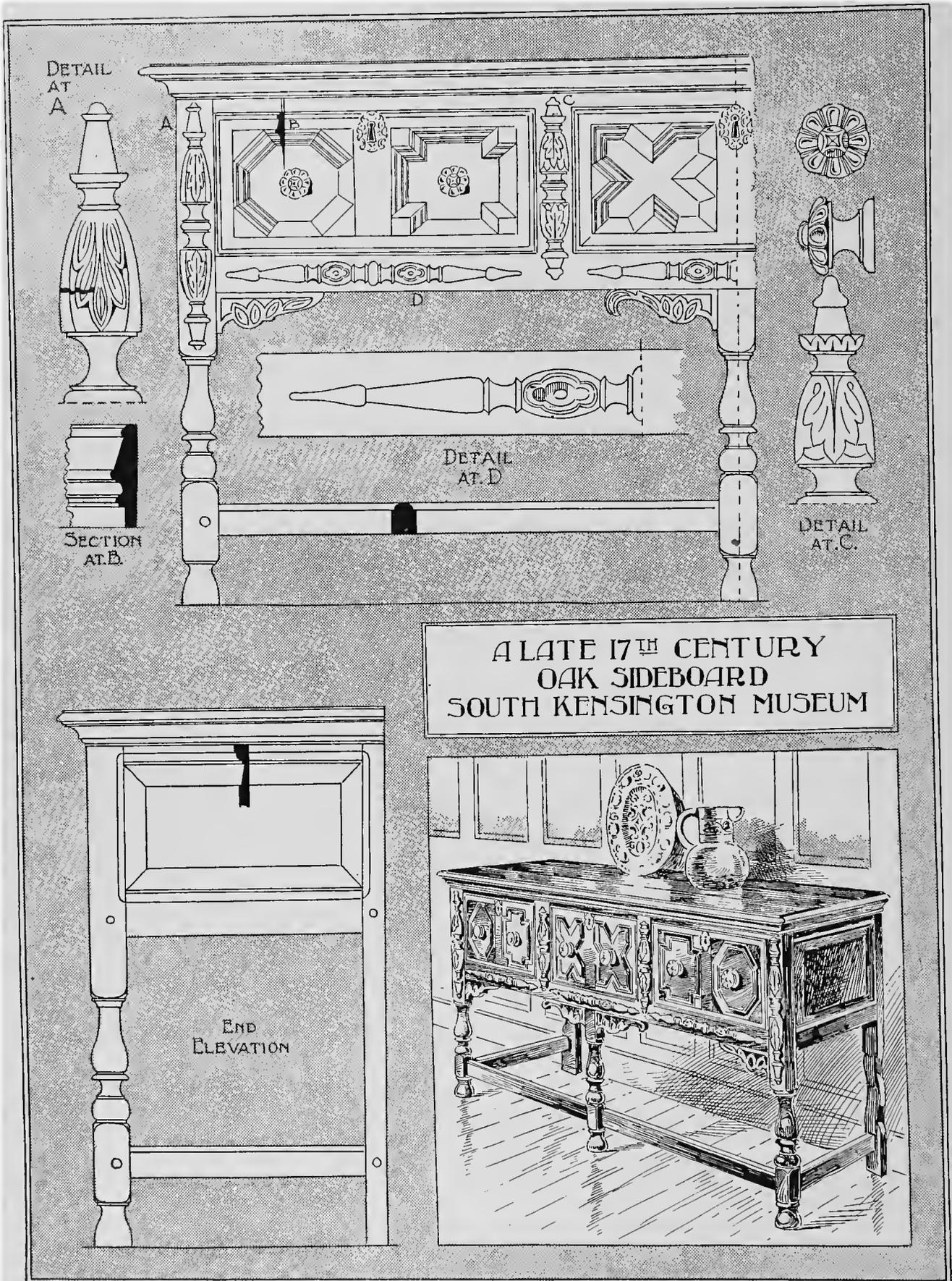
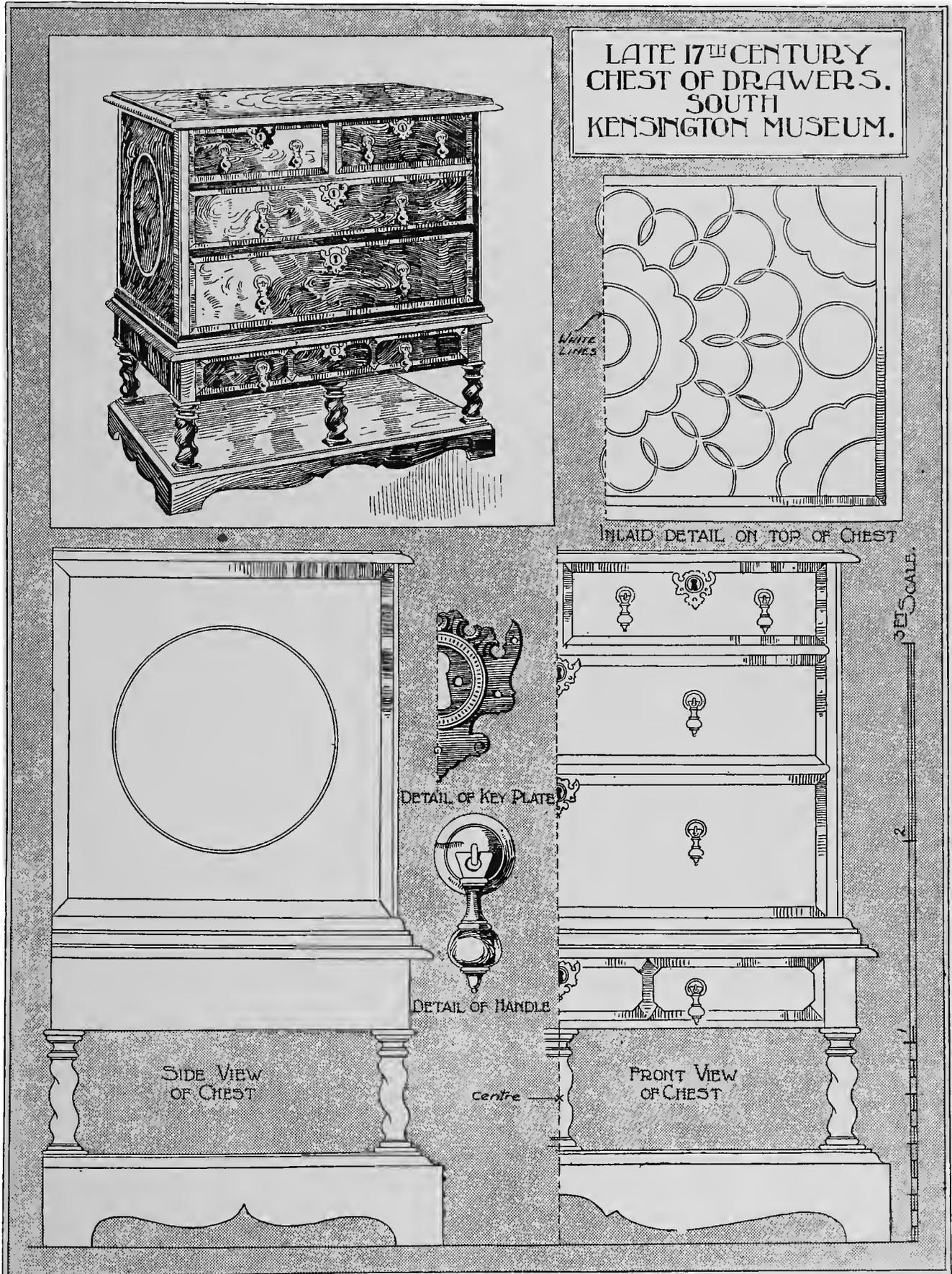


PLATE 16.



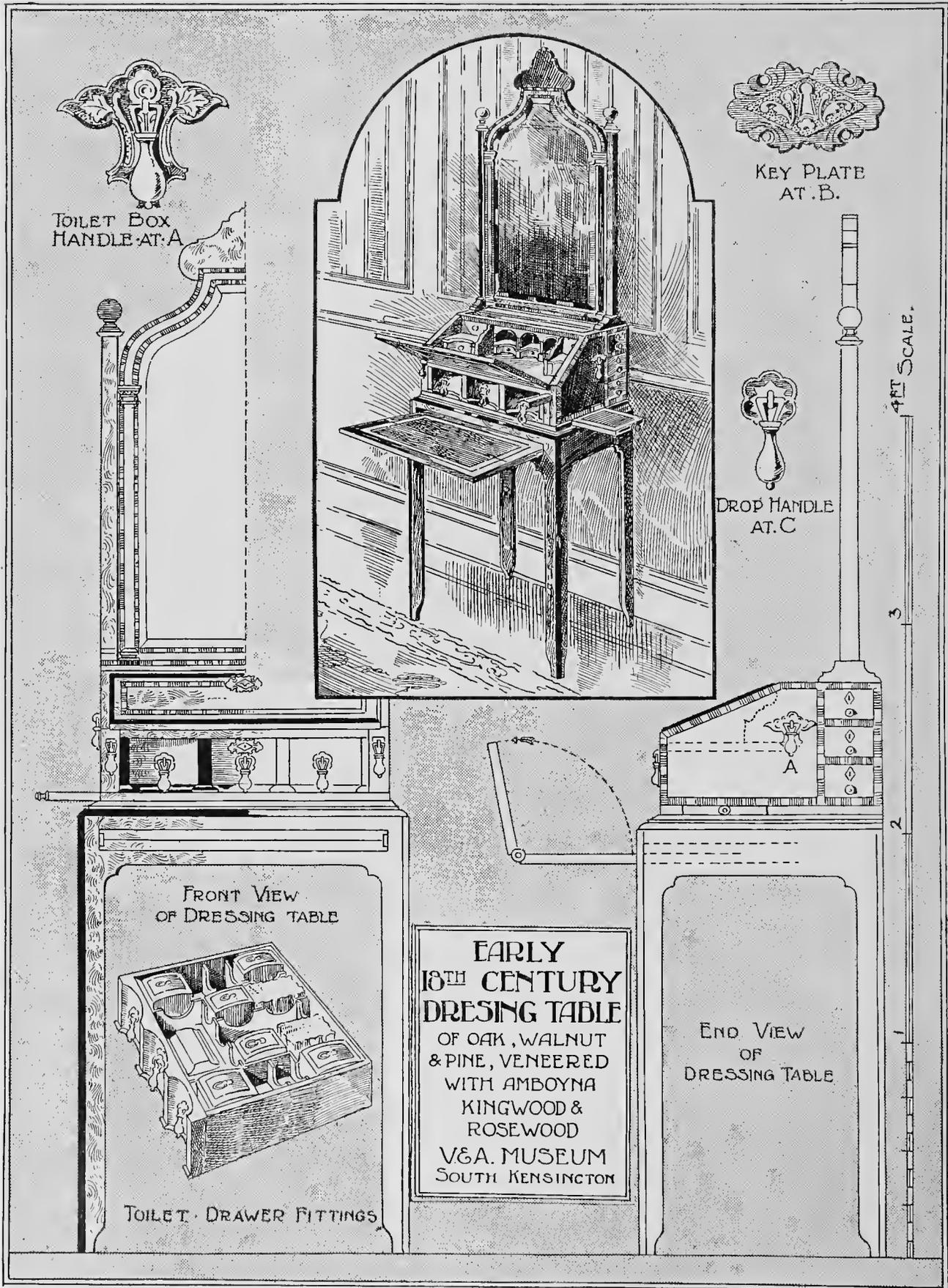


PLATE 18.

A LATE XVICENTURY
INLAID CABINET
S.K. MUSEUM.

SKETCH VIEW
OF CABINET.

SIDE
VIEW.

