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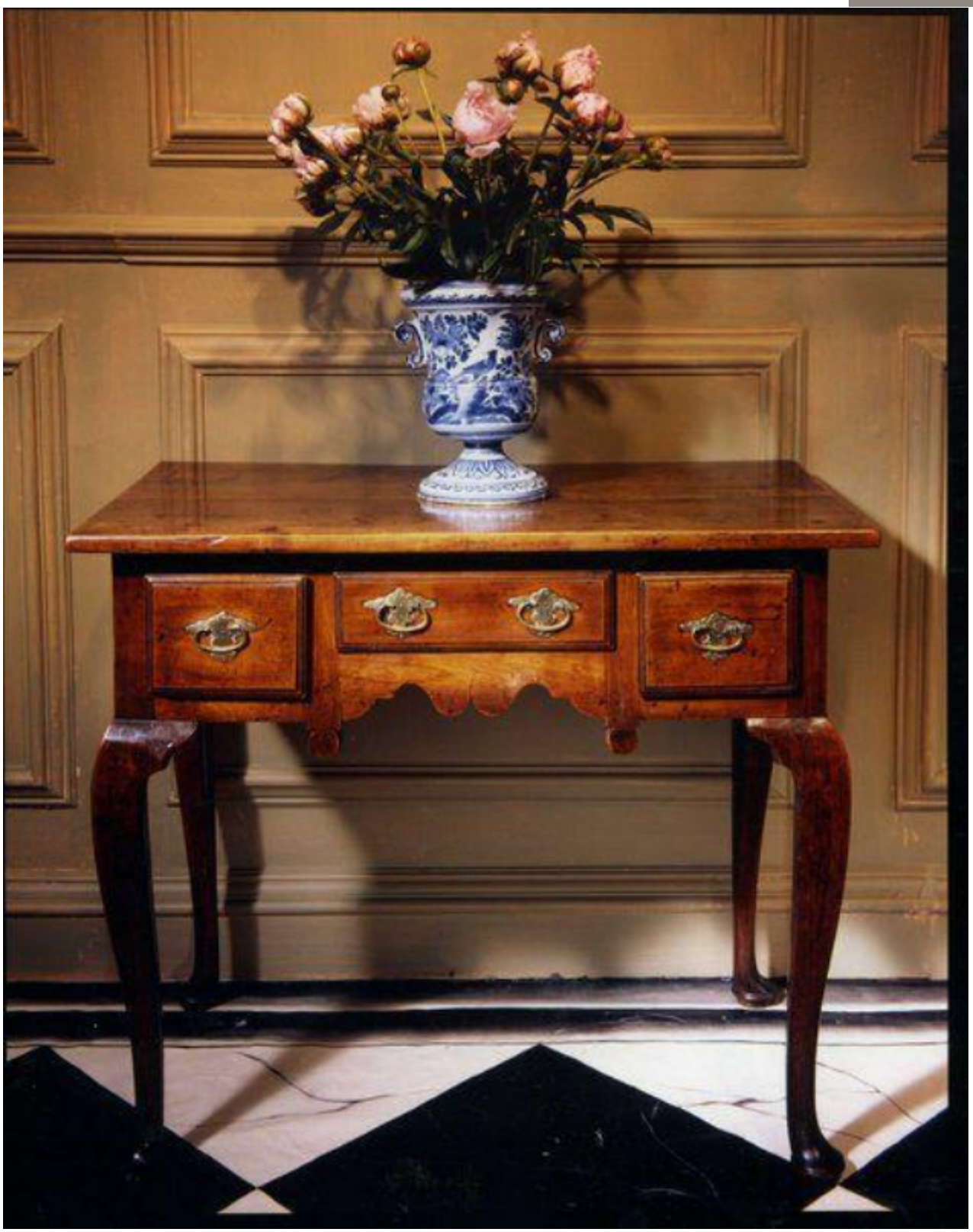
A rare, mid-18th century, cherry lowboy

Sold



Howgego Historic & Modern
07974 149 912
lucy@howgegohistoricandmodern.com howgegohistoricandmodern.com

REF: 10514

Description

The plank top in two sections. The shaped frieze with three drawers with replaced, period handles and a moulded edge. Standing on cabriole legs ending in pad feet, with original toes. The drawers lined in walnut. Excellent configuration, original colour and patina. English, second quarter of the 18th century.

Width : 79.50 cm./31.25 in.
Height : 68.00 cm./26.75 in.
Depth : 47.50 cm./18.75 in.

This elegant dressing table is, unusually, executed in the finest fruitwood, cherry, which has developed a lustrous, colour and patina over time. It is a fluid piece with soft, sweeping lines and has survived in excellent condition.

After the Restoration, elaborate sets of dressing plate became fashionable for the wealthy. These must have required a substantial table for their display in order to accomodate a mirror supported on a strut, salvers, porringers for possets, candlesticks, powder boxes, caskets, brushes and combs.

The walnut and japanned swing toilet glasses on box stands that came into fashion circa 1700 were placed on small veneered walnut tables with pillar or cabriole legs and usually two or three deep drawers to hold brushes, combs etc. This type and the familiar small knee-hole table with drawers down the sides, which was also used for writing, remained popular during the first half of the 18th century even after dressing tables with complex fittings had become fashionable.

Towards the end of the 17th century painting and rougeing the face was indulged in to an enormous extent and deaths occurred from the immmoderate use of paints and powders containing deleterious ingredients such as mercury and white lead. It became the custom for ladies of fashion to sit at a dressing-table giving the finishing touches to their face and hair. Representations in pictures and engravings of this time show that many dressing-tables were completely enveloped in fringed draperies, and had elaborately worked covers.

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