

F I R S T E D I T I O N



- An Illustrated guide to identify The art of the chair in French Regence style.
- Reveals Top Industry secrets of antique finishes techniques.

# Furniture Black Book



# FURNITURE BLACK BOOK

## FIRST EDITION

MOH.HASS

Expert in antique furniture

Foreword by MOH.MOH

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## Foreword

the collections of the master chairs drawings and photos made available through some of the best French antique reproduction companies in the world and are related to master pieces (stamped pieces) is to give furniture designers , decorators , students , collectors , and all other interested in fine furniture , amore comprehensive knowledge of representative chairs executed in the Eighteen - Century French Regence style (1700 - 1730 ).

In choosing the specimens of chairs studied , an effort has been made to select subject that will serve best ( include the chair origin , period , dimensions , and descriptions , both as sources of inspiration for original designs , and as models for the manufacturers of replicas.

In order that the reader may better understand the traditions and influences governing the form and character of these designs a short explanatory text accompanies each piece . Photos of the piece is also included in different finishes and wood only.

These books' series will reveal through its published editions top industrial secrets , representing in this book through the explanation of antique finish techniques, a lot of efforts is made to gathering these information hoping that our readers will have a more comprehensive knowledge about the industry as well as the history.

**MOH.MOH.Eissa**

# Useful Terms

## SCROLLED ARM

One of the most popular types  
Of arms in the 18<sup>th</sup> century

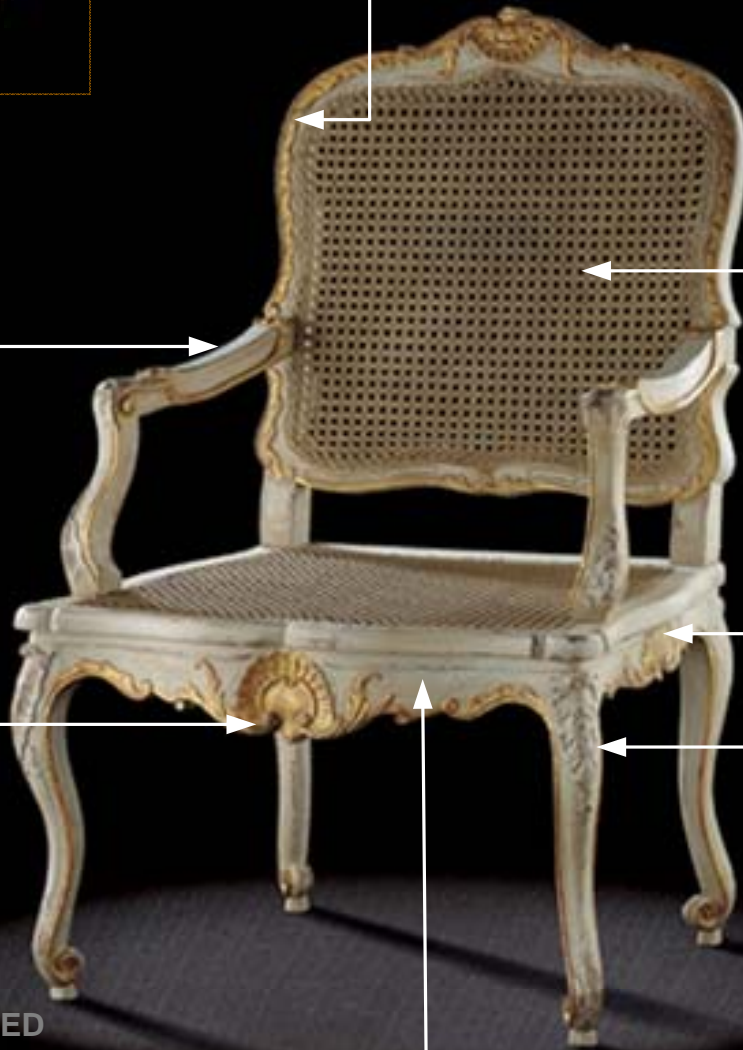
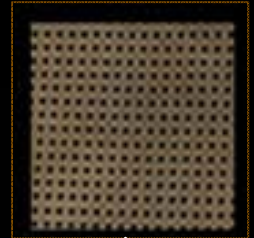


