

(Free pdf) American rooms in miniature

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Mrs James Ward Thorne

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#5473073 in Books 1979-01-01 #File Name: B00005VDJN74 pages37 Units - from The North Atlantic, "brownstone front", South, 19th century of the Mid West, Deep South, the Southwest and California. The models are 1 to 1' scale (1/12th of the original): Ex: 1. Living Room Kitchen Early Massachusetts House (1675-1700). 2. Parlor Samuel Wentworth House, Portsmouth, NH 1710. | File size: 18.Mb

Mrs James Ward Thorne : American rooms in miniature before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American rooms in miniature:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. 10-star book By Jane in Milwaukee Living so close, we have visited the Art Institute of Chicago a bunch of times and while I sometimes send my husband and son off to the nearby Field Museum of Natural History, I stay behind and see my exhibits--particularly the miniature rooms. The last time I was there, there were almost no other people so I got to cruise around at my own pace and really study the rooms from many angles. I just inhaled their beauty. In going from room to room, if you half-close your eyes in between, you really get a sense that these rooms are life-like portrayals and you're a giant. One secret to success you may not realize is that there are no doll figures. You see realistic portraits, but if there were figures in the rooms, it would be all about how realistic they are instead of the surrounding room. This book covers one half of the rooms, the American Rooms; there are 37 with the vast majority--26--being from 18th century colonial New England. The only additional room not being of the South or California is the "Middletown" parlor probably based on Mrs. Thorne's Indiana childhood home. The only fault I have with the rooms themselves is what designer Christopher Lowell describes as the "bowling alley" effect...all furniture is jacked up against the walls with only a timid dining table or settee stepping foot into the middle. Only for a ball would you have found this in real life. Think of any period movie you've seen (or Downton Abby!).

This allows you to see each piece of furniture better but it actually disrupts being able to appreciate the walls. The rooms look a little more spare and cold. A real sitting room, lounge or bedroom has furniture more accessible in the middle of a room. The only fault I have with this gorgeous book itself is the angle at which it is photographed. If you study the cover photo carefully, you'll see that the back wall is always in the middle of the picture, with as much floor as ceiling shown. Only in the close-ups is the view from a person who's no more than 6' tall and not 11' feet tall. When I view the rooms, I bend down to see them more straight-on: this heightens the realism of the rooms for me. These minor considerations aside, these rooms are glorious and the book well-worth reading. You'll want to make a beeline to the Art Institute (which actually has a lot more lovely exhibitions too) whenever you're in our neck of the woods. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Incredible Shrinking Mahogany By Robert Beveridge Mrs. James Ward Thorne, American Rooms in Miniature, 5/E (Art Institute of Chicago, 1962) I know it's a product of the times--but even taking that into account, the forties seems awfully late for these sorts of shenanigans--but every time I see a book written by someone who is presented to us by her husband's name rather than her own, it rubs me the wrong way. And thus, I'll tell you that Mrs. James Ward Thorne's first name was Narcissa. Which, depending on your POV, may explain why she allowed the books bearing her name to be published as being by Mrs. etc. None of which has to do with this book itself. Narcissa Thorne was the architect and arbiter of a number of miniature depictions of American architecture, many of which were 1:12 copies of actual rooms that were still extant in their historic homes, or which had been saved when those were destroyed and rebuilt in museums. As the title conveys, this book focuses on those that originated in America. The pictures are nothing out of the ordinary, which is to be expected given that the idea is to focus on the miniatures themselves and be able to pick out details as they're pointed out by the text (which is uncredited, but I assume was written by Ms. Thorne). Said text is rather dry, and this would have probably been more fun had the author enlivened it a bit with the passion that she must have had for the project, given the immense amount of time it must have taken to put all these rooms together; still, it is a good record of an art form that, fifty years on, has faded into obscurity. If you stumble upon these at a used bookstore, they're worth checking out. ***

A group of miniature rooms, generously presented to The Art Institute of Chicago in 1942, consists entirely of American interiors. Includes reproductions or reconstructions of famous examples of