HALF
FRONT
VIEW

Detail of A

Detail of B

Detail of D, E, F

Detail of C

SCALE

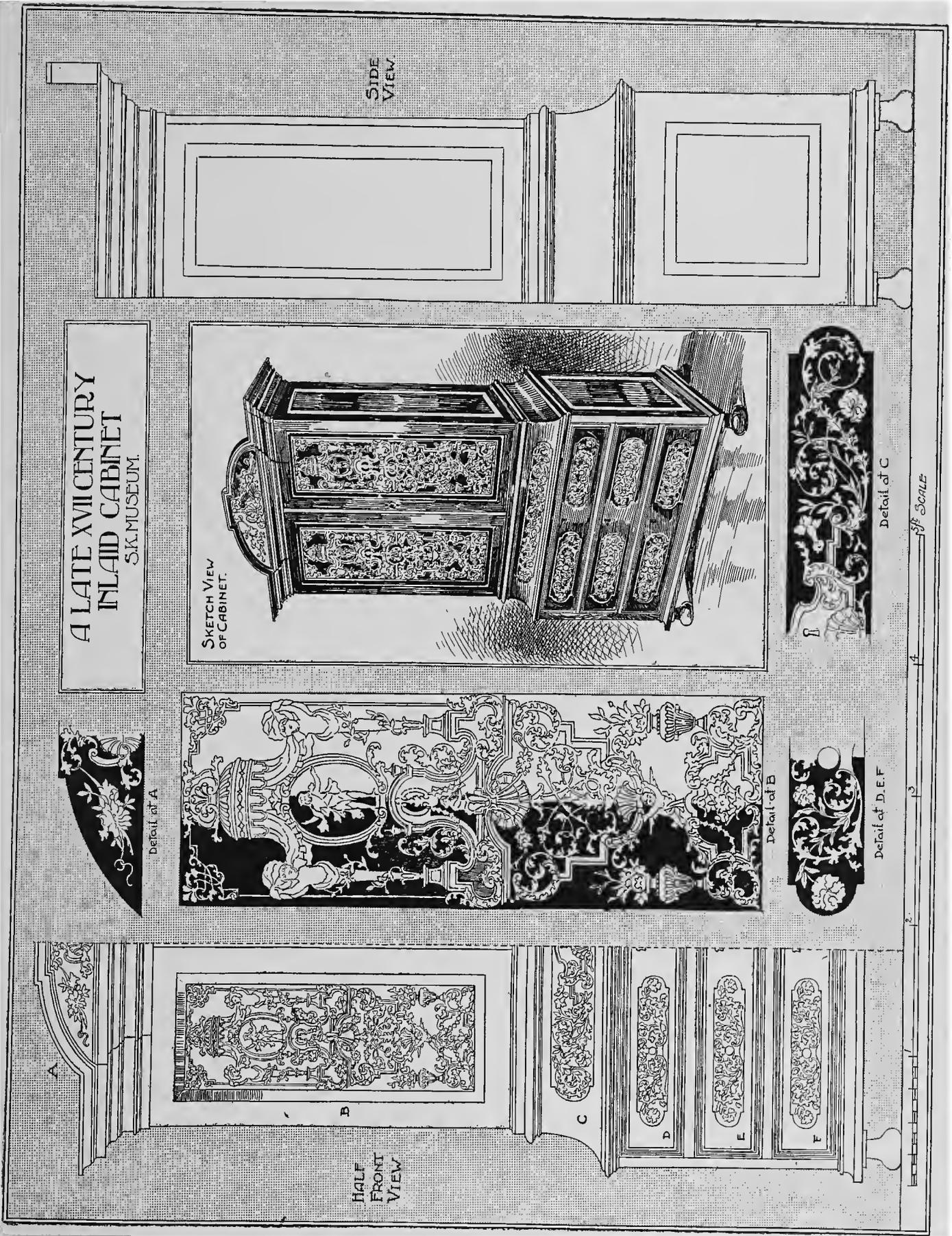
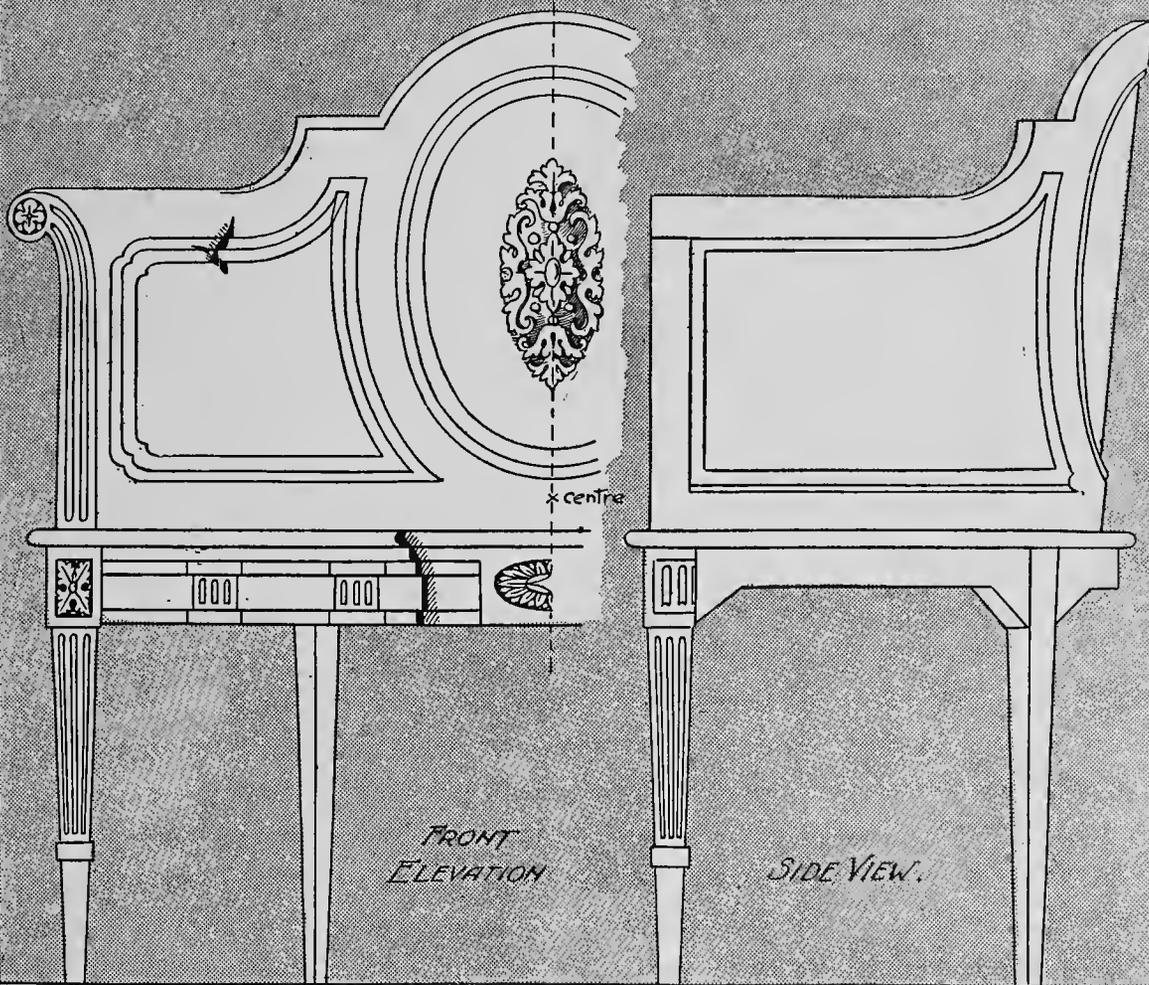
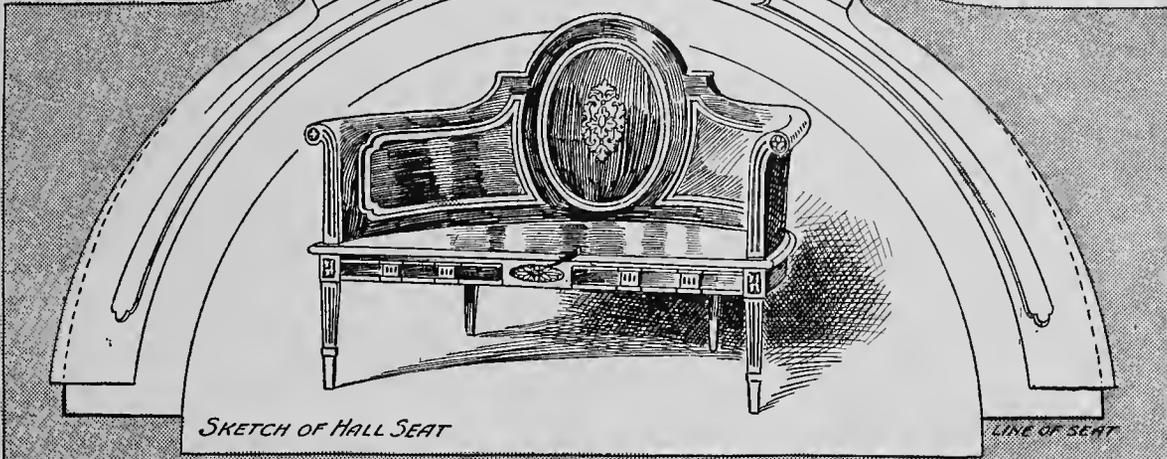




PLATE 20.

A MAHOGANY
HALL SEAT

S. K MUSEUM
DATE ABOUT 1800



SCALE 1 2 3 Ft.

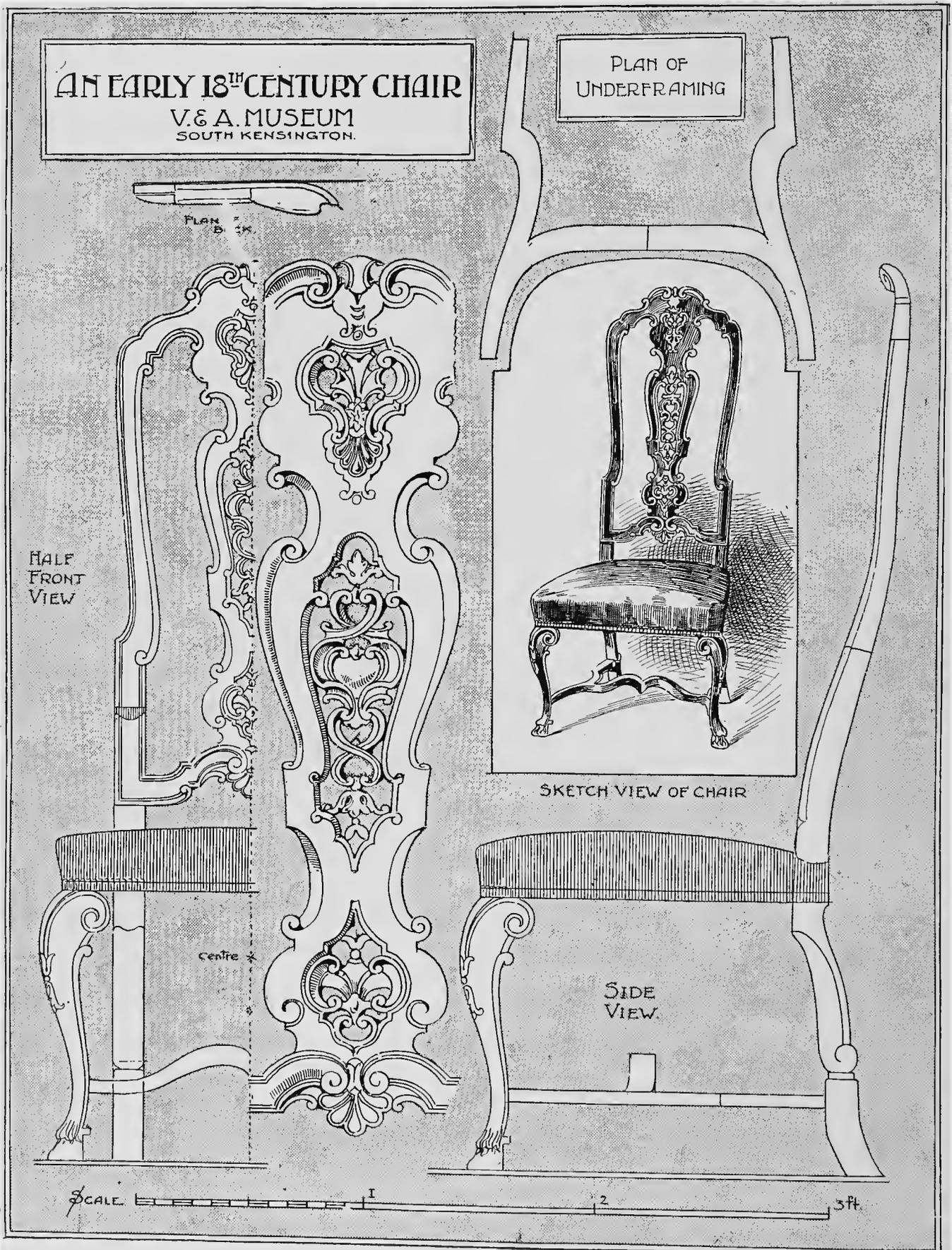
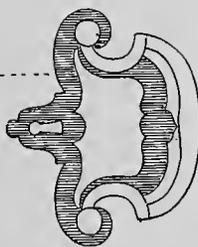


PLATE 22.

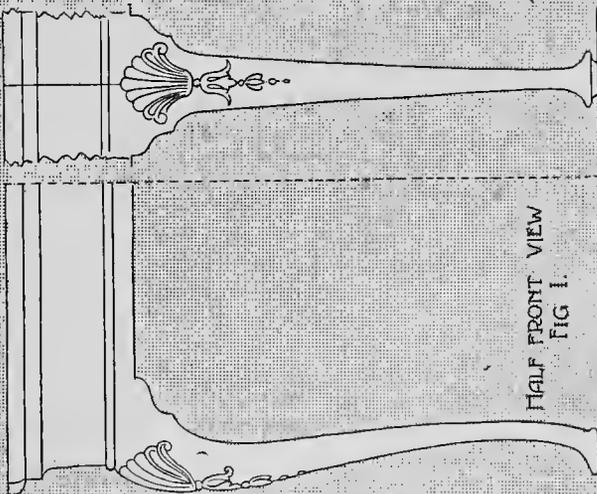
EARLY 18TH CENTURY MAHOAGANY TABLES.

V&A MUSEUM
SOUTH KENSINGTON

HALF PLAN
OF TABLE TOP
FIG 1.



ENLARGED DETAIL OF HANDLE
FIG 2.



HALF FRONT VIEW
FIG 1.

FIG 1.

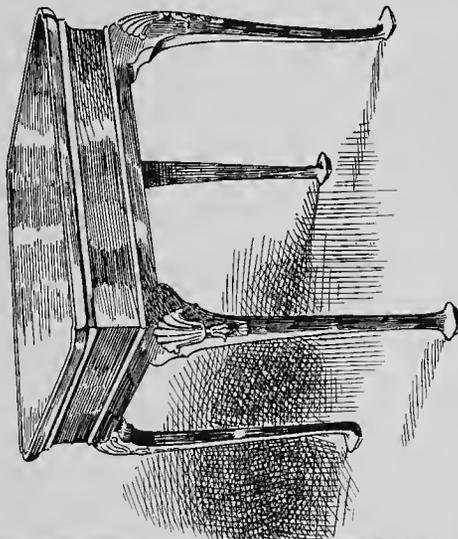
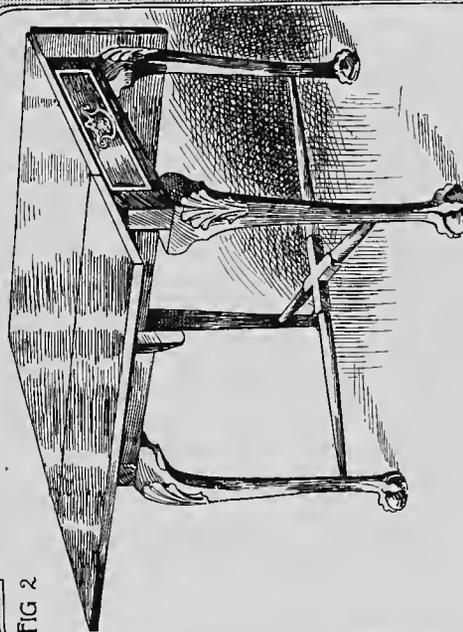
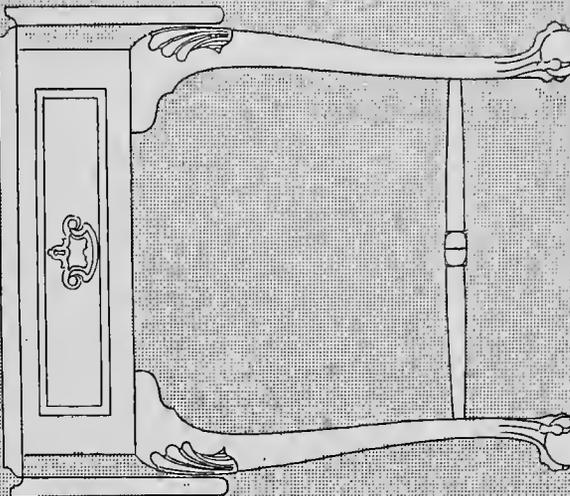
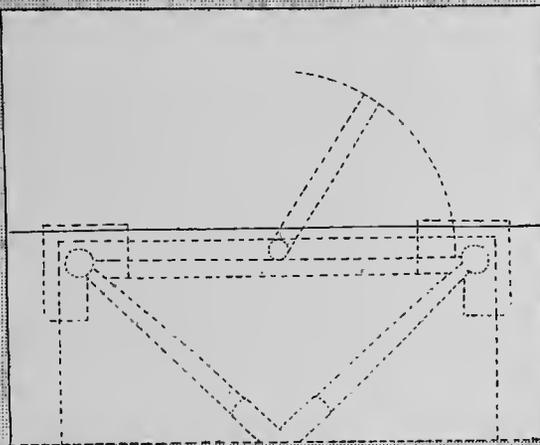


FIG 2



HALF PLAN OF UNDERFRAMING FIG 2.

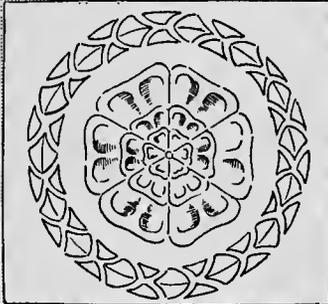


END VIEW OF FIG 2.

