

INTRODUCING EMBROIDERY

BY

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Introduction

This booklet is primarily an introduction to embroidery for those beginners who are anxious to widen their knowledge of the craft and who may lack the opportunity of personal instruction.

Books on embroidery are not numerous. The bibliography given on the last page has been compiled with the object of bringing a knowledge of some of the best books, which have been written on the subject, to those who may not already be familiar with them.

The author is aware of omissions which are unavoidable in a booklet, but has striven to present as varied a selection of different types of embroidery as space has allowed.

The section on costume jewellery is in line with contemporary fashion and has been included in the hope that it will afford some measure of entertainment and satisfaction in production.

Most books on embroidery are expensive and this fact stops many learning new or unusual embroidery methods. So this booklet will have fulfilled the author's purpose if it acts as a simple introduction to a craft which never ceases to attract new devotees.



Portion of Cromwellian chair embroidered by the author in crewel wools on linen crash. From the collection of Alfred Copleston, Esq.

Crewel Embroidery

EMBROIDERY is the art of decorating a ground fabric, with threads and varied stitches to strengthen and ornament. The term 'crewel embroidery' means the free working over the surface of a fabric using a variety of embroidery stitches to give the full effect. This effect depends on the care with which the stitches are chosen, and on the colour combinations which are so closely associated with crewel embroidery. As a general rule the best effects are obtained on backgrounds of twilled linen, either fine or coarse, and worked in coloured wools or silks. This form of embroidery is best exemplified in Jacobean work which came into popular use during the last thirty years of the seventeenth century. These large examples of crewel work, now only to be seen in museums and old country houses, are the best of their kind. They were inspired by examples of Indian embroidery brought back by traders from the Far East in the seventeenth century. The big tree and flower designs gave an impetus to the growing need for wall hangings in the increasing number of country houses being built in this period. Crewel work grew quickly, looked attractive when done and was very suitable for the backgrounds of oak panelling and the four-poster beds, which it adorned with such grace. Recently it has been revived due to the vogue for furnishing in period styles and it is the only form of embroidery familiar to many people. Jacobean embroidery was formerly applied to very large pieces of work, especially wall and bed hangings, bed coverlets and screens, but to-day its use is more restricted. Fire screens, cushion covers, stool tops, door curtains and bedspreads possibly, and many smaller articles such as knitting bags, tea-cosies, slippers are more in keeping with the range of the modern embroideress.

The term crewel embroidery has also been applied to later forms of embroidery worked on light-weight fabrics in floss and twisted silks, but no first class design has been achieved by this technique.

Equipment: Crewel needles are required, which are short and strong, with long, large eyes to enable easy threading; pointed embroidery scissors; thimble; and, for some of the stitches, a tambour frame with a screw.

Materials: Fine linen, or linen twill; linen and cotton mixture; poplin; crash; linen crash, or any material which is firm and not likely to pucker in the working.

Threads: Wool, silk or mercerised cottons, twisted or stranded. It is important that the thread should suit the material by not being too thick or too thin. Avoid at all times using long lengths of thread which roughen quickly, knot, and tend to slow down the work.



thread fillings, follow on. The crewel work panel on this page shows that use of some laid thread fillings. Their full working can be obtained by reference to any comprehensive work on embroidery (see Bibliography).

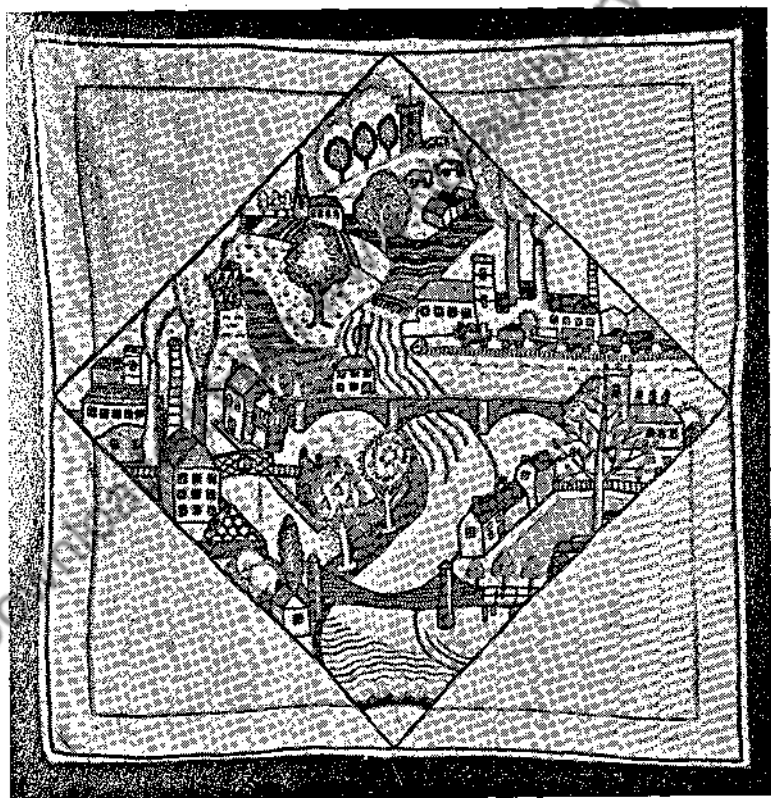
It is immaterial whether a frame be used for working or not. The circular tambour frame with an adjustable screw is useful when large shapes require a laid thread filling. The two hoops of the frame fit over each other with the material between them and make even, regular laying of the threads more possible. The best embroidery is always done in the hand. The frame should be regarded as an aid. The larger type of embroidery frame is illustrated in Fig. 23.

Design inspired by Spanish Blackwork. Stems and grapes in chain and french knots. Leaf outlines in whipped running with laid thread fillings. Tendrils in backstitch.

Canvas Embroidery

CANVAS embroidery is mainly used to-day for chairs, stool tops, firescreens, etc., although from time to time it is applied to dress accessories, e.g. evening bags and purses. One of the earliest forms of embroidery is *opus pulvinarium*, or cushion style, which was worked on a canvas ground covered with tent stitches. From this early work, dating from the thirteenth century in England, the canvas work which we know now has been derived. Throughout the centuries it has been used in various forms in this country and in Germany and France, mainly in ecclesiastical vestments and in large wall hangings. Nowadays a far larger variety of canvas stitches is used and canvas embroidery can reflect work of much individual merit.

Canvas embroidery is worked strictly upon the counted threads of



Crewel work cushion cover on linen in chain stitch, buttonhole, french knots, couching and satin stitch

the ground fabric which should be an open meshed, single thread canvas. Perfection of technique is essential for all canvas work.

Equipment: An embroidery frame for fine close work or for large pieces, but it is not essential; large eyed canvas needles with blunt points; smooth thimble and scissors.

Materials: Single mesh canvas; wools; silks or mercerised cottons. It is very important that the thread should be suitably chosen for the canvas and in working should completely cover it, allowing no ground to show.

Method: An embroidery frame is always best for large pieces of work. Small pieces of canvas work may be worked in the hand. Do not use pointed needles, they slow down the work considerably, prick one's fingers, and split the stitches, causing irregularities in the embroidery. For a design incorporating mixed canvas stitches the design should be carefully and clearly painted on the ground canvas, and, whether a frame is used or not, the worker can begin on almost any part of the design. In canvas work the whole ground is covered. It is wiser to embroider the main design first and fill in the background portion afterwards. Stitches should follow the edges of the design as closely as possible, the good sense of the worker deciding precisely where to end. The aim should be to keep the edges neat and regular, avoiding any gaps between the varying sized stitches, and filling them in by following the pattern of the stitch as far as possible.

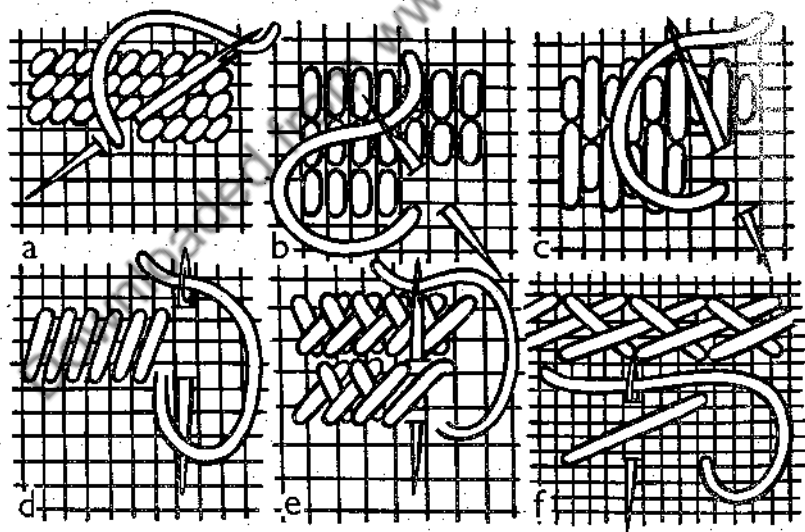


Fig. 2. Canvas stitches: a. Tent St., b. Straight St., c. Upright St., d. Gobelin St., e. Plait St., f. Longarmed Cross.



Wall hanging Pied Piper of Hamelin on single thread canvas in cross-stitch.
Size 32" X 20".

In working all these varied stitches (of which only a few are given here—Fig. 2), it is important that the back of the work should receive as much attention as the front. A rhythmic working of each stitch should be cultivated, so that on the underside the stitches should be regular and alike, though not of course exactly the same as the front.

When a design is to be worked entirely in tent or cross-stitch then the design may be marked directly on the canvas. Alternatively the design may be drawn first on squared paper and coloured, which shows up the shapes to better advantage. This makes the counting of the squares very much easier. The only real advantage of the squared paper method over the marked one is that it is possible to control the exact working out of the outline.

Cross-stitch should be worked from left to right in rows and back again. A smooth finish results. It is very important that all stitches should be crossed the same way.

