

PATRICK JEFFERSON



PAIR OF IRISH GEORGE IV CARVED ROSEWOOD LIBRARY ARMCHAIRS

Attributed to Williams & Gibton, Dublin, *circa* 1825-30.

Palmerstown House, Co. Kildare, possibly by descent from the 4th Earl of Mayo.

Height 41½" (105cm)

Width 23¾" (60cm)

Depth 32¾" (83cm)

Each scrolled high back above a deeply swept seat, with down-scrolling leaf-carved arms, raised on acanthus-carved fluted front legs terminating in brass cup castors; traditionally reupholstered in hand-stitched horsehair and covered in striped French silk with bespoke passementerie; in excellent condition, one back leg with a small replaced section in grained walnut;

This refined pair of library armchairs came from Palmerstown House, Johnstown, Co. Kildare, seat of the Earls of Mayo from the 17th century, and may have formed part of the furnishings commissioned from 1807 by John Bourke, fourth Earl, for the previous house rebuilt in 1872 and again in 1923.

The distinctive design, notably the vivaciously raked backs, follows examples by Gillows who supplied a notably similar 'Spanish' chair in 1823. A related model was illustrated by Loudon in 1839 and another, attributed to Arthur Jones, is at Malahide Castle, Dublin. Dr. Angela Alexander has attributed these chairs to Williams & Gibton, comparing them to a set previously at Lissadell, Ballinfull, Co. Sligo, that were not included in the house sale of the majority of the contents. Other unsigned pieces with this supportable attribution have come from the same source, the last major and, until that point uniquely undisturbed, Williams & Gibton commission.

A fascinating aside is their remarkable similarity to a pair of chairs (fig. 3) in the Tented Room at Schloss Charlottenhof, Sanssouci, Potsdam, designed around 1815 by Karl Friedrich Schinkel for Crown Prince Frederick William, later King of Prussia.

£27,000

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fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3