



Sister Parish: The Life of the Legendary American Interior Designer

Apple Parish Bartlett, Susan Bartlett Crater

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Sister—as she was always called by family and friends—was born Dorothy May Kinnicutt into a patrician New York family in 1910 and spent her privileged early life at the right schools, yacht clubs, and coming-out parties. Compelled to work during the lean years of the Depression, Sister combined her innate design ability with her upper-echelon social connections to create an extraordinarily successful interior decorating business. The Parish-Hadley firm's list of clients reads like an American Who's Who, starting with Astors, Kennedys, Paleys, Rockefellers, and Whitneys. She helped Jacqueline Kennedy transform the White House from a fusty hodge-podge into a historically authentic symbol of American elegance. For her clients, she was an indispensable presence, both in their salons and designing them. Sister's style, marked by cozy, airy, colorful, but understated elegance, came to be known as "American country," and its influence continues to this day.

Compiled by Apple Parish Bartlett (one of Sister's daughters) and Susan Bartlett Crater (a granddaughter) from Sister's own unpublished memoirs, as well as from hundreds of interviews with family members, friends, staff, world-renowned interior designers (Mark Hampton, Mario Buatta, Keith Irvine, Bunny Williams, and her long-time partner Albert Hadley, among many others), and clients (Annette de la Renta, Glenn Bernbaum, Mrs. Thomas Watson, et al.), *Sister Parish* takes the reader right into the houses—and the lives—of some of the most fascinating and famous people of this inimitable woman's time.

Long out of print, this acclaimed biography—a *New York Times* Notable Book—of the doyenne of American interior design is once again available to acquaint a whole new generation of designers and design lovers with the charismatic woman who redefined interior design in America. Fully updated, the revised edition features a new Foreword by Albert Hadley and an Appreciation by Bunny Williams, who began her career at Parish-Hadley.

A *New York Times* Notable Book

Praise for *Sister Parish*:

"Sister Parish's reminiscences, along with those of her friends and admirers, bear a remarkable resemblance to what one remembers about her interior decorating—warm, personable, cozy, thoughtful, harmonious, satisfying, impeccable. An enchanting compilation."—George Plimpton
"In my novel *People Like Us*, I based the character of the famous society decorator Cora Mandell on Sister Parish. Apple Parish Bartlett and Susan Bartlett Crater have presented a loving portrait of her, as well as a superb social history of her era."—Dominick Dunne
"If you love design, history and a good biography, you are sure to enjoy this book!"—*Annechovie* blog

"What makes this biography so enjoyable is that it compiles Sister's own unpublished memoirs with stories from family members, friends, staff, clients and world-renowned interior designers. . . . All generations of decorators and designers will appreciate this look at the life of this American icon."
—*From the Right Bank* blog

"Compiled from Sister's unpublished memoirs and augmented by many interviews with friends, family, staff and fellow design icons, it is a wonderful insider look at an era and a life." —*Quintessence* blog

"This book is a MUST HAVE for any design library of substance or design student." —*Architect Design* blog

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