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A PAIR OF GEORGE III PERIOD MAHOGANY WINDOW SEATS Attributed to Mayhew & Ince

REF756

English, circa 1770

Height: 27 in (69cm)

Width: 38 ½ in (99cm)

Depth: 18 in (46cm)

PROVENANCE

Spains Hall, Finchingfield, Essex

A similar pair was sold at Christie's New York, October 2004, lot 194

DESCRIPTION

Each carved on all sides, the scrolling, moulded arm facings headed by paterae, the seats with serpentine fronts above paterae decorated rails alternating with fluting, on moulded cabriole legs headed by carved fan motifs to the knees.

Probably commissioned by John Ruggles (d.1776) who inherited Spains Hall from his father

Samuel Ruggles in 1764. A fire destroyed the northeast wing of the hall in 1768 and John Ruggles started renovations in 1769, which ties in with the date of these window seats. It can therefore be assumed that these window seats were commissioned for Spains Hall during that period.

Spains Hall is an Elizabethan country house near Finchingfield, Essex, which was named after Hervey de Ispania, the first owner of the house. It was passed on through marriage to the Kempe family in the early 15th century and they remained there until 1727 when Sir Swinnerton Dyer, 3rd Baronet of Tottenham, inherited Spains Hall, also through marriage. As he had no children, his youngest brother, Sir Thomas Dyer, inherited the hall upon his death in 1736. Sir Thomas Dyer, in his turn, sold the house to Samuel Ruggles, a clothier from Bocking, Essex, in 1760 whose descendants are still in residence.