

The Seat of Elegance

An Insider's Guide to the Chair

1720-1760

The serpentine line of carefully opposed curves and well-balanced proportions is the hallmark of seating furniture from the middle decades of the 18th century. The stiff narrow frames and complex turned elements of the previous period give way to more open fluid designs that are a marvel of self-contained, useful sculpture. In this exhibition chairs in the late baroque, or Queen Anne style are brought together in order to consider the evolution of the style and, in particular, its wonderfully varied expression in the hands of American colonial craftsmen.



Checklist No. 17

The naming of the style for a monarch who reigned only during a brief period of its development, is due to an incomplete understanding of the style beginning with English furniture historians of the late 19th century. Through subsequent decades, research has brought comprehension that the style has its roots in the international phenomenon of baroque art and flourished in England during the reigns of George I and II (1714-1760). In many instances early Georgian would be a more accurate name than Queen Anne, but, the term that places the style in its larger art historical framework, is late baroque. For the present, however, the label Queen Anne will continue in use because it has long been widely understood to designate those chairs we would call late baroque, the sense of the style belonging to a single English monarch's reign having long ago been disregarded in the course of one hundred years of reconsideration.

Like all cultural artifacts, seating furniture reflects the society which creates it. These chairs illustrate the close connection between England and her American colonies while also providing evidence of the diverse immigrant populations that

have always characterized this nation. The ability to distinguish when and where the chairs in this exhibition were made is dependent not only on careful consideration of their outwardly apparent characteristics, but, on the less easily distinguished elements of material and methods of construction. To illustrate these elements, the exhibition contains an "exploded" replica of an 18th century side chair, that is disassembled but mounted to show how the parts would be joined. This replica presents the chairmaker's methods in New England, particularly in Boston, while other chairs in the exhibition are shown without their upholstery in order to illustrate some of the "nuts and bolts" of the craft as found in other regions. Consideration is also given to what, for some of these chairs, would have been the most important and costly aspect, the upholstery. A very rare original needlework covering (no. 14) is shown, as is an exact replication of the well-cushioned treatment found on easy chairs in this period (no. 5). The sophisticated nail-less technique developed recently and used to reupholster this 250 year old easy chair frame without the damage caused by hundreds of tacks, is the subject of a videotape in the exhibition.



Checklist No. 5

A sense of the variety of the forms of seating furniture is provided here. Although not encyclopedic, it is demonstrative of the relative rarity of certain chair forms in the 18th century. The most common form was the side chair which was always made in sets, usually of six or more. A single armchair might be purchased to accompany the set. The crescent-armed round-about chair (no. 6) was made primarily for use at a desk and its shaping promoted a masculine sitting posture. The couch (no. 4), as the eight-legged daybed form was known in the 18th century, was rare in its day and attrition over more than two centuries makes it even more exceptional today. Perhaps the most common chair form of the time, the slat-back has not been included because its age-old design, with vertical posts and multiple horizontal back slats did not, for the most part, take on the features of the late baroque style.

On October 14, 1729, Samuel Grant (1705-1784), an upholsterer in Boston, then the largest city in the colonies, recorded the sale of a chair covered with cloth he called "red Chainey" and formed with a "New Fashion round seat." With these words Grant documents the earliest known instance of Queen Anne seating furniture being made in America. Extensive research involving Grant's ledgers and the styles of chairs which immediately precede this record make it clear that the only new fashion Grant could be referring to was the curvilinear late baroque. In the months that follow, Grant's ledgers gradually reveal the incorporation of all the new features of a full-blown Queen Anne chair. The cabriole or serpentine leg is announced with the November 1730 sale of "1 Couchframe horse-bone feet." The framing of seat rails to carry a loose, or slip seat occurs when six chairs are sold with "cush[io]n seats" in October of 1731. Carved cabriole legs with round pad feet appear in January of 1732 and a description of a chair with horsebone legs and a banister back, which in this case refers to a vase form splat, is found three months later. A listing for a chair of walnut, the primary wood of the best quality furniture of the late baroque in America, concludes this vital documentation in September, 1732.¹ As all these features are brought together, one of the resulting chairs could have been no. 13, with its walnut frame, cushion seat and horsebone round feet. As these new features come into use they were also grafted onto earlier baroque chairs, as makers and consumers adjusted to the new fashion. The cane chair (no. 9) is a stiff, narrow frame, which except for its square cabriole legs, was a type of seating produced in the colonies by 1715.² In that period the cane chair would have had lathe-turned legs shaped using blocks alternating with balusters (derived from the baluster, also called banisters, used in architecture to support horizontal rails) as demonstrated by the Portsmouth armchair (no. 2) and coastal New England side chair (no. 11). Less expensive than carved legs, turned legs offered the customer a cheaper, more conservative product, requiring fewer changes in the chairmaking practices of any craftsman working in the old style. In fact, the only real change for that chairmaker was the insertion of the vase-shaped wooden splat and yoke-form crest rail to replace the caned or leather upholstered back panel and a crest that typically arched upwards in a series of arcs and hollows. Not even the shaping of the rear stiles of these chairs, which gave the form a serpentine profile, was new in fashion, for the records of another Boston upholsterer, Thomas Fitch, show that he first sold "crook'd back" chairs in 1722.³ The molded

