

# PATRICK JEFFERSON



## EXTREMELY RARE PAIR OF GEORGE II LEATHER UPHOLSTERED CHAIRS

England *circa* 1755, seats and legs upholstered in the original Flanders leather.

Provenance: E.D. Thornburgh Cropper (the label for which can be accurately dated as pre-1874).

Height 37½" (95cm)                      Width 22½" (57cm)                      Depth 23" (58.5cm)

*Each serpentine top rail with acanthus-carved cresting above an interlaced splat carved with rosettes, the brass-studded serpentine leather seat above close-covered, square section legs; minor damages, the frames repaired, the leather restored and reupholstered to conservation standards.*

This pair of side chairs broadly follows designs published by Thomas Chippendale (1718-79) in *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director*, 1754. This influential book, reprinted in 1755 and 1762, promoted Chippendale's business in St Martin's Lane, creating templates for rivals to emulate, hence the term 'Chippendale' has become synonymous with carved rococo furniture.

It is the close covering of the legs, as well as the rare survival of the original leather, that sets this pair of chairs apart. The idiosyncratic stamped and gilded leather, decorated with rococo scrolls, flowers, and phoenixes in rich blues, greens, and creams, is likely to have been *en suite* with an unidentified 18th century interior. Polychrome leather of this type, produced in Holland, Flanders, Italy, and Spain, as well as the St Paul's Churchyard area of London, was used in the first half of the 18th century on walls or screens to add colour to a panelled interior. Upholstering the seat and legs to match, however, appears unique, as we know of no other British chairs covered in this manner.

Serendipitously, the mould for this exact pattern survives, confirming that the leather was produced in Flanders around 1750. The expert conservators who worked on these chairs agree that the leather is original and has been removed only once, before being reupholstered using the same 18th century flat-headed upholstery tacks.

(Extensive research available on request.)

£18,500

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2

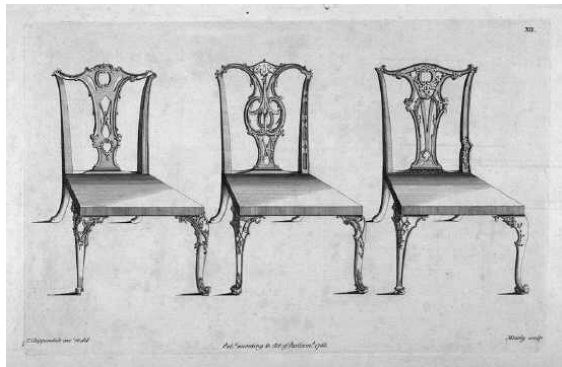


Fig. 3