Primary Maker: Unidentified maker
Title: Relic armchair
Date: 1856-1857
Medium: Oak; modern horsehair upholstery
Dimensions: Overall: 65 x 31 x 27 in. (165.1 x 78.7 x 68.6 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Benjamin Robert Winthrop
Object Number: 1857.11

Object Name: Armchair
Classification: FURNITURE

Curatorial Remarks:
This chair is made of relic wood from the house at 3 Cherry Street in lower Manhattan where George Washington lived while serving as President of the United States, between April of 1789 and February of the following year. The hallowed mansion was demolished in May of 1856 to make way for an impressive cast iron building housing a book-publishing company. Timber from the mansion was rescued by New York real estate investor Benjamin R. Winthrop, who commissioned the chair from a local craftsman. The chair was presented to the N-YHS in 1857 for the use of the President of the Society. The donor also presented a similar chair to the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Physical Description:
Oak Renaissance Revival armchair made of relic wood from Washington's New York City residence; tall back with
arched crest rail surmounted with removable carved eagle, stiles project above back and are decorated with medallions with the seals of New York State and City (left and right sides respectively), back contains open strapwork with central upholstered oval panel flanked by initials "G" and "W" and surmounted by bust of Washington; open upholstered arms with eagle-head hand-holds amid curved guilloche-carved supports; upholstered trapezoidal seat with paneled front seat rail with central carved Federal shield; turned legs with castors; plaque with inscription on rear seat rail; modern black horsehair upholstery.

Markings: Silver plaque on rear seat rail engraved: "This Chair / was made from timber of the house / in which GEORGE WASHINGTON resided / when first inaugurated president of the / UNITED STATES / Presented by Benjamin R. Winthrop / Nov. 3, 1857."

Related Objects: