

# A Lincolnshire Windsor Chair



Everything about this yew wood Windsor chair is what is expected of an early Lincolnshire example – plain back legs, well balanced design of ring and cove decoration to the front legs, all spindle back support and a bell shaped seat in plan.

There are several makers who made such chairs but this one is stamped 'BRAND MARSH SLEAFORD'; the first ever recording of these two makers working together.

The early life of John Brand is difficult to trace but it appears he was born about 1785.

A maintenance order was made against him in 1807 when his occupation was shown as a carpenter. He married in 1809 in Sleaford Parish Church and went on to have nine children and later in the 1841 census his profession was given as a chair maker.

The style of this chair would indicate an early date in the 19th century so the MARSH part of the name stamp would refer to the older of the father/son business of chair makers, namely Thomas. He was born in 1779 in Nottinghamshire but later lived in Little Gonerby and in 1802 married a local girl in Grantham's magnificent church of St Wulfram's and another chair maker, Richard Hubbard, witnessed the marriage. Thomas Marsh seems to have spent all his life making chairs in Sleaford, joined by his son Thomas in about 1820.

It would appear that John Brand and Thomas Marsh worked in partnership for a while making Windsor chairs.

I have Robert Williams to thank for spotting this chair at the Bury St Edmunds saleroom where the auctioneers pointed out the name stamp on the lot notes. The chair was sold by Lacy Scott & Knight and could have disappeared back into obscurity forever but the auction house agreed to pass my details on to the purchaser in which I stressed the importance of this chair. The lady who bought it allowed me to set up a temporary studio in her kitchen and make a photographic record.

I have never handled a BRAND chair to compare with this one but there are some constructional techniques used on this chair that do not appear on MARSH chairs. This leads me to conclude that they were making chairs together for a while in the early 1800s and Thomas Marsh later went on to establish his own workshop that produced chairs of a slightly different design.

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