In working tent stitch, the stitch is begun from the right with a long slanted back stitch taken underneath for the next surface stitch. Tent stitch should be worked like this in neat rows, the work being turned upside down for alternate rows in order to preserve the evenness. A few canvas stitches are drawn here. Others may be found in more comprehensive works. Some are: tent stitch; cross-stitch; Gobelin stitch; Hungarian stitch; rococo stitch; plait stitch; longarmed cross-stitch; double cross-stitch; four sided Italian cross-stitch.

White Work and Broderie Anglaise

THERE are varied methods by which white threads on a white ground may be made to look interesting and attractive. These different methods have given rise to different types of white embroidery under very distinct names, such as drawn thread work, broderie anglaise, Russian drawn work, drawn fabric work, etc. and they all have their respective character.

Under the heading of white work may be grouped many of the crewel work stitches, especially stem stitch, padded satin, french knots, chain, featherstitch, seed stitch, and rice stitch. The best white work was produced in England during the reign of Queen Victoria in the nineteenth century. This lovely white embroidery very often reveals an exquisite feeling for design. The use of padded satin stitch on small leaves and motifs is sometimes arranged in feathery scrolls and interspersed with delicate floral motifs and sections in openwork. Delicate linens, fine lawn, cambric, and Indian muslins form the white ground for all this type of work and many museums exhibit specimens of babies' bonnets, bibs, christening robes, petticoats, and adult garments. In the main it is a form of embroidery used on clothes. Much has survived, often as heirlooms and often because it is strong wearing, although it looks so fragile. A great deal can be learnt from this fine technique and many of the designs are worth recording and adapting for use in other ways. Broderie anglaise is often combined with this

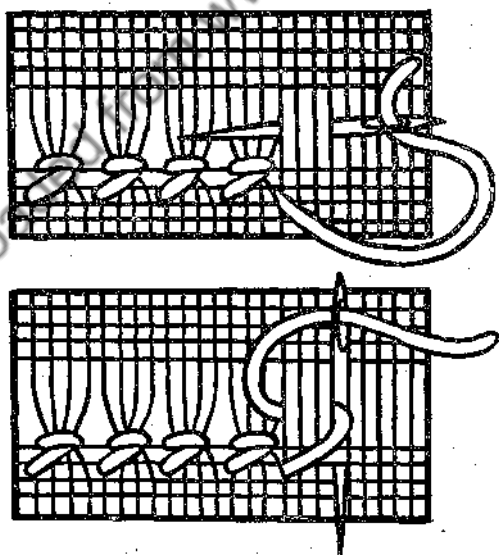


Fig. 3. Simple Hemstitching.

type of white work, although it is better known as a distinct type of embroidery on its own. It is sometimes called Madeira work.

Broderie Anglaise which has now returned to fashion, is often called 'eyelet' embroidery and needs much care in working.

Equipment: Very sharp pointed embroidery scissors; a stiletto; thimble; fine crewel needles.

Materials: Fine linen lawn of the best quality; fine white mercerised cotton for working.

Method: Broderie anglaise is characterised by the numerous small holes neatly edged with overcasting. They are made by first outlining the shape to be cut out with small neat running stitches. If the shape is oval, then a single cut is made, the edges are turned underneath and rolled back to the outlining thread between finger and thumb. The edges are then overcast with neat firm stitches which must not overlap. For round holes a cut may be made both ways in the form of a cross and the edges rolled under. Very small holes may be punched through the material with a stiletto. Padded satin stitch is also used to advantage in broderie anglaise when working on spots, leaves, flower petals, and scalloped borders. The border padding is composed of a series of long running stitches worked before the buttonholing is done.

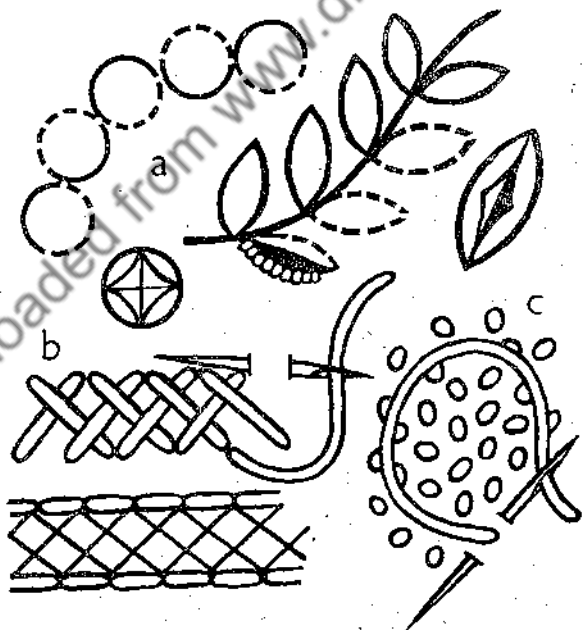


Fig. 4. a. Broderie anglaise method, b. Shadow work, c. Rice St.

Drawn Fabric Work and Punch Work

This is a very interesting type of embroidery, particularly satisfying because of its strength and durability. It belongs to the white work group of embroideries. The threads of the ground fabric are drawn or pulled together forming patterned textures. No threads are actually removed, but the resulting effect is open and web like. This work can only be worked successfully on a loosely woven fabric with a fine, strong thread which matches the thread of the ground fabric as closely as possible. Drawn fabric work (sometimes called 'pulled' work) is especially useful for household linen which needs only a small amount of decoration, yet is expected to withstand long wear.

Equipment: Thick needles with large eyes and blunt points; thimble and scissors.

Materials: Loosely woven tabby weave fabrics, such as linen, scrim, crash or any fabric which allows the threads to be drawn up.

Threads: Fine strong linen thread; cotton or mercerised cotton.

Method: After the design has been chosen and transferred to the material, then the chosen drawn fabric stitch may be begun. It is immaterial whether a simple outline is employed to give shape to the areas of drawn fabric stitches; many of them are quite effective without them. This outline may be worked first or not, it is a matter for individual choice.

The direction in which drawn fabric stitches are worked varies according to the type of effect required. Some of the stitches are worked horizontally across the material (see Fig. 5) and others are worked diagonally. Only three stitches are given here but all are very

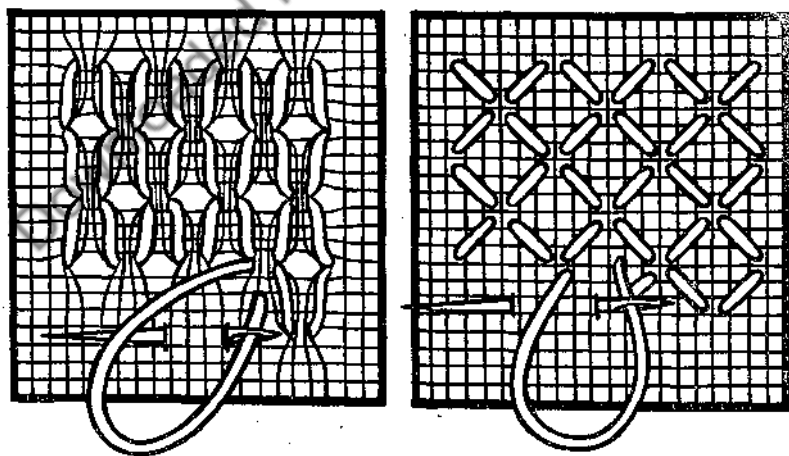


Fig. 5. Two drawn fabric stitches.

effective and simple to work, the pulling of the working thread producing the open effect.

Reference should be made to the D. M. C. Encyclopedia of Needlework for fuller information and a wider range of these stitches. In some cases two stitches combine to give an even better effect. There are occasions when these open stitches may be combined with coloured embroidery to form an attractive contrast to coloured threads of silk or wool.

In the working of all drawn fabric stitches a new ground texture is produced. Sometimes these stitches actually form a background to a contrasting design which is left plain, and the careful counting of the threads is of the utmost importance. Any error in counting should be remedied at once by undoing the work and correcting the mistake. Drawn fabric embroidery is slow in execution but very rewarding in its final effect and in its long wear.

There is a type of drawn fabric stitch known as Punch work, which may be seen in English and Indian muslin embroideries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is worked exactly on the same lines as the stitch given in Fig. 7, diagram B, but at each stitch the needle is inserted again into the same holes forming a firm backstitch which is pulled tightly. This is worked both horizontally and vertically and can be used on any fine fabric, but, instead of counting the threads, the background is marked out by means of a series of dots arranged in squares. In the working, each dot becomes a hole.

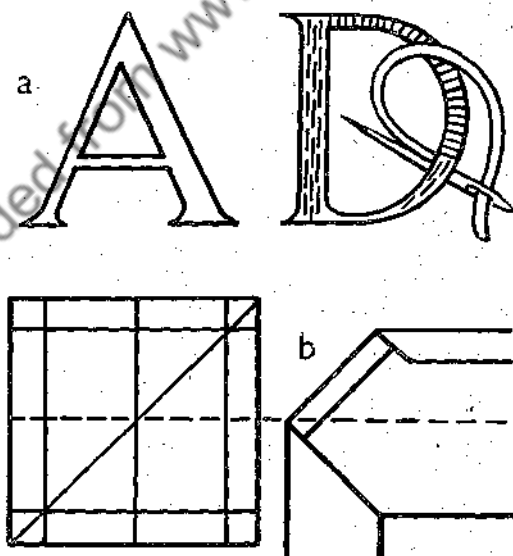


Fig. 6. a. To work initial letters in padded satin st.
b. Mitreing a corner.

Russian Drawn Work

THIS type of white embroidery makes its appeal from the openwork squared effect produced by removing some of the ground threads and whipping them. It is fairly bold in character and very strong in wear. It is mainly used for household linen, bedspreads, afternoon tablecloths, traycloths, chairbacks, etc. It can be worked in colour, but is usually associated with white embroidery.

