Basic Detail Report



Title Armchair

Date 1810-1825

Primary Maker Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney

Medium Maple, ash, cane

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Description Painted armchair in the Empire, or late neoclassical, style, with a fancy slat-back and fancy front stretcher, and a cane balloon seat. The back of the chair is formed by a rectangular crest rail at the top between two stiles. The crest rail is bowed back in the center; the top edge of the crest rail is located about one inch below the top of the stiles. Below the crest rail are four slender, horizontal slats, with three wooden balls between each, for a total of nine balls. Below this a rectangular slat joins the stiles. Above the seat, each stile curves backward, has a flat front, and is turned with seven shallow rings just above the back seat rail. Below the seat, each leg is tapered and curves back slightly. Each arm curves downward, extending from the upper stile, down to the scroll that forms the handhold. The front of each arm is supported by an arm support consisting of an elongated pyramid over a baluster, a ring, and a cylinder form that is joined to the side of the seat rail. The woven cane seat is balloon shaped, with an outward curved rail at the back and a single rail at the front and sides that extends forward from the stile, curves out to the side, then around to a projecting curve in the front. Each front leg is sharply tapered, and turned with three groups of shallow rings over a foot that is slanted forward. A fancy stretcher that joins the two front legs consists of two horizontal rails, separated by three wooden balls. Each side of the armchair has two plain, turned stretchers. The back has a single plain, turned stretcher. Painted Decoration. The chair frame is painted ivory. The crest rail has a gold painted design of leaves. There are thin gold lines painted on the slats, arms, arm supports, stiles, seat rail facings, front legs and stretchers. The balls in the back of the armchair

and the front stretcher are painted gold. Condition: The frame is repainted. There are scratches and gouges in the paint on the arms, lower arm supports, the front of the seat rail facing, the lower back legs, and the front legs and stretcher. The front edge of the cane seat has broken and is separated from the front seat rail. Design and Construction Details: The crest rail and each slat is tenoned into the upper stiles. The back of each arm is tapered to meet the front of the stile; the top front of each stile has a tapered notch to accommodate the tapered tip of the back of the arm. The back of each arm is screwed to the front of the stile; the screw is hidden with a wooden plug on the front of the tapered section of the back of each arm. The front of each arm is supported on a tenon at the top of the arm support. The lower cylindrical end of the arm support is screwed into the side of the curved seat rail; the screw is hidden with a wooden plug. The seat is constructed of four curved seat rails that are concealed behind thin seat rail facings. The back seat rail is tenoned into the stiles and extends forward; a screw extends through the back of the stile into this joint, and is hidden with wood filler or a wooden plug. Immediately below the back eat rail is a rectangular rail that is tenoned into the stiles. The side seat rails are tenoned into the back seat rail and into the front seat rail. The front seat rail is supported on a tenon at the top of each front leg. The seat rail facings, one at the back and one long curved facing at the sides and front, are nailed in place. The cane is woven around holes on the interior edges of the seat rails. The stretchers are tenoned into the lower legs.

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Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 33 3/8 x 20 1/16

x 19 3/16in. (84.8 x 51 x 48.7cm)