

## **Elizabeth Paddy Wensley**

**By an anonymous Boston artist**

**Painted between 1670 and 1680**

**Material: Oil on canvas**



Elizabeth Paddy Wensley (1641-1710/11) was born in Plymouth. She settled in Boston after her marriage to John Wensley, a very wealthy merchant. Elizabeth and John had 5 children. At his death in 1686, John Wensley owned a house in Boston's North End with rich and abundant furnishings, as well as warehouses and wharves.

Elizabeth had her portrait painted by an unknown, but skilled Boston artist who demonstrated his expertise in handling both textiles and 3-dimensional forms. The portrait presents her in the stylish dress of the 1670s.

The vase contains a simple arrangement of tulips, roses and carnations. These flowers do not bloom at the same time of the year but are, rather, traditional symbols of femininity. The anonymous artist skillfully shows his subject's refinement, elegant manner, and beauty.

Portraits from this era are rare. Elizabeth Paddy Wensley's portrait is one of the finest.