Equipment: A tambour frame with adjustable screw; sharp scissors; thimble; pointed long eyed crewel needles; blunt canvas work needle.

Materials: Linen or any fabric with a plain tabby weave, a thread slightly thicker than the yarn of the fabric. Coton à broder, or stranded cottons are suitable.

Method: The design must be enclosed in a fixed shape, either a long, square, or a border. The threads in this shape should be carefully

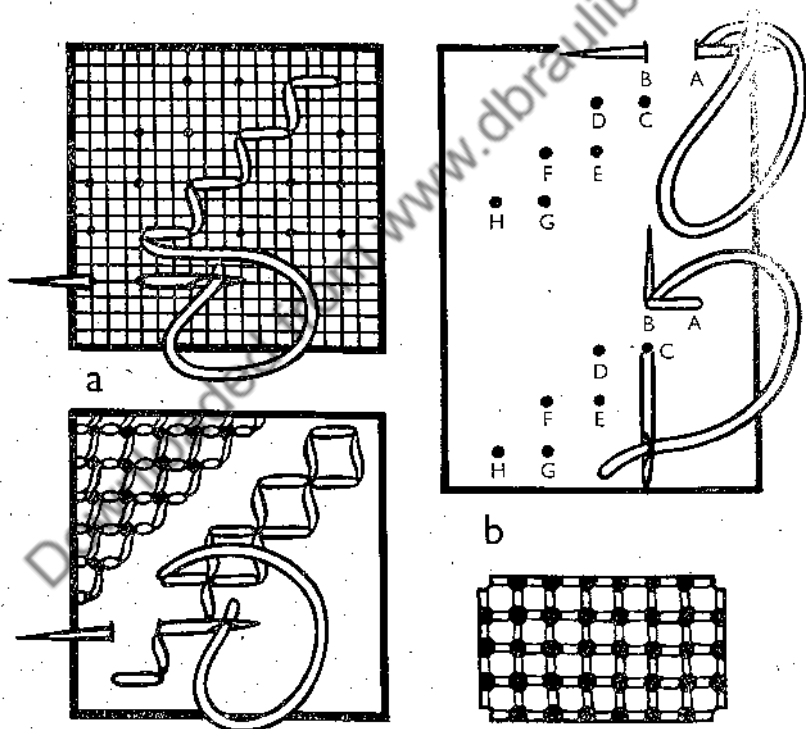
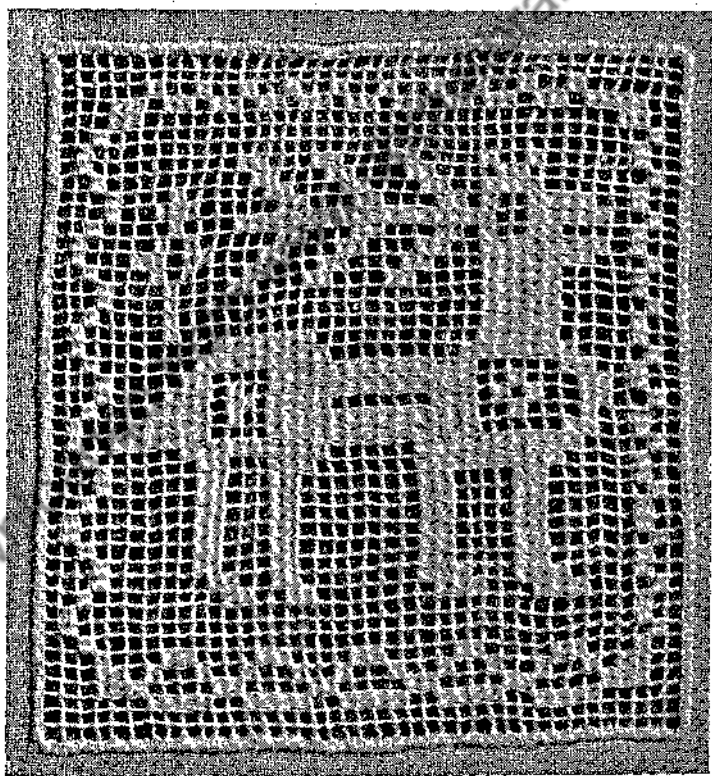


Fig. 7. Two stitches. a. A drawn fabric stitch. b. Punch work, method and finished effect.

counted and divided and corners marked (see Fig. 8). Then a long neat running stitch is worked, exactly marking this shape. Next a neat firm row of buttonholing is worked round this edge with the heading nearest the inside of the shape. The next process needs care. Having arranged for the series of threads to be cut away, the first thread nearest one end of the shape is selected, drawn up on a pin, and carefully cut away at the buttonholed edge. The next thread is then treated in the same way. Finally, leaving in the required number of threads, all the alternate ones as arranged are cut out. This process should be done in both directions (across warp and weft). At this stage the work looks rather loose and ragged.

Using the tambour frame and a blunt needle, the threads should be arranged in order very gently, by poking and easing them back into position.

When this has been done the threads are then whipped in both



Russian drawn work.

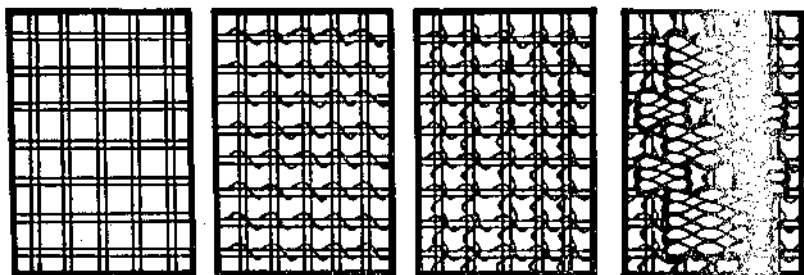


Fig. 8. The four stages in working.

directions. This forms a ground on which the design is to be worked. The final stage in this type of embroidery grows very quickly—the squared shapes of the design are simply woven in blocks across the squares until completed. This work wears well and is quickly executed.

The best arrangement for threads is one where three ground threads are left between those cut away. If this is done, the resulting work is firmer and neater, as the three threads tend to form a natural 'lock'. Two threads can be left instead of three. Although the effect is more delicate, the threads are difficult to control and the squares do not stay in position. The work on page 17 has been worked over two threads. Three threads are strongly advised for the beginner. Fig. 8 merely shows the method of working and does not represent any particular number of threads to be overcast.

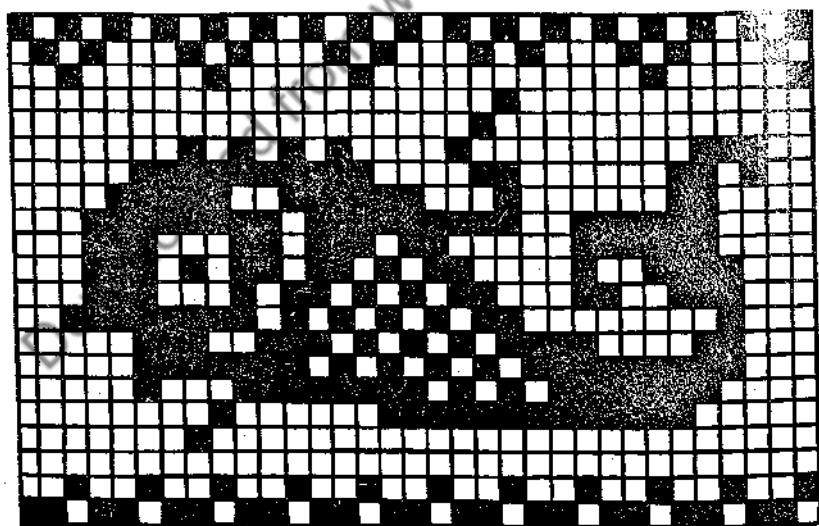


Fig. 9. Design for Russian drawn work.

Carrickmacross Lace and Needlerun Net

CARRICKMACROSS lace is a form of embroidery so delicate in appearance that it ranks as lace which it much resembles on completion. It is coming back into favour for accessories and evening dresses. Some embroidery experience is required for this work as it requires much care in spacing stitches.

Equipment: A tambour frame with an adjustable screw is a necessity for this work. Also fine sewing needles; a larger needle for the couched thread; small sharp pointed scissors.

Materials: The best quality white organdie and white cotton net with six sided holes like a honeycomb (this is important). The net should not be too fine, with a mesh which will blend with a 40 or 50 sewing cotton; a firm crochet cotton No. 20; and 40 or 59 white sewing cotton for couching.

Design: The design should be composed of portions for plain organdie and for net fillings. Harmony between pattern and plain should be aimed at.