## BACK UPRIGHT

A vertical piece  
Of wood that continues  
The line of the back legs

## CANE WORK BACK

cane was introduced Into Europe  
in the 1660 by the Dutch And  
English east India companies



## APRON

The shaped front  
And / or side edge  
Of a chair

## CARVING APPLIED

the front rail in crossbow form ,  
the bow-shaped splat ,the fine ,  
gracious carving of shells ,  
foliated scrolls and foliage(palms  
and rocaille elements)



## CABRIOLET LEGS



## SEAT RAIL

The horizontal rail that supports the  
Seat of the chair

## Useful Terms

### BALUSTER

a vase shaped column of wood usually turned some times used in chair legs some splats are also of bluster form

### STRETCHER

A horizontal strut Or rail between legs Of a chair or table

### ACANTHUS

Conventionalized leaf of a plant growing in Asia Minor. It is found as the basis of all foliage ornamentation in Classic Greek and Roman decoration.

### ANTHEMION

Stylized flower motif based on honeysuckle pattern conventionalized to radiating cluster, and derived from a classical Greek ornament. Used in the 18th and 19th centuries on furniture, silverware and in decoration

### CABRIOLE

Dominant in the 18th century. Furniture leg shaped in a carved, double curve. The name springs from the root, Caprigoat - though the Spanish "cabriole", suggests its resemblance to the bent leg of an animal.

## Introduction



The antique chairs collection on which this book has included illustrate the most glorious moments in the history of French seating and the skill of the joiner and cabinet – maker, together with that of the tapestry – maker and the art of the upholstery trimming. All of the antiques models reproduced by the expert of artisans of the famous companies studios have been selected for the purity of their lines decoration , their character and their originality.

The finest antique chairs are rare single pieces or frequently incomplete sets of chairs, stamped with makers' marks and preserved in stately homes or in public or private collections. These chairs are not necessarily luxuriously royal thrones but simply offer a chaste of harmony of line which displays the excellent taste of the nobility, the clergy and the upper middle class.

Included in the black book first edition range are cane chairs and armchairs of the Regency period , in a variety of light finishes.

### The Regency chair (1715 – 1723)



When , towards the ends of his reign , Louis XIV encouraged the spread of new ideas , the nobility and bourgeoisie built private town – houses in Paris. Protocol was more flexible and lines became more harmonious ,the rooms will better lead out , became more intimate and were luxuriously decorated. The Regence style a transitional period which began around 1695 and ended around 1725. The colors used in decoration were clear and light , with motifs drawn from nature. Changes to society gave rise to the creation of a variety of new forms of seating.

Besides stools , folding chairs , straight chairs , and armchairs , the chaise lounge and the couch made their appearance. Seats were upholstered , chairs were straw bottomed . At the end of the century , cane reappeared in France and reached its peak in the reign of Louis XV . Chairs once more become lighter , with back often of uncovered wood. Armchairs had arms which curved back and consoles fell out of favour so that women wearing crinolines and panniers could sit down more easily.

## The Regency chair (1715 – 1723)



The couch, providing seating for several people, went by different names according to its shape. The first Bergeres, on which very little wood was left visible, were spacious and comfortable, with side pieces and cushioned seats.

The main decorative themes of the Regency were sea – shells, flowers, acanthus leaves and rosettes on a chequered ground. The stretcher – bars between chair legs became lighter, until at last they disappeared completely. The gentle curve of the legs became more pronounced as the reign of Louis XV approached. The legs terminated in claw – feet or in light scrolling. The backs of chairs and armchairs were often flat (the style called a la Reine), in uncovered wood with mouldings and decoration identical to those of the seat. When this fashion came to an end, backs became curved. The general shape of the back was less regular; it was flowing and asymmetrical, developing into fiddle back. Arms had a revival, but became shorter and set farther back. A space was left on the arm to accommodate the padding.



