

Basic Detail Report



Title Armchair

Date 1740-1760

Primary Maker Governor Joseph Talcott

Medium Maple, ash, rush

Basic Detail Report

Description Maple armchair in the William and Mary, or early baroque, style, with

a solid crest rail, a banister-back, turned stiles, banisters, front legs, and

stretchers, and a rush seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail at the

top between two turned stiles; each stile has a ball-shaped finial at the top. The

top of the crest rail is shaped with an arch, flanked by a lobe and a tapered edge.

Below the crest rail are four cone-and-reel turned banisters, which attach at the

bottom to the stay rail. The banisters are turned and split; the rounded side of

each banister faces the front of the chair. The lower edge of the stay rail is

shaped with a downward pointing peak flanked by an upward curve with a

chamfered edge, ending in a circular scroll near each stile. Above the seat, each

stile is turned and is angled backward. Below the seat, each stile forms a straight

back leg and foot. Each arm slopes downward and has a scrolled handhold that

extends well past the top of each front leg. The top surface of each arm and

handhold is rounded. Each front leg is turned with a baluster over three blocks,

each separated by ovoid turnings, over a Spanish foot (now missing). Above the

seat, each front leg supports the arm. The chair has a trapezoidal rush seat. Each

side of the chair has a turned baluster-and-ring stretcher below the arm and

above the rush seat, connecting the upper portion of the front leg to the stile at

the back. The front, sides, and back of the chair each have one stretcher; these

stretchers are each turned with a double-baluster form. Painted Decoration

(later addition, now worn): The armchair has gilded decoration over a brown

mahoganized, or grained, finish. The gilded decoration circles many of the

turned rings on the stiles, banisters, front legs, and stretchers. Most blocks have

Basic Detail Report

a gilded border outlining the front. Condition: The front and back feet are

missing. The chair is not structurally sound; the joints where the side seat rails

and arms join the stiles are loose. The rush seat is damaged, and a portion of the

rush is missing to the right of the middle of the front seat rail. The banisters,

arms, handholds, and front ankles are worn and scratched. The chair has been

faux grained with gilded decoration; the graining and decoration are now

scratched and worn. Design and Construction Details: The crest rail has a

rectangular tenon at each side that extends into the block near the top of each

stile; each of these joints is secured with a wooden pin through the back. Each

banister is constructed of a split spindle. Each banister is tenoned into the crest

rail at the top and into the stay rail below. Each end of the stay rail has a

rectangular tenon that extends into the stile. Each arm is tenoned and pinned

into the stile at the back. Each front leg is tenoned and pinned into the front of

the arm above. Each seat rail is bladelike, with a rounded outer edge and a

tapered inner edge. The seat rails and stretchers have round tenons that extend

into the front or back legs.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 46 15/16 x 23 9

/16 x 23 1/2in. (119.2 x 59.8 x 59.7cm)