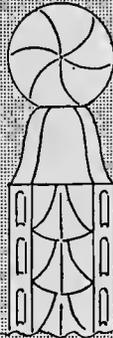


EARLY 18TH CENTURY
GERMAN CHAIR

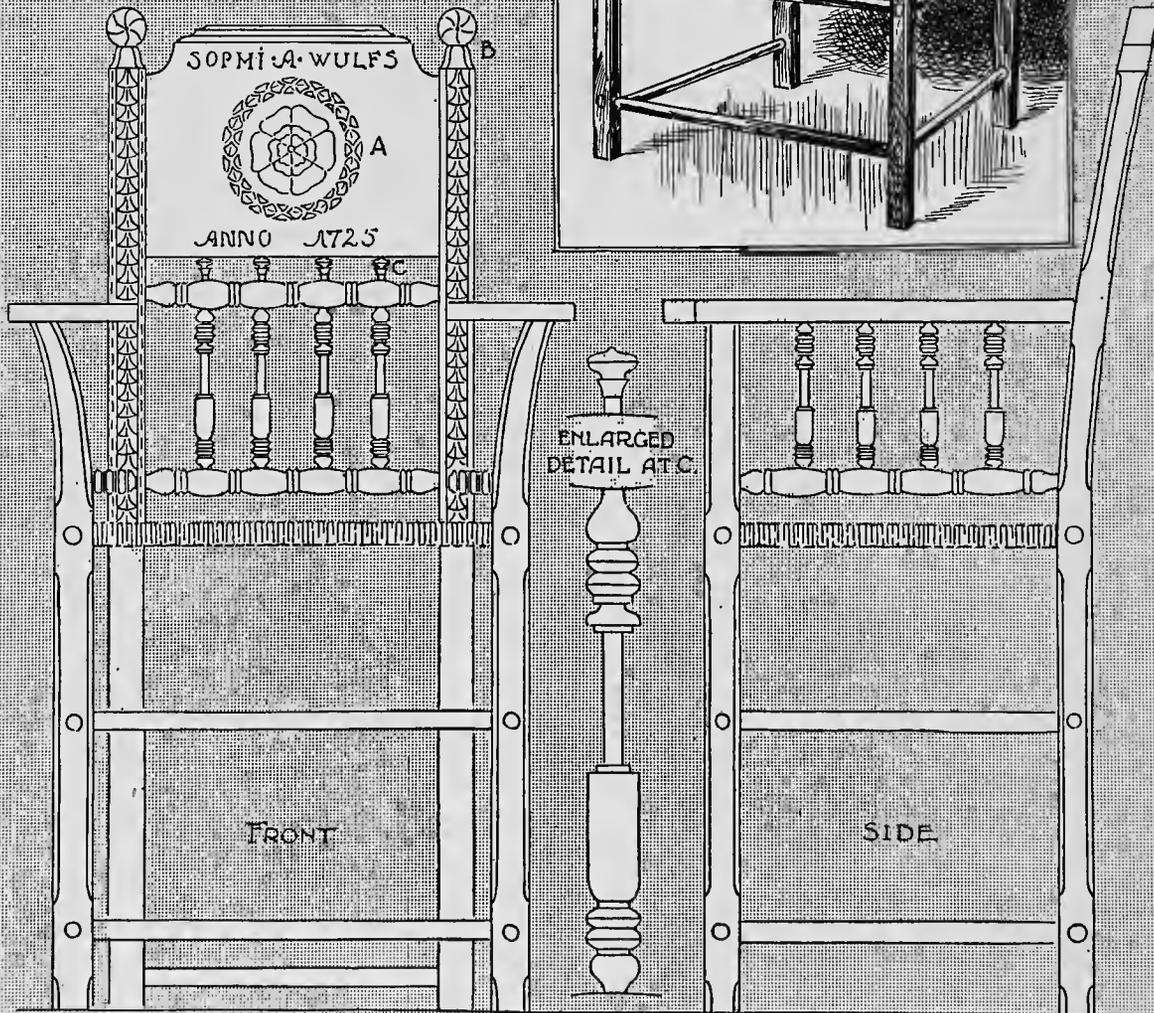
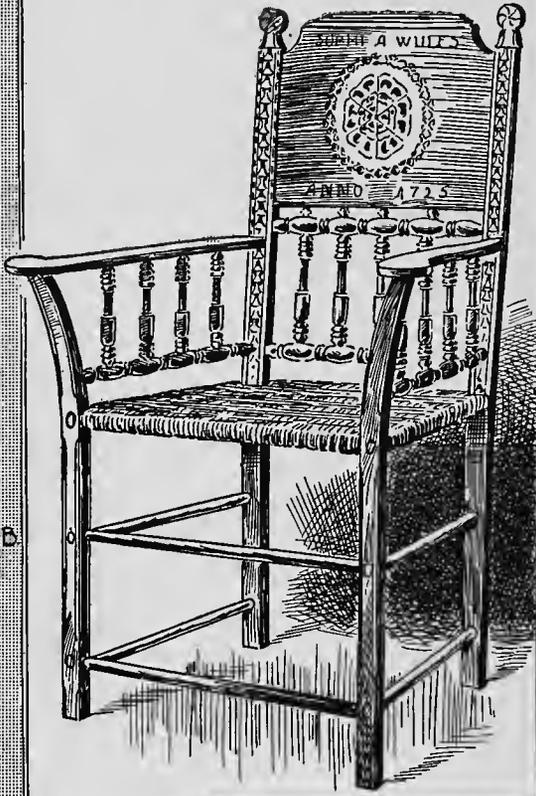
V&A.MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON



ENLARGED DETAIL
AT A.



ENLARGED DETAIL AT B.



SOPMI A WULFS

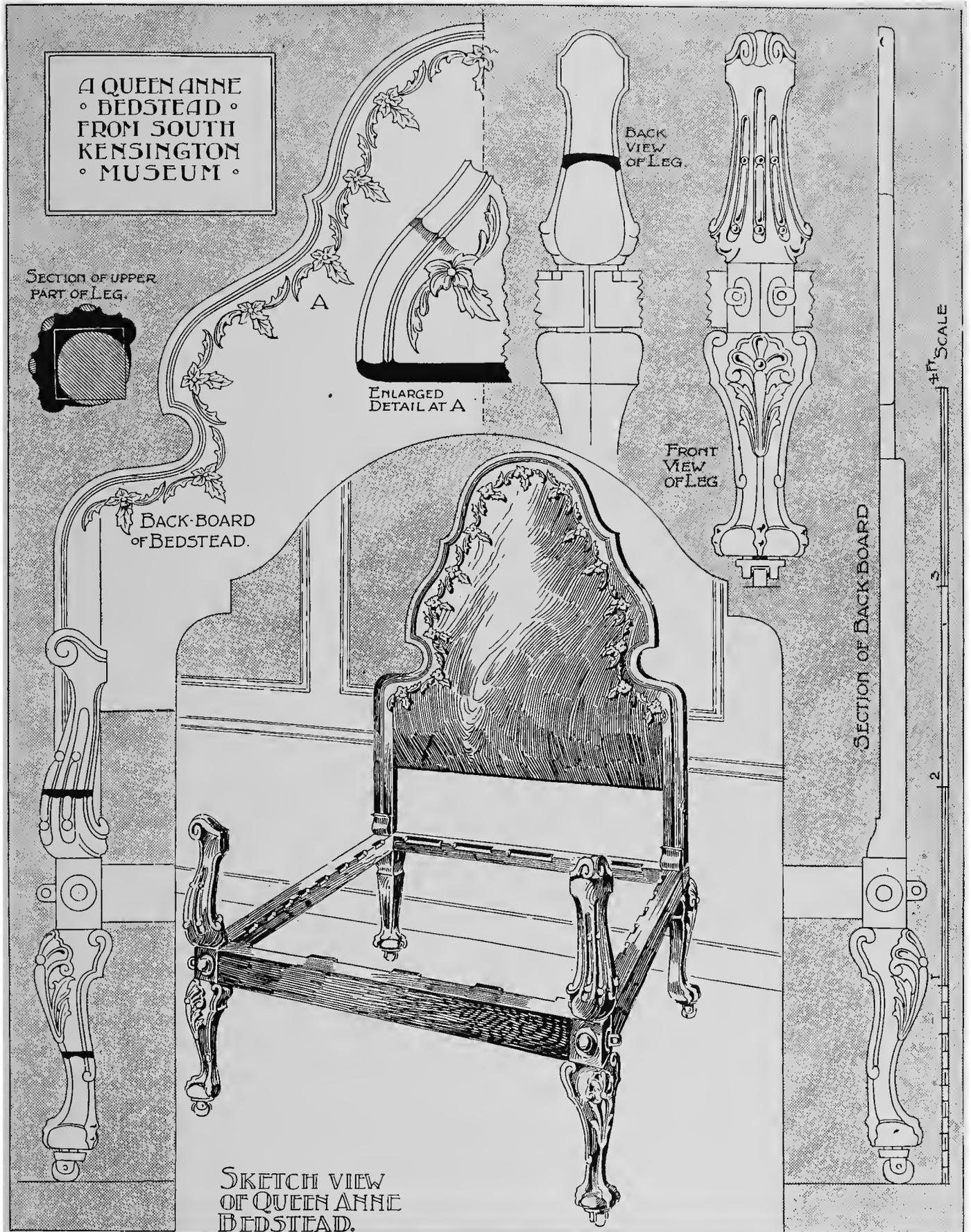
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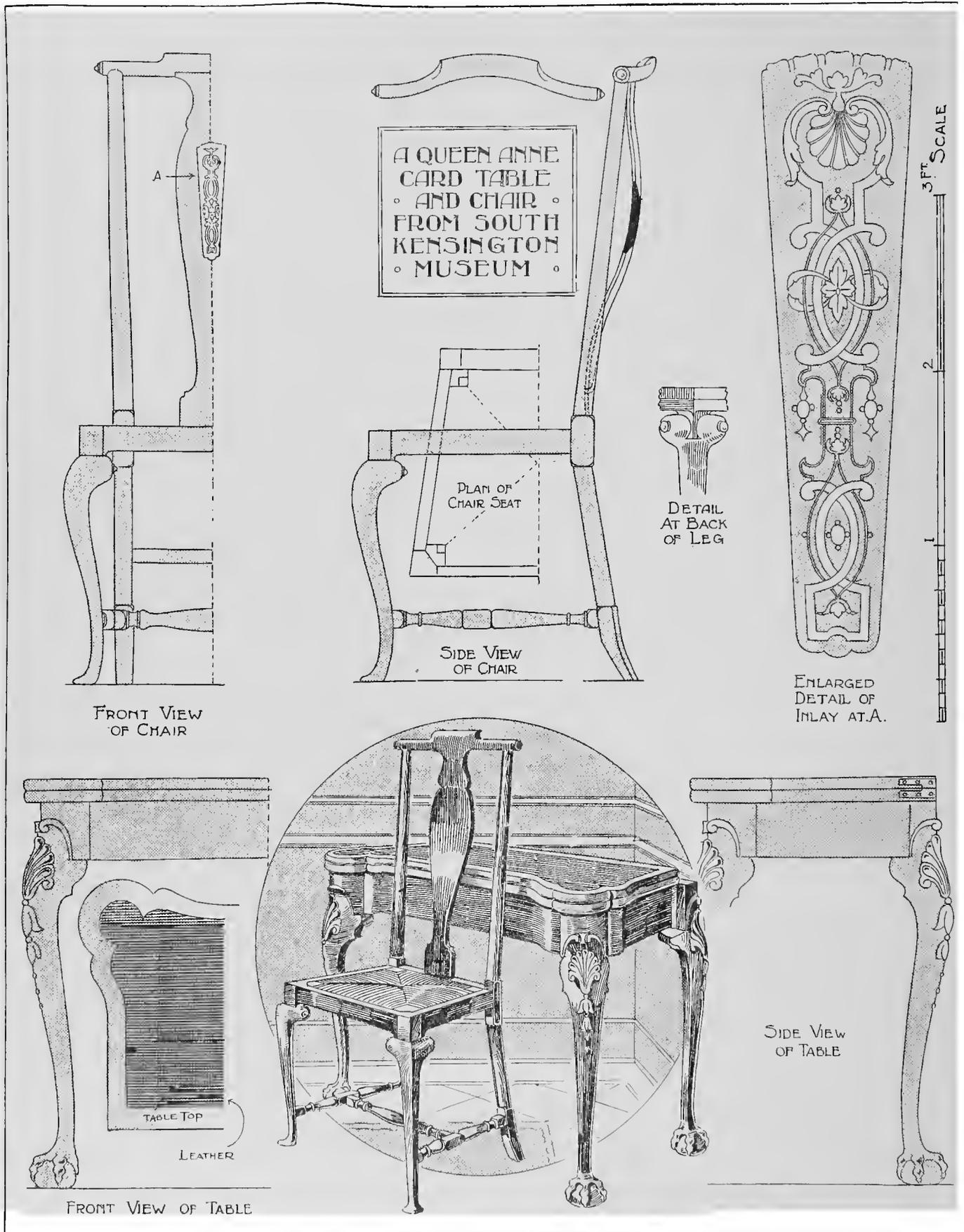
ENLARGED
DETAIL AT C.

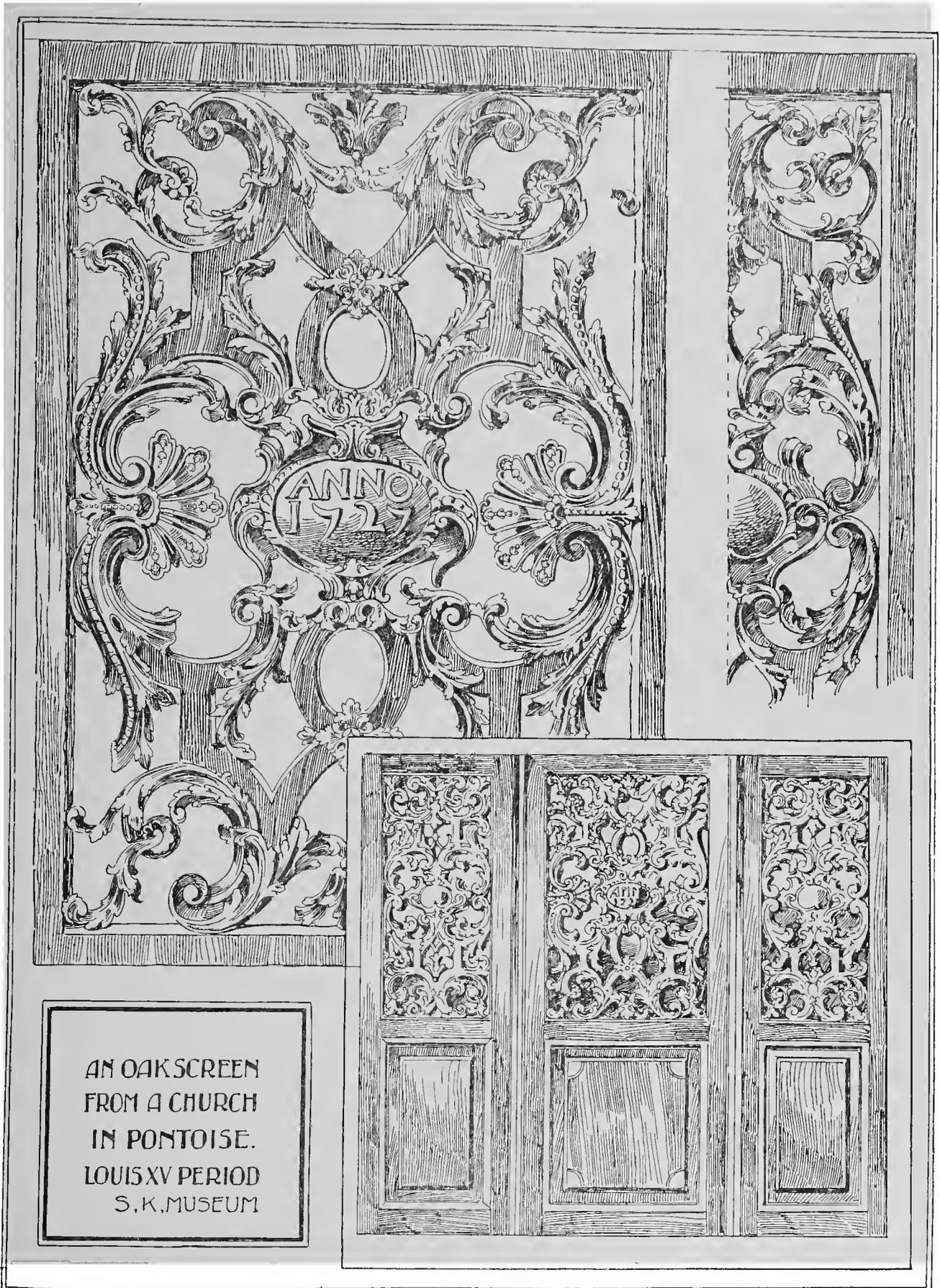
FRONT

SIDE

1 2 3/4 SCALE.







