



THE SCARLET LETTER



Happy holidays to all of my fellow fans of historic needlework. During the past year, The Scarlet Letter introduced ten new designs ranging in age and origin from very early eighteenth century England, to nineteenth century Scotland, Germany, and India. There will be much more to come beginning in January 2018, so keep those needles sharpened.

All kits will now be supplied with the superior Bohin needles. They are also offered for sale individually as tapestry needles in sizes 26 and 28.

Several "new" antique samplers will be posted to the website before Christmas, including some de-accessioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



The staff at The Scarlet Letter and Smoke Ham Farm wish you the happiest holiday season



Grace Kemish - "New" Antique Sampler

A CHRISTMAS QUIZ

There are at least eight samplers/needleworks in the collection of The Scarlet Letter with Christmas themes and/or messages. The first person to identify at least seven of them will receive a \$50.00 gift certificate.

May your threads never fray, your dyes never run, and your needles remain sharp and swift.

All my best,
Marsha



What happens at the staff Christmas party, stays at the Christmas party.

2017 SAMPLER DESIGNS

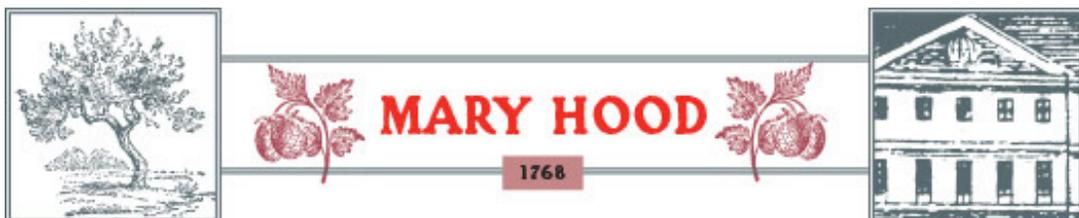


So many unusual and enigmatic features were left by Ann Carbutt on her sampler, made when she was sixteen years old, very likely in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Her work is more free form, with an unusual firmament stitched across the top fifth of the sampler which includes a blood red sun, a rainbow (the first I've ever seen on a sampler), the moon and stars. Most fascinating to me are the verses.



Ann Carbutt

[More about Ann Carbutt](#)



This English sampler retained its vibrant original color when I acquired it, having been conserved and de-accessioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It features bold- original!- primary colors in its four sided floral border, verses, and scene with a lovely but asymmetrical brick house with dormer windows, flanked by trees.



Mary Hood

[More about Mary Hood](#)



CAMEL AND LION



This design was inspired by an early eighteenth century English needlework picture executed in tent stitch: a magnificent example of the art of "needle painting" by the meticulous employment of silk threads on fine linen. This exotic scene illustrates foreign creatures new to the English people. This type of depiction was popular with the upper middle class audience, intrigued by the fascinating discoveries being made by explorers and men of science.



Camel and Lion

[More about Camel and Lion](#)



ELIZABETH HICKS

1765



This beautiful, petite, energetic sampler expressed three fine verses and, at the end, one of the truest "signatures" I've ever read on a piece of needlework. The three verses on the sampler are separated by floral and geometric pattern bands executed in cross and counted satin stitches. The color on the front of the sampler is very nearly as bright as the back. The antique has been cleaned and conserved and is available for sale.

[More about Elizabeth Hicks](#)



Elizabeth Hicks



This partial German band sampler (the lower half was evidently removed at some point in its journey to the 21st century) was probably made in Saxony, in the area of Dresden, as the style resembles others that The Scarlet Letter have reproduced from that region (titled SDW, IRS, JCS and IES 1707, to name four). It has been arranged in two columns, the left side in finer stitches than the right. The sampler features a number of horizontal pattern bands very precisely stitched, as well as elaborate alphabets which were usually used as training exercises for embellishments to towels, cuffs, pillow cases, and other household textiles.

[More about the Saxon Alphabet Sampler](#)



Saxon Alphabet



This elaborate English sampler features a fearsome tiger beneath a tropical plantation house or gazebo, covered in lush trellises and vines. This was probably stitched in either Africa or India (more likely the latter) by a British girl whose father was in the employ of an enterprise such as the East India Company, as the sampler was made before British rule in India but during the period when the EIC flourished there (1757-1858).

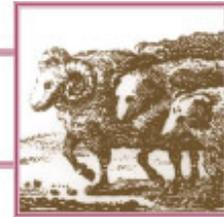


M. Rees

More about M. Rees



ESTHER CHARLTON

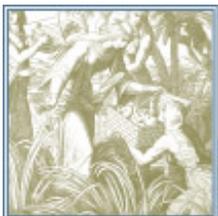


This English sampler features imposing, symmetrical red brick mansion houses flanking Adam and Eve and the Tree of Life in the upper register. In the middle register "Solomon's Temple"-like structures flank potted flowers and a large stylized tulip popping from a cornucopia of blossoms. The lower register depicts a pastoral scene with a shepherd, shepherdess and their sheep.



Esther Charlton

More about Esther Charlton

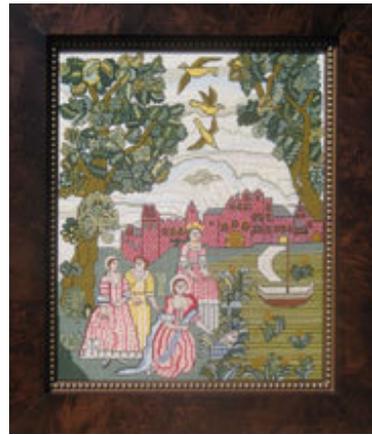


MOSES IN THE BULLRUSHES

AN EARLY 18TH CENTURY ENGLISH NEEDLEWORK PICTURE



This beautiful depiction of the Old Testament story of Moses was likely made in the late seventeenth or very early eighteenth century. The lively mix of biblical story has been interpreted by the needle worker through her contemporary lens (note the rambling red brick late Tudor/early Stuart buildings and the fashionable clothing of the women-apart from their rather clumsy sandals) as they gather the baby from the river.



Moses in the Bulrushes

[More about Moses in the Bulrushes.](#)



“PALLA” Chalice Cover



This small textile originally made in the late 15th or early 16th century, is called a "palla" (chalice cover), stitched on a linen ground. The center show the face of Christ with a golden halo, framed by a narrow guilloche band and a large Latin inscription in Gothic lettering which translates as "Hail the holy face INRI the Redeemer."



Palla Chalice Cover

[More about the Palla Chalice Cover](#)



ROSE SHENAMON MITCHELL A SCOTTISH SAMPLER



Rose's unusual middle name should have provided some clues about where she was born, and where she lived, but the name "Shenamon" is elusive despite my efforts to discover its origins as well as hers. It is spelled many different ways when researched (including Shinimon and Schinnamon which suggest a Germanic origin, or perhaps even Hebrew). From the stylistic characteristics of her work, she was obviously schooled in Scotland in 1816 when she stitched this sampler.



Rose Shenamon Mitchell

[More about Rose Shenamon Mitchell](#)

COMING IN 2018



FANNY PEACHEY Available January 2018



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