

# Basic Detail Report

## Title Side Chair

Date about 1783

Primary Maker Eliphalet Chapin

Medium Cherry, pine, red moreen wool

Description Cherry side chair in the Chippendale, or rococo, style, with an undulating crest rail, a pierced splat, straight front legs, and a removable slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail atop two stiles. The top edge of the crest rail has three arches, a rounded ear at each end; there is a small crocket, or knob, between each arch. Centered below the crest rail is a pierced splat with interlocking pointed arches that create a Gothic-style pattern. The bottom center edge of the crest rail is carved to continue the pierced trefoil openings on the splat. 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 red moreen wool. 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 connecting the legs. A rectangular medial stretcher connects the two side stretchers. Condition: Portions of the left and right upper sides of the pierced splat are replaced. The rear corner blocks are replaced. Sections at the lower center and left side of the crest rail are repaired. A horizontal area below the

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right ear is repaired. The front seat rail, the lower legs, and the medial stretcher are lightly worn and scratched. The frame has been refinished, and the slip seat has been covered.

**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 the front legs each have a line of molding consisting of an ovolo flanked by a fillet.

**Chair Frame.** The crest rail is supported on a round 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; extra pieces of wood are glued to the lower center section of the back of the crest rail to provide additional support for the top of the crest rail. The splat is tenoned into the splat shoe at the top of the back seat rail. The splat is nailed down on 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; this joint is secured with a wooden pin through the stile and two small wedges inserted into the back of each tenon. Each side seat rail is tenoned and pinned into the top of the front legs. The front seat rail is tenoned into the top of the front legs. The interior top edge of the front and side seat rails, and the top of each front leg, have a rabbet to support the upholstered slip seat. The interior back corners of the seat frame have quarter-round corner blocks held in place with glue and nails (replaced). The interior front corners of the seat frame each have a vertical glue block and a semi-circular corner block glued and nailed in place. The interior corner of each leg is canted. Each side stretcher and the back stretcher are tenoned and pinned into the lower portion of the legs. The medial stretcher is dovetailed into the side stretchers.

**Upholstered Slip Seat.** The side chair is

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accompanied by the original removable, upholstered slip seat; this is encased in a red moreen wool slip case. The original slip seat consists of a linen undercover over stuffing, linen sackcloth, canvas webbing, and a trapezoidal wooden frame.

The linen undercover is held in place with nails through the underside of the frame. Please see attached essay by the Chapin authority, Dr. Thomas P.

Kugelman for more information about this piece.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 38 x 21 3/8 x 20 1/8in. (96.5 x 54.3 x 51.1cm)