surface of the stiles, serpentine in section, as we have already seen on the cane chair (no. 9), was in use by 1715.

These derivative elements are indicative of the strong reliance of Queen Anne chair design on the early baroque. Although, as a complete entity, the Queen Anne chair employs a new language of relaxed open proportions and simplified serpentine lines, the individual features of the whole draw on an existing vocabulary of Oriental, French, Dutch and English chairs of the second half of the 17th century. Daniel Marot (1663-1752) personifies these combined influences. The French-born Marot was student and a follower of Jean Bérain (1640-1711) and Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682), leading designers associated with the creation and furnishing of the palace at Versailles. Begun in 1661, the work accomplished for Louis XIV (1638-1715) at Versailles was to have an enormous impact because of the king's dedication to its magnificence. He spared no expense in acquiring the finest materials and the best craftsmen throughout the continent and the international baroque of Versailles rapidly became a model for all of courtly Europe. Marot's uncle, Pierre Golle (fl. 1660-1690), was a cabinetmaker to the king welcomed from the Netherlands because of his mastery of the techniques of marquetry. After 1685 Marot was to experience the influence of the Dutch far more closely as he immigrated to the Netherlands. He did so with many other French Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes ended an era of French tolerance for the Protestant faith. In 1686, Marot was hired by William of Orange (1650-1702), prince of the northern province of the Netherlands, later William III of England. William III and Mary II (1662-1695) would bring Marot's influence to England when they acceded to the throne in 1689. Until the death of William III, in 1702, Marot would divide his life between England and the Netherlands disseminating his designs by publication as well as through royal and court commissions.

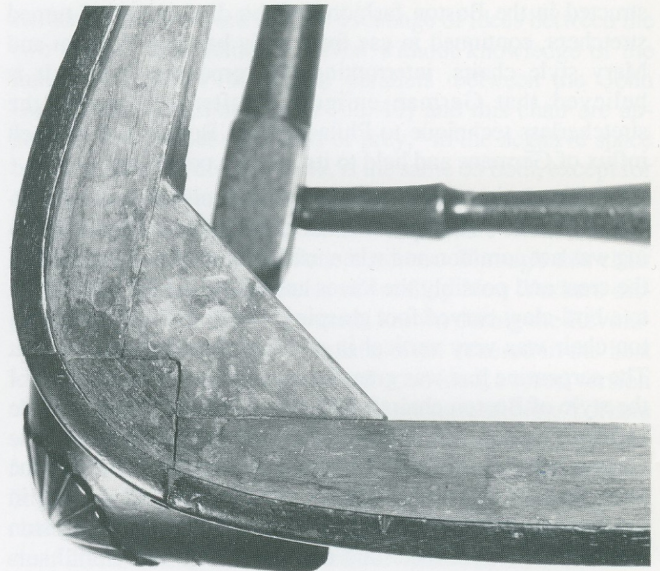
Marot's work for Princess Mary Stuart, before the accession, displayed the wide influence of Oriental design on the Dutch. Their East India company brought ship loads of wares from China and Japan and porcelains were especially treasured. Marot designed rooms for the display of ceramics in the royal residences in The Hague and at Het Loo lining some with panels taken from oriental lacquerware screens. The importation of oriental furniture in addition to lacquer screens is not well documented, but, other forms must surely have been known, if only through images on the porcelains and screens.⁴ The serpentine side profile of chairbacks on Chinese chairs dating from the second half of the 17th century, the use of round-sectioned (rather than board) stiles and the central wooden splat that extends the full height of the chairback are all found on chairs in the Queen Anne style. Other features of the late baroque chair are clearly developed from the type of seating furniture Marot was designing for the court of William and Mary at the very beginning of the 18th century. His designs included very tall chairbacks that had an angular rake above the seat rails. The stiles were either molded on the face or carved, the latter occurring on chairbacks with a serpentine outline. Scroll form legs are described in a 1702 bill from a chairmaker to the court as "fore parts carved horsebone," and begin to replace the stiff baluster-form leg.⁵ It should be understood that while designers such as Marot put all these elements into the chairmakers vocabulary it was not a language