AN OAK SCREEN
FROM A CHURCH
IN PONTOISE.
LOUIS XV PERIOD
S. K. MUSEUM

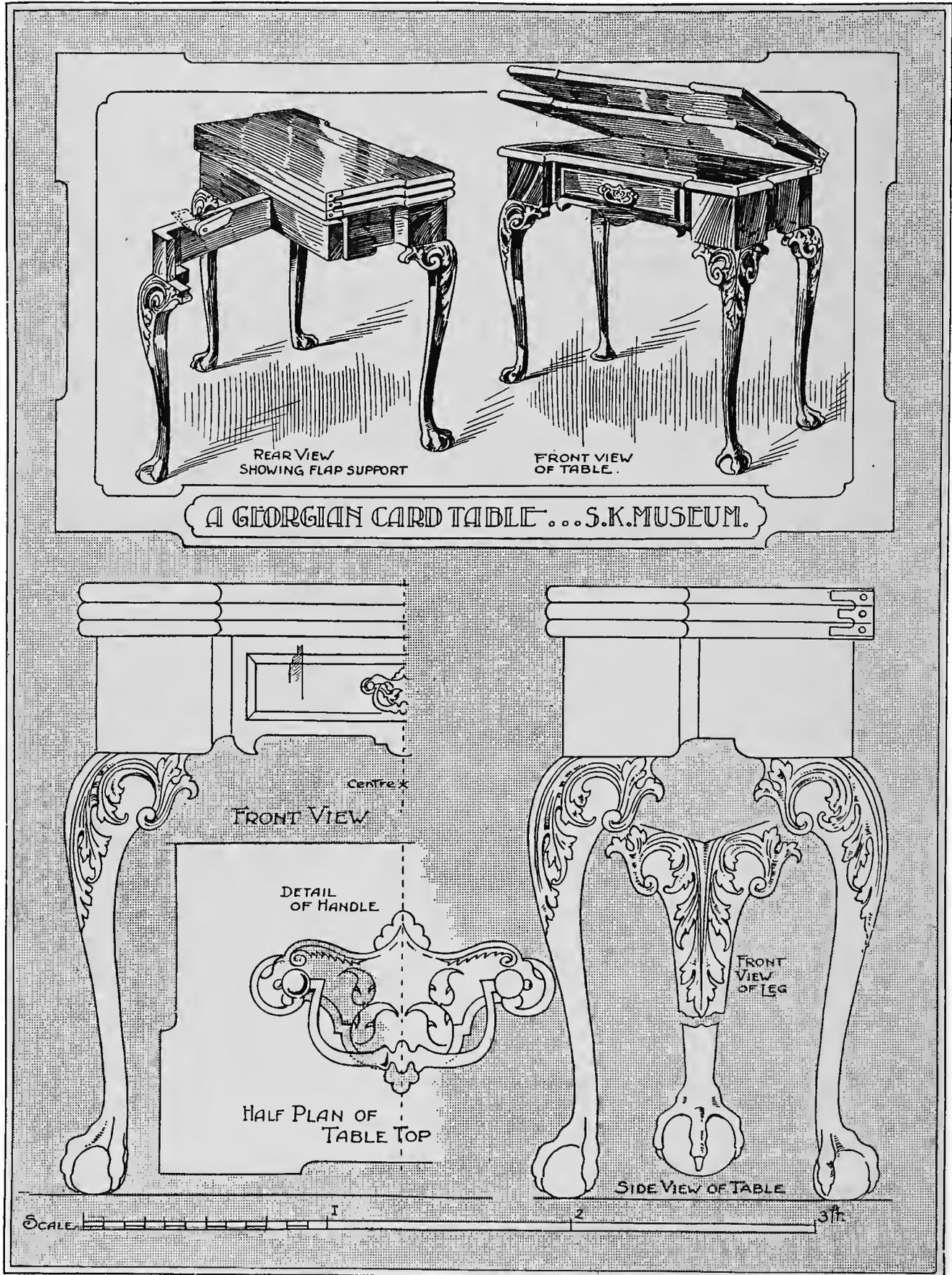
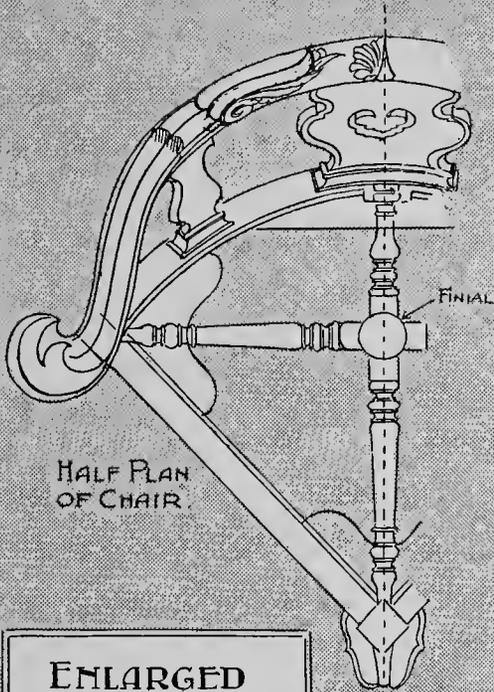


PLATE 28.

AN EARLY GEORGIAN
CORNER CHAIR ... S.K. MUSEUM

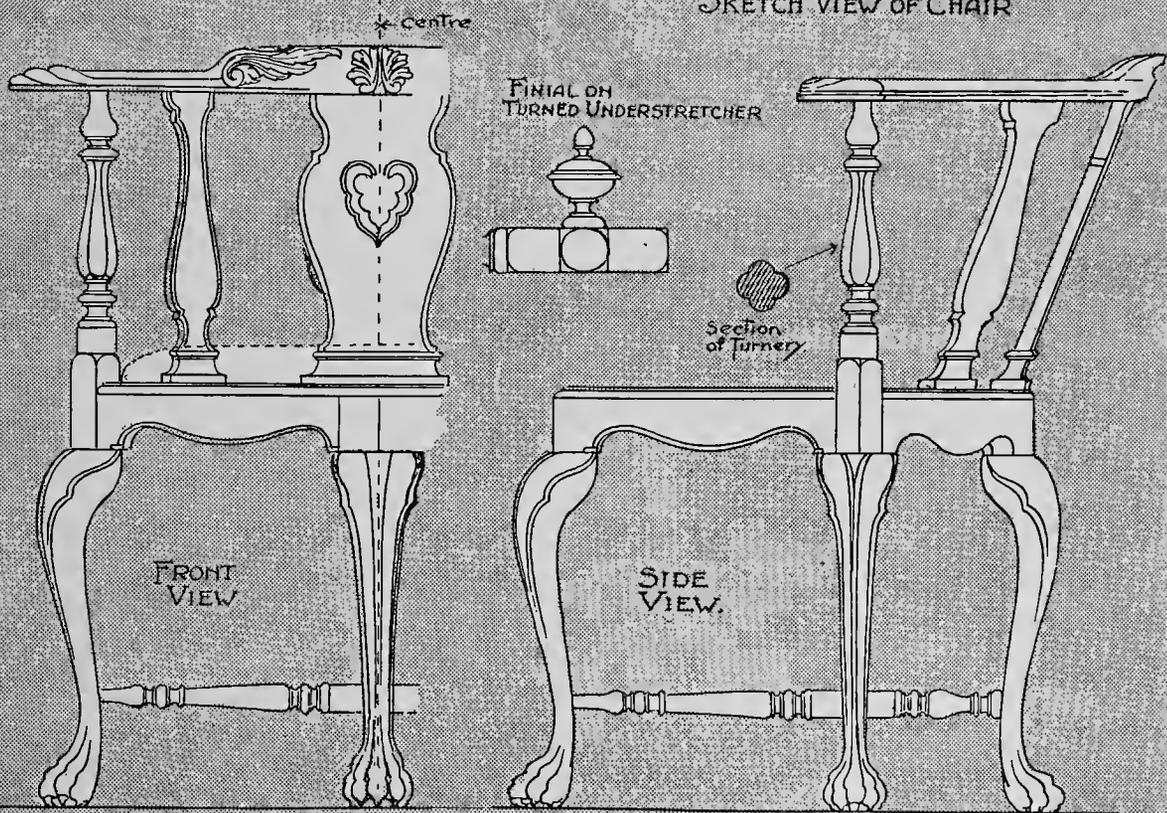


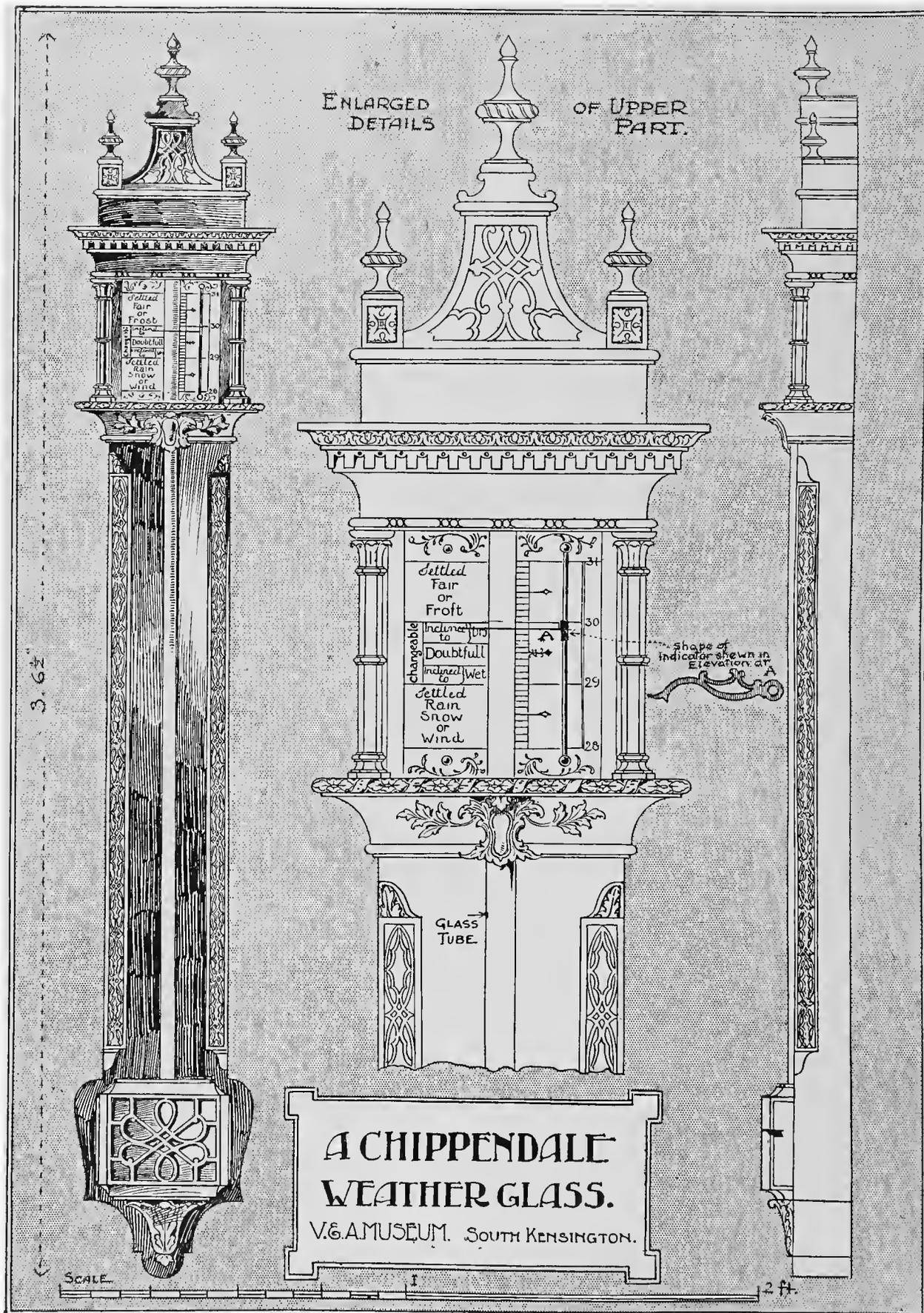
HALF PLAN
OF CHAIR.



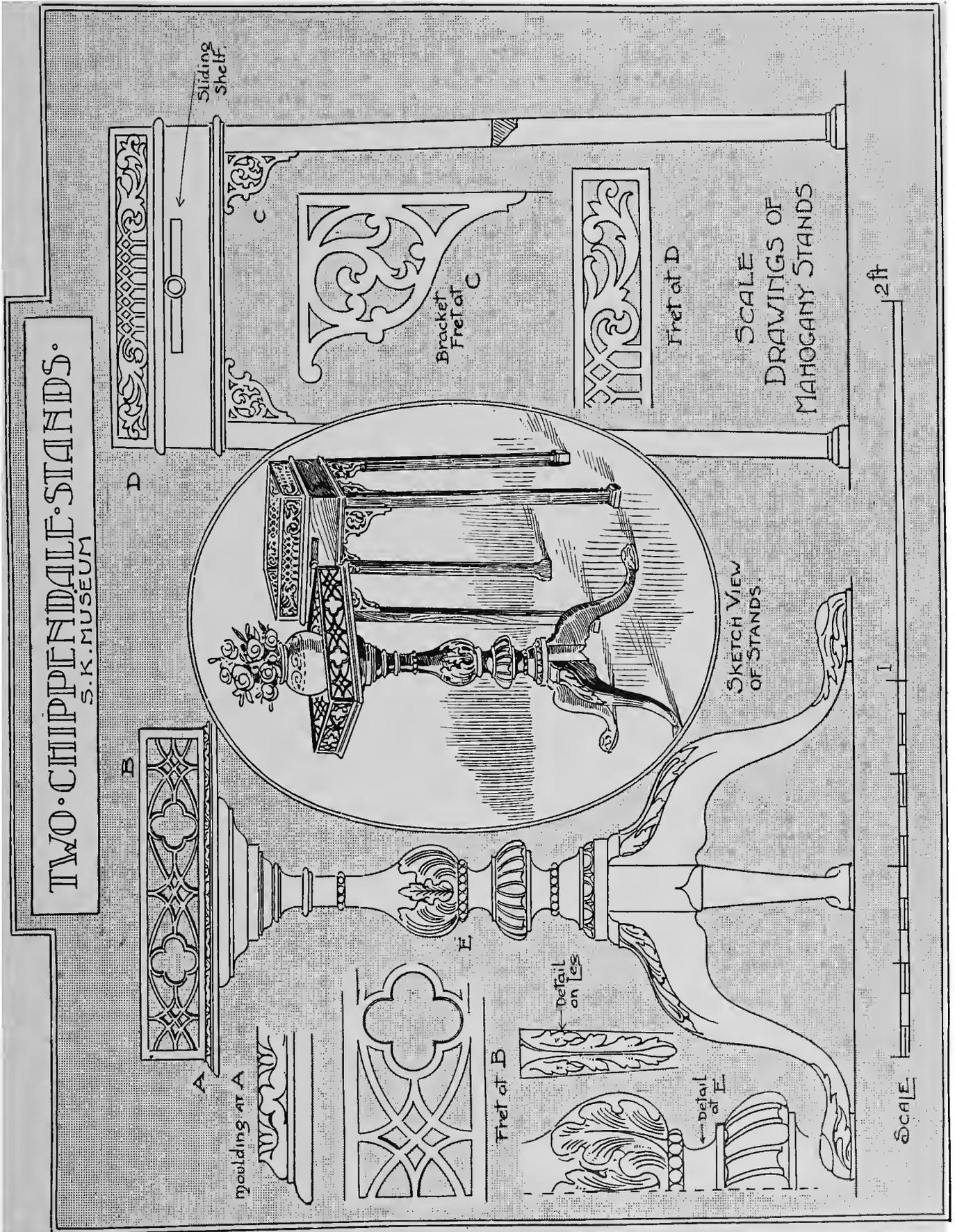
SKETCH VIEW OF CHAIR

ENLARGED
DETAILS OF
CHAIR.