Method: First the design should be very clearly painted on the organdie with a fine water-colour brush and ultramarine blue. This will wash out without leaving a trace. Be careful *not* to use Prussian blue. The net is then placed under the organdie and tacked two or three times across the middle and round the edge. This is to hold the two layers together. Place the tambour frame in position before beginning work. Take the crochet cotton and pull through to the back of the work at a suitable place in the design. Sew this end very neatly into position and do not cut from the ball, for the couched thread should be continuous. Next bring the needle to the right side and couch

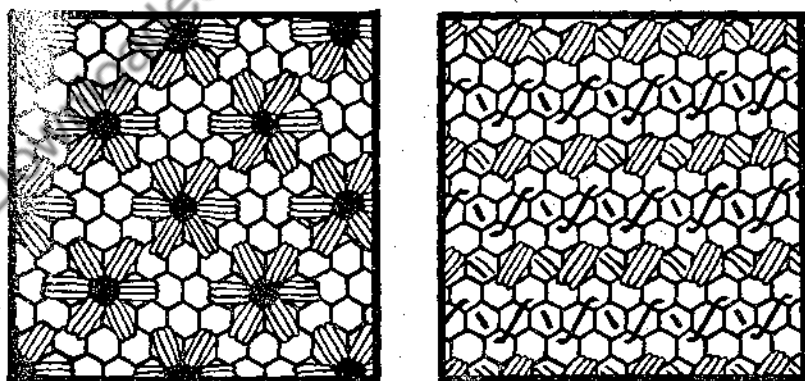
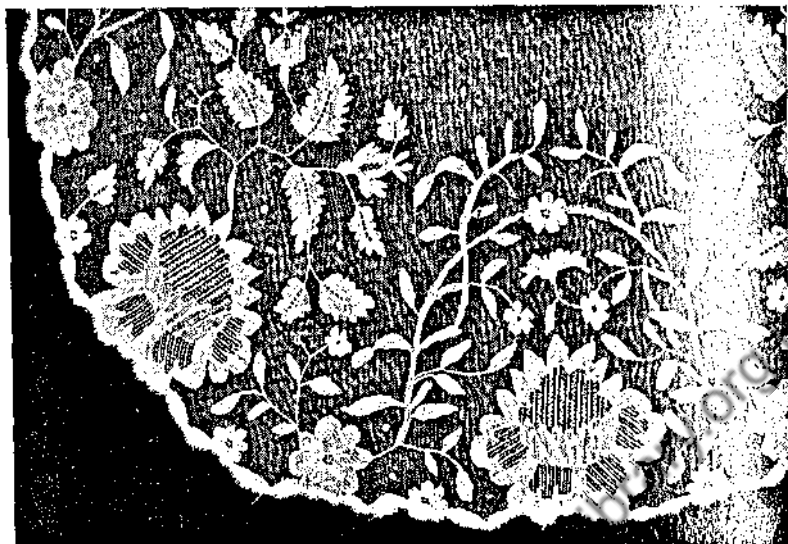


Fig. 10. Two net fillings.



Christening veil, 19th cent., English, in needlerun net and net fillings.

the crochet cotton down neatly and firmly with evenly spaced stitches which should be kept straight (see couching diagram). Continue the couching, taking the thread over itself where necessary, until all the outlines of the design are covered. Next, the portions of the organdie which are to be cut away should be removed with sharp scissors, leaving the net exposed.

These areas of net now lend themselves to patterning. Two fillings are given here and the worker is referred to the Encyclopedia of Needlework for variations. The same fine white sewing cotton should be used for these fillings.

Needlerun Net. This is a design outlined on net in running stitch. The net groundwork should be honeycomb or six-sided, not four-sided or diamond mesh, in order that net fillings may be incorporated if desired. The outlining thread, which may be of either cotton or silk, should be thick enough to show up clearly on the background. The fillings may be worked in finer thread. An example of needlerun net is given on p. 20 showing the freedom of line and effect which it is possible to produce in this type of embroidery.

Method of working: The net should be tacked directly on the design, previously traced on tracing paper. The needle follows the lines of the

design outlining them in running stitch. The work may be rolled into the left hand for convenience or supported from underneath while working. The portions which are to be worked with net fillings should be done after the outlining is complete and the work removed from the paper background. No knots should be visible and care is needed to conceal joins.

Quilting

The fascination of quilting lies in the play of light over a crinkled surface which is produced by stitching together two layers of material with padding between. The designs and patterns formed by the stitchery are the sole means of giving interest and meaning to quilting. Quilting has been used for centuries for warmth and for an effect of richness both for dress and in the home. The eighteenth century in England gave rise to floral embroidered coverlets with quilted backgrounds. Quilted petticoats and waistcoats were widely worn. Today lovely quilts are still made in Northumberland and Durham and in South Wales where the surface fabric is often made of patchwork. Many traditional designs of curling feather shapes, interlocked circles or guilloche geometric shapes, with diamond backgrounds, have been handed down and are still in use. Quilting lends itself excellently to modern design. Almost any good linear design with enough background pattern is suitable and well within the scope of a beginner.

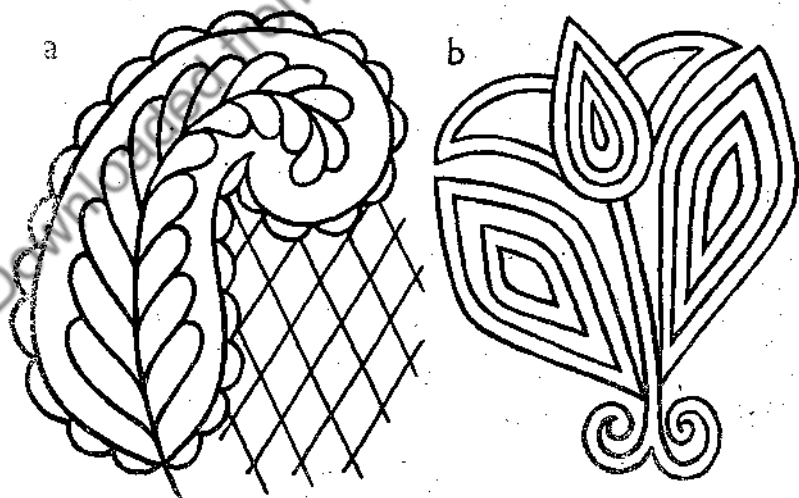


Fig. 11. Quilting designs. *a.* English quilting. *b.* Italian quilting.

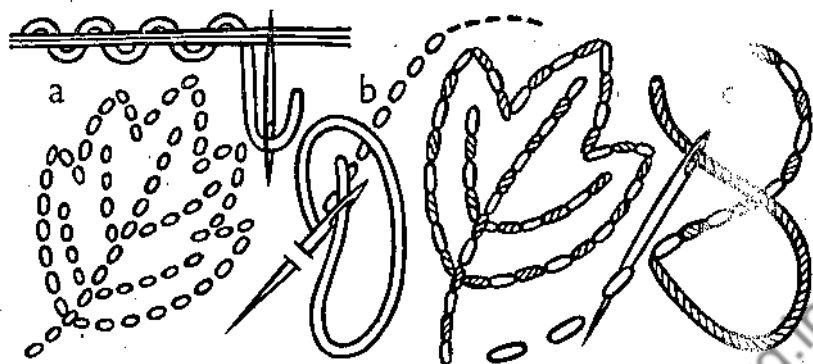


Fig. 12. a. Stab stitch, b. Running stitch, c. Double running stitch.

Equipment: A quilting frame for any large piece which cannot be held in the hand; thimble; scissors; quilting and ordinary sewing needles; tape-measure.

Materials: For the surface fabric any firm thin material is suitable—linen; cotton; silk; rayon; satin; any dress fabric. Avoid thick stiff materials. The lining may be muslin; cotton; sateen or even the same fabric as the front of the work. The interlining may be of soft flannel; domett; tailor's wadding; cotton wool; or anything suitable or soft. Quilting can be done without an interlining, but it is not so effective, especially if warmth is required.

Threads: It is immaterial whether the working thread is of the same colour as the ground or of a contrasting tone or colour. Thread can be cotton; silk; or mercerised thread, and fairly thin. The thread in quilting should not be too much in evidence.

Method: Large areas of quilting, such as bedspreads, need a frame for working, but smaller pieces can be worked quite well in the hand. If a frame is used the extra material is wound about the rounded ends of the frame, and only the actual section being worked upon exposed. The most usual stitch is stab stitch (see Fig. 12), which looks like running stitch. Back stitch, chain stitch, and double running in two colours (an Indian method), are most suitable. For the smaller pieces of quilting done in the hand, the work must be carefully tacked across in both directions but not round the edge. The fullness is worked to the edge and so quilting is better started in the centre of the work.

Edges of quilting may be simply turned in to each other and stitched, or they may be piped or have an inset frill. Fringes, cord, and braid may all be alternatives. Quilting is again popular, and is used for evening coats, coat interlinings, skirts, boleros, collars and cuffs, evening bags, slippers, cushions, and tea-cosies.

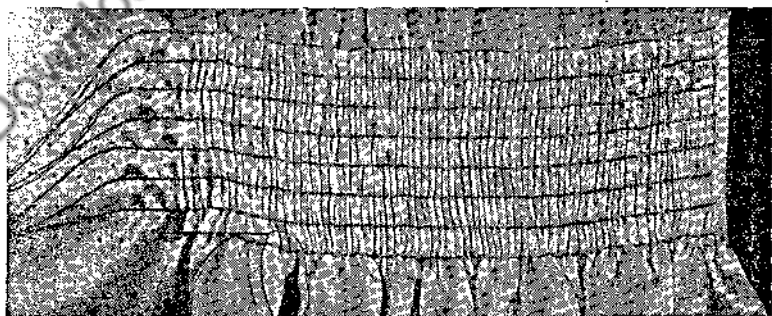
Smocking

SMOCKING is a form of embroidery that is always in fashion, especially for children's clothes. Its long history of a thousand years, lasting from the Anglo-Saxon period to the Industrial Revolution, shows how gathered fullness in a simple tunic garment became a developed craft. It flourished in the rural communities, where local traditional designs evolved, and these smocks are much sought after by the collector. The machine age largely ended the use of the smock. Smocking is a very satisfactory and beautiful way of fitting gathered fullness into neat flutes and pipes which, when worked over, are sufficiently elastic to allow for expansion. In children's garments this is a useful characteristic. Smocking can also be used on adult dresses, blouses, overalls, and aprons with much success.

Equipment: Ironing board and pins, or drawing board and drawing pins; smocking transfer or punctured card of evenly spaced holes; sharp HB pencil; suitable needles and tacking thread; embroidery thread of silk, or mercerised cotton.

Materials: The materials most suitable for smocking are those which are firmly woven but not too thick. Wool fabrics are too bulky as a rule, for satisfactory smocking requires at least three or four times the width of the required smocking. Linen, cotton, silk, rayon, organdie, voile, and nylon are all suitable.

