

(Read download) Handbook of American Crewel Embroidery

Handbook of American Crewel Embroidery

Muriel L. Baker

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Muriel L. Baker : Handbook of American Crewel Embroidery before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Handbook of American Crewel Embroidery:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. If you like Americana, crewel, or embroidery and textiles in general, you'll like this bookBy Jane in MilwaukeeI adore Muriel L. Baker's books and these are the other titles of hers I can highly recommend:Blue and white: The cotton embroideries of rural ChinaThe Scribner Book of Embroidery DesignsNeedlepoint: Design Your OwnMs. Baker lived in New England and studied art and delved into Early American folk-art. She was an expert needlewoman as well as researcher and was a certified teacher for the Embroiderers' Guild of America, a judge of crewel embroidery in exhibitions, a lecturer and author of other books and numerous articles. This is a tidy little book, laid out very well. First there is a brief but thorough discussion of the history of crewelwork during Colonial days and how it developed from but was different from the crewel of the Old World. "Crewel" is not the technique but rather the spun fibers used in the embroidery--"slackly twisted two-ply worsted yarns." We are then introduced to twenty different stitches most notably the New England laid stitch which is an elongated cross stitch which provides both coverage as well as texture; it also sacrificed the least amount of fiber to the back of the material to anchor the stitches. Then we are treated to no less than 67 different motifs and figures found on contemporary furnishings. Crewel was flashy and rather thick so it was not used on much clothing but rather to brighten the chairs, walls and especially bed hangings and curtains.It is such a disappointment to open the book and be greeted with the "Frontispiece" (you don't see these much in publishing anymore...), a color photo of the set of bed furnishings embroidered by the wife of Thomas Jefferson's Postmaster General, currently in a historic house in

Connecticut. Mrs. Mindwell Pease Granger not only embroidered lovely large red flowers onto a pink bedspread and canopy, she spun and wove the background fabric and spun and dyed the crewels! No, the photo is beautiful...the disappointment comes when you find all the other 27 photos are bw. Anyway, the pictures do give you the origin of the individual motifs teased out and drawn. You get a good perspective from seeing how homes were furnished. This is a true "handbook" meant to be a practical guide to use to stitch your own projects. Every one of the 67 designs includes the stitches and colors used in the original. The final 10 of the 28 photos display the author's own recreations of the designs: they are very authentic. So in a mere 67 pages in a rather small book you get a great bit of information. This book can be purchased for a song and I recommend it to anyone who feels a connection to our needlework past.

A Handbook of American Crewel Embroidery