MACKINNON
FINE FURNITURE



WRIGHT & ELWICK

England, *circa* 1755

These superbly carved chairs relate particularly closely to three suites of documented seat furniture; from Hackwood Park, Wentworth Woodhouse and Powis Castle respectively. These suites include sofas, armchairs, side chairs and stools.

The Wentworth suite was supplied by the celebrated Yorkshire cabinet-makers Wright & Elwick to Charles, 2nd Marquess of Rockingham (d. 1782). The firm of Wright & Elwick provided a significant amount of furniture for Wentworth Woodhouse during the 1750s and 1760s.

A second suite was supplied by Wright & Elwick for the 5th Duke of Bolton (d. 1765) for either Hackwood Park, Hampshire or the family's Yorkshire residence, Bolton Hall. Uncertainty arises as the suite does not appear in any 18th century inventories for Hackwood Park, and consequently that suggests that these chairs were originally supplied to Bolton Hall – the proximity of location in Yorkshire again making this more likely. The chairs do appear in a 1905 Hackwood Park inventory – likely they had been relocated to Hackwood after a devasting fire at Bolton Hall. The furniture then remained at Hackwood until William Berry, 1st Viscount Camrose purchased the estate in 1935. The 1905 inventory of Hackwood by Hampton and Sons refers in the Saloon to: 'The finely carved mahogany Old English suite with shaped seats and backs on cabriole legs & upholstered in crimson flowered cretonne comprising: '3 armchairs, 4 'occasional' chairs, and 2 '24 in shaped stools' en suite'. Three of the side chairs were included in the Hackwood Park House Sale, Christie's 20-22 April 1998, lots 119-120: lot 119 pair in solid mahogany (£43400) and lot 120 with beech side rails inscribed 'Bolton' (£7475).

Various pieces from both the Wentworth and the Hackwood suites have appeared at auction over the years. Most recently a pair of armchairs, Christie's New York, The Rockefeller Collection, 9 May 2018, part 1, lots 238 ($93,750) having been purchased from Apter Fredericks in 2010.

A further suite of this pattern, comprising settees, armchairs and side chairs is likely to have been commissioned by Henry Herbert, 1st Earl of Powis (d. 1772) for Powis Castle, Wales or Oakly Park, Shropshire – Herbert was employing the Cheshire architect William Baker (d. 1771) to carry out improvements on both properties in the 1750s. The National Trust attributes these as in the manner of Paul Saunders (1722 – 1771) or William Bradshaw (d.1775) – a sofa, three open armchairs and four side chairs all upholstered in green velvet, which in turn bear close resemblance to a suite supplied in 1757 for the 1st Earl of Leicester at Holkham Hall, Norfolk by the cabinet-maker, upholsterer and 'Tapestry Maker to His Majesty' Paul Saunders.

Attributed to Wright & Elwick

An exceptional pair of George II Chippendale period carved mahogany side chairs, attributed to Wright & Elwick. Each serpentine seat and back upholstered and close-nailed, standing on a finely carved mahogany show frame with scrolls throughout, the legs carved with bound acanthus leaf decoration to the knees and cabochons with further acanthus to the feet.

The mahogany of particularly good colour and patina throughout.

Exceptionally crisp carving.

Literature:

E. Lennox-Boyd, The Wentworth Cabinet-Maker: Wright and Elwick, Christie's London, 8 July 1998, pp. 110-112

M. Hall, 'Powis Castle', Country Life, 21 October 1993, p. 891, figs. 5 and 6

D. Fennimore et al., The David and Peggy Rockefeller Collection: Decorative Arts, New York, 1992, vol. IV, p. 284, no. 291

S. Goodman, "The 9th Earl of Lincoln (1720 - 1794) and the refurbishment of Exchequer House, 10

Downing Street", The British Art Journal, Winter 2017/2018, pp. 3- 7

Height: 3' 2" in (96.5 cm)
Width: 2 ' 0" in (61 cm)
Depth: 1' 10¹/**I**" in (57 cm)

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