



Winterthur/University of Delaware
Program in Art Conservation
Conservation Report



Accession #: 2001.0017.0043

Object: [Portrait of an unidentified woman sitting]

Object Date: 1850-1900

Artist/Author: Unknown

Materials: Photograph, Tintype

Owner: University of Delaware Museums: "The Baltimore Collection"

Permanent Location: UD Museums Collections

Reason for Treatment or Examination: Examined as part of the photograph conservation block documentation project and aimed to add to the curatorial and conservation body of knowledge

Examined by: Melissa King, WUDPAC 2020

Report Date: January 9, 2018

DESCRIPTION

This is a rectangular shaped, bust length, tintype portrait of a seated woman wearing a button-up striped dress. The tintype has a paper backing adhered as opposed to the typical black varnish. The top two corners are slightly clipped, and was likely this way since manufacture. The photograph measures 5 cm wide by 8 cm in length. These measurements vary from those on Artstor.

CONDITION

The photograph is in overall poor to fair condition. There appears to be no varnish in several areas resulting in silver oxidation. These dark areas are at the bottom of the sitter's dress and a curved shape along her chest. There is an overall coating of dust and grime. The collodion binder exhibits many scratches exposing the black varnish below. There are losses to the varnish, binder, and silver image along the edges with some active flaking resulting from the corrosion of the iron on the substrate. The pressure of the increased dimension of the iron corrosion product is causing some cracking within the collodion binder. On top of the sitter's hands is a thumbprint that appears to have been created within the varnish layer while it was still drying.

On the verso, the paper appears to have mold damage and there are losses particularly along the edges where the iron corrosion is most visible. The paper has an overall yellow tone likely from acid degradation.