in common use until interpreted for production in large numbers. This adaptation for the merchant class and the lesser rooms of the courtly and aristocratic residences was the cane chair (no. 9) and its cousin, the leather chair. The latter differed from the cane chair in its upholstery which employed a vertical-board seat frame, mortise and tenoned into the chairs rear stiles and front legs, a type of seat illustrated by side chair no. 10, with its leather seat upholstered over the chair rails.

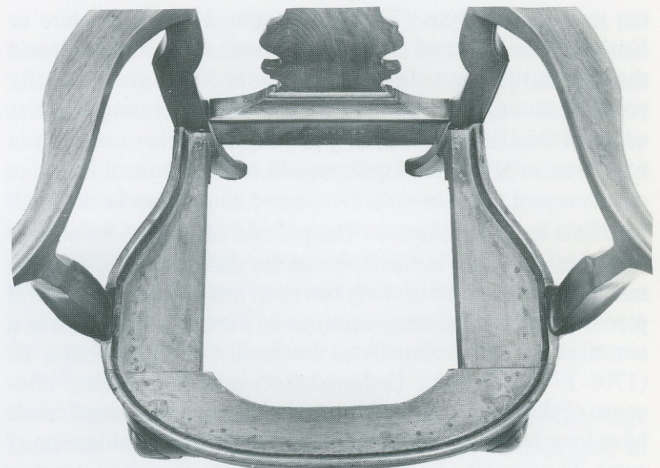
It was the cane and leather chair interpretation of the baroque that the American colonials imported and learned to produce either by copying or by training with an English immigrant chairmaker. When the late baroque was introduced in the early 1730s it was these cane and leather chairs that provided the basic framework onto which the more relaxed lines of the late baroque were superimposed. As with the earlier style, imported chairs (nos. 7, 8) of the fairly common production type, along with immigrant craftsmen, brought on the changes; however, American craftsmen did not employ the marquetry decoration so common to Dutch chairs (no. 7) because of the specialized skills the complex inlay required. Neither did colonial chairmakers use veneer, as is seen on the splat of the English chair (no. 8), with any frequency. High quality black walnut lumber was available in this country in large quantities, veneering was used only on the most elaborate chairs where a rare highly figured piece of walnut might be veneered only to the face of any otherwise ordinary walnut splat.

After 1730, when the Queen Anne style was in vogue in America, it had many interpretations, often indigenous to a geographical region or individual colony. Lacking the existence of a maker's label or other mark of origin, or a firmly documented history of the chair, determining the origins of a piece of seating furniture depends on an analysis of design details, construction, materials and an evaluation taking in related examples with documented origins. After all these considerations, it is also necessary to remember that chairmaking is a human endeavor and, in the 18th century, still subject to an individual's hand. The result is that for every rule stating, for example, construction method 'x' is only found in Philadelphia, there is an exception, where a Philadelphia chairmaker moved to Connecticut! Generalizations are useful only if it is understood that there are always variants from them and no designation of origins is wisely based on a single attribute, the whole chair must be taken into account.

