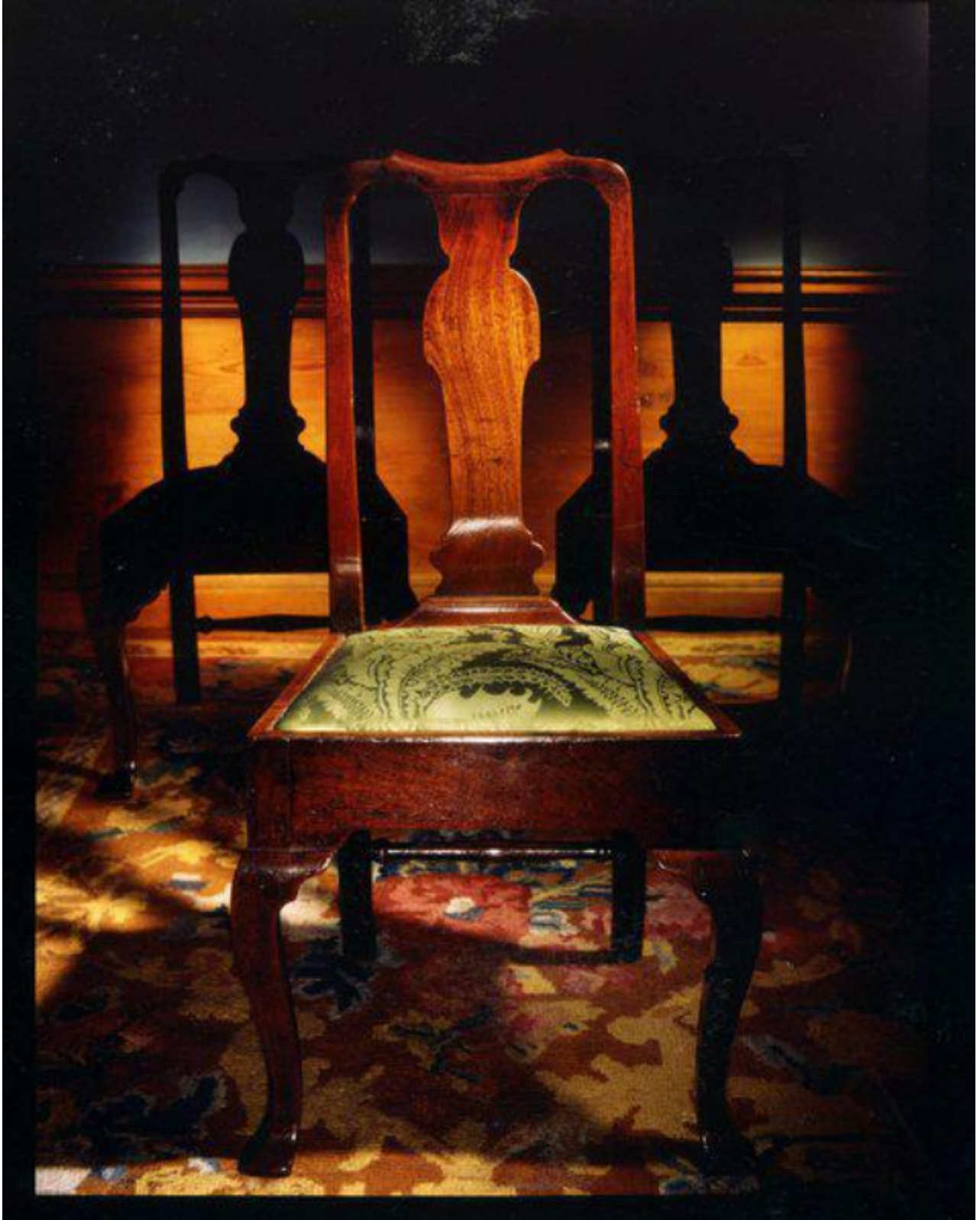


A rare, set of six, early-18th century, walnut sidechairs with crossbanded seats

Sold



REF: 10452

Height: 102 cm (40.2")

Description

The yoke top above a curved, vase-shaped splat with a repair to a small break at the top of one splat. Five original drop-in seats, and one replaced, re-upholstered in a re-drawn, hand-woven, green silk damask dyed to match a fragment surviving from the period. The seat surrounds crossbanded with walnut veneers with minor replacements. Standing on cabriole legs, with one ear replaced, and joined by a turned back stretcher. The toes square, one replaced and one repaired. A good rake of the back. The numbers one to six incised on the frames. Excellent original colour and patina. English, first quarter of the 18th century.

Sidechairs were generally made in sets of six during this period, and surviving sets are rare. The cabinet maker has used finely, configured walnut which has matured over time to an exceptional colour and patina. The shape is inspired by oriental designs which were the height of fashion at the time. The incorporation of the

walnut-veneered crossbanding, also highly fashionable at this time, indicates that these chairs were probably originally made for a good household.

Even after the Restoration the chair retained its function as the seat of honour and when a great personage was present he would occupy it, with lesser folk sitting on stools, illustrating differences in station. In Queen Anne's reign the continental styles that had been incorporated into chair design became naturalised and traces of foreign influence are less noticeable. The curved line dominates the design while sound construction, elegance and utility are united in the best chairs of this time. At first the uprights retain the vertical line and are of convex section, the seat rail is straight and the narrow cabriole legs ending in club feet are united by plain turned stretchers. With the fuller development of structural principles the bowed shape of the uprights becomes more pronounced, the seat rail serpentine or convex, and the legs of greater width, changes accompanied by the abolition of stretchers which were rendered superfluous. The splat follows the curve of the sitter's back rising from a moulded shoe-piece and the normal vase or fiddle shapes are sometimes replaced by a more complex outline. The seats were either stuffed over or upholstered on a removable framework, needlework, tapestry or velvet being the usual coverings.