The woods used for these chairs were beech, oak, cherry or walnut, depending on the region. The wood was painted or left natural, according to its type. The upholstery was more comfortable, better-stuffed and fuller. Arms were shorter and more rounded. The popular fabrics were silks, damask, and later lampas which has a plain ground and multicolored motifs. Brocatelle, silks brocaded or embroidered to resemble brocade, were continually in use, as were Genoa velvets and tapestry. Braid and ornamental nails put the finishing touches to the chair.



## *Part 1: master pieces list*

### **Regence Style**

Period before King Louis XV attained his majority ,when France was governed by a Regent ,the Duke of Orleans , from **1715** to. **1723**

The style itself ,however ,prevails between 1700 and. 1730

## Regence Rocaille chair / large



Period: Parisian chair , circa 1740 , in the Rocaille style in vogue early in the reign of Louis XV

Dimensions : 110 h x 56 w x 50 d cm

Description: No deep mouldings , carving of medium depth , rocaille element (in the center of the stretcher , on the legs , and on the edges of the rails and the back). It is fully - caned , as was dictated by the fashion of the time.

## Regence Rocaille chair / large



## Regence Rocaille Armchair / large



Period: Parisian chair , circa 1740 , in the Rocaille style in vogue early in the reign of Louis XV

Dimensions : 110 h x 56 w x 50 d cm

Description: No deep mouldings , carving of medium depth , rocaille element (in the center of the stretcher , on the legs , and on the edges of the rails and the back). It is fully - caned , as was dictated by the fashion of the time.

Regence Rocaille Armchair / large



## Regence Rocaille Chair



Period: Parisian chair , circa 1740 , in the Rocaille style in vogue early in the reign of Louis XV

Dimensions : 100 h x 50 w x 45 d cm

Description: No deep mouldings , carving of medium depth , rocaille element (in the center of the stretcher , on the legs , and on the edges of the rails and the back). It is fully - caned , as was dictated by the fashion of the time.

