

Basic Detail Report



Title Side Chair

Date 1770-1790

Primary Maker Eliphalet Chapin

Medium Cherry, leather

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Description Cherry side chair in the Chippendale, or rococo, style, with a

scalloped crest rail, a pierced, vase-shaped splat, cabriole front legs over claw-

and-ball feet, and a removable slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a

crest rail atop two stiles. The crest rail has a ribbed shell in the center, flanked by

a cyma curve, or S-curve, and a ribbed ear. Centered below the crest rail is a

pierced, vase-shaped splat with interlocking C-scrolls. The splat is joined at the

bottom to a tapered splat shoe, just above the back seat rail. Above the seat,

each stile is slanted back. Below the seat, each stile forms a cylindrical back leg

that is slanted toward the center back of the chair. The seat is trapezoidal, with a

removable slip seat upholstered with brown leather. The slip seat sits just inside

the four seat rails at the top of the legs. Each cabriole front leg extends from the

height of the seat down to a claw-and-ball foot. Two knee brackets are located

at the top of each front leg, where the leg joins the front or side seat rail; the

diagonal edge of each knee bracket is shaped with a cyma curve. Condition: The

top center of the splat is split. The finish on the right ear is worn and has a small

chip. The front seat rail has several small marks and gouges in the surface of the

wood. The upholstered slip seat is replaced. The frame has been significantly

skinned and is refinished. Design and Construction Details: Design. The shell

carved on the crest rail has nine projecting lobes. The bottom of the carved shell

does not extend down to the bottom edge of the crest rail. Chair Frame. The

crest rail is supported on a tenon at the top of each stile. Above the seat, the

back of each stile is rounded. The splat is tenoned into the crest rail. The lower

center section of the back of the crest rail is a separate piece and is glued in

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place. The splat is tenoned into the splat shoe at the top of the back seat rail.

The lower edge of the front and side seat rails has an elongated horizontal section in the center, flanked by a short vertical, a semi-circular downward curve, and a horizontal section where the rail meets the leg. The back seat rail is constructed of a rail that is tenoned and double pinned into the stiles with a thinner piece of wood laminated to the interior side of the rail. Each side seat rail is tenoned through the stile; each of these joints is secured with two small wedges of wood inserted into the back of the tenon. The front seat rail and each side seat rail are tenoned into the top of the front legs. The knee brackets are nailed to the underside of the front or side rail and to the side of the knees. The exterior top edge of the front and side seat rails, as well as the exterior top of each front leg, is shaped with molding consisting of an ovolo and a fillet. The interior top edge of the front and side seat rails, as well as the interior top of each front leg, has a rabbet to support the upholstered slip seat. The back interior corners of the seat frame have quarter-round corner blocks that are glued and nailed in place; the lower edge of each of these corner blocks is shaped to conform to the shape of the seat rails. The front interior corners of the seat frame each have a vertical glue block and a semi-circular corner block that are glued and nailed in place. Upholstered Slip Seats. The side chair is accompanied by two removable, upholstered slip seats, one original and one reproduction. The original slip seat consists of brown leather (now only present on the bottom of the seat) over a linen undercover, stuffing, linen sackcloth, canvas webbing, and a trapezoidal wooden frame. The leather and linen

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undercover are nailed to the underside of the frame. The reproduction slip seat consists of brown leather over a linen undercover, stuffing, sackcloth, webbing, and a trapezoidal wooden frame. The leather is tacked to the underside of the frame with small nails.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 38 5/16 x 22 1/2 x 20in. (97.3 x 57.2 x 50.8cm)