

MACKINNON FINE FURNITURE



Wright & Elwick: A Set of Ten George III Carved Mahogany Dining Chairs

England, 18th Century

The seat frames original, seven with original webbing and scrim, one seat frame inscribed 'PAV' beside a naïve drawing of a house, another seat frame inscribed 'the elbow for York'.

The ink inscription 'the elbow for York' found on the seat frame of one of the armchairs provides a tantalising clue as to the original commission. An attribution to the celebrated Yorkshire firm of Wright & Elwick can be made. They were highly influenced by the published designs of Thomas Chippendale and frequently interpreted his designs into bold and masculine creations of their own. The pagoda cresting is a well-documented motif seen on seat furniture supplied by the firm. In particular, they supplied distinctive and highly carved mahogany furniture to the Marquess of Rockingham for Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire, in the 1750s and 1760s.

These chairs are distinguished by their superb quality and the rare survival of the original seat frames and webbing. They encapsulate the elegant fusion of the Rococo, 'Chinese' and 'Gothick' styles as promoted by Chippendale in his *Director*. A very similar armchair with virtually identical pagoda-centered top rail, stiles and unusually carved seat-rail and legs is illustrated in Moss Harris & Sons, *A Catalogue and Index of Old Furniture and Works of Decorative Art*, London, part II, p. 277. The design of the splat on this suite appears on a chair and settee in the collection of W.H. Lever (H. Cezinsky, *English Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, 1911, vol. II, pp. 182-3, figs 180-1).

A superb set of ten George III carved mahogany dining chairs, of the finest quality mahogany and crisply carved throughout, the shaped top-rail centred by a carved pagoda cresting above incised trellis decoration and flanked by carved foliate motifs above bead and reel mouldings, the moulded and tapered uprights centred by conforming bead and reel decoration and headed by carved acanthus leaves, the ornately carved and pierced and interlaced splat with a pair of rosettes and a scallop motif carved shoe, the shaped open arms with leaf-carved terminals and carved downswept supports, the drop-in seat within scallop motif mouldings above borders of blind fret carving and egg and dart mouldings, on foliate and scroll-carved cabriole legs ending in claw and ball feet.

The set comprised of two armchairs and eight single chairs (one of a later date).

Side chairs:

Height: 38½in (98 cm)

Width: 24 in (61 cm)

Depth: 23½ in (60 cm)

Armchairs:

Height: 38¾ in (98.5 cm)

Width: 26½ in (67.5 cm)

Depth: 25 in (63.5 cm)

Exhibitions

Exposição de Arte Decorativa Inglesa, February - March 1958, fig. 18, cat. 61

Literature:

Exposição de Arte Decorativa Inglesa, February - March 1958, fig. 18, cat. 61

Height: 38.78 in (98.5 cm)

Width: 26.57 in (67.5 cm)

Depth: 25.00 in (63.5 cm)

Stock Number

AD.77

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