

All hooked rugs begin with hand, hook, and a time-honored, time-consuming process. In the past twenty years, the general public's appreciation for the aesthetic and monetary values of hooked rugs has grown.

American Hooked and Sewn Rugs: Hooking was the one needlework that could be done by even those at the lowest economic level; no other needlework was made from worn out clothing or the unraveling of the burlap foundation, to be used as a hooking material. The supplies needed could be as humble as four boards nailed together and a hook fashioned from a bent nail inserted in a wooden handle. Hooking could also be upgraded by those of more means with the purchase of better newer fabric. The introduction of burlap in the s was well timed with the proliferation of the textile mills and the availability of fabrics at cheaper prices. With the increase in hooking came an incredible profusion of hooking gadgets and printed patterns led by the entrepreneurial spirit in of Edward Sands Frost of Biddeford, Maine. While on his journeys as a peddler and after he saw a need for them, Frost made the first pre-stamped patterns on burlap for rug hooking. As the demand grew and free hand drawing was too labor intensive, he came upon the idea to print the designs from stencils he could make using the metal from old copper boilers. In he started printing them in color. When Frost moved west for his health, James A. Strout bought the Frost business in and ran it until Others soon followed with their patterns and gadgets. In , Ebenezer Ross of Toledo, Ohio started and invented a gadget called the Novelty Rug Machine that used yarn instead of cut strips of cloth. This technique today is referred to as needlepunch. Many rug hookers would personalize the patterns and add their own design elements. No rugs from the same pattern would come out the same, given the variety of materials used to make them. Even so, they were instrumental in limiting originality and creativity though these businesses are credited for popularizing and expanding interest in the craft. Needlepunched rug likely a Ross pattern c. The last half of the 19th century was a time of rapid change: The Industrial Revolution in America was well on its way. It seemed that the momentum was for more and more, done faster and faster, to be cheaper and cheaper. As production for consumer goods intensified and prices declined the quality of goods suffered. These were not always bad but often execrable" i. By the end of the 19th century, the popularity of hooked rugs was at an ebb. Fashions, styles, available time and economic positions had changed. The "quaint" homemade hooked rug would be replaced by the "modern" factory produced carpet. Also now, in reaction to what was seen as the homogenization of the individual and the reduction of man to yet another cog in the industrial process, an anti-modernism movement gained momentum and cottage industries started up to counter what was seen as bad designs made cheaply. Their purpose was to supply better made and designed rugs to a growing middle class and provide work for those in need. Wilfred Grenfell opened the Grenfell Mission in to help the desperately poor in Newfoundland and Labrador. As hooking had a long history in Canada, he saw an opportunity for the fishing families to earn some much needed money in the off season by making hooked mats to sell. The earlier rugs were hooked with cotton flannelette and later in the 30s and 40s, with collected and dyed silk and rayon knit hosiery. These rugs today are highly prized and very distinctive in style and subject. This one was started by Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell and is still in business. With the proliferation of the cottage industries, the homemade rug went out of style until a resurgence of interest in the 30s and 40s. This was in large part thanks to William Winthrop Kent, an architect and hooked rug authority. He felt that old rugs should be saved and hung as art and new ones be made for the floor. About this time Pearl McGowan was also teaching and raising awareness of the craft of rug hooking. Whereas before, most any type of leftover fabric was used for rug making, now wool became the dominant component. Improvement in the standard of living and an increase in discretionary income for the expanding middleclass, made it feasible for wool to be purchased and dyed specifically for rug making. Wool became the dominant material in hooked rugs and remains so today. Interest in rug hooking once again seemed to wane in the 50s and 60s as styles changed. Joan Moshimer helped fire up the interest in contemporary rugs with the opening of her hooking business in Kennebunkport, Maine. Rug hooking has gone through many ins and outs of popularity as well as ups and downs in esthetic and technical quality. Today it is once again growing and expanding. Printed designs,

cottage industries making finished rugs to order, commercially and hand dyed wools are widely available. Far surpassing the original bent nail and four boards nailed together for a frame, many tools are now available; designer hooks, cutters, frames and stands. Classes, books, shows, workshops, lectures, seminars, internet posting groups, camps and guilds are multiplying to the ever growing interest and participation in rug hooking. Museums and galleries are mounting hooked rug shows, recognizing both the old and the contemporary. There is an amazing and impressive amount of original designing being done today as well. Rug hooking is an example of how a humble craft, born of leftovers and cast off clothing to produce utilitarian goods has blossomed into a medium for textile design and gained recognition as an art form. Hooked rugs fill a special need. Like quilts, they are a way to be creative and expressive as well as make something both functional and attractive. Hooked rugs can be a physical registry of the life of the maker. They contain the shirt off their back, the socks from their feet and other materials that had been used up and worn out. Now they begin a new life. Several rug styles can be assigned to specific regions in Canada. Inch mats small squares arranged by color to form a pattern were as common in Nova Scotia, as basket weave patterns were familiar in New Brunswick and as black outlined forms were to Prince Edward Island. Maple leaves and beavers were a sign of Canadian origin. A sculpted 3-D effect was originally known as "Acadian" now known as the Waldoboro style from the town of the same name in Maine. With the spread of patterns through magazines and newspapers the distinctions blended. The opening of her own studio, Jamar Textile Restoration Studio located in NYC in , allowed her restoration and conservation services to be offered directly to private collectors and antiques dealers. She also restores American floor coverings including hooked, yarn sewn, shirred and rag rugs. Many of the items restored by Tracy Jamar are in major American museums and important private collections. A rare Bed Rugg she restored is currently in the collection of the American Folk Art Museum in NYC where she has lectured on the care and restoration of hooked rugs and quilts. Tracy prepares textiles for mounting and hanging and offers consultation about a variety of display options. She is known for her swift, competent and reliable service and can offer excellent references upon request. For information call Or, visit her Web site:

Chapter 2 : Rug Making Books Halcyon Yarn

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Chapter 3 : Hooked Rug Treasury : Jessie A. Turbayne (author) : : Blackwell's

This is an older rug hooking pattern catalog published by one of the premier rug design companies of its time. Excellent drawings of earlier patterns, and the book contains a large number of patterns in all subjects and styles.

Chapter 4 : Hooked Treasures - Hooked Rug Designs by Cherylyn Brubaker, Rug Hooking Patterns

This treasury holds more than of the choicest hooked rugs. The chapters present the best work found from Nova Scotia to Hawaii over many years. Some of the finest private and museum collections are represented and noteworthy public exhibits, auctions, dealers, and clubs for hooked rugs are.

Chapter 5 : A Few Loops of Hooked Rug History by Tracy Jamar

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Joan Moshimer's Treasury Of Hooked Rug Designs has 1 rating and 1 review. Linda said: This book encompasses the art and craft of old-fashioned rug hookin.

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Her rugs have also appeared in Jessie Turbayne's "Hooked Rug Treasury" as well as other publications. In cooperation with Barbara Franco, then assistant director of the Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington, DiFranza worked on the exhibition, "Walking on Art."