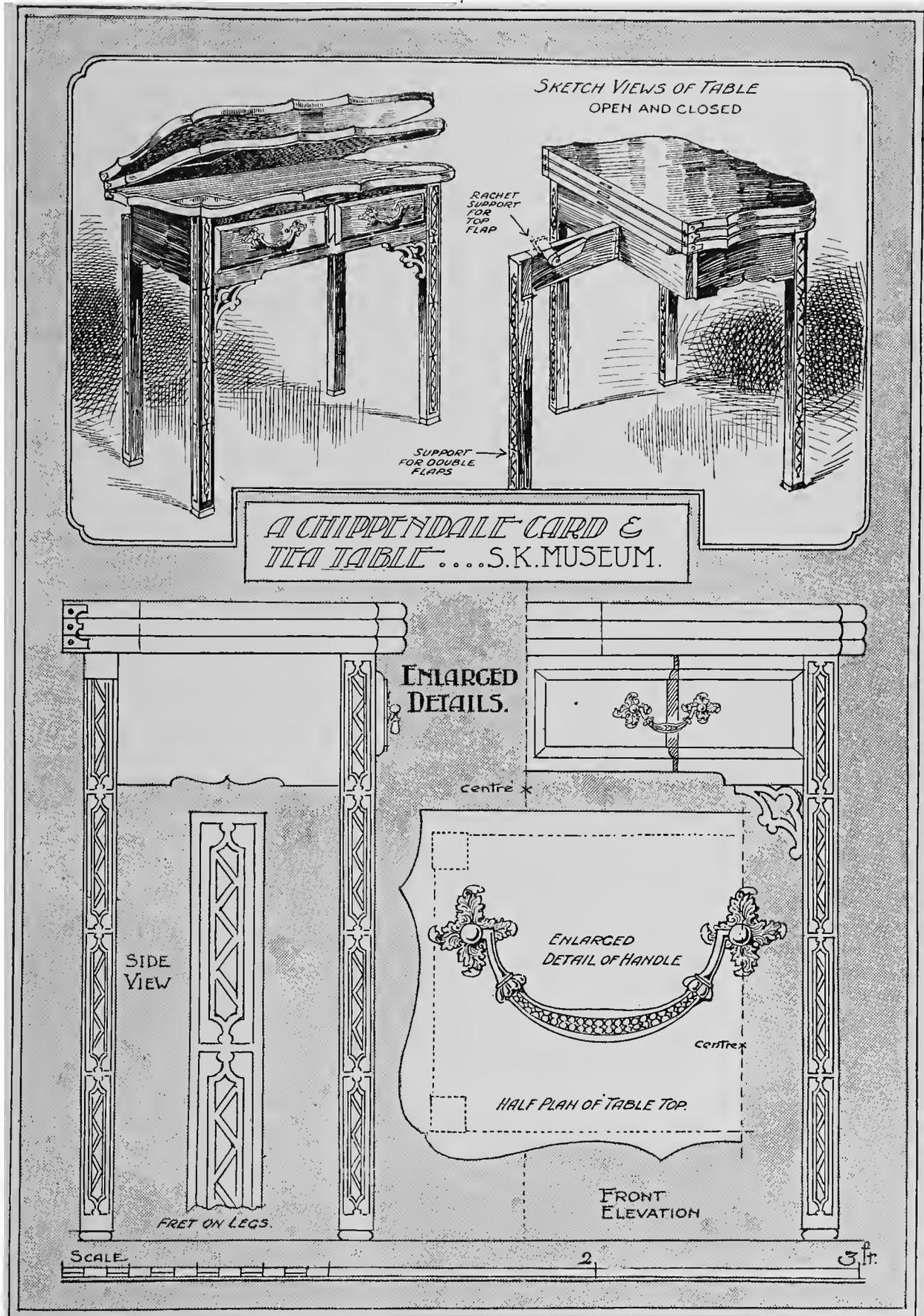


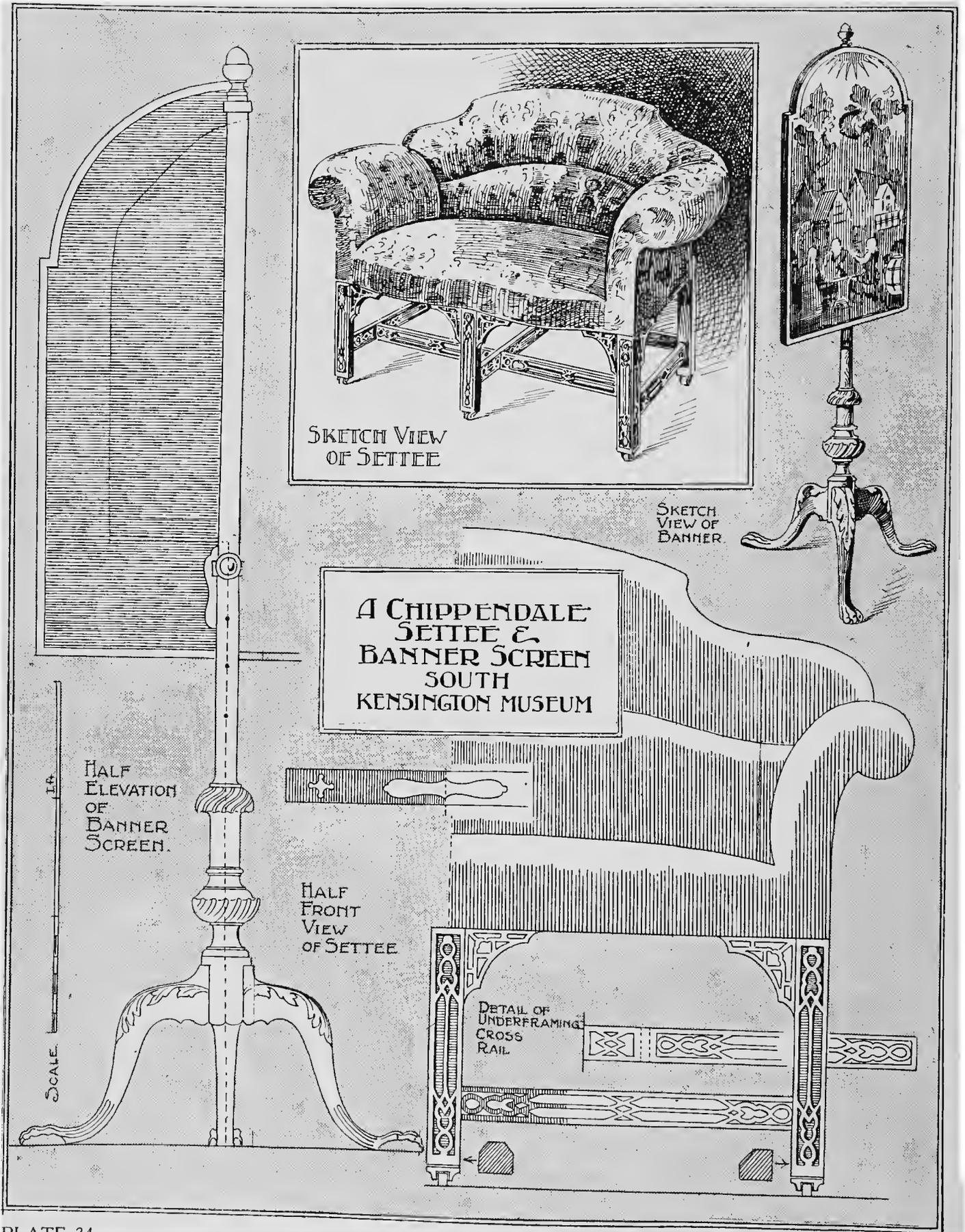


A CHIPPENDALE WEATHER GLASS.
 V.&A MUSEUM. SOUTH KENSINGTON.

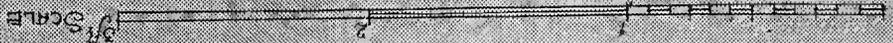
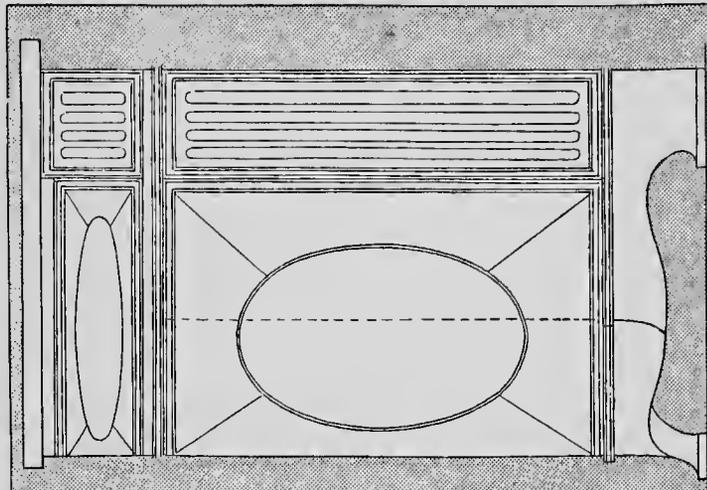
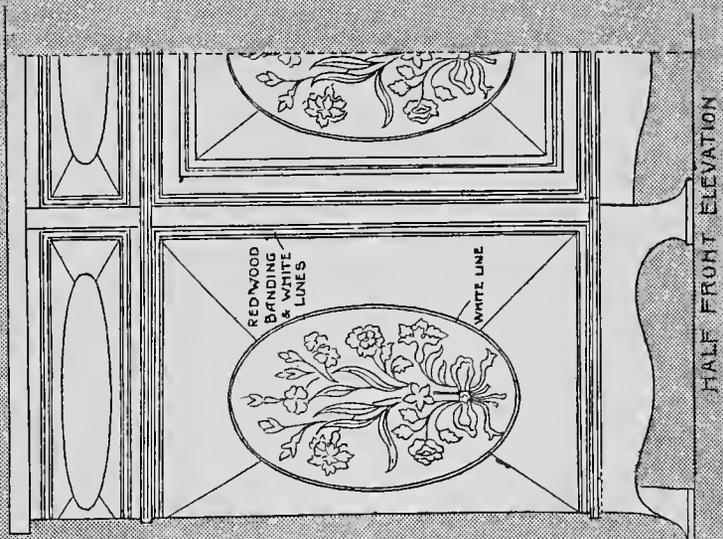
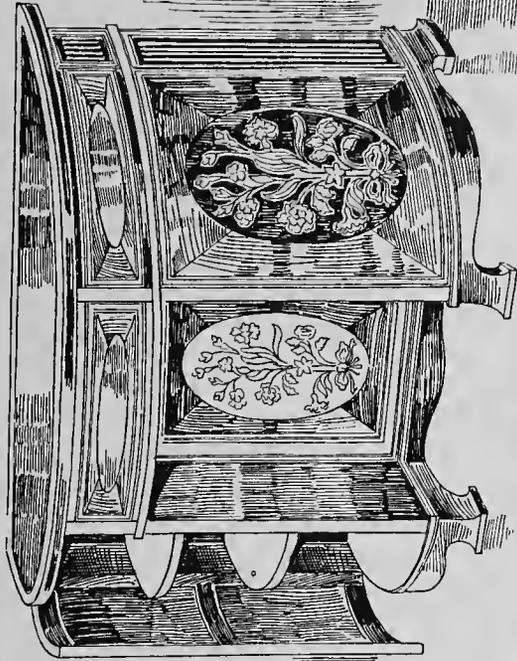
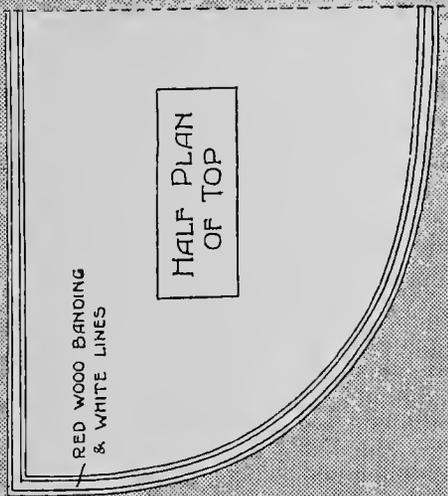


