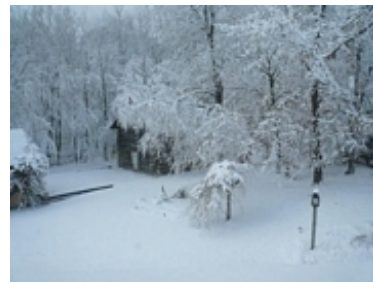




THE SCARLET LETTER



The love and appreciation holiday approaches, and I extend both to all of my friends. We surely need it to stay warm up north where the weather has been especially cruel this winter. The animals are safely sheltered and cozy (I wish I could say the same about the human, but at least the roof hasn't caved in from the snow load). There was a lovely crop of hay last summer so everyone in the Smoke Ham Farm barns is fat and happy.



The view from my office, a few days ago.

Creativity can flourish when one is snowbound. Load the stove with wood, hunker down, scribble and stitch away surrounded by books while the wind howls around the old place...until it's time to bring in more wood from the shed that seems impossibly far away from my warm chair. I enjoy the serenity, peace and silence of the snow, but the incoming seed catalogs are a welcome distraction from the wind chill. My furry staff are hard at work eating the lovely hay from the 2017 bumper crop, and I'm equally busy polishing up some new designs, to introduce in April.

Needlework pictures are one of my specialties. I have reproduced many gorgeous designs from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, so we have created a new category on the website to illustrate these, apart from the samplers. Please have a look!

[Needlework Pictures category](#)



A Parrot, A Leopard, A Lion

FEBRUARY QUIZ

How many putti (or putti disguised as cherubim) can you find in The Scarlet Letter collection? In simple terms, cherubim are winged creatures which serve a god or goddess, and putti symbolize non religious passion. There are quite a few of both at www.scarlet-letter.com. (FYI, singular angels do not count.) A putto represents a childlike version of the Roman god of love- Eros, cupid by any other name.



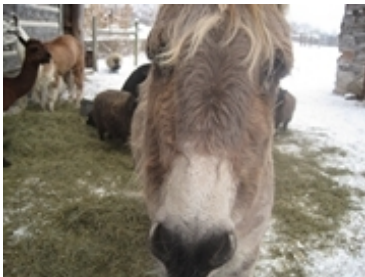
Example of Putti

I found twenty five of them. They are very busy little creatures, spanning centuries of needlework.

The first person to name at least 25 designs featuring putti or cherubs wins their choice of any graph from The Scarlet Letter's collection. If no one finds 25 by Friday, February 16th at 12:00 noon central standard time, the person identifying the most will win. Check the [puzzles page](#) to see if this puzzle has been solved.

Be well, be warm, be happy,

Marsha and my animal family



Mario needs a haircut but won't admit it.



Jessie chowing down on hay since the pasture is covered with snow.



Lluther is quite the clown.



What's New



A PEACOCK, A UNICORN, A BADGER

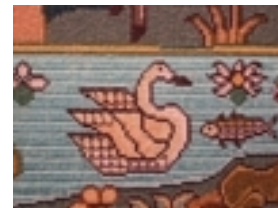
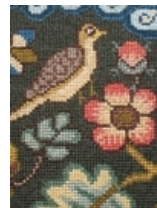


This design was inspired by an early eighteenth century English canvaswork picture executed in tent and counted satin stitches. It illustrates a stylized "Tree of Life": a brilliant example of needle-painting with the meticulous shading of embroidery threads on linen, illuminating various exotic creatures and plants, inspired by the new discoveries of mariners and men of science as excursions to the west teased and opened the minds of embroiderers more than three centuries ago.



A Peacock, A Unicorn, and a Badger

More about A Peacock, A Unicorn and A Badger



HARRIOT RINGROSE



Regarding the sampler's origins, the English name "Ringrose" is of uncertain origin, first attested in Norwich in the year 1259 as "Ringerose". It could be derived from Middle English "ring" plus "rose" but the exact meaning is not clear. It is likely that this sampler was made in northern England.



Harriot Ringrose

[More about Harriot Ringrose](#)



FANNY PEACHEY



This naive Adam and Eve sampler might have been made in Maryland around 1810. At first I believed that the sampler was either English or Irish, judging by the unusual surname, until, in my research, I came upon the gravestone of a Fanny H. Peachey, born 24 November 1799, died 11 February 1822, in the Westminster Burial Ground in Baltimore, Maryland.



Fanny Peachey

[More about Fanny Peachey](#)



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