

Basic Detail Report

Title Smoking Chair

Date 1865-1875

Primary Maker Hermann Maerklein

Medium Black walnut, ash, brass, iron

Description One of a pair of unupholstered, black walnut and ash smoking chair

frames in the Renaissance Revival style. The back of each chair is formed by a

horizontal crest rail at the top, and a stay rail below, both between two stiles.

The crest rail and the top of each stile have a straight top edge that is curled

back. Above the seat, the stiles are slanted back. Below the seat, each stile forms

a leg that curves back and then down to form a plain foot. The chairs no longer

have their upholstery. Small tack holes show where the upholstery nails would

have been originally. The lower two thirds of the front and side seat rails are

carved and would not have been covered with upholstery; each rail has two

bands of three horizontal, recessed flutes. Each front leg consists of a block at

the top carved with a flower on the front and side, over a tapered column, over

three rings, a cylindrical section, and a brass caster. The portions of the upper

frame that would have been upholstered originally are not finished. Condition:

The upholstery is completely missing from smoking chair .1. The seat rails of

each chair are scratched; smoking chair .2 has more scratches than .1. On each

chair, the lower portion of the back legs and projecting portions of the front legs

are lightly scratched. Design and Construction Details: On each chair frame, the

crest rail, the stay rail, and the back seat rail are tenoned into the stiles. A corner

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block, with a curved inner surface and a cut-out in the back to accommodate the interior corner of the stile, is glued down on top of the back and side seat rails.

The top edges of each corner block are chamfered. The front seat rail and each side seat rail are tenoned into the tops of the legs. Each front leg extends from the height of the seat and terminates with a caster. The portions of each stile that are above the seat, the top third of each seat rail, and a portion of the block at the top of each front leg, are all recessed slightly and were once covered with upholstery. Upholstery. Smoking chair .1 has no upholstery.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth of each chair):

30 x 21 1/2 x 25in. (76.2 x 54.6 x 63.5cm)