

Chest or Stollentruhe, Early 16th Century, German Gothic, Oak  
Chest, Original

£22,500



REF: 11226

Height: 71.5 cm (28.1")

Width: 172 cm (67.7")

Depth: 63 cm (24.8")

## Description

This standing chest is of clamp-front construction, extensively decorated with long, ironwork straps with quatrefoil finials which 'wrap' around it, and has an ornate, central lockplate, and front legs with full, height stiles. The ironwork straps and finials are fixed with convex, headed nails: running along the front, five long straps; the two side straps; and the five straps on the top. On the chest front, centrally placed, is a large, iron lockplate with four outer, radiating spade finials in each corner and three, superimposed spade finials (a symbol of nobility) which are pierced with the initials 'BB'. The lockplate receives a corresponding, external hasp fitted to the lid. Below the floor of the chest, the two front stile legs retain most of their original height. The lid is supported by substantial iron strap hinges that extend right down the back of the chest. Inside the chest at the left end is a shallow, oak till.

**Construction** The chest is of joined, 'clamp-front' construction, reinforced by the nailed, iron mounts. In total it uses ten, oak boards which were riven and planed. The back and front are each formed from a large single plank held to the full height stiles by long, pegged tenons. The sides are also single boards joined into the stiles using long tenons held by dowels, and extend down below the chest bottom, concealing the ends of the bottom boards. The bottom consists of a single board cut into the sides and shallow rebates in the stiles. The front and back boards are dowelled into the bottom boards. The lid which overhangs the sides has a narrow cleat at each end, and consists of one wide plank which has bowed a little as a result of shrinkage.

**Ironwork** : The wrought ironwork straps, lockplate, hasp and lock all appear to be early, and of the same original manufacture and are fixed with convex headed nails. There is mild dark staining of the oak around the iron mounts, possibly because of low tannin content in the oak.

Length 172 cm., 67 ¾ in., Height 71.5 cm., 28 ¼ in., Depth 63 cm., 24 ¾ in.,

**Related to:** No 900:2-1904 V&A Museum, London. Stadtmuseum Dusseldorf. Decorative Arts Museum Berlin. Museen Schleswig-Holstein & Hamburg. A related example featuring elaborately-carved feet and formerly in the Horsham Museum, West Sussex, sold at Christie's in 2010 for £97,250 and another example, again with carved feet sold at Sothebys in 2006 for £48,000.

**Literature:** A similar example is illustrated in H. Lüttgens, *Alt- Aachener Wohnkultur; Ein Rundgang durch ein altes Aachener Haus im Wohnstil des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Aachen, n.d., ill. 12, and another comparable iron-bound chests illustrated in H. Kreisel, *Die Kunst des Deutschen Möbels*, Munich, 1974, pls. 45-46.

This type of large oak standing chest is known as a 'stollentruhe' (studded chest) and is thought to have been made from at least the early-16th century, based on the style of ironwork and form of the front legs which tend to be carved on earlier models. The German Renaissance was established and Albrecht Dürer and Lucas Cranach the elder were famous throughout Europe. The type has become closely associated with the Westphalia region in central, wes...