

SA1224439

Rare Jacobean Portrait of Lady Elizabeth Wheeler (née Cole), 1623; Attributed to Cornelius Johnson (1593–1661), Oil on panel painting

Price

GBP 12,950

| USD \$17,524 | EUR 15,153

Item Reference: SA1224439

Date of manufacture: 17th Century

Dimensions

Height = 95.5 cm (37.6")

Width = 77.5 cm (30.5")

Depth = 7 cm (2.8")

Description

This rare early oil on panel, preserved in outstanding condition, has been newly identified as a portrait of Elizabeth Cole (1607–1670), later Lady Elizabeth Wheeler. More than a handsome Jacobean likeness, it is a rediscovered historical document: a Westminster gentlewoman who would later serve in unusually intimate royal employment as laundress for the King's person, placing her close to the final years of Charles I. Shown half-length against a dark ground within a painted sculpted oval, she wears a deep green gown over a stiffened linen jacket densely worked in gilt embroidery. The painter renders the goldwork as readable, "stitched" ornament rather than generalized shimmer; lace, ruff, and long gold chains are described with equal precision. A sheer, high-waisted overskirt completes an ensemble of controlled luxury, where status is carried by textile cost and craftsmanship. Her identification rests on heraldic and genealogical analysis, resolving the arms to the London/Westminster Cole branch and anchoring the portrait in a civic-gentry, Crown-adjacent milieu where portraiture served social strategy. The stated age of nineteen, slightly older than expected for an ea...

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