## Regence Rocaille Chair



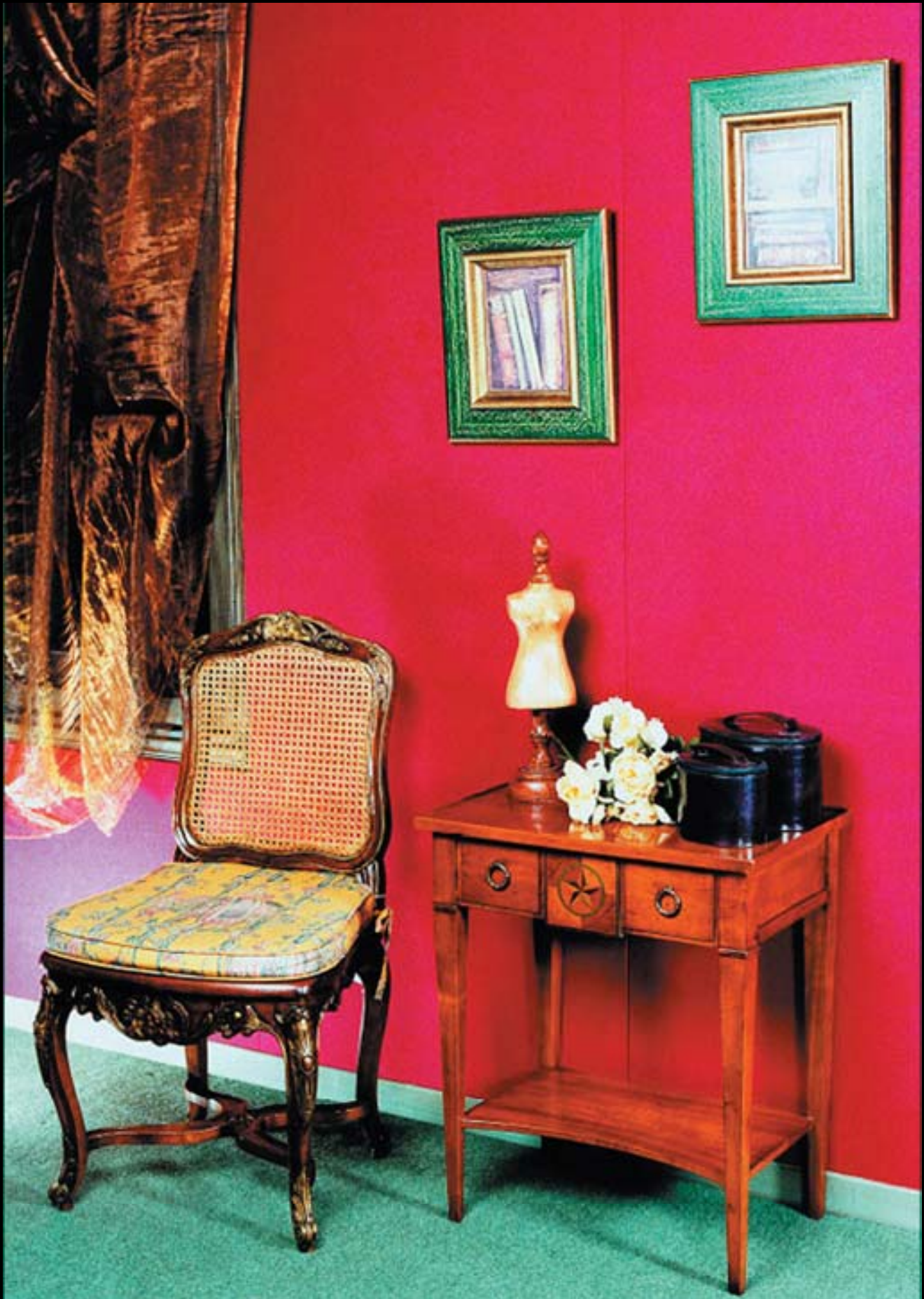
## Regence Rocaille Chair



## Regence Rocaille Chair



## Regence Rocaille Chair



## Regence Gautier chair



Period: Parisian chair , circa 1725 - 1730 ,with the Gautier Stamp

Dimensions : Dimensions : 95 h x 52 w x 45 d cm

Description: The charm and elegance of this chair lie in the fine Rocaille carving , the perfect curves of the front leg and the rare horseshoe shaped design of the seat. The back legs are formed in a single plan , with scrolled feet , strongly inspired by Louis XIV style

## Regence Gautier chair



Regence Gautier chair



## Regence Maestricht chair



Period: Dutch upholstery chair, around 1730 , known as Maesticht

Dimensions : 103 h x 55 w x 51.5 d cm

Description: The tendency towards Rocaille carving and the Regence taste the reigning in Europe due to the influence of French high style can be seen in the carving of the rails, but this very fine chair is totally loyal to the magnificent Dutch style which make it so up- to - date. The legs carved with claws, are superb (some English and American model have some decorative similarities) in its tapestry upholstered version, the additional comfort makes the carving slightly less noticeable on this great comfortable chair.

## Regence Maestricht chair



## Regence Maestricht chair Caned back



Period: Dutch cane chair, around 1730 , known as  
Maesticht

Dimensions : 103 h x 55 w x 51.5 d cm

Description: The tendency towards Rocaille carving and the Regence taste the reigning in Europe due to the influence of French high style can be seen in the carving of the rails, but this very fine chair is totally loyal to the magnificent Dutch style which make it so up- to - date. The legs carved with claws, are superb (some English and American model have some decorative similarities) in its tapestry upholstered version, the additional comfort makes the carving slightly less noticeable on this great comfortable chair.

## Regence Maestricht chair Caned back



## Regence Rocaille Armchair



Period: Dutch cane chair, around 1730 , known as Maesticht

Dimensions : Dimensions : 96 h x 67 w x 50 d cm

Description: The la reine back is lower than the previous chair which make it harmonious , but the seat height means that it can be used at the table , with or without the addition of a pad or cushion.