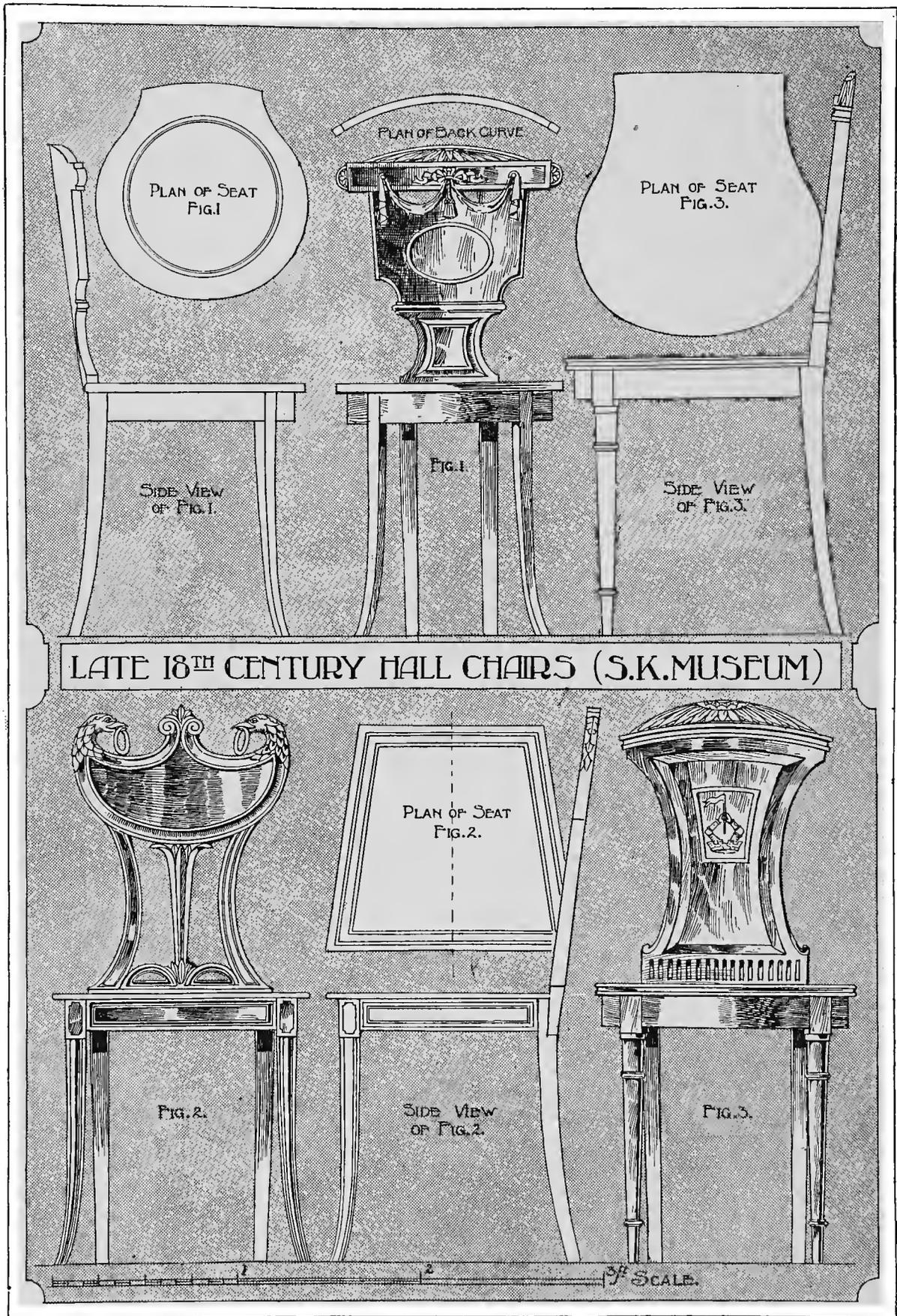


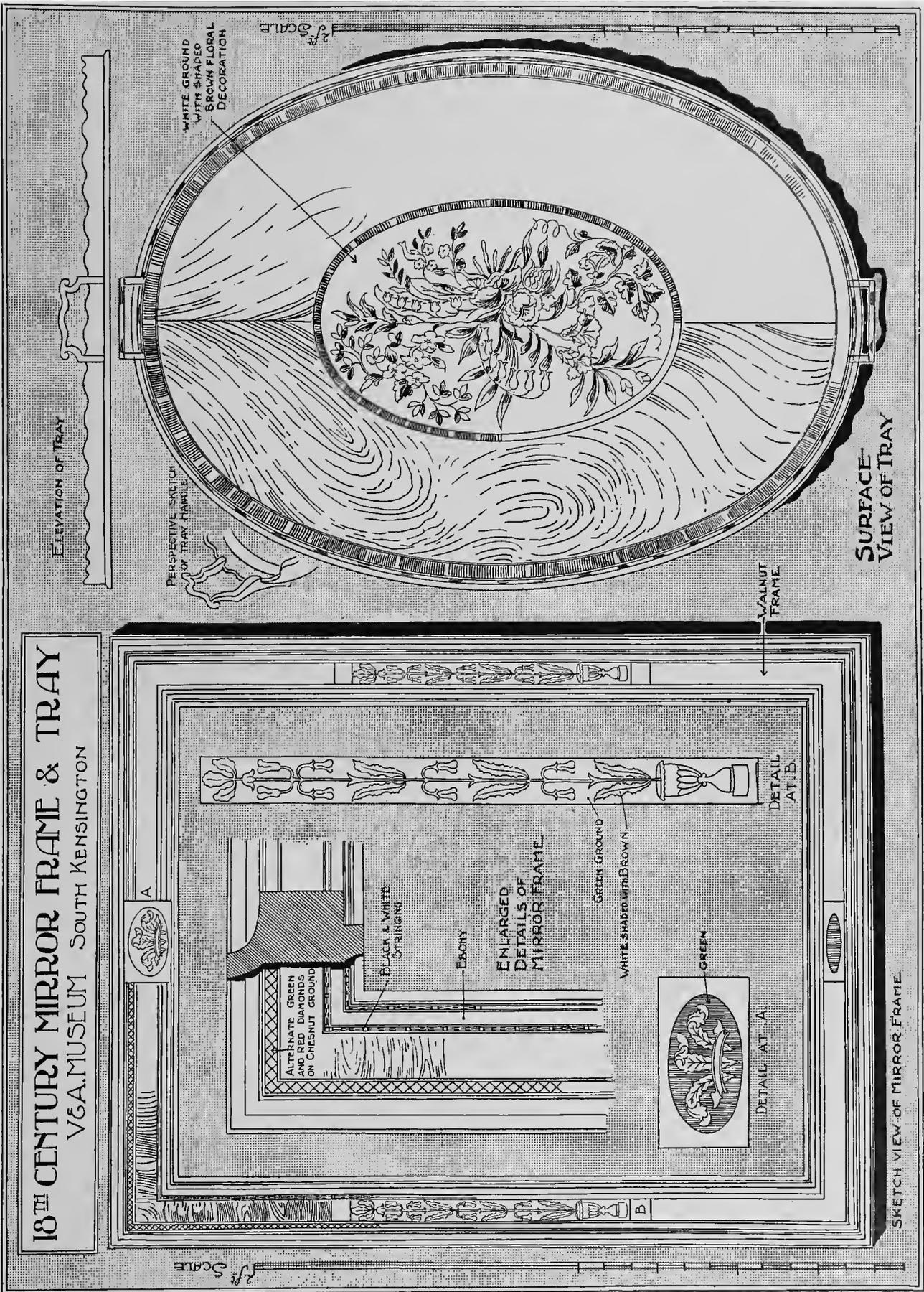




18TH CENTURY INLAID WALNUT DRESSING TABLE
V&A MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON







18TH CENTURY MIRROR FRAME & TRAY
V&A.MUSEUM SOUTH KENSINGTON

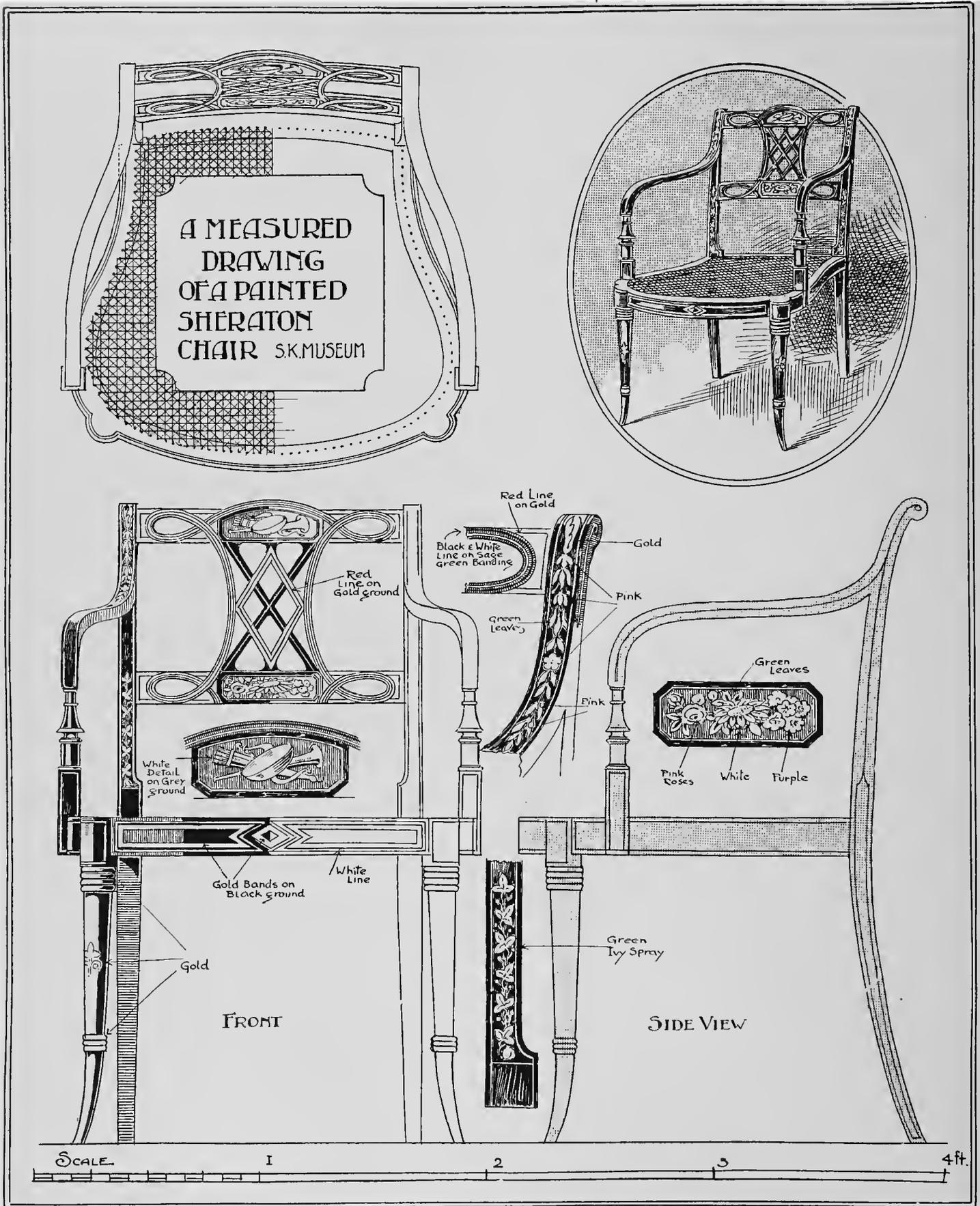
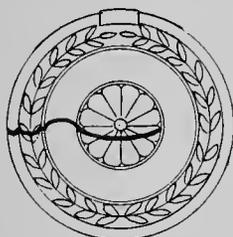


PLATE 38.

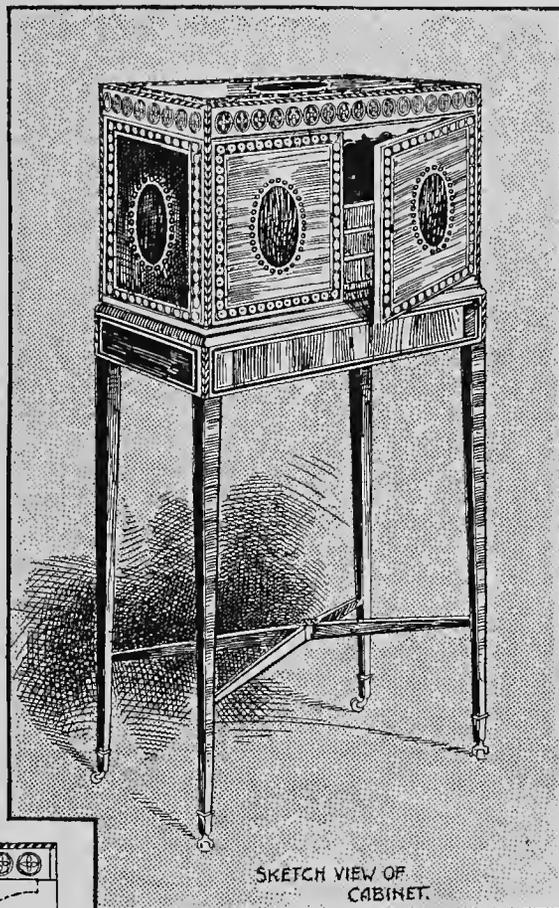
AN INLAID SATINWOOD
CABINET
S.K. MUSEUM



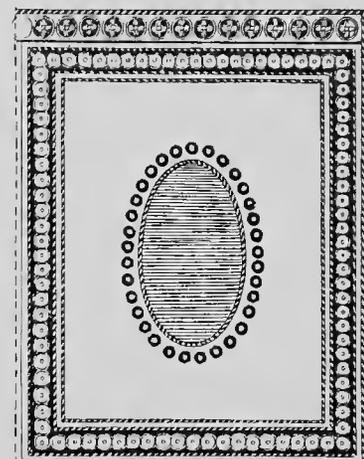
HALF FRONT ELEVATION
OF INTERIOR.



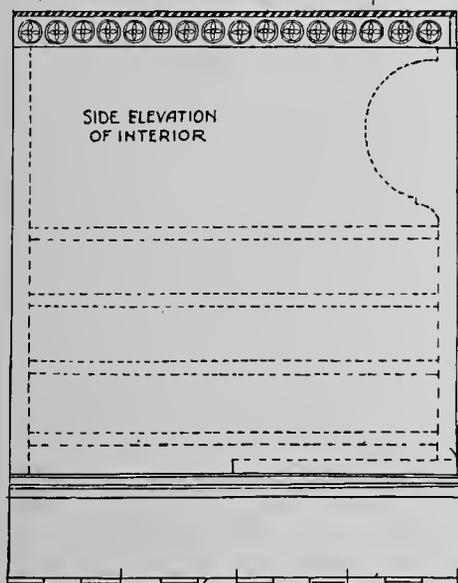
SKETCH OF
DRAWER HANDLE.



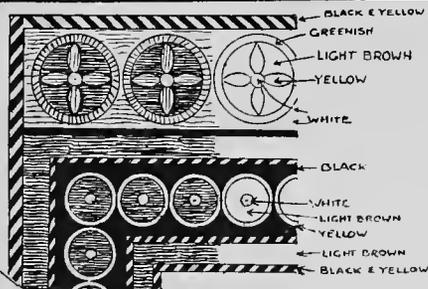
SKETCH VIEW OF
CABINET.



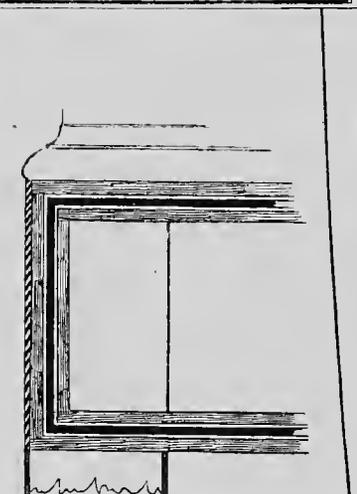
DETAIL OF
DRAWER FRONT



SIDE ELEVATION
OF INTERIOR

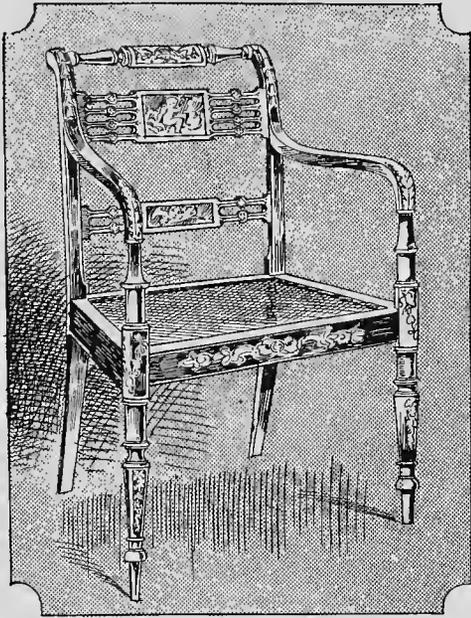


ENRICHMENT OF
UPPER PART
OF CABINET.

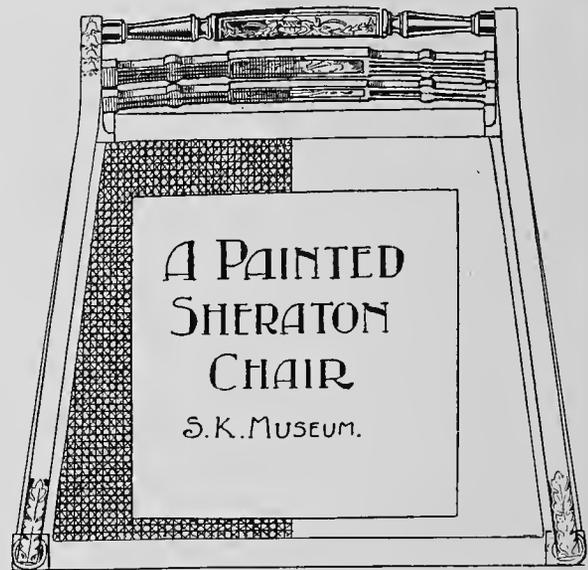


HALF FRONT
ELEVATION OF
CABINET.

2 ft SCALE.

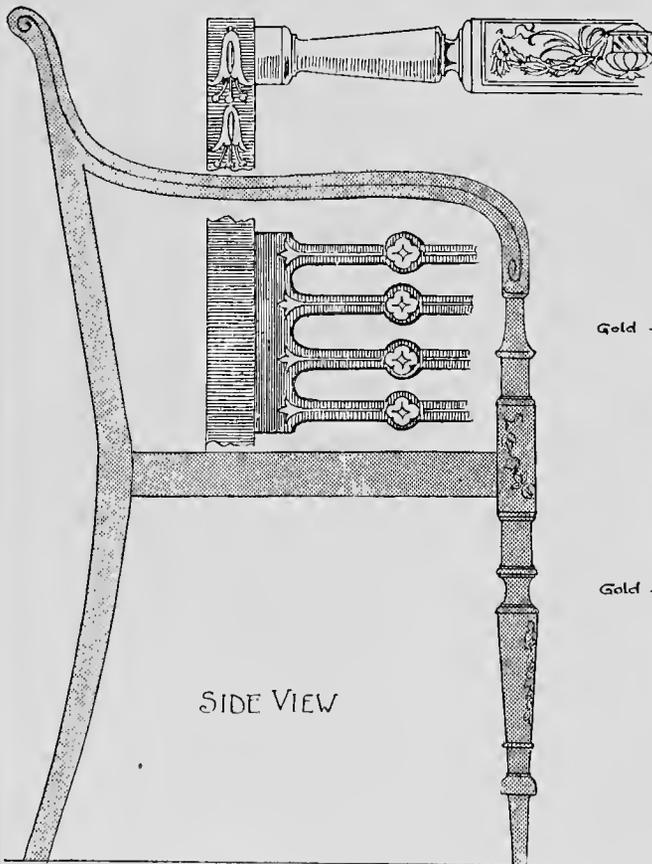


SKETCH VIEW OF CHAIR.

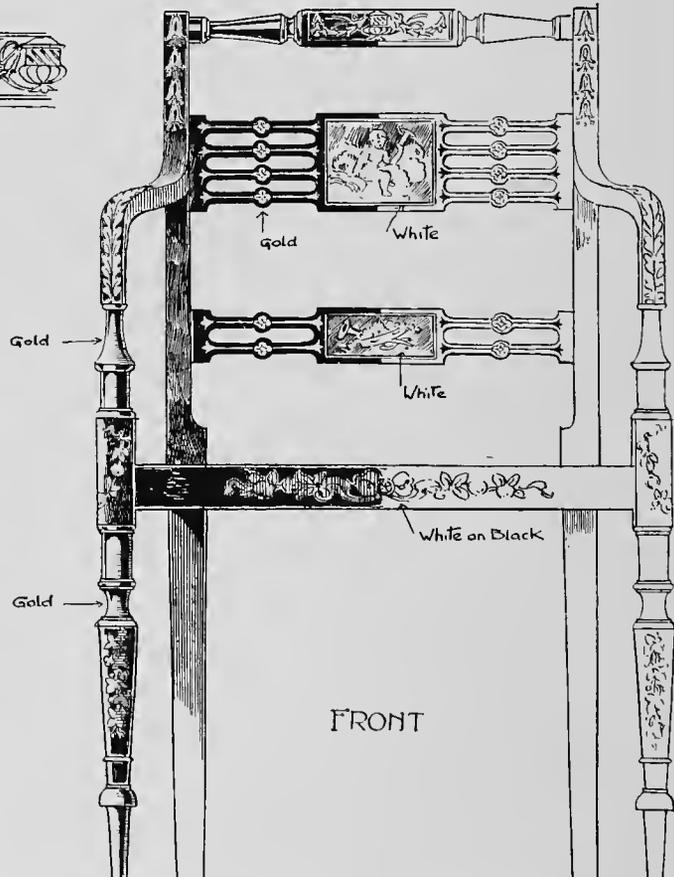


A PAINTED
SHERATON
CHAIR
S.K. MUSEUM.

