

Let's play a game...

After a gentle drive along the A12, enjoying the beautiful Suffolk countryside take the B1078 signed to Campsea Ashe. Turn right following the B1078 towards Campsea Ashe, past the village shop turn left into the car park for [Clarke and Simpson Auction](#)

But wait, haven't we been here before? Yes, of course, home of my local auction site; a cornucopia of antiques, collectables, curiosities and one-man's-junk to my treasure trove.

After taking care of the business end, I enter saleroom 4 and take in the sights, sounds, aroma of history. Today, unusually, I'm on a mission. I am secretly taking part in my own, ["Make me a Dealer" \(BBC One\)](#) challenge.

Working with a small budget of £20 I aim to buy at least one lot that I can make a profit on. Armed with my camera, catalogue and buyer number I tour the room.



Lot 1: A collection of Del Padro figures in the form of Medieval Knights on horseback Estimate £30 – £50

I think that might be what is known as a “come and buy me” estimate. I would love them, but they are going to be too strong for me. My estimate £80-£100. This estimate was later to be proven correct, they sold to an online bidder for £95



This is a possibility. With a personal connection, as it is the year I was born, I would like it. Would it make a profit? Not unless I find the right buyer. Also it is one of several other plates and sundry items. Estimate £10-£20. A possible, but only at £15. Don't forget the 18% buyers premium.





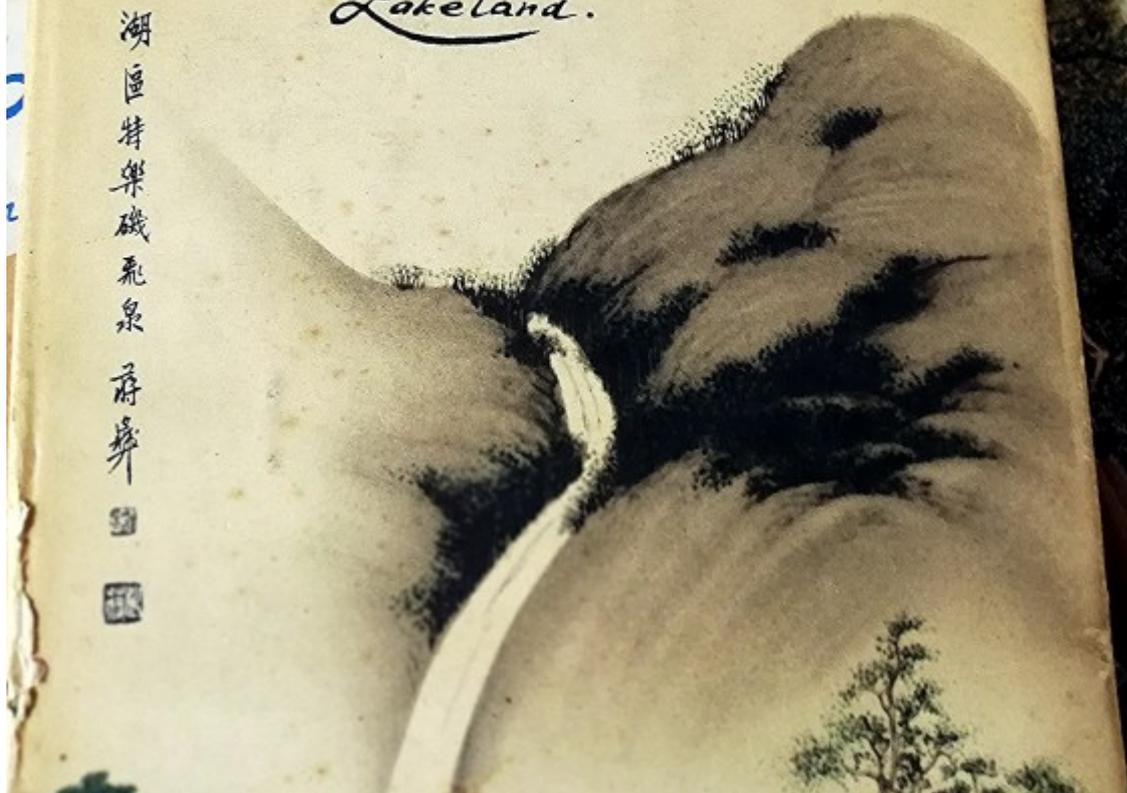
Lot 294: An oriental camphor wood blanket box – with key. Again above my budget, estimate £50-£80. But can I pause for a

while and admire it's beauty. Exquisite carving, the quality and detail of the lock, the deco style shaping of the rounded corners just the feel of the wood. Open the lid, and the camphor aroma plunges you into the orient, transporting you to far away places with stories of mystery, intrigue, romance and exotic nights. Dream but close the lid now, time to move on.



The Silent Traveller
A Chinese Artist in
Lakeland.

湖區特樂磯飛泉 蔣彝





But the mood to travel afar lingers as I fall in love with these books. A beautiful set, with the original dust covers, and all in good condition. Inside, the text was illustrated with beautiful designs, calligraphy and pencil drawings of the places visited. I think I can honestly say, never was I so taken with the beauty, style and simple pleasure of holding a book and being privileged to enter into it's story. I wanted them.

Lot 264: Ten volumes of [The Silent Traveller by Chiang Yee](#).
Estimate £150-£200

I hope the online buyer likes them. I wish them safe journeys.

Was I ever going to find something? Today, everything was too expensive, too big, or in job lots where I wanted maybe one or two items out of the box or boxes full.