## Regence Rocaille Armchair



## Regence Rocaille Armchair



## Regence Rocaille Armchair



## Regency Bergere



Original : private collection – Liege area (Belgium)

Period: Regency Bergere, around 1730 , known as Maesticht

Dimensions : Dimensions : 95 h x 79 w x 68 d cm

Description: The generous dimensions of this fine chair make it very comfortable , and the seat back arm-rest supports leave the seat free. Giving a great impression of ease. This arrangement was adopted following the fashion for dresses with very wide hoops. The symmetrical Regence carving is discreet (shell and acanthus leaves) but in good taste. This seat which is low and wide is supported by short , arched legs finished in claw feet which make it original.

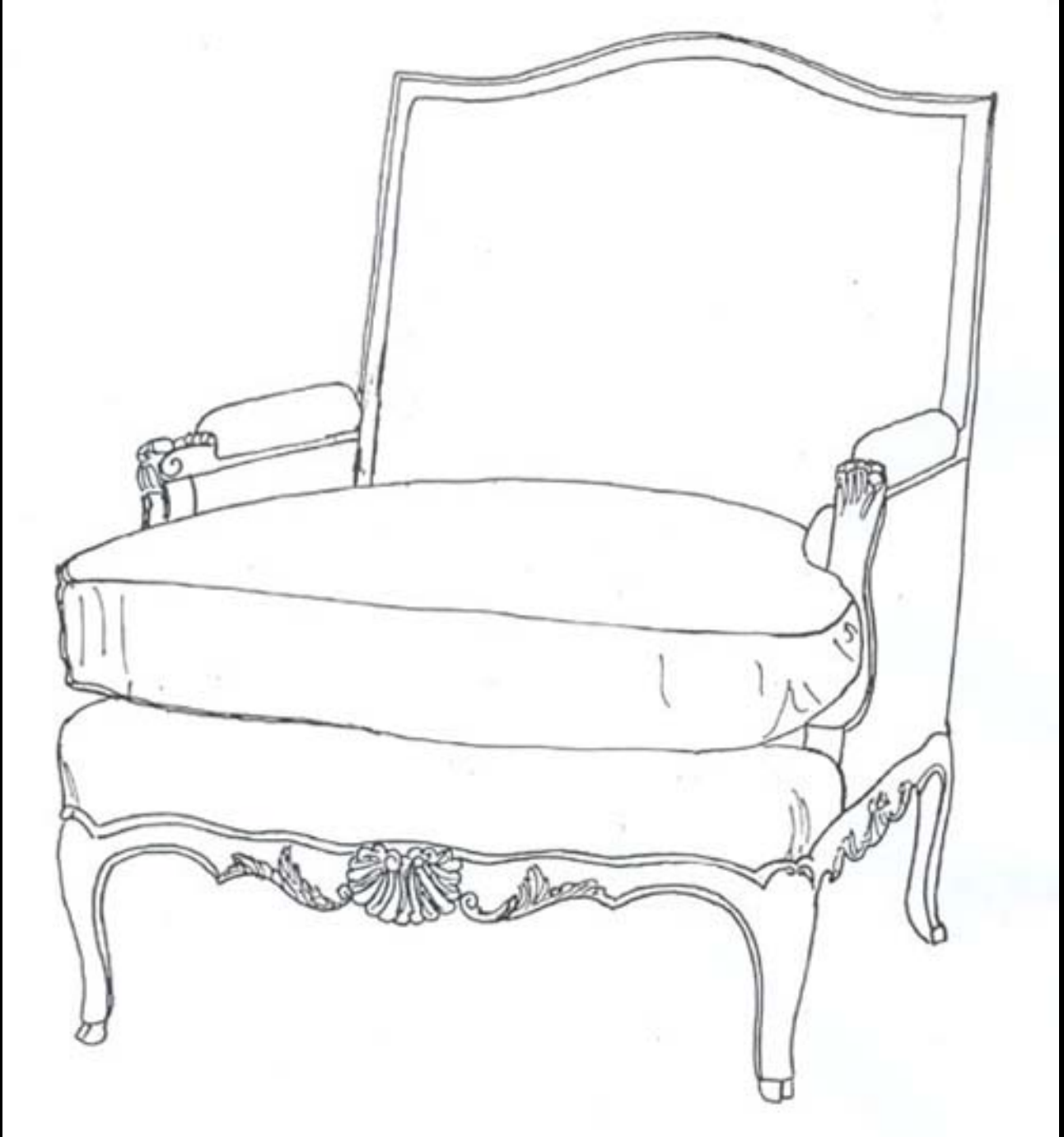
## Regency Bergere



## Regency Bergere



## Regency Bergere



## Regency Bergere



## Regence Footrest



Original : private collection – Liege area (Belgium)

Period: Regency footrest, around 1730

Dimensions : 47 h x 76 w x 65 d cm

Description: The generous dimensions of this fine chair make it very comfortable , and the seat back arm-rest supports leave the seat free. Giving a great impression of ease. This arrangement was adopted following the fashion for dresses with very wide hoops. The symmetrical Regence carving is discreet (shell and acanthus leaves) but in good taste. This seat which is low and wide is supported by short , arched legs finished in claw feet which make it original.

## Regence Footrest



## Regency Arbalete Armchair



Original : private collection – Liege area (Belgium)

Period: Outstanding armchair form the regence period,  
around 1730

Dimensions : 98 h x 64 w x 48 d cm

Description: It is pleasure to the front rail in crossbow form , the bow shaped splat , the fine , gracious carving of shells , foliated scrolls and foliage , and above all the legs ending in scrolls. All this emphasis the very high quality of the original. This type of chair was used both as arm chair de cabinet ( at a desk) and as a salon chair; the height of the seat is also suitable for sitting at a table.

## Regency Arbalete Armchair



## Regence Haut Dossier Armchair



Original : Chateau de Beauvoir – Dompierre (France)

Period: Armchair from the early regence period, around 1715-1720

Dimensions : Dimensions : 112 h x 65 w x 57 d cm

Description: It is a pleasure to the front rail in crossbow form, the bow shaped splat, the fine, gracious carving of shells, foliated scrolls and foliage, and above all the legs ending in scrolls. All this emphasizes the very high quality of the original. This type of chair was used both as an arm chair de cabinet (at a desk) and as a salon chair; the height of the seat is also suitable for sitting at a table.