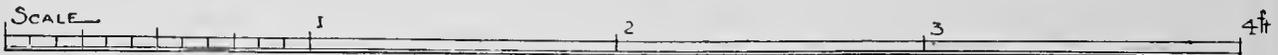
PLAN OF CHAIR FRAME



SIDE VIEW

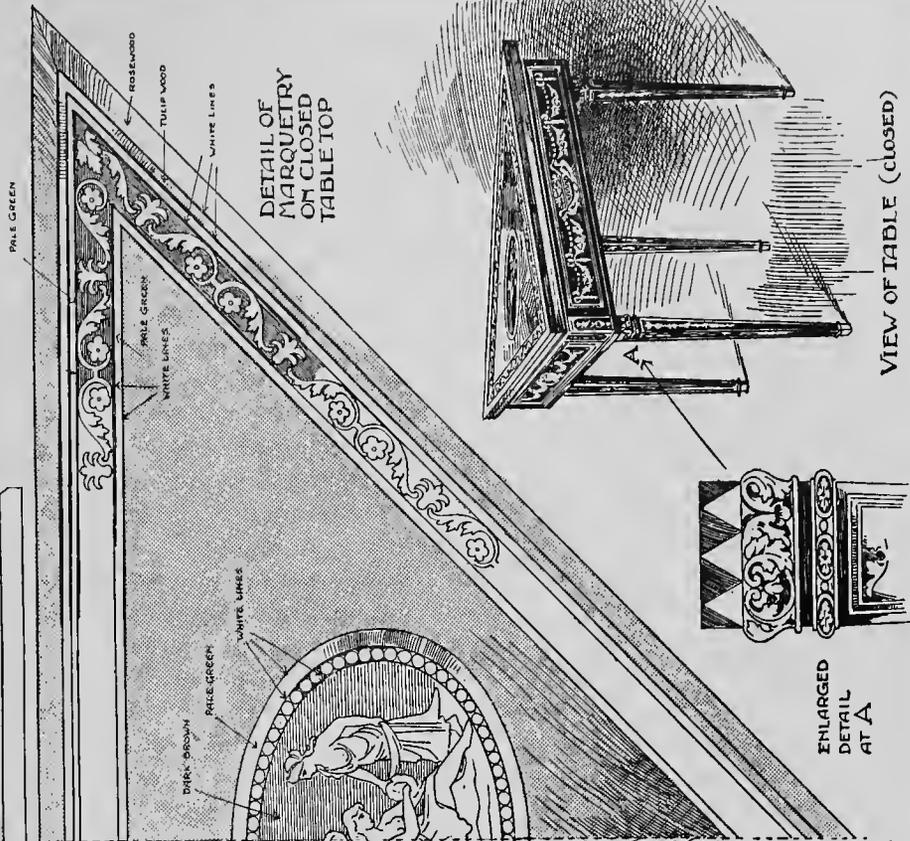
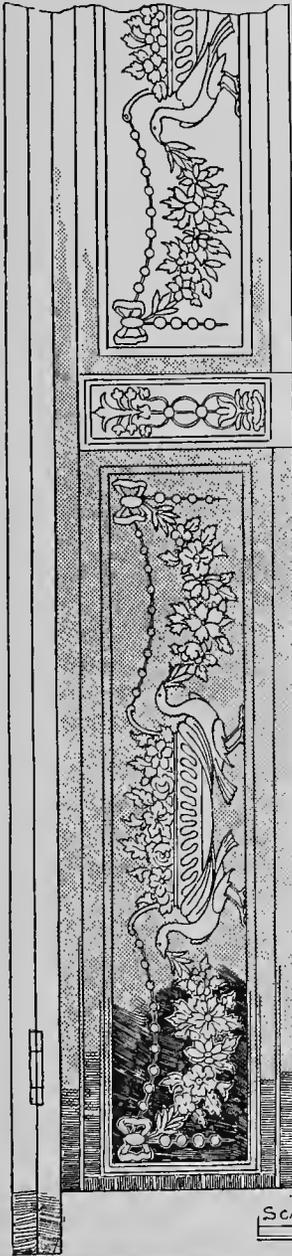


FRONT



AN 18TH CENTURY
(ITALIAN)
CARD TABLE
S. K. MUSEUM.

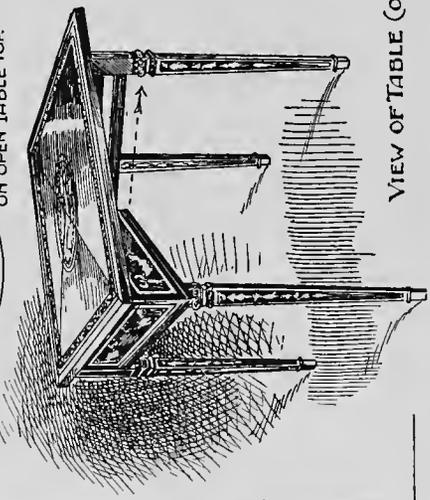
DETAIL AT BACK OF TABLE



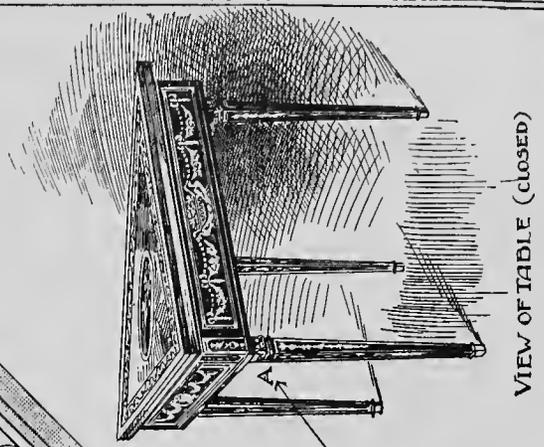
DETAIL OF MARQUETRY
ON CLOSED
TABLE TOP

TABLE MADE
IN ROSEWOOD
INLAIN IN
VARIOUS WOODS

DETAIL
OF CENTRE PIECE
ON OPEN TABLE TOP



VIEW OF TABLE (OPEN)



VIEW OF TABLE (CLOSED)

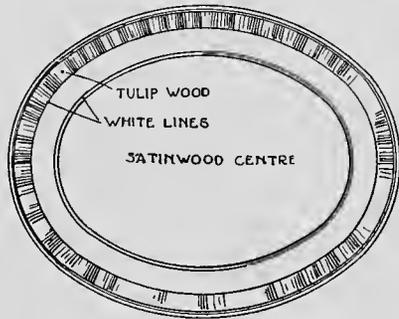


ENLARGED
DETAIL
AT A

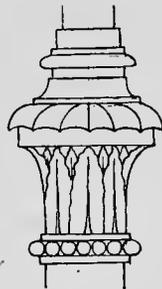
SCALE

2

18TH CENTURY
URN STAND &
BANNER SCREEN
V&A.MUSEUM
SOUTH KENSINGTON



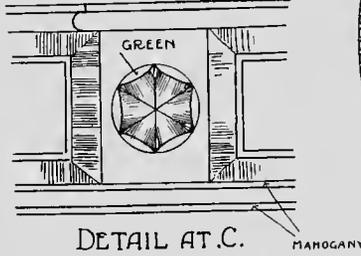
PLAN OF TOP



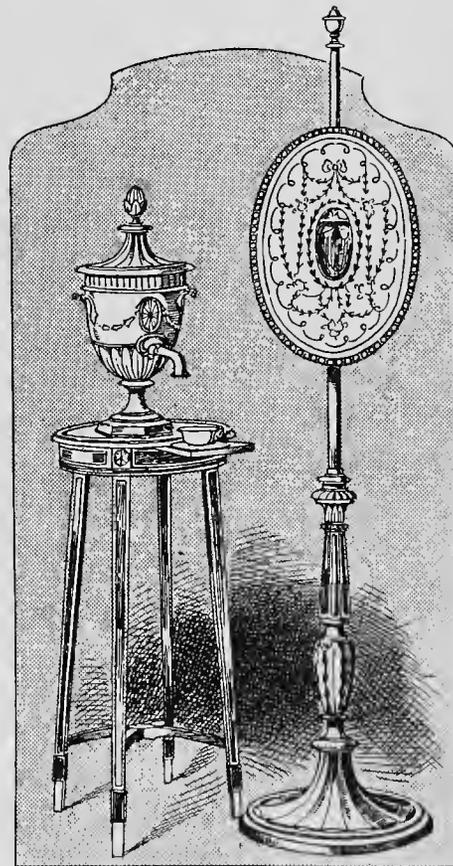
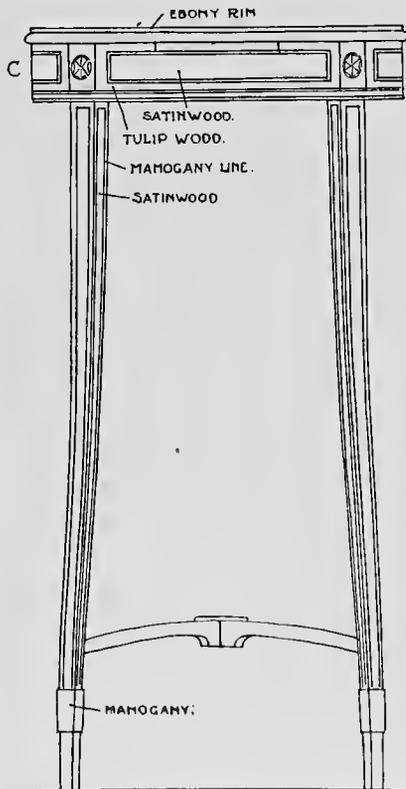
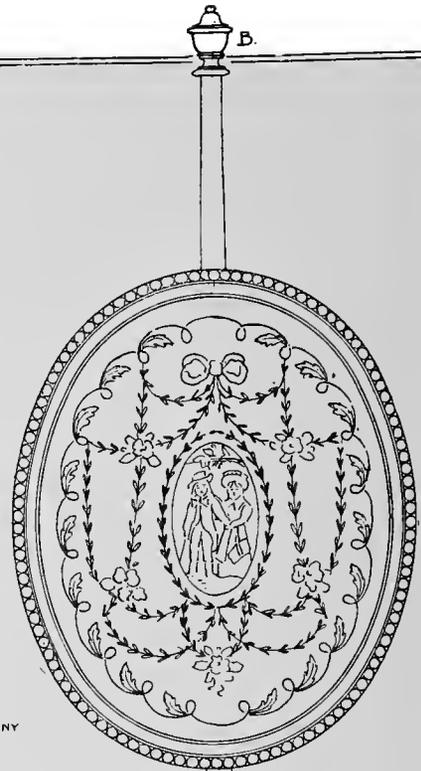
DETAIL AT A.



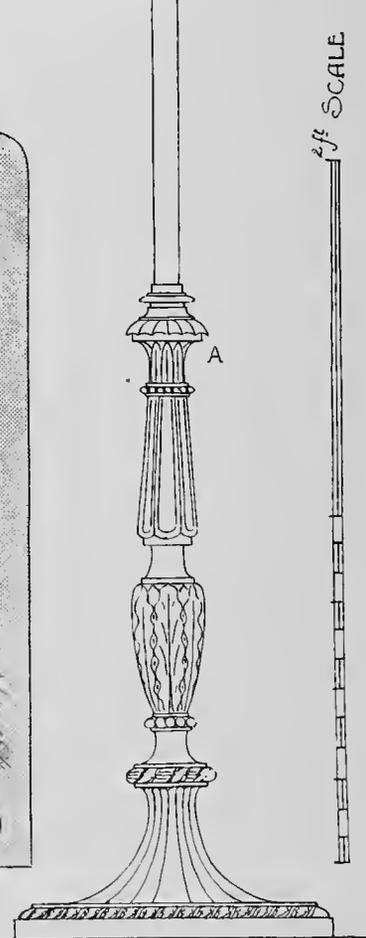
DETAIL AT B.



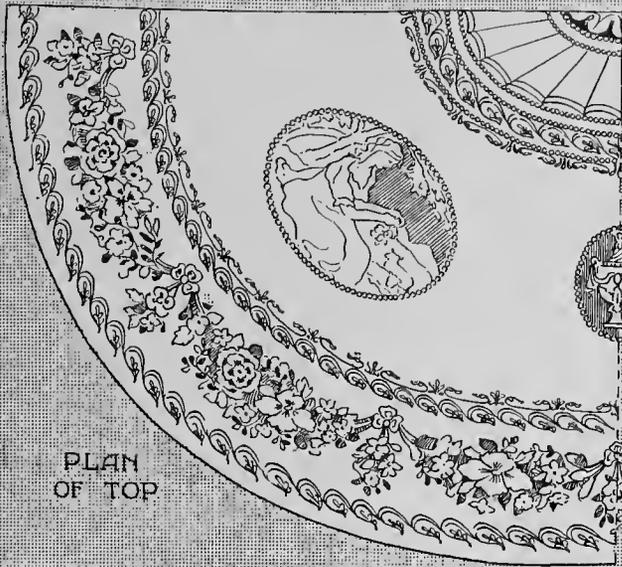
DETAIL AT C.



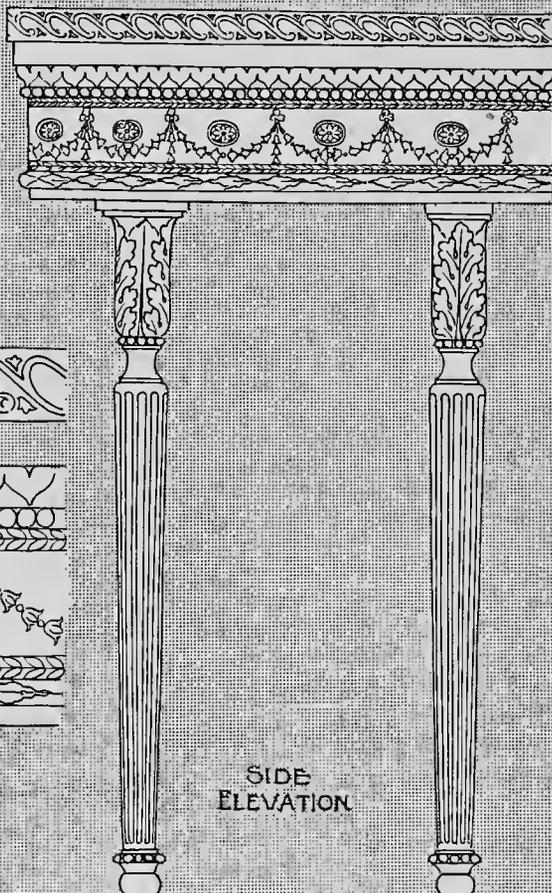
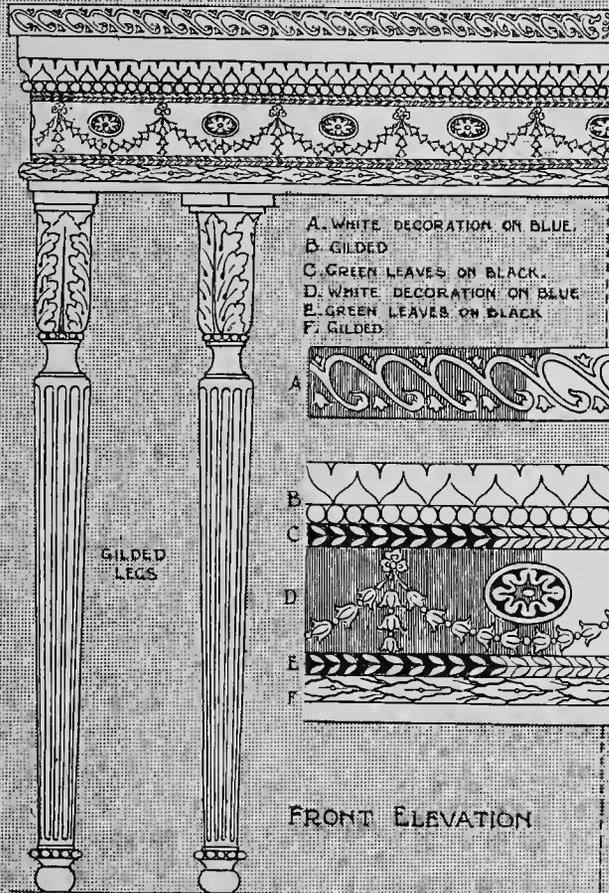
PERSPECTIVE SKETCH



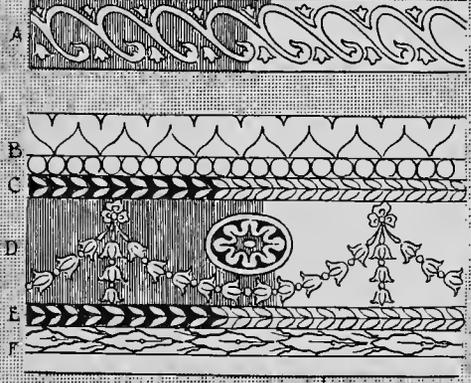
ADAM



AN 18TH CENTURY
PAINTED TABLE
V.&A. MUSEUM SOUTH KENSINGTON.



