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A PAIR OF GEORGE III PERIOD GILTWOOD ARMCHAIRS

A Pair of George III Period Giltwood Armchairs

Attributed to Ince and Mayhew

English, circa 1780

Height: 37 ½ in (95cm), Width: 25 ½ in (66cm), Depth: 24 in (61cm)

The shield backs, finely carved with acanthus and bell flowers and centred by a stylised anthemion.

The shaped arms similarly carved with acanthus leaves, joining the front legs, headed by paterae with water leaves and fluting over turned feet. Now upholstered with blue damask fabric.

£ 34000

DESCRIPTION

The present armchairs relate closely to designs by the architect James Wyatt and to the work of celebrated cabinet making partnership, Ince and Mayhew. Their overall profile and distinctive carving bear a particularly close resemblance to a suite of eight armchairs, probably originally comprising twelve, supplied by Ince and Mayhew to James Alexander, 1st Earl of Caledon, for the Oval Drawing Room at Caledon House, Ireland (illustrated in Hugh Roberts, 'Unequalled Elegance: Mayhew and Ince's Furniture for James Alexander, 1st Earl of Caledon', *Furniture History*, vol. XLV, 2009, p. 105, fig. 2).

The Caledon chairs share the elegantly shaped backs centred by stylised shells, serpentine aprons adorned with an identical draped patera, and closely related legs.

The carving to the seat rails and legs is also identical to that of a pair of window seats inscribed '5715 Hornby' which were sold at Christie's, New York, 8 April 2004, lot 275.

it is interesting to note that the silhouette of the chairs further recalls designs by James Wyatt dating to circa 1780 (illustrated in John Cornforth and John Fowler, *English Decoration in the 18th Century*, London, 1974, p. 29, fig. 13). This close affinity reinforces the association of the present examples with the refined neoclassical designs of the late George III period.