

~1956 - probably from the Parkersburg WV newspaper



**RARE ART**—Mrs. Ferdinand Luther of Devola and a picture recently completed for a wealthy Virginia family. So far as can be discovered, Mrs. Luther is the only person who has mastered this rare type of art.

Photo for The News by Helen M. White

# Mrs. Luther of Devola Has Mastered Rare Type of Art

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Most things have a name, no matter how rare, there is still a noun to identify them.

However, Mrs. Ferdinand Luther of Devola, near Marietta, is master of an art which has no name that in any sense describes it.

From a piece of heavy paper, generally black, with a pair of the tiniest scissors imaginable, Mrs. Luther creates pictures of unbelievable beauty and depth.

The word, "silhouette," is often applied to her art, but this term conjures up memories of carnival artists with their fast snipping of of an individual's profile in solid black outline.

"Some call my pictures 'scissors - art'," Mrs. Luther smiled in discussing this no - name dilemma, "but then people immediately think of a string of little doll - like figures holding hands

and all cut at one time from a sheet of folded paper."

Mrs. Luther's pictures look like the finest of etchings, so much so in fact, that most people feel they must touch them to convince themselves that they are not drawn, or done with some other commonly used media.

Mr. and Mrs. Luther and their two sons, Lars and Holgar, came to this country soon after the close of World War II, refugees from war - torn Esthonia on the Baltic Sea.

## Rare Talent

The ability of an individual to bring forth form and depth through a highly developed feeling for highlights and shadows all of which are created only by cutting out the right places to the exact size and shape is indeed a rare artistic talent.

It is said that this form of art was once developed centuries ago in Esthonia and became a lost art.

In fact, Mrs. Luther knows of no one living who attempts such art - and she, herself, is self-taught having developed her skill over the years to a degree of lacy perfection.

As one woman phrased it, "You expect her Madonnas to smile much more than you would the Mona Lisa, and the flowers she creates seem to actually give off perfume, they are so life-like."

Flowers, characters from the old fairy tales, and religious pictures are the subjects most often ordered from this small, unusual woman.

When requested, her husband hand - crafts the frames or cabinets for her pictures, often inlaying them with skillful designs.

Also popular with those who know of Mrs. Luther and her talent are portraits of children done in the same manner with plain dark paper and tiny scissors.

Many artists paint in oil with varying degrees of talent, many use water colors, crayons or pastels, charcoal or pen and ink, as media for their pictures.

But tiny Mrs. Luther is the only person so far as can be discovered who possesses her rare talent, a skill so unique and almost unknown that there is not even a name for it.

Mrs. Luther's art was recognized in Europe and the palace of the King of Denmark contains several early examples of her work.