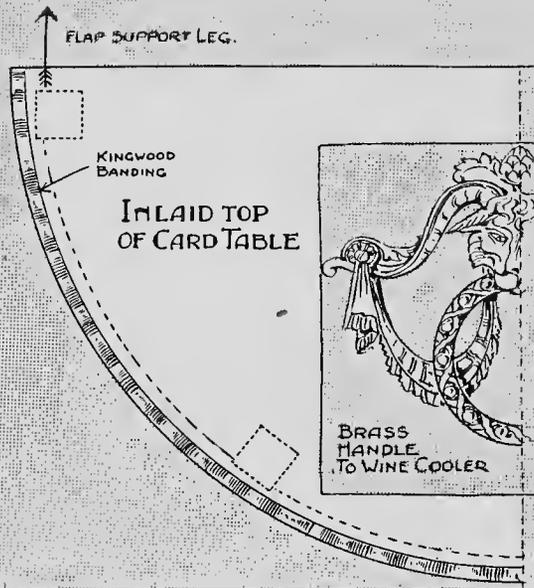
- A. WHITE DECORATION ON BLUE.
- B. GILDED
- C. GREEN LEAVES ON BLACK.
- D. WHITE DECORATION ON BLUE.
- E. GREEN LEAVES ON BLACK.
- F. GILDED.



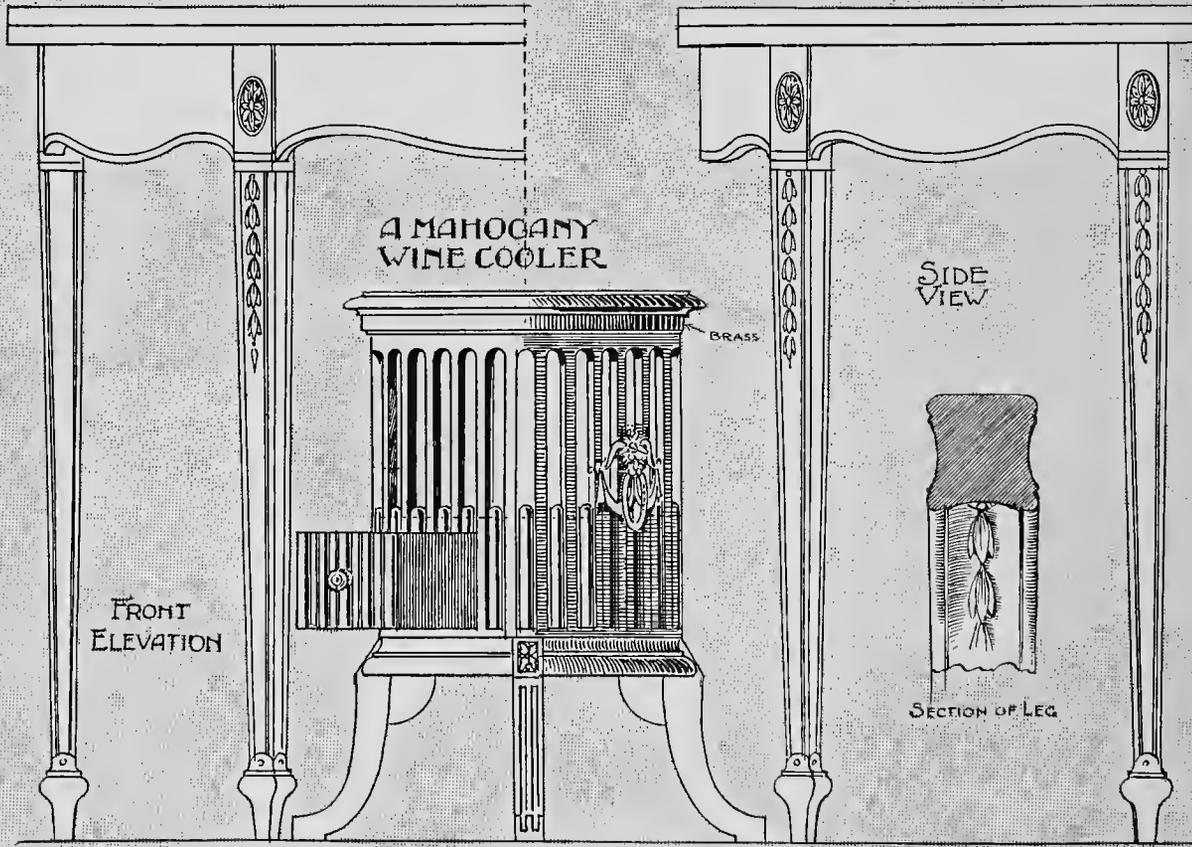
FRONT ELEVATION

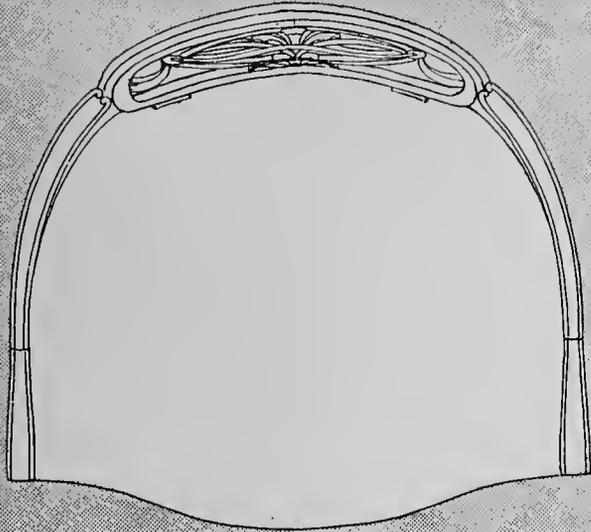
SIDE ELEVATION



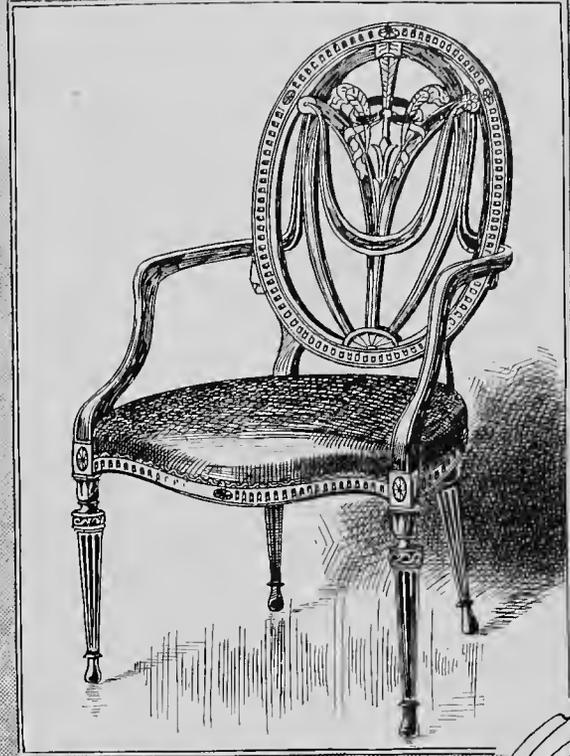


A MAHOGANY ADAM CARD TABLE ... S.K. MUSEUM

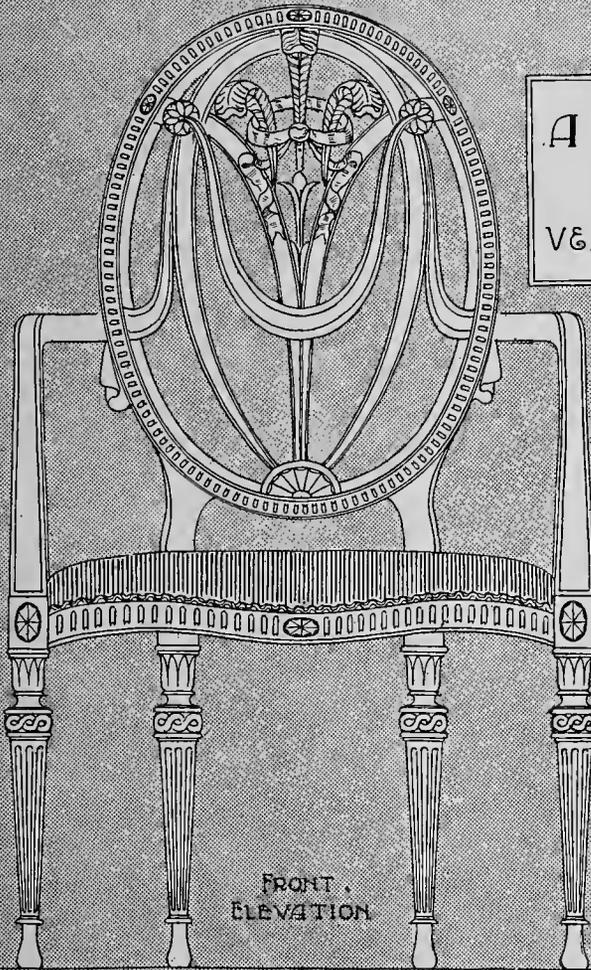




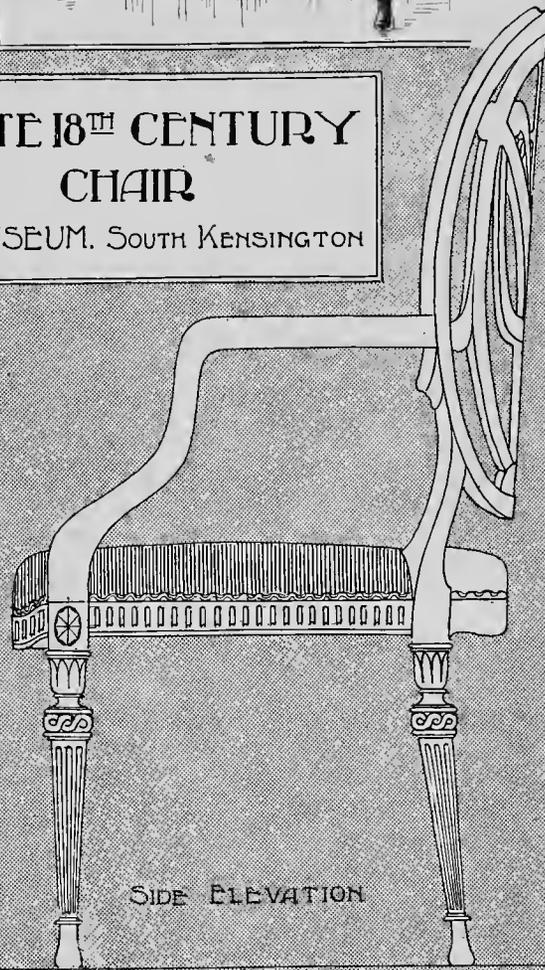
PLAN OF CHAIR.



A LATE 18TH CENTURY
CHAIR
V&A.MUSEUM. SOUTH KENSINGTON



FRONT
ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



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BY

H. P. BENN & W. C. BALDOCK

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- I. Introduction. Sixteenth Century Influences.
- II. Jacobean. Early Stuart and Cromwellian.
- III. Carolean and William - and - Mary. Late Seventeenth-Century Work.

CHAPTER

- IV. Queen-Anne and Dutch Influence.
- V. Georgian. Early Eighteenth Century.
- VI. Chippendale. His Art and Contemporaries.
- VII. The Heppelwhites.
- VIII. The Adam Brothers and their Influence on Furniture Design.
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- X. Collectors' Pitfalls.
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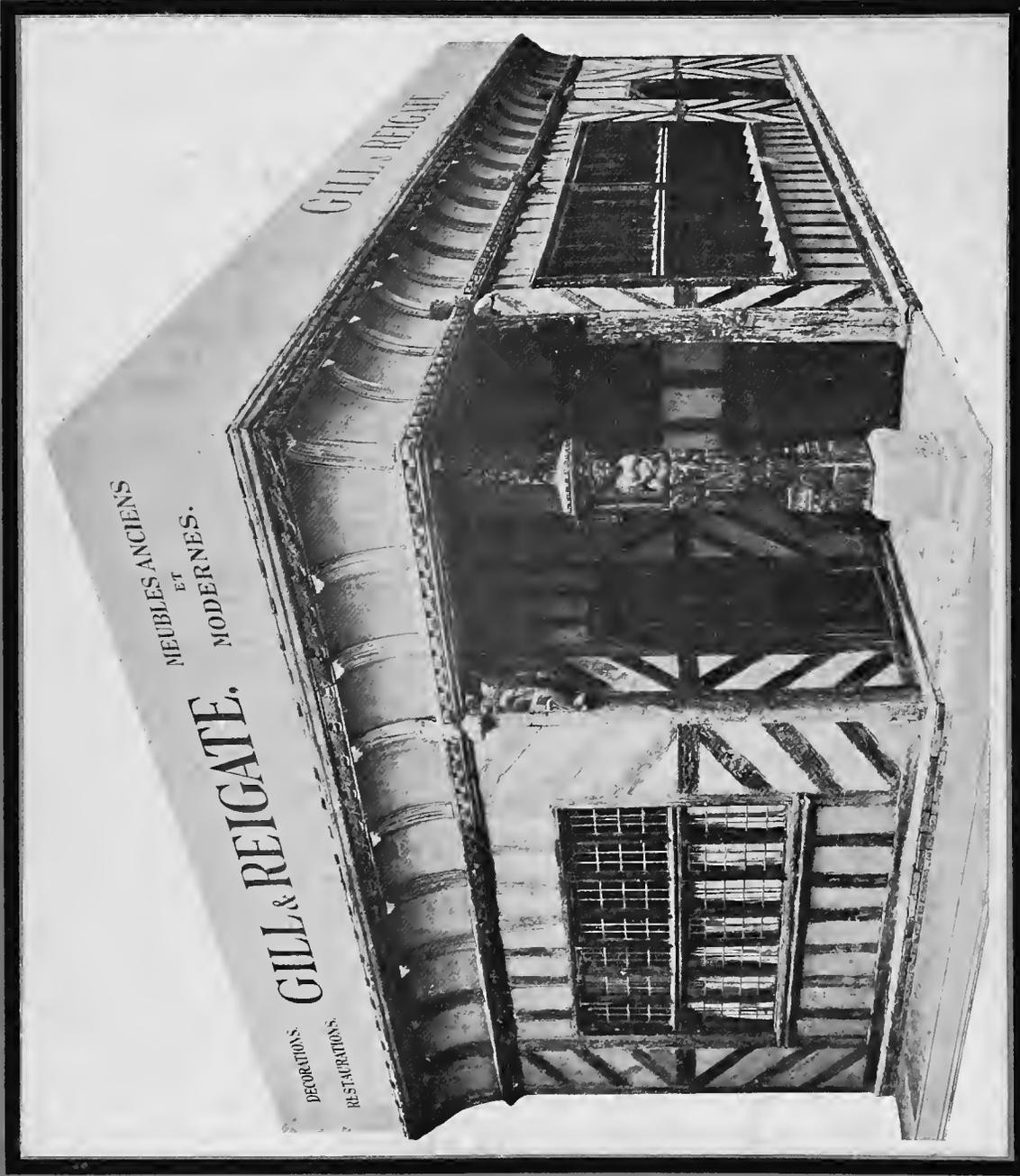
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