Method: In order to gather the material into the necessary neat and orderly gathers (these must be perfectly done for successful smocking), it is wiser to use the mechanical means of a series of dots. There are two ways in which this can be done. The first method is by means of a smocking transfer. These transfers may be bought with light spots for a dark fabric and dark spots for a light one. The depth of smocking required is measured and the transfer cut to correspond. The material should be pinned taut on to the ironing cloth with all creases ironed out and the smocking transfer pinned into position and ironed on.



Preparing gathers for smocking.

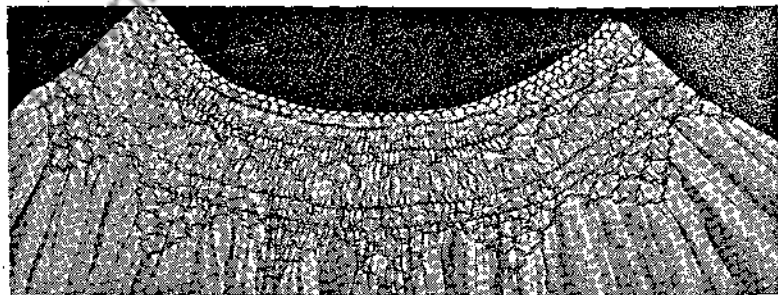


Fig. 13. Two useful smocking stitches.

Care must be taken to buy sufficient transfer to continue the dots across the whole width of the material and the join must be matched up. A second method is to rule a card with evenly marked lines of dots at intervals of about $3/16$ " or $1/4$ " apart and puncture each dot with a darning needle. In this case pin the material on a drawing-board keeping it straight and taut. Lay the perforated strip in the required position and mark through with a pencil, moving the strip into the next position as required. The next process is to gather with a tacking thread every row of dots across the whole fabric. The needle picks up every dot. The threads are then drawn up and each two threads are wound in a figure of eight over a pin. The tension should be firm and easy in the hand so that the needle can work into the gathers with ease. Do not pull too tightly. See that the gathered threads are securely fastened before gathering. After drawing up into position and securing, the work is ready for the embroidery stitches which will hold the smocking in place after the tacking threads are removed.

Stitches: Few stitches are used in smocking and oddly enough the most simple and effective one, honeycomb stitch, is not really a smocking stitch at all. The other stitches are clever arrangements of stem or outline stitch, chevron and feather.

Colour schemes in smocking are most effective when the working thread is the same colour as the ground. If colour is used, however, the primary colours blue, red, and black, on a neutral ground, usually



Smocked neckline on voile.

give the best effect. Pastel colours very often look unsatisfactory as they do not give the texture of the self-colour scheme or the contrast of the primaries.

Needleweaving

NEEDLEWEAVING is a type of embroidery which is allied to drawn-thread-work. Its main asset is the use of colour which characterizes the blocks of embroidery thread woven closely over the exposed warp or weft. Needleweaving is used mainly for border embroidery, although it is suitable to work in any square or rectangular shape. This type of embroidery does not lend itself to curved effects.

Equipment: Blunt canvas needles; thimble and scissors; and possibly a tambour frame; graph paper.

Materials: Any fine or coarse material with a tabby weave which will allow the removal of some of the threads.

Threads: May be of wool, cotton, or silk, but should be of a thickness suitably proportioned to the fabric.

Method: The area to be worked should be marked out on the material or on the article to be decorated. The threads should be counted, and, working in conjunction with a sheet of graph paper, the design to be embroidered in the needleweaving should be worked out in squares, oblongs, or solid blocks of colour. This preparation may take more

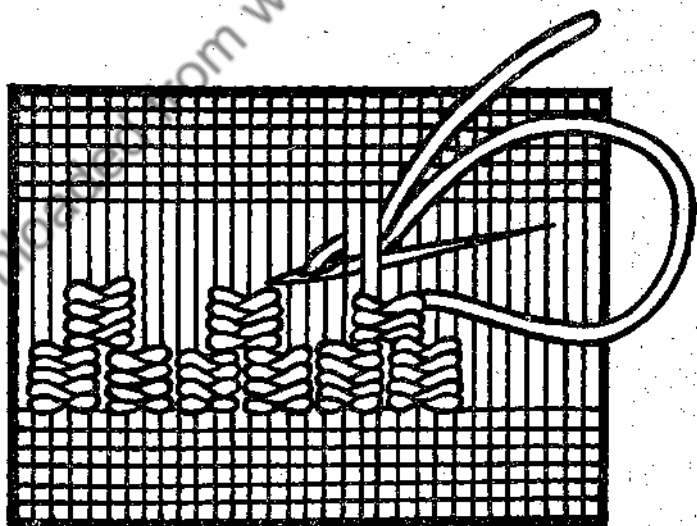
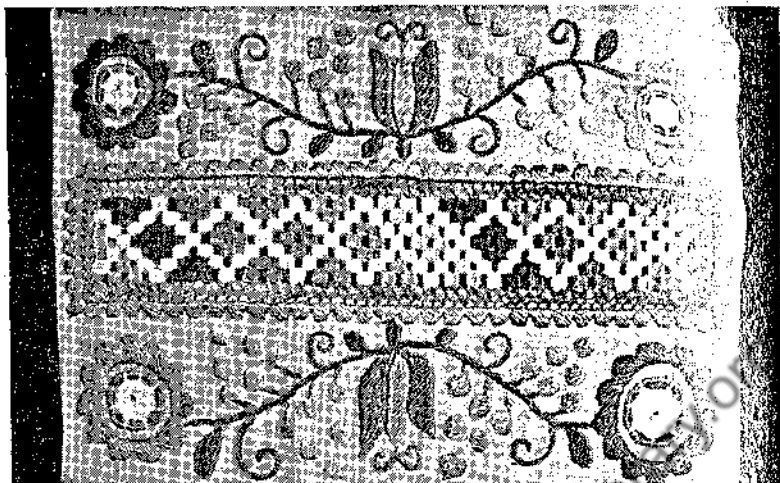


Fig. 14. Method of needleweaving.



Needleweaving on voile. Portion of sleeve of Hungarian dress.

time than the actual embroidery, but unless careful planning is made for needleweaving the design may not work out very satisfactorily.

Having finally decided on a suitable design, the end portions of the needleweaving are firmly buttonholed over a running stitch before the necessary cutting is done. After cutting the two ends (next to the looped edge of the buttonhole) all the horizontal threads are then completely removed. Reference to Fig. 14 should explain this point. The needleweaving is then ready for working. The groups of threads are divided into two and, using the eye of the needle if preferred, are woven

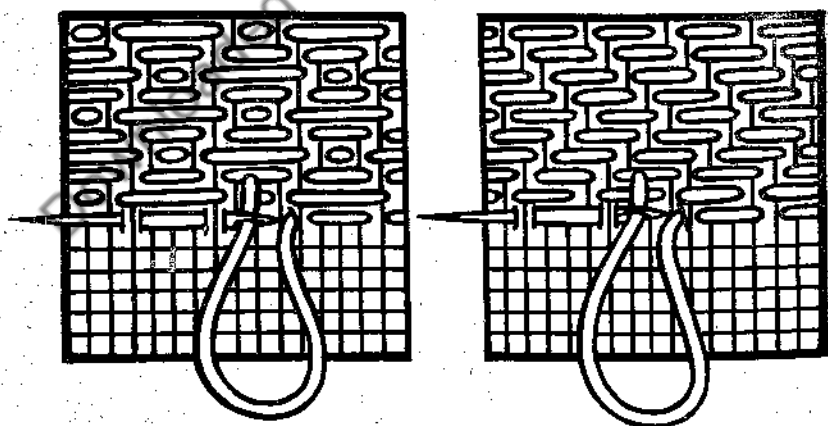
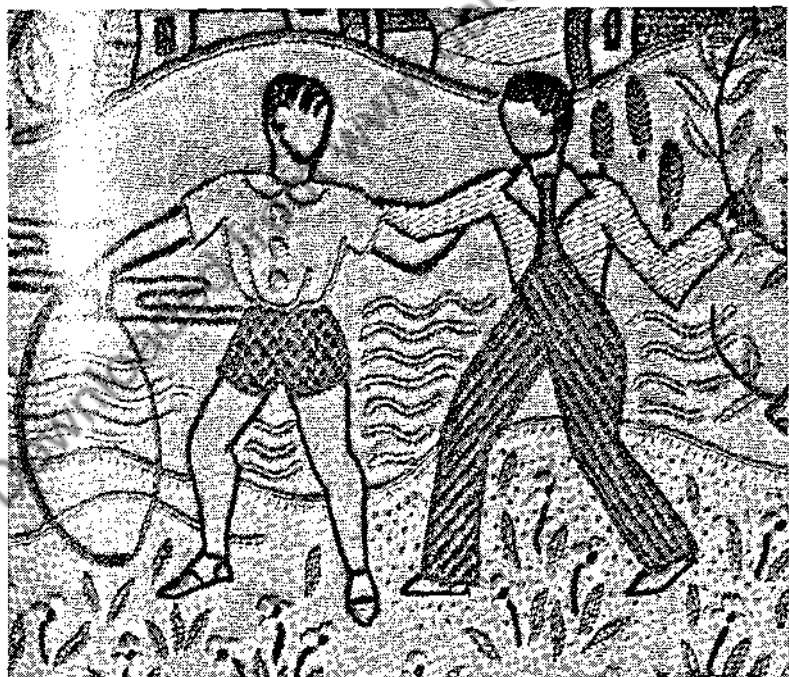


Fig. 15. Two simple pattern darns.

under and over until the required amount has been covered. These woven blocks of colour may be grouped into as many horizontal sections as desired. The arrangements of the subdivisions of the threads do not follow a definite rule. In moving from one block of colour to another the thread is taken across to the next block continuously. In joining a new length of thread or colour, the end should be buried neatly in the weaving.

In order to soften the hard effect which the edges of the needleweaving sometimes produces, the edges may be hem-stitched first. Other stitches can be added as desired and this very often helps to relate the needleweaving to the background of the fabric.