Queen Anne chairs made in Boston were reliant on English precedent for both basic overall design and construction. The mortise and tenon joinery used to connect the frame elements is demonstrated by the exploded version of a Boston-type Queen Anne chair in the exhibition. Such construction methods were used on the vast majority of Queen Anne chairs made in New England and New York. The feature that separates these chairs from some of those made further south, in the Philadelphia area, is the vertical orientation of the seat rails and the joining of the legs to the seat. In Boston, the boards which support the seat upholstery were placed so the narrow edge forms the top and bottom of the seat rail while the width of the board forms the side of the seat. The top of each front leg formed the front corner of the seat and was mortised out to receive the projecting tenons of the side and front seat rails (no.



Detail, Checklist No. 17



Detail, Checklist No. 3

17). The rear tenons were not cut through the rear legs and wedged in place, as they were in Philadelphia, but were housed invisibly inside the joint. With the exception of using the through tenon, Philadelphia chairs with squared seats (no. 18) were made in the same fashion as the Boston version above, but there is a major difference in construction when the seat is balloon, or compass, shaped (see nos. 3, 16, 23). In that instance the boards of the seat rails were laid with their widest part on the horizontal plane, the narrower edge of the board formed the side of the seat rails. The interior of the seat frame was square, the serpentine shape was cut from the outside edge of the rails. The seat rails tenoned into each other at the front corners and the top of the leg was made with a dowel-like round tenon that was inserted up into the front rail and wedged from above. Constructing the chair seat with these wide, heavy boards allowed the maker to drop the use of the leg-bracing stretchers and make a purely serpentine chair. Chairs con-

structed in the Boston fashion had the distraction of turned stretchers, continued in use from early baroque William and Mary style chairs, interrupting the serpentine form. It is believed that German emigrant craftsman brought the stretcherless technique to Philadelphia. Boston had no such influx of Germans and held to its English precedents.⁶

The design details of Boston chairs also show a conservative attitude that looked to modest English precedents. Carving was not common and when used was restricted to a shell at the crest and possibly the knees and occasionally, after 1750, to a bird-claw-carved foot grasping a ball. The essential Boston chair was very vertical in orientation and simple in line. The serpentine line was graceful but minimal. What is true of the style of Boston chairs could be said of many chairs made in New England. As the largest city in the colonies when the Queen Anne style came into fashion Boston chairs set the precedent for many chairmakers. With some 225 artisans in the furniture trades in the city between 1725 and 1760, Boston was the largest producer and marketer of furniture until surpassed by Philadelphia in the 1760s.⁷

A side chair made for the Sayward family of York Harbor, Maine (no. 24) offers an indication of how closely chairmakers in a smaller urban center north of Boston emulated the mainstream style. The Portsmouth, New Hampshire or York, Maine maker of this chair imitated the form but altered the details, making a sharp line down the knees and generally creating an angular chair by only slightly beveling the rear edges of the chairback, leaving very square corners at the front of the seat rails and making an angled, rather than molded, edge on the top of the seat rails. A second chair from Portsmouth (no. 2) is far less imitative. The pierced carving of the crest is very rare, the usual would look like the short-horned yoke seen on chair no. 11. The carving has been associated with several pieces of case and seating furniture in Portsmouth as well as a set of chairs descended from the family of John Gaines III (1701-1743), a turner (lathe-worker) and chairmaker.⁸ Because of this connection chairs with these unique carved crests have long been attributed to Gaines. However, examination of some 25 examples by this author indicates that there are two different designs for the turned elements on these chairs, each with a very individual style. A drastic change in the shape of the turnings Gaines made is unlikely. Perhaps he was making so many chairs that he had to job out some of the turnings. Alternatively, as it is the elements which come from a carver and joiner which unite these chairs, perhaps the carver was also a joiner making most of the chair parts and buying his turned legs and other lathe-made elements from Gaines and another local turner. It is also possible that a third party, a joiner, jobbed out the carving and the turnings, contributing the stiles, splat, seat rails and side stretchers, then assembled the whole. Regardless of the questions concerning the maker/s of this boldly styled chair and those related to it, there is no question that there was an unusually independent, creative mind in the lead.

In determining if a chair was made in Boston it is necessary to be aware of chairs made in Newport, Rhode Island for they are most like Boston examples. The chair produced in both these New England population centers that is most likely to be confused is the type illustrated by chair nos. 13 and 17.



