



Pair of Gillows Shell-Back Hall
Chairs for George Sandeman,
Founder of the Sandeman Port and
Sherry Brand, with an Interesting
Provenance and of Magnificent
Quality

Inventory Number :210-104

Size: 17 ins wide, 20 ins deep and 34 1/2 ins high; Seat
18 ins high

By Gillows of Lancaster and London these mahogany hall chairs are amongst the finest we have seen, the backs being formed from 2 inch thick oval pieces of mahogany deeply carved with a shell motif over a finely painted family crest and motto, STAT VERITAS, Truth Stands, for the Sandeman family of Perth Scotland, flanked by strong c-scrolls above a shaped rectangular seat over boldly carved legs to the rear and octagonal legs terminating in flattened ball feet to the front of the chairs. The rails to both chairs stamped JAMES WINTER 101 WARDOUR ST. The first recorded Gillows shell back chairs were commissioned by the Reverend Holland Edwards of Wales in 1811 and the present pair probably date from between 1815 and 1820. The present chairs however, also must have been specially commissioned given the quality and thickness of the timbers used.

Provenance:

It is clear that these chairs were commissioned by George M Sandeman 1765-1841 who, with his older brother David George Sandeman, 1757-1835, founded the Sandeman wine trading company in 1790 at a coffee house in the city of London. George's elder brother David soon left the firm in 1795 returning to Scotland where he founded the successful Scottish Commercial Bank, while George Sandeman prospered in London, Portugal and Spain building the wine shipping empire that is still known today. It is clear that George Sandeman commissioned the chairs from the firm of Gillows in London and the Sandeman name is recorded in the Gillows Estimate Sketch Book Indexes for 1800-1850. The impressed stamp to the rails for James Winter provides an invaluable clue to the history of the provenance of these chairs. James Winter was a second-hand furniture broker and merchant doing business at 101 Wardour Street in Soho from 1823, expanding to larger premises in the 1850's when the firm occupied 151-155 Wardour Street and closing by 1870. It is indeed probable that Winter acquired these chairs on the death of George Sandeman in 1841, stamping them with the shop mark of the time. These chairs are wonderful in their own right but will appeal not only to Gillows enthusiasts, but also to wine enthusiast looking for a very special piece of history.

English, by Gillows c. 1815

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