

Basic Detail Report

Title Side Chair

Date 1750-1770

Primary Maker Governor Thomas Fitch

Medium Walnut, cherry, maple, fabric, linen

Description Walnut side chair in the Queen Anne, or late baroque, style, with a yoke-shaped crest rail, a splat-back, cabriole front legs, a shaped front seat rail, turned stretchers, and an upholstered slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a yoke-shaped crest rail atop two stiles. Centered below the crest rail is a solid, vase-shaped splat, which attaches at the bottom to a tapered splat shoe over the back seat rail. Above the seat, each stile and the splat curve backward. Below the seat, each stile slants backward and forms a back leg. The seat is trapezoidal, with an upholstered, removable slip seat. The front seat rail has a shaped lower edge, consisting of a hanging half circle flanked by a cyma curve, or S-curve. Each knee bracket return has a lower edge shaped with a cyma curve; each is applied to the underside of the front and side seat rails where they join the front legs. Each cabriole front leg terminates in a pad foot. Each side of the chair has one turned stretcher, with a block in the center. The chair has a medial stretcher, connecting the two side stretchers at the block. The back stretcher is also tapered; it connects the back legs. Condition: The crest rail has broken off; it has been repaired at each lower edge and rejoined to the top of each stile. The interior back edge of the left knee bracket return is repaired. The red fabric on the slip seat is faded badly, stained, and torn at the back right side.

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The frame is refinished. The slip seat is reupholstered over old sackcloth, old webbing, and the original frame. Design and Construction Details: Side Chair Frame. The crest rail is supported on tenons at the top of each stile and on a long, narrow, rectangular tenon at the top of the splat. Above the seat, the back edges of each stile are chamfered. The edges of the back side of the splat are chamfered sharply. The splat is tenoned at the bottom into the tapered splat shoe; this is nailed to the top of the back seat rail. The back seat rail is tenoned into the stiles. Each side seat rail is tenoned and pinned into the stile in the back, and into the top of the leg above the knee in the front. The front seat rail is tenoned and pinned into the top of each front leg, above the knee. The interior top edge of the front and side seat rails, and the block at the top of each leg, has a rabbet to support the slip seat. The knee bracket returns are nailed to the underside of the seat rails. Each side stretcher is tenoned and pinned into the back leg and tenoned into the front leg. The medial stretcher is tenoned into the side stretchers, and the back stretcher is tenoned into the back legs. The front edges of each back leg are chamfered above the stretcher. Upholstered slip seat. The upholstered slip seat consists of the present red (now faded) fabric over cotton stuffing (later addition), an undercover (later addition), stuffing, sackcloth (old), webbing (old), and a trapezoidal maple frame (original). The red fabric and undercover are both tacked to the frame with small iron nails.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 39 5/8 x 22 x 20 1/2in. (100.6 x 55.9 x 52.1cm)