Checklist No. 2

For these chairs, the elements that swings the pendulum towards Boston is the absence of two small ring turnings on the medial stretcher, just at the head of each conical terminal. Rhode Island chairs incorporate the rings, Boston chairs usually have plain terminals. However, there is at least one instance of a chair of the type cited above with a strong Rhode Island provenance that is made without the rings. In contrast, the side chair (no. 19) attributed to John Goddard (1723-1785) represents a Queen Anne chair design that is one of the most distinct Newport designs. With its unusual round stiles, this fluid statement of late baroque design is attributed to one of Newport's finest cabinetmaking shops. Goddard made another set nearly identical to this example for the wealthy Providence merchant Moses Brown. In this exhibition the other New England chair that has round stiles is no. 12. Round stiles are an oriental attribute that has a tremendous softening effect on the overall design of the chair, a strong contrast from the usual rectangular posts. The elongated balusters of the complex turned stretchers are an early form commonly used by Boston chairmakers and generally abandoned for a smoother columnar turning in about 1735.

Aside from Newport, the only other region to employ rounded stiles with any regularity was Philadelphia (see no. 23). There, as in Newport (no. 19), they were only used on chairs of the best quality. A comparison of "bests" again shows the contrast of the Philadelphia style with that of New England. The former is complete in its employment of serpentine lines, from the outline to the numerous carved embellishments. The latter, with its elongated back, narrow splat and blocked ending to the rear stiles is illustrative of the simpler, more static lines of the northern colonies.

The intra-New England exchange of overall chair styling and the use of individual elements of design has been discussed in connection with the chairs of Boston and Newport but an intriguing side chair (no. 22) has some of the characteristics of these regions in combination with elements of New York chairs. The combination may be result of the Long Island/Rhode Island connection formed by Solomon Townsend (died ca. 1720). The Townsend name is as famous as Goddard in Newport furniture making and Solomon, who went to Newport from Oyster Bay, Long Island in 1707, was the progenitor of the Rhode Island branch of the family. Other Townsends

remained in New York and the exchange of ideas between the two regions is undeniable. Even without knowledge of the family connection the visual parallels between the John Goddard-attributed side chair (no. 19) and this chair are apparent. The profile of a "bird of prey," in the negative space between the splat and the stiles, is the same on both, except for a bulge at the base of the heavier set "New York" chair. The bulge as well as the great width of the splat, are features found on other chairs with New York histories. Through this chair we see the Loyalist tendencies of wealthy New Yorkers displayed well before they were made known during the Revolution. In a fondness for wide splats, often venerated in the best London fashion, and the use of the 3-toed foot, a lobed version of the standard circular pad foot of New England, New Yorkers were heeling close to English models. The raised scroll that forms a bead on the inside of the scroll knees is yet another English detail, but one that is also known on New England chairs (no. 20). The knee scroll and the flattened stretchers of chair 20 have long been assigned Newport origins because of a chair with these features which may have been made for a Rhode Island family by John Townsend. Recent research has indicated that both elements also occur on chairs with Boston histories.

In a case such as no. 22, where the chair represents the combination of so many features from diverse areas, analysis of the woods used to make it can be very helpful. In this instance microanalysis of the secondary wood, which is the wood that is used in unseen areas of the chair and is most likely to be local to where the chairmaker worked, has determined that the frame of the loose seat and blocks which support it are sweet gum, a timber which does not grow north of southern Connecticut. This provides a good indicator that this chair is more likely to be from New York than Rhode Island or Boston where sweet gum would have to have been imported and where the secondary wood of choice for Queen Anne chair seats is usually maple.

The deeply serpentine seat rails and stretcherless legs found on the common type of late baroque chairs made in Philadelphia make them one of the most easily recognized of the regional variations in American Queen Anne chairs. Chairs made without the compass seat did not share the same openness of design and robustness of line but the maker of one square-seated chair (no. 18) provided enormous visual energy by using maple with a very dense stripe in its figure. That man was probably William Savery (1721-1788), whose descendants owned the chair into the 20th century. Savery was apprenticed to Solomon Fussell of Philadelphia who taught him every aspect of making turned chairs, that is chairs which were framed from parts made on the lathe in combination with bentwood horizontal back slats. Nevertheless, Savery clearly learned the techniques for producing all types of joinery or he would not have made chair 18 and others like it which carry his label. Savery's skill is equal to the maker of side chair 16, a walnut compass seat chair which has the same chair back design as he employed. The outline of the splat differs slightly but Savery is clearly working in the mainstream of Philadelphia joined-chair design. Chair 15, from the nearby Delaware River Valley offers a view of one of the difficulties a maker of turned chairs encounters interpreting the joined chair. The maker had



