

Basic Detail Report

Title Side Chair

Date 1770-1800

Primary Maker George Belden family

Medium Cherry, pine, linen, canvas, and horsehair and grass stuffing

Description Cherry side chair in the Chippendale, or rococo, style, with a scalloped crest rail, a pierced, vase-shaped splat, straight front legs, and a removable slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail atop two stiles. The crest rail consists of a central arch and two side arches, with a small, curved ear at each end. Centered below the crest rail is a pierced, vase-shaped splat with interlocking arches and quatrefoils in a Gothic-style pattern. The bottom center edge of the crest rail is carved to continue the pierced shapes in the splat below. The medial arches of the splat are also carved up onto the front of the crest rail. 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 back leg that is slanted toward the center back of the chair. The seat is trapezoidal, with a removable slip seat upholstered with the original linen undercover. The slip seat sits just inside the four seat rails at the top of the legs. The straight front legs extend from the height of the seat down to a plain foot. The back and each side of the chair have a plain, rectangular stretcher joining the legs. A medial stretcher joins the two side stretchers.

Condition: The seat blocks at each front corner may be replaced. The front and back of the crest rail, the front seat rail, and the lower front legs are worn and

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scratched. The frame has never been refinished; the present resin layer was

applied over the original stain and varnish. The upholstered slip seat is original.

Design and Construction Details: Design: The top edges of the front and side seat

rails, the top of the legs, and the front exterior edge of each front leg all have a

line of molding consisting of an ovolo flanked by a fillet. 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 section of

the back of the crest rail is a separate piece that is glued in place and shaped to

conform to the pierced openings in the splat. The splat is tenoned into the splat

shoe at the top of the back seat rail. The back seat rail is tenoned and pinned

into the stiles. Each side seat rail is tenoned through the stile; the joint is secured

with a wooden pin through the side of the stile (there are no wedges through the

back of the tenon). The front of each side seat rail is tenoned and pinned into the

top of the front leg. The front seat rail is tenoned into the top of each front leg.

The interior top edge of the front and side seat rails, as well as the top of each

front leg, all have a rabbet to support the upholstered slip seat. The interior back

corners of the seat never had a corner block. The front interior corners of the

seat frame each have a vertical-grain glue block and a vertical-grain triangular

corner block nailed in place (possibly replaced). There are no corner blocks on

the back interior corners of the seat frame. Each side stretcher is tenoned and

pinned into the lower portion of the front leg and is tenoned into the lower

portion of the back leg. The back stretcher is tenoned and pinned into the lower

portion of the back legs. The medial stretcher is dovetailed into the side

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stretchers. Upholstered Slip Seat (original). The side chair is accompanied by a removable slip seat (top upholstery material is missing). The slip seat consists of a linen undercover over grass and horsehair stuffing, linen sackcloth, canvas webbing, and a trapezoidal wooden frame. The undercover is nailed to the underside of the frame. Pieces of the original upholstery are visible under the nail heads.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 38 x 21 1/8 x 19 3/4in. (96.5 x 53.7 x 50.2cm)