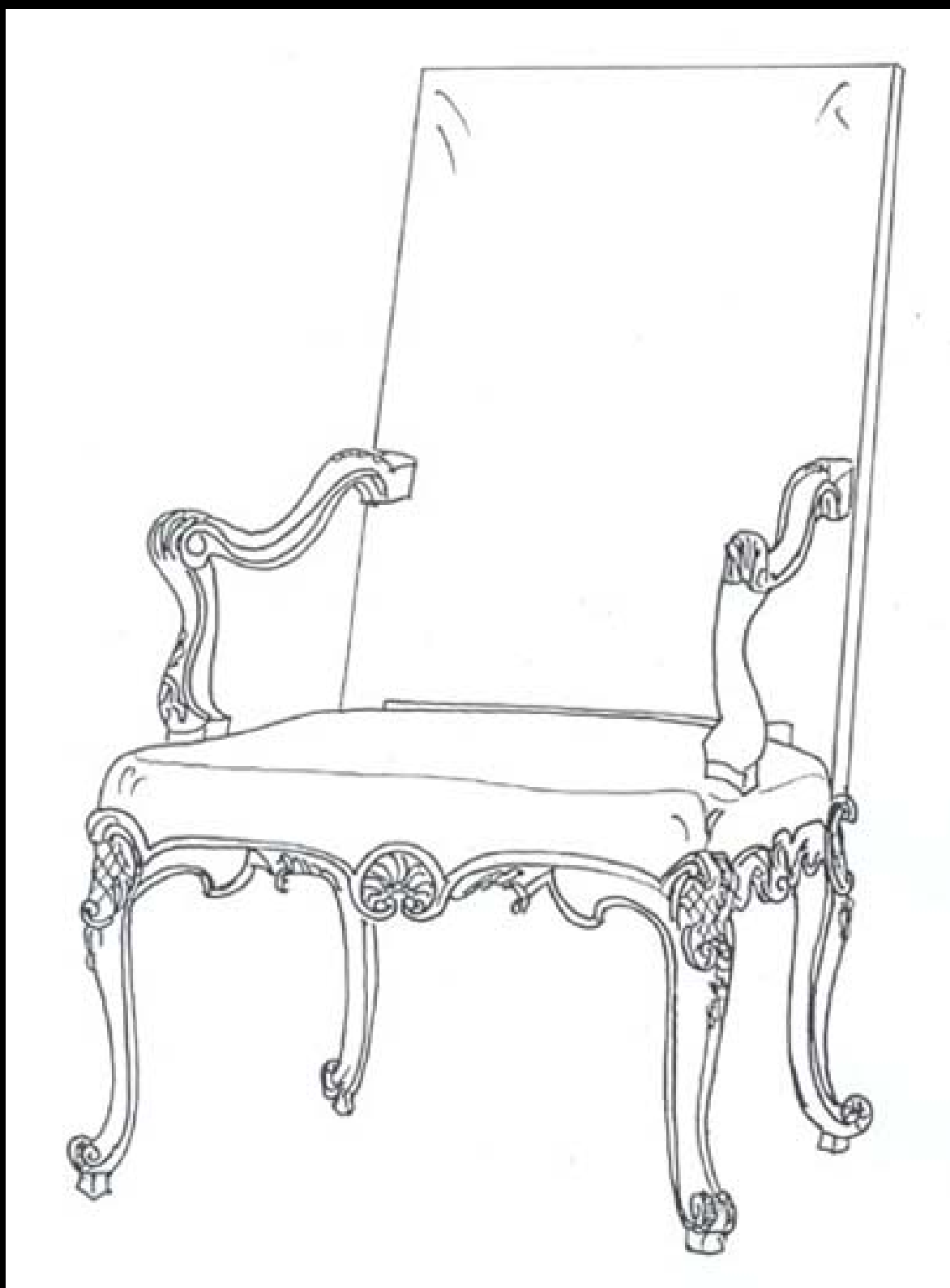
# Regence Haut Dossier Armchair



# Regence Haut Dossier Armchair



# Regence Haut Dossier Armchair



## Regence Haut Dossier Armchair



## Regence Haut Dossier chair



Original : Chateau de Beauvoir – Dompierre (France)

Period: Armchair from the early regence period, around 1715-1720

Dimensions : 104 h x 56 w x 49 d cm

Description: It is pleasure to the front rail in crossbow form , the bow shaped splat , the fine , gracious carving of shells , foliated scrolls and foliage , and above all the legs ending in scrolls. All this emphasis the very high quality of the original. This type of chair was used both as arm chair de cabinet ( at a desk) and as a salon chair; the height of the seat is also suitable for sitting at a table.

# Regence Haut Dossier chair



Regence Haut Dossier chair



Regence Haut Dossier chair



## *Part 2: Antique finishing techniques*



## Antique finishes samples

These finishings being entirely hand-made ,slight shade variations may occur .