Photo by Joel Bregger

Checklist No. 22

learned the use of the new "H" pattern of stretcher common to the Queen Anne style joined chair but he is unwilling to drop the huge front stretcher. That stretcher which is so necessary to a turned chair, is equally unfitting on a new-style joined chair, already equipped with the usual four stretchers. The design of the Savery-attributed chair employs flat stretchers like those on the Boston/Newport side chair, no. 20. Both of these chairs may have drawn the element from an imported English chair just as the Philadelphia chair draws on an English or Irish model for the design of the triple raised-panel foot which is a version of the trifid foot. The trifid was the common foot of Philadelphia's late baroque chairs, preferred over the circular pad foot so ubiquitous in New England.

Through the examples in this exhibition it is possible to gain a sense of some of the many American interpretations of the late baroque style. Clearly the colonies were relying on European, and particularly English models, but, the needs and demands of the provincial population had an effect on how those models were adapted. The elaborate designs made for the court and aristocracy were unfamiliar here. By comparison the results are relatively "simple" chairs. Nevertheless, the chairs express the skill of makers reliant on proportion and subtle manipulation of the serpentine, memorialized in 1753 as "the line of beauty," in William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*.

Any understanding of late baroque seating furniture and the insights it may offer on the culture that created it first requires that it is 18th century objects which are studied. A 20th century copy of a chair in the late baroque style cannot serve as a source on the 18th century. Study of objects known to be of the period, like all but one of those in this exhibition, informs us of what a late baroque chair looks like, but to differentiate between the chair that copies the late baroque and one that is 18th century it is important to know how period chairs were made and how the passage of 250 and more years may effect chairs. In the exhibition the exploded reproduction of a Boston-type late baroque joined chair illustrates what parts the chairmaker had to produce and how they would be assembled. As discussed earlier, the methods displayed in a Boston chair are essentially the same throughout the colonies, with the largest exception being Philadelphia compass seat chairs. To illustrate the Philadelphia technique chair no. 16 is exhibited without its slip seat to reveal the broad, horizontally-oriented rails that distinguish them. The methods of the turned chairmaker adapting to the joined chairs of the late baroque is illustrated by another "seatless" chair (no. 11) an example from coastal New England. Here the rails would have originally been covered with rush woven directly onto the chair, there is no loose cushion seat that sits inside board-framed rails. This same chair provides an interesting example of the kind of alterations time and a change of fashion may impose on a chair. In the 19th century the seat rails, originally a plain trapezoid, were widened in order that the front rail could be curved and the whole upholstered with a fabric, rather than rush, covering. Even if not structurally altered like this, 250 year old chairs will be altered by light and oxidation. These effects are most clear on the parts of the chair not normally seen because the visible surfaces are almost certain to have had new finishes applied to them at some time in their existence, while the secondary areas often escape these changes.

A 20th century chair (no. 25) made in the style of the late baroque provides a comparison of the 18th century maker's methods and those of a modern chair manufacturer. The 20th century example is of very high quality, made of walnut with a very handsomely figured piece used for the splat; even the unseen frame of the slip seat is walnut. You would not see the use of an expensive primary wood in an 18th century slip seat where less costly materials such as maple would serve the purpose. Wood is lavished on heavy stiles and a thick splat on the 20th century chair where the 18th century maker would use a dimension that was structurally sound and not more. The heavy lines these thicker elements create are also out of sync with the design effect desired in the 18th century. The joining of the legs to the frame is also at variance from the late baroque model in that they are not joined directly to the seat rails, but join a bracing block which in turn joins the rails. This technique would seem to require more effort than any of the 18th century methods seen in the exhibition, nor does it save material. It is difficult to know why it was done this way, but, it does make clear that there is a very different approach to building a chair in operation here — a difference that is as valuable a record of its 20th century creators as we find 18th century chairs can offer for an earlier day.

