

Crab Tree Farm II

We had admired John Bryan's gifts and loans at the Art Institute. His private collection extends well beyond 17th- and 18th-century furniture to include clocks, needlework, carpets, ceramics, glass and metalwork, almost all of English origin. In each field the objects were of the highest quality and included items of great rarity. Victor Chinnery had advised on the oak collection. There were also contemporary pieces by John Makepeace and others.



Fig. 6 Small oak panelled
'romayne' coffer



Fig. 7 The polychrome lid of a box, c. 1639

The small oak, ex-Adler, frame and panelled chest, with two deeply carved profile head roundels, is a rare convincing example of the type. Large chests with Romaine panels, such as the (recently resold) one in Chinnery (p. 426), are often 16th-century panels placed within later structures. A 1639 box with polychrome lid carved with an asymmetric apple (?) tree branch design was also striking as lid carving is rare on early boxes; the 1570 box at Bonhams, Oxford in June 2014 is another example. An oak 'bible box' dated 1594 with black and white linear inlay and a variety of gouge work and punch work was a good example of its type. Lastly, there was an exceptional group of three-legged joined stools.¹

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¹ Items from the collection can be seen in Jellinek's *Early British Chairs and Seats 1500–1700*, Koldewey's *The English Candlestick 1425–1925*, Lanmon's *The Golden Age of English Glass, 1650–1775*, and the forthcoming *100 English Chairs*, edited by Adam Bowett.