

**William Dobson (1611-1646)**

**MARY DONE, c.1635-38**

Oil on canvas 64 x 84 cm

Purchased with support from the Grosvenor Museum Society, V&A

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Framed with support from John Davies Framing Ltd., Grosvenor  
Museum Society, North West Museums Service



### **The Sitter**

Mary Done was the second daughter of Sir John Done and Dorothy, Lady Done. One of eight children, she was born in 1604 at Utkinton Hall, ten miles from Chester, and was baptised at Tarporley. In 1636 she married John Crewe M.P. (1603-70), second son of Sir Randolph Crewe of Crewe Hall. They had four children, born between 1637 and 1641: the youngest was Sir John Crewe, whose portrait also hangs in the Art Gallery. In 1639 she became 22nd Chief Forester of Delamere and Mondrem, and her symbol of office, the Delamere Horn, is displayed in the Silver Gallery. On her death at Utkinton in 1690 her son wrote: "This day died my mother, the best parent, the truest friend, the greatest housekeeper of her rank, and the most pious Christian of her time."

## **The Artist**

The portrait painter William Dobson was born and died at London. He was apprenticed to William Peake and studied with Francis Cleyn. This picture, whose composition is based on Sir Anthony van Dyck's 1635 triple portrait of King Charles I, was painted around 1635-38 and is one of Dobson's earliest surviving works. Dobson was the heroic portraitist of the Royalist cause during the English Civil War, filling the role of the king's principal painter at the court of Charles I in Oxford between 1642 and 1646. His highly personal and distinguished style justifies the 17th-century view of him as "the most excellent painter that England hath yet bred".

## **The Frame**

The frame was commissioned by the Grosvenor Museum from John Davies Framing Ltd. Its design is based on the *auricular* style frame on a portrait of Archbishop Laud by the studio of Van Dyck, dating from around 1636 or later, in the National Portrait Gallery. The auricular frames of the 1630s are organic in the nature and use of their ornament, and are some of the most fantastic and anti-classical frames ever produced in Britain. This frame reflects the portrait's origins in the art of Van Dyck at the court of Charles I, and emphasises its importance as one of the most remarkable paintings in the museum's collection.