Notes

1 Grant's ledgers are discussed in detail in Brock W. Jobe, "The Boston Furniture Industry," in *Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1972), 42-47; and Benno Forman, *American Seating Furniture, 1630-1730* (New York: W.W. Norton, for Winterthur Museum, 1988), 286-87.

2 Forman, *American Seating Furniture*, 285.

3 Ibid.

4 Nicholas Grindley, *The Banded Back Chair*, (London: Barling of Mount Street Ltd., 1990), 10-12.

5 Forman, *American Seating Furniture*, fig. 115, 287.

6 Benno Forman, "German Influences in Pennsylvania Furniture," in *Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans*, (New York: W.W. Norton for the Winterthur Museum, 1983), 168-69.

7 Morrison H. Heckscher, *American Furniture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Vol. II. (New York: Random House, 1985) 20, 23.

8 Brock W. Jobe, "An Introduction to Portsmouth Furniture of the Mid-Eighteenth Century," in *Old Time New England: New England Furniture, Essays in Memory of Benno M. Forman*, (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1987), 164-173.



Checklist No. 3

Acknowledgments

The organization of any exhibition is a cooperative effort and I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to all those whose help made **The Seat of Elegance** possible. Both public and private lenders to the exhibition have been especially generous. I am grateful to Milo Naeve, Field-McCormick Curator of American Arts at The Art Institute of Chicago, Wendy Cooper and M.B. Munford, curator and associate curator of decorative arts at the Baltimore Museum of Art; Luke Beckerdite, executive director of The Chipstone Foundation here in Milwaukee; Lee Ellen Griffith, assistant curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Richard Nylander and Marty Pike of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Thanks also to those in the registrars offices of each of these organizations for their essential assistance. Loans from private collectors comprise the largest part of the exhibition and it is my privilege to thank Mrs. Faith Selzer, Marvin and Mary Sokolow and all the anonymous lenders who have so willingly shared their pieces with the museum and the public.

For their generous financial support of the exhibition the Milwaukee Art Museum would like to extend its gratitude to Leslie Hindman Auctioneers of Chicago.

Checklist

All pieces in the exhibition are American in origin unless otherwise noted. Dimensions are given at maximum points of height, width and depth unless otherwise noted.

1. *Armchair* 1730-1760
Eastern Massachusetts or Connecticut, possibly Norwich
Maple, pine
45 x 24 1/2 x 24 1/2" (114.3 x 62.2 x 62.2 cm.)
Lent by the Chipstone Foundation
2. *Armchair* 1735-1743
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Attributed to John Gaines III (1704-1743)
Maple
43 1/2 x 26 x 23 1/2" (109.8 x 66 x 59.7 cm.)
Lent by Faith Henoch Selzer
3. *Armchair* 1745-1765
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Black walnut, southern yellow pine
41 1/2 x 30 3/4 x 22 7/8" (105.4 x 78.1 x 58.1 cm.)
Gift of Richard Titelman M1973.89
4. *Couch* 1740-1760
Probably Boston, Massachusetts, possibly Newport, Rhode Island
Walnut
38 1/8 x 24 1/2 x 68 3/4" (96.8 x 62.2 x 174.6 cm.)
Lent by the Chipstone Foundation
5. *Easy Chair* 1740-1765
Boston, Massachusetts
Black walnut, maple, birch, pine
46 1/2 x 34 5/8 x 21 3/8" (118.1 x 88.7 x 54.3 cm.)
Purchase Milwaukee Art Museum President's Special Fund M1979.45
6. *Roundabout Chair* 1740-1760
New England, possibly Connecticut
Walnut, cherry, pine
34 3/4 x 31 x 28" (88.3 x 78.7 x 71.1 cm.)
Private Collection
7. *Side Chair* 1720-1730
Dutch
Walnut, mixed-wood marquetry
41 1/2 x 22 x 17 1/2" (105.4 x 55.7 x 44.4 cm.)
Gift of Malcolm Franklin, Inc. M1968.75
8. *Side Chair* 1720-1730
English
Walnut, walnut veneer
41 1/4 x 21 x 17" (104.7 x 53.2 x 43.2 cm.)
Gift of Miss Isabelle Miller M1970.109
9. *Side Chair* 1730-1740
Boston, Massachusetts
Beech, walnut, cane
44 1/2 x 18 1/2 x 17 3/4" (113 x 47 x 45.1 cm.)
Private Collection

