



NORTHERN SCHOOL, EARLY 17TH CENTURY

Portrait of an English lady in a hat

red chalk and wash over indications in black chalk

bears inscription in brown ink: *Ecole Allemande heinsius 1787* (verso)

180 x 137 mm

Provenance:

Johann-Ernst Heinsius (alternative dates 1740-1812 or 1731 - 1794)

Lucien Rouze-Huet (died circa 1889), Lille [L. 1742]

This drawing shows the portrait of an English lady, possibly a merchant's wife. She is shown nearly half-length, slightly turned to the left, with part of her shoulder-length curly hair in a braided bun. She wears a brimmed hat with high crown and a shoulder wrap, possibly with two rows of scalloped lace edge, over a low cut bodice. Dr Susan North, curator of historical fashion at the V&A, has confirmed that black beaver felt hats were typical of middle-class Englishwomen in the early 17th century and that they are rare in Dutch and central European portraiture. However, she notes that the high-waisted bodice, full sleeves and kerchief around the neck can be seen in other European portraits of women.

The paper historian, Peter Bower, has examined the sheet and believes it to be French in origin. The wire profile, fibre blend and felt impression suggest a date of around 1620 and an origin from one of the paper mills around Angoulême in the Charente. The writing on the verso, which is also French, records the name of the sheet's one-time owner, German portrait painter Johann-Ernst Heinsius.

Sold