

Chest, Coffin, 17 Century, English, Oak, John Butler Yeats, William Butler Yeats

Sold



REF: 11240

Height: 68 cm (26.8")

Width: 123 cm (48.4")

Depth: 46.5 cm (18.3")

## Description

A mid-17th century transitional oak chest, from the collection of John Butler Yeats & the Yeats family by descent. This charming chest has an exceptional provenance coming by descent from the collection of John Butler Yeats, the artist who is best known for his portraits, many of which hang in the National Gallery of Ireland and major Galleries worldwide. His son W.B. Yeats was one of Ireland's most famous poets and statesmen, a Nobel Prize winner, an influential author in the Irish literary movement, and a member of the Irish senate. The Yeats family is one of Ireland's most notable families producing a master poet, a master painter, and influential drivers of the Irish Arts and Crafts movement, and this chest offers the chance to own a piece of their history. This is a transitional piece demonstrated by the use of ends which are traditionally found on 16th and early 17th century boarded chests, combined with a characteristic mid-17th century three panelled front with gadrooning and a top faced with moulded edges.

The single plank top faced with a moulded edge and with a later iron hasp. The interior with a till and replaced hinges. The front with crisply carved, gadrooned frieze retaining its original iron lockplate above three panels separated by moulded uprights with punched decoration in the centre. Standing on stile feet with a sliced repair to the front feet. The sides plain. The replacements are not recent and are to elements that have been used over time and are thus acceptable and demonstrate its authenticity. The ring hinges in situ probably date back to the 18th century, there are signs and remnants of 17, 18, 19th century hasps, the lockplate is most likely original and the D hook probably 19th century. The recess where the lock was removed has been beautifully patched with oak again, most likely 19th century.

Provenance: • John Butler Yeats (1839-1922) the artist, unknown when and how acquired • 1922 - W.B. Yeats, John Butler Yeats son the poet by descent • 1939 - Michael B. Yeats, W.B. Yeats son, the barrister and politician by descent, part of the furnishings at Cliff House in Dublin, • 2007 - Grainne Yeats, Michael's wife, by descent, remaining at Cliff House, Dublin • 2013 - Caitriona, Siobha and Padriag, Michael and Grainne's children, by descent. They were the executors of the Estate and the chest was sold by the Estate. John Butler Yeats was one of Ireland's finest portrait painters and during a long and productive lifetime, painted many of the leading figures of the Irish Renaissance. Among these were his famous sons, Jack B. Yeats, and the poet William Butler Yeats and writers such as Lady Gregory, AE and Padraic Colum as well as the original members of the Abbey Theatre Company.

The son of a Protestant clergyman from Sligo, John Yeats studied Law at Trinity College Dublin and graduated at the age of twenty-three with honours and a prize in Political Economy. The following year he married Susan Pollexfen, the daughter of a Sligo ship owner, whose family originated in Cornwall. Soon after their marriage, Yeats began to study for the Irish Bar, to which he was called in 1866. But his efforts to earn a living in this field proved difficult and he decided t...