Antique red



Old white



Antique  
cream



Antique grey



Antique green



Antique  
terracotta  
green



Antique  
white / blue  
rechampi



Antique grey /  
yellow



Antique white/  
yellow  
rechampi



Antique  
yellow



Antique white



Antique  
black / gold



Chalk on  
wood



Antique white/  
blue /gold



Antique sky  
blue



Antique gold



Antique blue/  
blue /lining



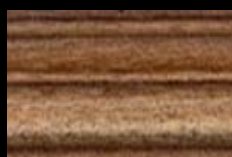
Antique  
cream /  
anthracite/  
rechampi



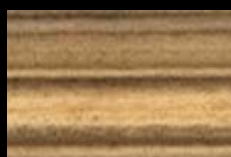
Gilded – 24  
carat gold



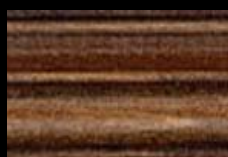
Antique  
sienna



Antique wax  
honey



Antique wax  
white honey



Antique wax  
walnut



Antique wax  
dark walnut

*Antique finishes samples*



Patina Black  
&  
Bourgogne



Patina  
Bourgogne  
& Gold



Patina  
Green  
Mastic  
Ivory



Patina Ivory  
& Gold



Patina Old  
Gold Dusty



Patina Sand  
Ivory



Patina  
White &  
Gold

## *Antique finish techniques*

### The different stages of water – gilding a chair .

The work was broken down into four operations , including dressing , recarving the gesso , gilding proper and finishing.

### The dressing operation it self had three stages , as follows(p1) :

- 1- washing , which consisted of cleaning the wood with water containing absinth (wormwood) leaves – in the eighteen century this was called " scoring and putting on absinth "
- 2- Gessoing , the gesso applied by brush , which could mean applying a dozen coats of blanc de Meudon to fill in any unevenness , and creating a perfectly smooth surface .
- 3- the smoothing down , using water and pumice stone to bend to the shape of mouldings and carved motifs , and also pieces of shave – grass to smooth the white coat that has just been applied.

### The second operation was that of the repareur (p2) – repareur in the eighteen century French – which involved remodeling the decorations

That has been thickened out by successive coats of gesso , with the use of cutting hooks to create the fine details , such as the veining of leaves , the whorls of shells or background pattern.

The procedure was prime importance , because the carving in its final form would only appear after the gilder's work.

The next stage was " yellowing " the whole chair with yellow ochre to hide the white of the gesso in case there were gaps in the gilding or to prevent it from shining through.(p3)

p1



p2



p3



## *Antique finish techniques*

The third operation was the gilding it self. The mixture was composed of Armenian bole ( A reddish clay) , graphite and grease – giving a red color – which would be used to fix the gold leaf. This had to be moistened with water to allow the gold to blend. Only those parts of the chair were to be burnished would be coated with the mixture.

The last stage was the finishing ; with the gold leaf applied the craftsman used a brush dipped in water to give a matt finish to certain areas , the burnished parts being rubbed with agate chalcedony.

We have not yet mentioned the inside of the chair (the seat ring) which would have been finished in its own way . It would have been brushed with size along with the rest of the chair , and also " yellowed " to hide any finger marks or flaws . This would be done before applying the gold leaf.

p4



p5



## *Top secrets in finishing techniques*



### **Taking their own good time**

The marks of the two hundred years of wear and tear are faithfully reproduced , from dust and woodworm holes to the luster and natural patina of a wood which has aged gracefully.

To allow the wood to be deeply impregnated with successive layers of wax , each piece stands for several days in our workshops between the different finishing stages. This method gives the chair a natural ageing effect and a warmer and livelier patina. What is more all the patinas will become more pronounced over the years , just as that of the inherited piece of furniture, enhancing the unique character of each seat.

## *Future work*

In the near future our expert team will publish a lot of editions of the furniture black book . They will contain a lot of furniture industry secrets and a lot of manufacturing techniques including ( cane techniques – upholstery techniques – other antique finish techniques).

Also we will describe the history of chairs in , Louis XV, Louis XVI, Directoire, Empire, and Restoration.

Our only hope is to make our readers get a comprehensive knowledge about furniture industry as well as furniture history.

*Dear readers*

If you need more information about the furniture black book first edition you can go to our Web site :

[www.whatantiquefurniture.com](http://www.whatantiquefurniture.com)

Be sure that the value you will get is more worth than the money you will pay for our complete e-book.

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