When it is necessary to turn a corner in needleweaving, in a border of any width, it is better to arrange some way of treating the corner solidly. The large hole which results in removing a number of threads in two directions presents not only a problem in itself but actually weakens the ground fabric. Narrow borders of needleweaving, however, may allow for an open corner which is easier to fill in.



Pattern darning on Russian crash.

Pattern Darning

THE counted threads of the ground fabric form the basis of pattern darning. It is necessary therefore to choose material with clearly marked threads for regular darning, usually a tabby weave fabric. Pattern darning is a very useful way of filling in a large area, or shape, in embroidery by a very simple means. It is also very effectively used as a background treatment. The patterns of darns give scope for variation and are simple to execute. They are rich in texture and produce fairly quick results. (See Fig. 15.)

Equipment: Long darning needles; thimble; scissors.

Material: Any type which allows the threads to be counted; darning thread of similar proportion to the woven thread.

Method: All pattern darning is geometric and depends on the careful counting of the ground threads. The needle is threaded with a longer thread than usual, perhaps a yard, and, having decided on the pattern to be worked, the thread is fastened on, brought to the right side of the material and the stitch darned by following the selected pattern. Very careful counting is necessary especially for the first row. Care should be taken not to pucker the work. The threads should darn easily into the ground and become part of it. The darn should cover the material and none should be visible between the lines of darning.

Some forms of darning are free and are little more than running stitches worked backwards and forwards over a surface, often producing effective results. Almost any type of ground fabric may be used for free darning as it is not necessary to count the threads.

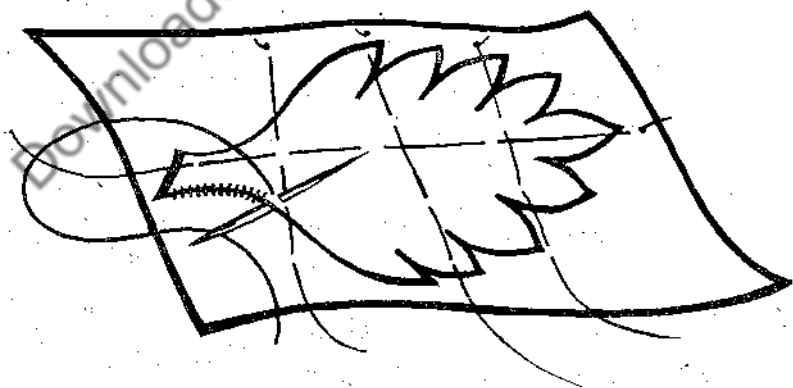
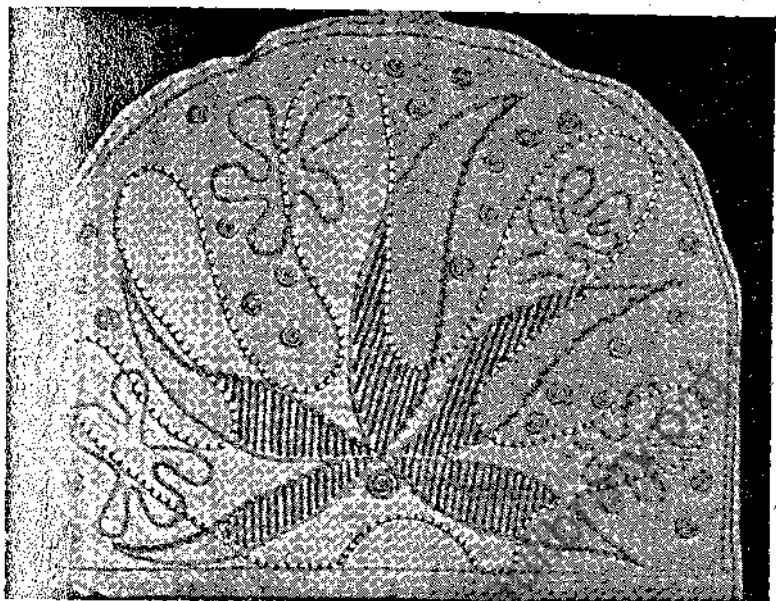


Fig. 16. To apply appliqué shape. Tack in position and overcast neatly.



Tea-cosy in appliqué using net on poplin and worked in couching, darning, chain, and threaded back in silk and wool. Loaned by Mrs. Joan Hoyland.

Appliqué

APPLIQUÉ embroidery means the applying of one fabric on another and attaching it by means of stitchery. It is a method of embroidery of great antiquity and began to be used very widely for ecclesiastical vestments of all kinds in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in England. Sections of an embroidery were worked separately and finally sewn into position on damask or other grounds of embroidery, usually *Opus Anglicanum*. This method grew and extended to other types of appliqué, such as Italian applied embroidery, showing remarkable effects of counterchange and richness of execution. Throughout the long history in the treatment of applied fabrics, the rule has always been laid down that the applied portion should be lined and stiffened before any stitching is done. Many exponents still hold this view. It is possible, however, to dispense with this method if the areas of appliqué are not too large or are worked over in such a way that the possibility of puckering or bubbling cannot arise. A great deal of experiment has been done in the field of appliqué and nowadays there are far fewer limits in the choice of materials than was at one time supposed possible. The main consideration is to decide the purpose to which the appliqué will be put when completed. If it is to be used

constantly, then every precaution should be taken to see that the material does not stretch or pucker and that the edges are securely stitched and strengthened. If the appliqué is to be framed, perhaps for a glass dressing-table top, a glass tray or as a wall panel, it can then be made of any delicate fabric with far less stitchery in evidence.

With the production of appliqué the question of design arises at the outset. A slight attempt has been made to deal with the vexed question in this booklet in the section on Design (page 38) and a few suggestions have been offered.

It is important to have a very clear idea of what one is hoping to make and to decorate before starting work. It is wise to make a preliminary experiment with snippets of material, with threads, with sequins, choosing, arranging, and changing. By trial and error a design which will inspire the embroideress to start work should emerge.

Equipment: Drawing board or any convenient board for arranging and pinning shapes; drawing paper and tracing paper or greaseproof paper; rough paper; newspaper; drawing pins; ruler; soft and HB pencils; chalk; large and small scissors; thimble; pins; needles (all sizes).

Materials: These may include any kind of embroidery, dress, furnishing fabrics, etc., as well as an assortment of braids, buttons, beads, sequins, tape, feathers, curtain rings, and any other oddments that suggest themselves.

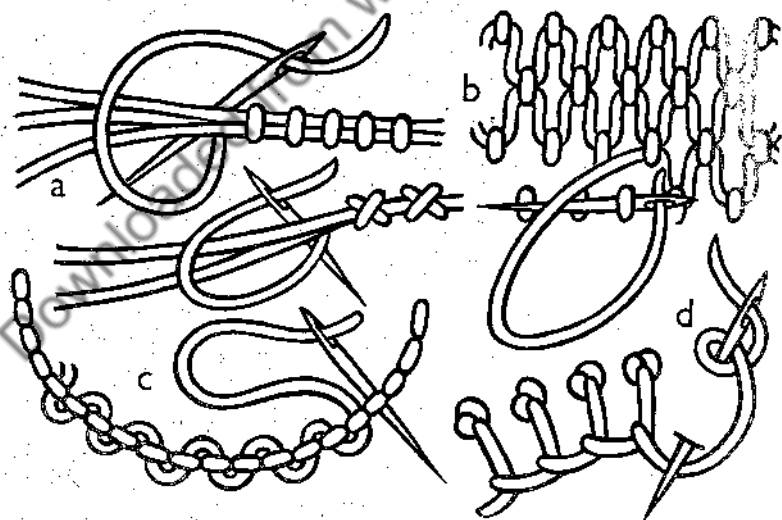
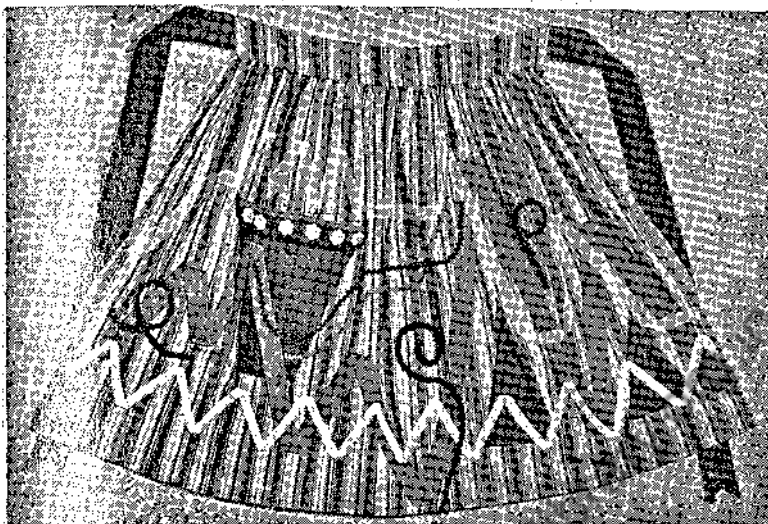


Fig. 17. Useful stitches in appliqué embroidery. *a.* Two couching stitches. *b.* Cloud filling. *c.* Threaded back stitch. *d.* Knotted buttonhole stitch.



Appliqué apron worked on striped seersucker in red, blue, yellow, black and white.

Threads: Of all kinds and thicknesses in wool, silk, cotton, yarns, and metals.

Methods: There is little doubt that shapes cut in paper are excellent for the preliminary laying out of a design, although this is far from being the only way. Assuming that the shapes to be used are cut ready, the colour scheme decided upon, the fabrics chosen, then they should be temporarily pinned or tacked into position.

