

Basic Detail Report



Title Side Chair

Date 1770-1800

Primary Maker Spencer Shops

Medium Wood, splint

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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 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.

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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)