

Basic Detail Report

Title Side Chair

Date 1770-1800

Primary Maker Spencer Shops

Medium Wood, splint

Description Painted side chair in the William and Mary, or early baroque, style, with a solid crest rail, a banister back, turned stiles, banisters, legs, and stretchers, and a splint seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail at the top between two turned stiles; each stile has a reel-shaped finial at the top. The top of the crest rail is shaped with a horizontal (the more elaborate shaped top is missing), flanked by a recessed half circle and a spur. Below the crest rail are four baluster-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 horizontal section in the center, with a tapered edge to each side. Above the seat, each stile is turned with baluster-and-reel forms. Below the seat, each stile forms a straight back leg with a backward-slanting foot. Each front leg is turned with three blocks, each separated by a turned baluster, over a turned foot. Each front leg has a squared top that extends slightly higher than the woven splint seat, which is trapezoidal in shape. The front of the chair has one stretcher turned with a double-baluster-and-ring form. Each side has a stretcher turned with a double-baluster form. The back has one plain turned stretcher. Painted Decoration (later decoration). The chair frame is painted black, with gilded

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highlights. The crest rail and stay rail are outlined in gold. The ring turnings on the back of the chair are gilded, and each baluster on the back has a line of vertical gilding. Each front leg has a vertical line on each block, and a small star on the upper turned baluster. The chair is decorated with small gilded stars, dots, and lines on the turned forms. The seat is coated with yellow paint.

Condition: The chair has later black and gold paint. The yellow paint on the seat is also a later addition. The splint seat has significant areas of loss in the center and on the left side; the front and left side seat rail are exposed. A nail was added to reinforce each joint where the crest rail joins each stile. 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 reinforced with a wooden pin through the front. Each banister is constructed of a split spindle, and each is tenoned into the crest rail at the top and into the stay rail at the bottom. The stay rail has a rectangular tenon at each side that extends into the stile. Each seat rail is roughly shaped, with some rounded and some squared-off edges. The splints are woven with a herringbone pattern. 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): 42 3/4 x 18 13/16 x 15 1/4in. (108.6 x 47.8 x 38.7cm)