10. *Side Chair* 1730-1760
Boston
Hard wood (probably maple)
41 7/8 x 20 3/4 x 20" (106.4 x 52.7 x 50.7 cm.)
Private Collection
11. *Side Chair* 1730-1770
Coastal New England, probably Connecticut
Soft maple
41 1/4 x 20 1/16 x 15 1/5" (seat) (104.7 x 50.9 x 39.4 cm.)
Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England
Antiquities, Boston, Massachusetts, Bequest of Frances S.
Marrett
12. *Side Chair* 1732-1740
Probably Boston, Massachusetts, possibly Newport, Rhode,
Island
Walnut
40 3/4 x 20 1/2 x 19 7/8" (103.5 x 52 x 50.2 cm.)
Private Collection
13. *Side Chair* 1732-1765
Probably Boston, Massachusetts
Walnut
40 x 22 1/2 x 19 3/4" (101.6 x 57.1 x 50.1 cm.)
Private Collection
14. *Needlework Seat Covering* 1732-1765
(Original covering for seat of chair 13)
Wool on linen
21 3/8 x 18" (54.2 x 45.7 cm.)
Private Collection
15. *Side Chair* 1735-1750
Delaware River Valley
Maple
40 1/2 x 21 1/2 x 20 3/8" (102.9 x 54.6 x 51.7 cm.)
Private Collection
16. *Side Chair* 1740-1770
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Walnut, tulip wood, pine
40 1/2 x 20 7/8 x 21 1/4" (102.9 x 53 x 51.4 cm.)
Private Collection
17. *Side Chair* 1745-1765
Probably Boston, Massachusetts
Black walnut, soft maple, white pine
39 1/2 x 22 1/4 x 20 1/2" (100.3 x 56.5 x 52 cm.)
Layton Art Collection L1986.1
18. *Side Chair* 1746-1750
Attributed to William Savery (1721-1788)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Maple
41 3/4 x 19 3/4 x 15 3/4" (seat) (100 x 50.2 x 40 cm.)
The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of the Antiquarian Society
19. *Side Chair* 1750-1765
Possibly the shop of John Goddard (1723-1785)
Newport, Rhode Island
Black walnut, soft maple
40 15/16 x 22 3/16 x 17 1/16" (104 x 56.4 x 43.3 cm.)
Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England
Antiquities, Boston, Massachusetts, Gift of Caroline Barr
Wade
20. *Side Chair* 1750-1770
Newport, Rhode Island or possibly Boston, Massachusetts
Walnut, pine
40 3/8 x 21 5/8 x 21 1/4" (102.5 x 54.9 x 54 cm.)
Private Collection
21. *Side Chair* 1750-1780
Newport, Rhode Island or possibly Boston, Massachusetts
Walnut
39 7/8 x 22 x 22" (101.3 x 55.7 x 55.7 cm.)
Private Collection
22. *Side Chair* 1750-1770
Probably New York, possibly Newport, Rhode Island
Mahogany, sweet gum, white pine
39 1/4 x 22 1/4 x 21 5/8" (99.7 x 56.5 x 54 cm.)
The Baltimore Museum of Art: Friends of the American
Wing Fund (BMA 1984.49)
23. *Side Chair* 1750-1780
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Walnut
41 3/8 x 20 3/4 x 19 1/4" (105.1 x 52.7 x 48.9 cm.)
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased: Harrison Fund
24. *Side Chair* 1755-1765
Portsmouth, New Hampshire or York, Maine
Black walnut, beech, soft maple
39 x 22 1/4 x 16 3/8" (seat) (99.1 x 56.5 x 41.6 cm.)
Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England
Antiquities, Boston, Massachusetts, Gift of the heirs of
Elizabeth Cheever Wheeler
25. *Side Chair* 1925-1940
Lincoln Chair Company
Columbus, Indiana
Walnut
41 5/8 x 21 1/2 x 21 5/8" (105.7 x 54.6 x 54 cm.)
Lent by Marvin and Mary Sokolow

The Seat of Elegance
An Insider's Guide to the Chair, 1720-1760

MILWAUKEE
**ART
MUS
EUM**

Teweles Gallery 23 May - 25 August 1991