



E. W. Godwin for William Watt, Old English Ebonised Beech and Cane Armchair

Ref: PV005044

Price on Application

MAKER	William Watt
DESIGNER	Edward William Godwin
PERIOD	Aesthetic Movement , 1870-1879
YEAR	1877
ORIGIN	United Kingdom
DIMENSIONS	H: 34.65 in (88 cm) W: 21.26 in (54 cm) D: 23.23 in (59 cm)

About this piece

E. W. Godwin for William Watt, this Old English or Jacobean armchair in **ebonized beech** aligned to the *Aesthetic Movement* (c.1860 to c.1900), **c.1877**.

The chair has a strong architectural frame, with a broad curved top rail, open geometric back and square capped rear posts. The back is arranged with horizontal rails and upright divisions, giving the chair a more structured Old English or Jacobean character than Godwin's lighter spindle-back designs. The arms sweep forward in a shallow curve and finish over slender turned front supports, with square blocks used at the main junctions of the frame.

The most unusual feature is the wrap around cane seat. Rather than being set within a conventional seat frame, the cane passes around the rounded front edge and continues into drilled holes in the seat rail, following the line of the circular seat. This gives the

chair a softer, more continuous seat profile while retaining the clean, hygienic cane surface that Godwin preferred for chair seating.

These armchairs were made in different variations, with differing seat and stretcher arrangements. Two sketches of this armchair are used in William Watt's *Art Furniture* catalogue of 1877, one upholstered and one in cane. This early version has a wrap around cane seat, rather than the usual cane seat set within the seat frame. It loosely follows the principle of rush seating of the period, but with drilled holes to the seat frame made specifically for cane, and is not one I have come across before on this model, or on any other type of Victorian cane seat chair, and could possibly be an early experimental prototype.