The method of lightly pasting a thin fabric to the back of the applied pieces may be done if considered necessary. Much depends on the design and its purpose and the material used. Next, all the edges of the applied portions to the ground should be overcast with sylko. A small tambour frame can be useful here in helping to keep the work flat. The final treatment of edges can be varied in many ways—some edges can be left untreated if the design allows for this. Couching, herringbone, buttonhole, zigzag chain are a few generally used methods, but the worker should feel free to choose her own ways of finishing off. After all pins and tackings have been removed, any overlaying with transparent material can be done. Further embellishment in the way of braids, beads, buttons, sequins, and additional stitchery can then be added. There is no limit to the infinite variations which can be worked out by means of stitch texture and colour. For a fuller treatment of modern appliqué, the worker is referred to *Modern Embroidery* by Rebecca Crompton.

Tassels, Cords, and Fringes

THESE handmade additions to embroidery often make a good deal of difference to the appearance of a piece of work. In some cases where it is desired to add a matching cord or fringe, it is much better to be able to make one of the same silk or wool.

Tassels. Simple tassels can be made by winding a number of lengths on a card of the required size of tassel. Thread a needle with double thread and slip it underneath the threads on the top edge of the card. Thread the needle through the loop of thread and stitch through two or three times, leaving the thread hanging. Remove the card and twist a second thread several times round the tassel loops, secure strongly and cut the loops. Another form of tassel can be made by preparing a knob on the end of a pencil. Twist a thread round the top of a pencil in the form of a figure eight. Oversew this knob with needle and thread, then wind a thread round the outside to cover shape. At the top twist twice round the top of the knob and work a row of button-hole stitches into this thread, then continue round and round with the huttonhole stitch until the knob is covered. Remove from pencil and insert tassel to complete.

Cords. The simplest of all cords is just a twist. Prepare a very long loop of thread and insert a pencil at either end. Two people stand with the thread between them and twist the pencils quickly away from them. Catch the centre of the tightly twisted thread and it will form a perfect cord. Secure ends to stop untwisting. See Fig. 18.

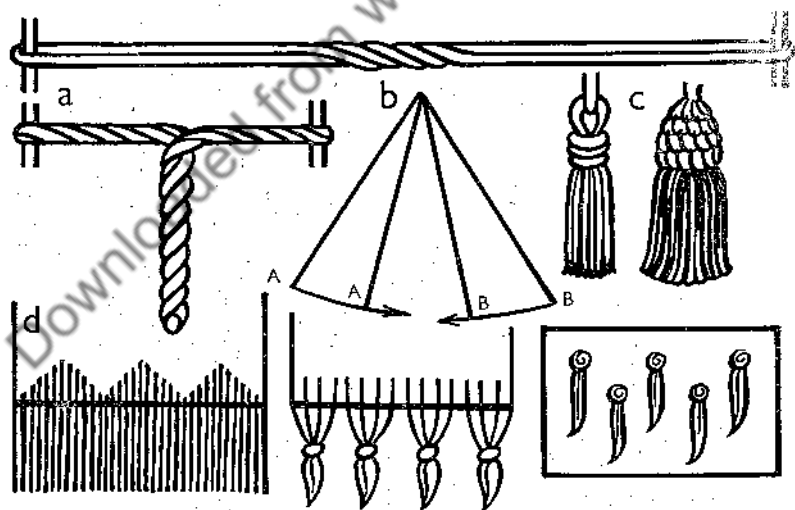


Fig. 18. a. Method of making a cord. b. A second method. c. Two tassels. d. Three types of fringe.

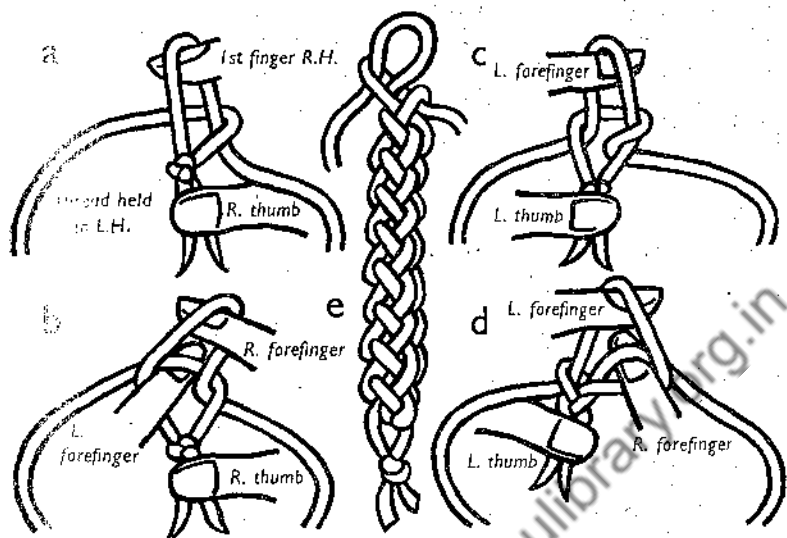


Fig. 19. a, b, c, d. Four stages in making a finger cord.

Finger Cord in Two Colours. Join two threads together with a knot hanging down and hold. Form one crochet loop with one thread and hold over left forefinger. With right forefinger dip down into loop and lift up the alternate thread and draw up. Keep reversing from left to right forefingers and a four-sided two-coloured cord results. One colour may be used. See Fig. 19.

A Third Cord. Attach threads to a table and let two people stand side by side each holding two ends. They alternately cross the threads over and over. One pair of hands holding two threads crosses over the other person's hands in one direction and the other person crosses over again in the opposite direction. See Fig. 18b.

Fringes. Fringes came into being as the result of the natural fraying of the edges of fabrics. Early fringes were merely knotted by bunching and tying, but by degrees, began to be elaborated into patterns. They have been used in innumerable ways and are useful and decorative in finishing an edge. Fringes can either be composed of the actual threads of the fabric or made separately and attached.

Threads darned into the background of the material and left hanging form a very satisfactory way of making a fringe.

For very elaborate fringes the worker is referred to the D.M.C. *Encyclopedia of Needlework.*

Embroidered Jewellery

COSTUME jewellery is widely worn nowadays and many simple styles of dress lend themselves to its use. Jewellery produced by means of embroidery gives much scope for experiment, and sounds rather ambitious, but, by the exercise of great care in cutting and stitching, the results are very well worth-while. It is not jewellery for the conventional, but for the individual who likes to wear something different. Necklaces in varied arrangements, brooches, bracelets, and earrings are all possible when once the simple methods of assembling have been grasped. But accuracy is essential.

Equipment: Cutting-out scissors and small embroidery scissors; needles in assorted sizes; very fine bead needles; thimble.

Materials: Ordinary plain postcards; skeins of multicoloured stranded cottons and sylkos; a large assortment of very small beads (black, white, silver, and gold being the most useful); pearls of all shapes and sizes, especially small, varied sizes of pearl drops; sequins in various colours; rhinestones of all shapes and sizes; jet shapes; assorted beads. (All these are best stored in small glass bottles so that their contents can be seen at a glance). Clasps; earclip bases and brooch backs; odd plain pieces of silk and satin; thick cushion cords; silver and gold threads.

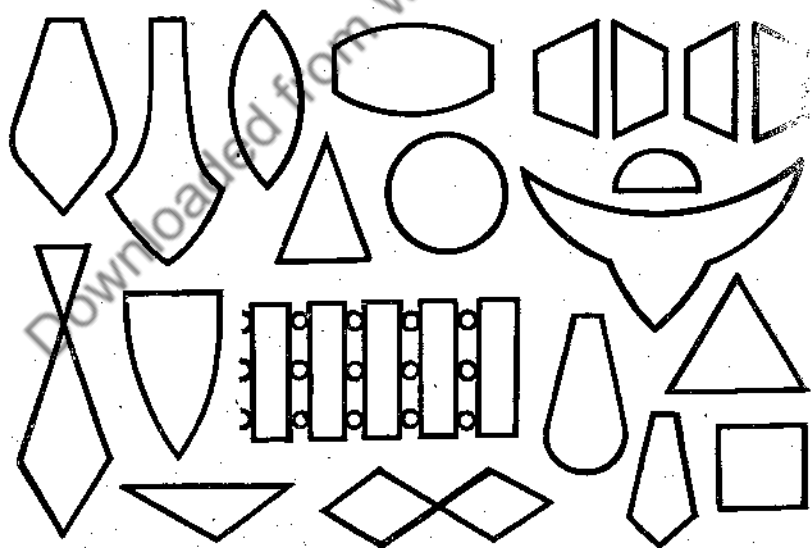
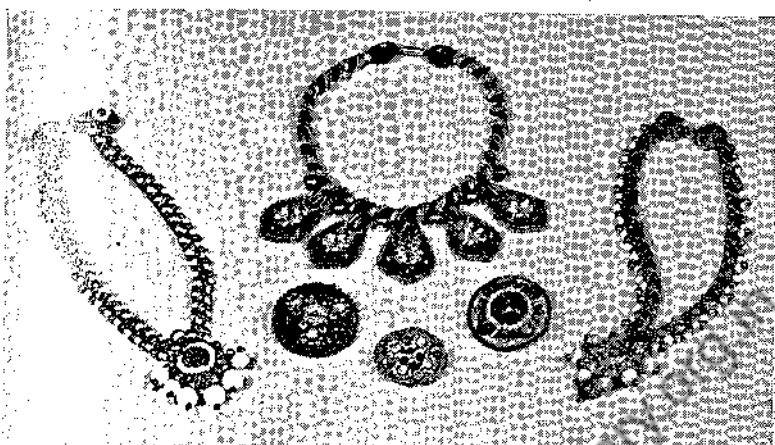


Fig. 20. Suggested shapes for embroidered jewellery.



Examples of embroidered jewellery.

Method: This jewellery is composed mainly of jewelled shapes and can be applied to any form of jewel. Cord makes a firm base for the necklaces.