Just recently my interests have been towards various art forms. Auctions can be good places to find that one piece of art you have been looking for to add interest to a blank wall, add a touch of culture to a clinical waiting room, or add colour, history or a story to your office. As usual for this auction there was a good selection. Some job lots of mixed styles, condition and interest. Some single pieces that required some knowledge of the artist before acquiring. But then, there it was:

Lot 436: Eleanor Cowles watercolour study depicting Isaac Lords near Ipswich Docks; together with a coloured print entitled "The Gentle Art of Making Guinness". and a pair of oil studies depicting desert scenes and camels. Estimate £10 – £20

A small lot, within budget, hopefully, and with local interest making it easy to research and sell on. I set my price to within £10 – £12 pound, rewarded myself to a cup of tea, found a good seat in front of the rostrum and settled in for the sale. The clock ticked round to 11:00, auctioneer in place, the room is hushed with the rap of the hammer and we're off...

Lot 1.....

Auctions are unpredictable. Items of history, age and beauty may be sold for little money, or sometimes not sold at all if a reserve price is not met. Other items, which are damaged, mismatched or apparently of very little value, are sold above estimate. The lots I had circled as 'interested' went for more than I wanted to spend. Some started at above my price, others I had chance to bid on, but someone in the room or on-line wanted it more than I. Gradually, lot by lot, my chances of buying were dwindling until we reached that set of art work. My last chance.

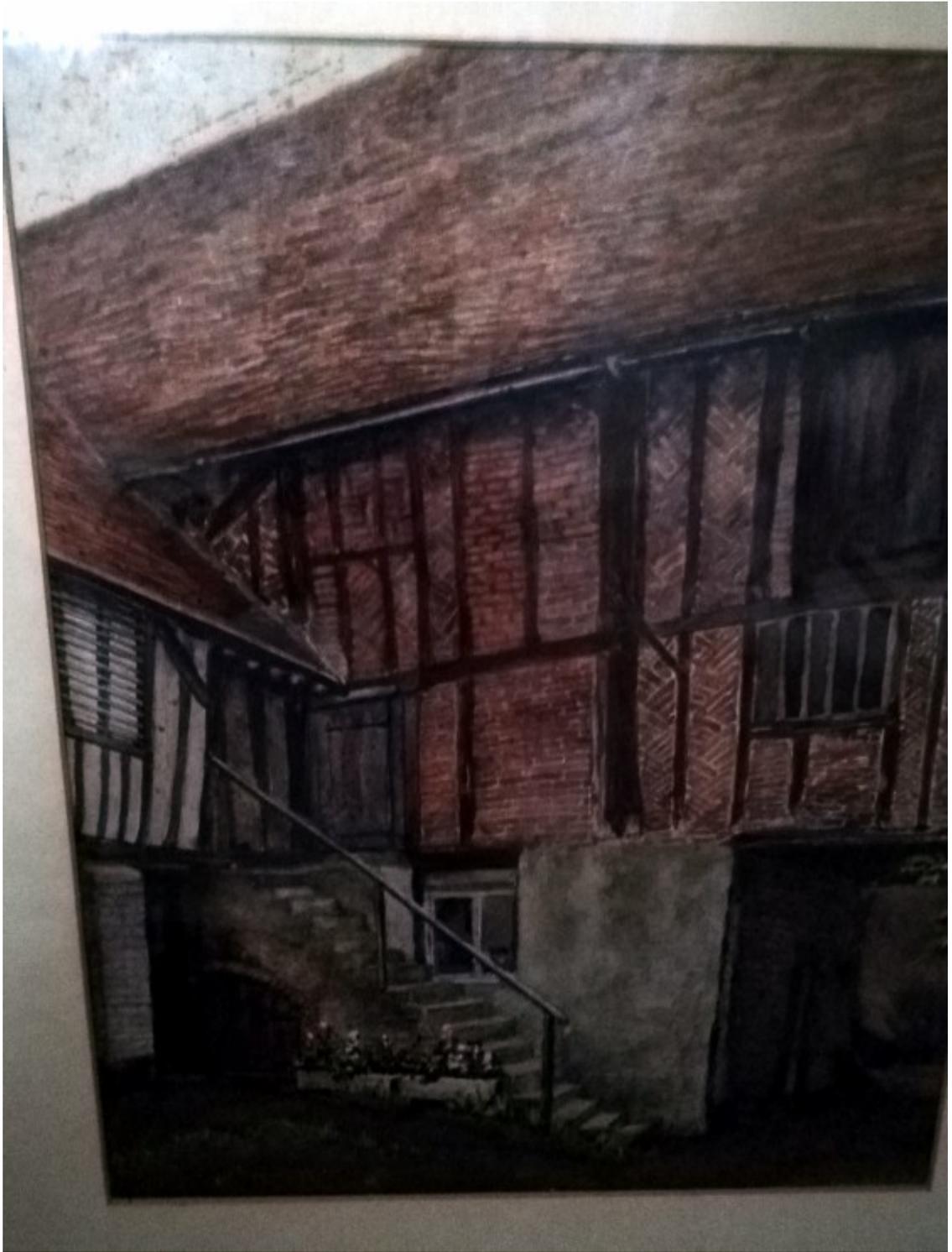
Lot 436.. a set of mixed oils and watercolours, a nice little lot here, can we start at £20, (silence)... £10 then?, still nothing...£5 queries the auctioneer a little desperately, I hesitated, and some one started the bidding at £2, here we go, I bid \$4 a counter bid, £6, I nodded, £8 a counter bid £10, I hesitated slightly, before bidding £12, but that was it... they refused, to the lady in the room at £12, looking for £14 is there anymore.. hammer held in the air, the auctioneer peers round the room, once more I'm looking for £14... make no mistake I'm selling at £12... the hammer falls, the price is set. I grin and show my number... I am the proud owner of 4 pieces of art!

Game on.....home to research and sell them on for a profit.

THE GENTLE ART OF MAKING GUINNESS.



SIGNING THE DAY'S P...



■ Isaac Lords Ipswich Docks