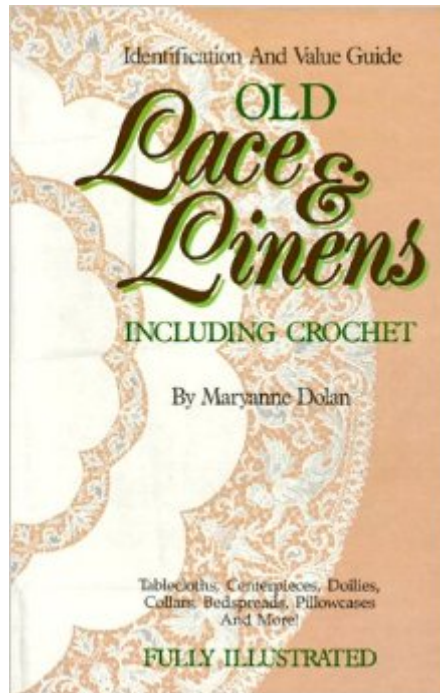


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Old Lace And Linens Including Crochet: An Identification And Value Guide



Synopsis

Tops the collectors' list as the best identification and value guide for hand-stitched artwork of the past century. Tablecloths, doilies, collars, napkins, towels, and more are spread out for simple identification, authentication, and pricing. Includes crochet.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (6 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

First 28 pages are well-written, lyrical descriptions but not terribly historically informative. While there is an extremely wide range of items shown, many photos are reproductions which lose much in the process. Identification of types is very spotty with even the obvious (hardanger and filet) listed only as drawn work or 'beautifully crocheted corners'. Dating of items seemed fairly accurate but pricing was "not of this earth". Most dollar amounts could easily be halved and one collar on page 43 listed at \$55-60 I purchased for \$8 from a knowledgeable dealer. This book is useful as an addendum to the library of a serious collector. It is however, of little value to the novice or student because it lacks identifying criteria and the pictures are not high enough quality to decipher detail.

That the author loves linens is obvious from her narratives. There are some tips on care and history that are worthwhile. Many of the identifications are misleading, and the prices quoted are most frequently inaccurate. The descriptions, although vague, may be a useful starting point for the novice or casual collector, I would not refer this to anyone as a definitive work, but it is useful as an entry level reference.

I MUST AGREE WITH THE FIRST TWO REVIEWS 100%. BUT I BOUGHT IT ANYWAY, TO ADD TO MY MANY OTHER BOOKS. THE BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT WAS THE PHOTOS. I WOULD NOT RECOMMEND THIS BOOK TO ANYONE UNLESS THEY JUST WANT TO SKIM OVER IT AND ADD IT TO A COLLECTION THEY MAY HAVE.

Speaking of the needlework produced in the 1930's Dolan remarks, "Poetic justice perhaps that those women struggling against financial difficulty and lack of much social life, produced so much that is whimsical. It is a tribute to fortitude and courage of high order." (page 10 @1989 Books Americana) That a woman may express her courage and high hopes in her needlework is not much considered today when so many contemporary needleworkers are viewed quizzically by friends and questioned "Why don't you just buy it?" Most descriptions in identification guides tell us the facts but never adequately acknowledge the heart that the crafter poured into the piece. Refreshingly Dolan speaks like a crafter as she describes the emotional and spiritual side of both the crafter and the viewer of the craft. Using lace as an example she writes, "The reason we cherish hand made lace, aside from it (sic) fairy like quality, is the fact that skilled hands, most of them in their own cottages, made very inch of it with love and care. Nothing made my machine can ever evoke the feeling present when a collector holds something made by a specific person in the past." (page 23) As a contemporary needle crafter much of Dolan's perspective resonated with my experience. We needleworkers know firsthand the initial excitement of choosing a pattern and color, the repetitive stitching that evokes a reflective calm, and finally the quiet pride of completion. We know that somehow this piece is inextricably ours even if we gift it to another. Seeing this volume at a used book store, I was attracted to the many photos depicting the whimsical examples of needlework made by women like my great aunties who inspired me to take up needle crafts. Pleased to see the emphasis on work from the early 20th century I also appreciated Dolan's tone that mimics the attitudes of the needlewomen themselves who forsook the reverent tone often adopted by their inheritors, and instead displayed a great love of craft alongside the lightheartedness that now so attracts us when we see whimsical subjects or cottage flowers simply outlined in bright playful colors upon plain backgrounds of white. Along with Dolan, I miss these ladies and remember them and their handiwork with great love. Unlike the true collectors, as a practitioner I feel that this work has much to offer as a springboard for ideas and for a look at what everyday crafters like ourselves created in the past. If you are a collector you may be disappointed by the black and white photography and I too found the valuations inflated for the period in which the book was written.

However the value of this book is not in the valuations which are out of date anyway in 2009. Instead this work stands as a heartfelt overview of various kinds of popular needlework that the current crafter may feel inspired to resurrect.

This is a great book for anyone interested in old lace and linens. Lots of photos and explanations of what the various pieces were used for. Also explains the different types of lace. I have quite a few old pieces picked up at yard sales, thrift shops, and church fairs over the years and this book has helped me identify some of them. And the price was right!!

The book arrived in quick time and as described. I'm very pleased with the seller's service. My only disappointment was that I failed (my bad) to notice the publication date so the values have no doubt changed. But that was my fault for not looking more carefully.

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