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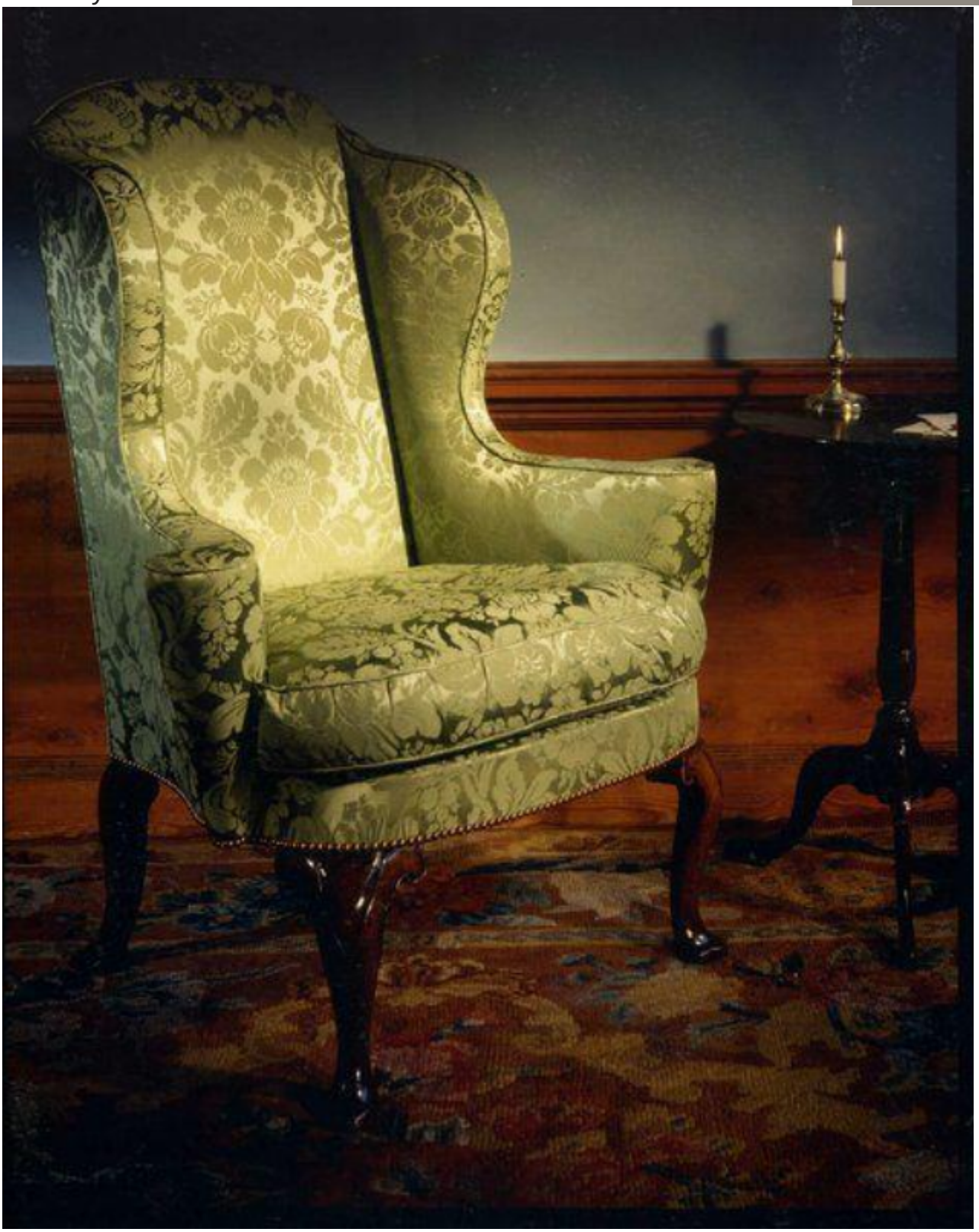
HISTORIC + MODERN

A rare, early-18th century, walnut wing armchair re-upholstered in an historically-accurate silk damask

Sold



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REF: 10461

Description

The oak and walnut frame with minor old repairs. The back with arched crest, and flanked by ogival wings and conical out-scrolled arms centering a compass-shaped loose-cushioned seat. Re-upholstered in a green, silk damask (see photographs). Standing on bifurcated front legs with shaped, pad feet, and flat-section cabriole legs to the rear with a good rake of the back. Excellent original colour and patination. English, first quarter of the 18th century. 3066775

It is extremely rare to find an early-18th century armchair in original condition. This chair has an exceptionally fine conformation with elegant, sweeping wings and is, more importantly, very comfortable. The bifurcated front legs are a rare feature, generally only found on the finest pieces from this period, and their natural colour and patination is outstanding.

Even after the Restoration the chair retained its function as the seat of honour. When a great personage was present he would occupy it, with lesser folk sitting on stools, illustrating differences in station. Upholstered chairs with low backs, turned framework and arms padded on their upper surfaces became fashionable after the Restoration. Large, winged armchairs padded and upholstered throughout began to be made during the middle of Charles II's reign, and examples can be seen at Knowle, Ham House and Penshurst Place.

During the Queen Anne period, wing armchairs tend towards uniformity of design, the wings being prolonged in padded arm-rests with an outward scroll. The new styles 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.

The height of the chair-back was considerably reduced, and in the pattern of the legs they follow the veneered walnut chairs of this time, but the cabriole is often found in a rudimentary form.

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