The method of dealing with one embroidered and jewelled shape is as follows. Using a plain postcard (chosen because the card is not too stiff for sewing yet stiff enough to retain shape), cut two of the required shape very carefully (a front and back). Cover front with coloured silk or satin (tacked on as patchwork with a matching thread). Choose a lining colour for the back and cover in the same way. Mark the centre of the front piece and using double syiko and a fine bead needle sew the main jewel (rhinestone shape or large pearl) firmly into position twisting the thread two or three times round the stone and taking to back. Add more jewels, rhinestones, sequins, jet or beads according to choice, building up from centre into a design and securing each by taking needle to the back. Usually very few jewels are needed for a satisfactory effect. Small spaces may be filled with a few additional embroidery stitches (long and short or french knots) where needed. When the jewelled portion is completed, place the piece back to back with the other one, which acts as a lining, and, using very small beads, overcast the two edges together with a bead for each stitch. Hold the two pieces together very firmly and stitch fairly tightly and securely. Finish off the edge by a couching of silver or gold thread as near the beads as possible. Now remove all tacking threads from the front and back. If for a brooch, glue on to a brooch back, if for earclips, make two on a scale suitable for ear decoration. If for a bracelet, measure and make the number of shapes required. The same

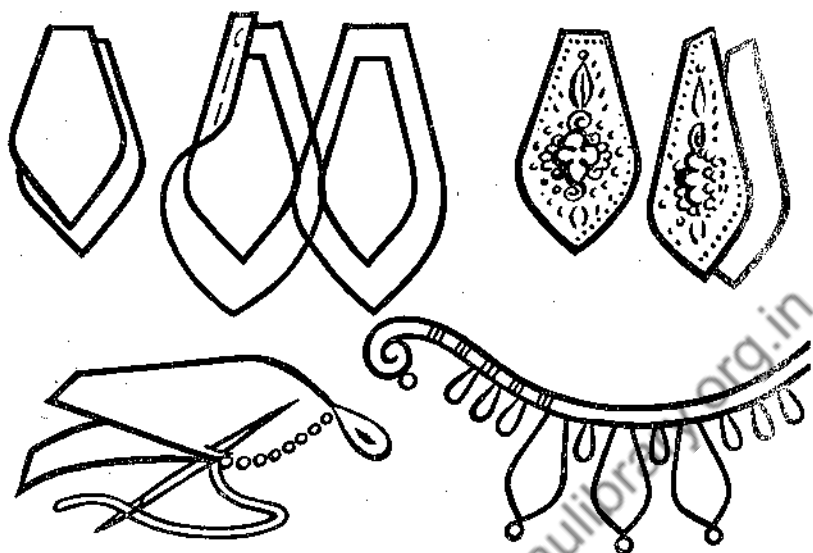


Fig. 21. Method of assembling.

procedure applies to a belt. Necklace shapes can be stitched to a cord according to taste. Sometimes the edges of the shapes can be couched with gold or silver thread and left plain without any beads. So much depends on the effect desired. Rather larger shapes, cut in double brown paper or buckram, may be designed as bands for making bracelets or belts. These may be of any desired width, but the method of covering the face of a belt with silk or brocade and backing it with an identical lining, tacked over with paper, would still prove suitable.

The worker will find that many jewellery designs will suggest themselves from the varied shapes of rhinestones, bugle beads, etc., and grow of their own accord when the area to be enriched is small. Simple repeating motifs work out most satisfactorily for belts.

In filling small spaces that occur between jewels, certain embroidery stitches are invaluable. Such stitches as french knot, bullion knot, long and short, seed and rice, padded satin, and fly stitch are all suitable for this purpose.

The decoration of thick cords can be in itself a decoration and need not involve the use of added shapes. If, however, shapes are to be attached then careful measuring and very neat stitchery is required to see that no sewing is visible. Cushion cord is easy to sew and most stitchery sinks into it. Any clasp is suitable and cord ends may be bound round with thread and twisted into a coil or bound with thread and lightly glued. Clasps should be sewn very neatly.

Treatment of Cords: Buttonhole stitch, open or spaced, is the most useful stitch for treating cords as a necklace. Designs made by threading beads at intervals can be varied indefinitely. On the cord surface, diamonds, pearls, sequins, jet, etc., are effective. Pearl droplets, or arrangements of beads, may be suspended according to taste. Extra backstitches and the strongest thread such as double sylko are best used with careful spacing.

Colour schemes: From experience the most satisfactory colour schemes for jewellery seem to be those in which neutral colour plays up to one strong colour note. Silver and gold, black, and white, are a sound basis for many schemes, but personal requirements naturally play a very important part in such a craft. Simple colour schemes are recommended for beginners. Later, more complex variations may be attempted.

It is but a step from the use of this type of embroidery for costume jewellery to dress decoration. Evening dress décor could be extended along similar lines and used for glove, evening bag, and slipper decoration. Millinery, too, suggests scope for the use of jewels and embroidery built up in this way. One has only to think of the period of Queen Elizabeth I to realize the close connexion between jewellery and embroidery that there has been in the past.



Embroidered necklace in gold and pearls on pale pink cord.

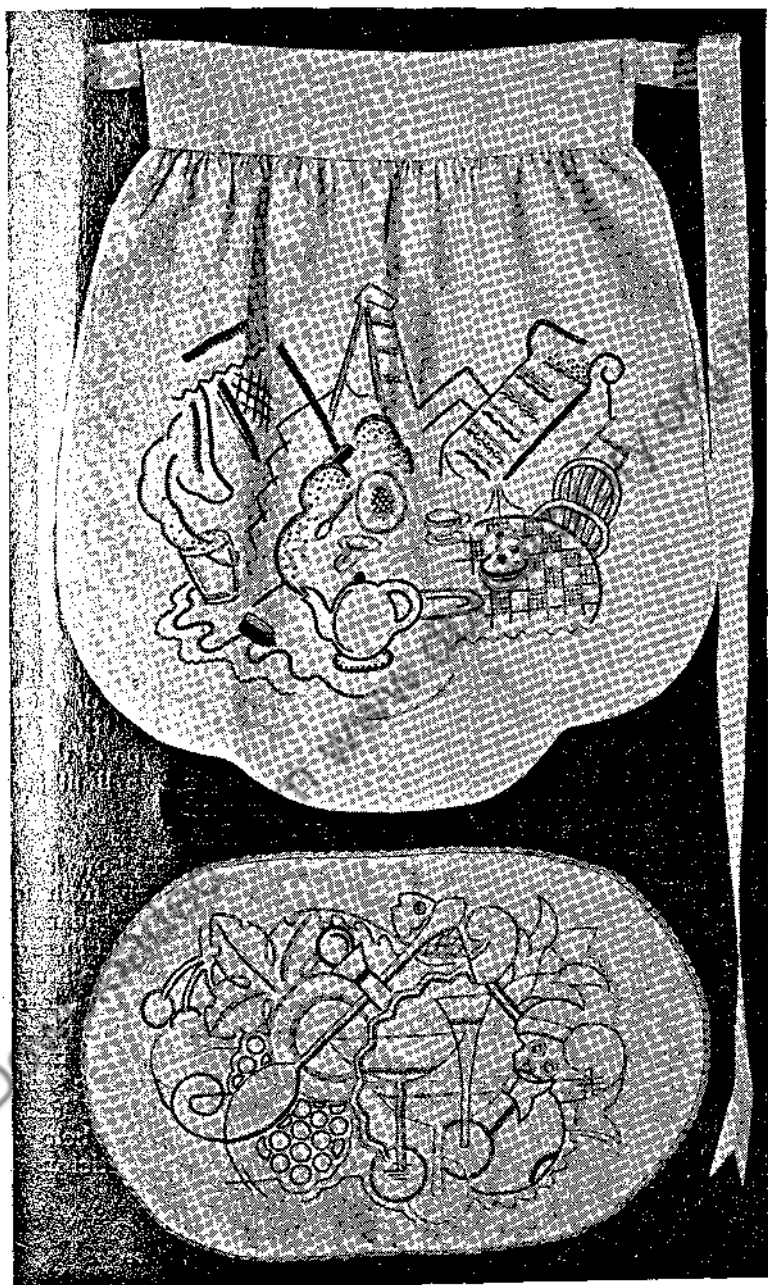
Design

THE prospect of making a design for a specific article appals the inexperienced. This is a pity. It is a common attitude and is based on lack of confidence and very often an inability to form any judgement on the matter. It is a fact that many beginners in design will not trust simple effects which are often sound, but are anxious to try their skill on elaborate, highly shaded, intricate designs with complex colour schemes, which would tax the powers of the highly skilled. The golden rule is to be simple. This section offers a few suggestions for simple designing.

All professional designers are trained for their work. No one is ever born a designer, and so everyone can learn. Not everyone has a gift for drawing, but most people like arranging things and can trace. It is a simple matter to trace a few well arranged shapes. That at least is a beginning. It is simple to fold paper into the basis of a design. It is simple to draw round objects and pieces of cut paper. Trained designers use all these methods and others. All are suitable for embroidery. The hardest way to produce an embroidery design is to start work on a piece of white drawing paper using a pencil. It paralyses the beginner and ends in complete frustration, so that method is best discarded at first.

Simple Aids to Designing: The folding method already mentioned breaks the surface of the area to be designed into smaller sections. The simplest is four and by arranging a motif in each section a simple, but satisfactory, design can result. The main point to watch is the proportion of the motif to the piece of work as a whole, making the former important enough to occupy a fair amount of the space. Study of the background area is important for this type of designing and generally the less the background is in evidence the better the result. The motifs to be placed in the folded shapes may be made from cut paper or any object suggesting a design, the shape or outline of which have caught the imagination of the worker. These cut shapes should then be arranged and pinned into position on the ground. Tracing paper should then be placed over them and the whole design traced, ready for transferring to the material (see Methods of Transferring, page 43).

The Use of Templates: A template is a shape which for the purposes of embroidery helps to give the beginner an outline to work to. It may be a large leaf, a shield, a geometrical shape, or an abstraction or irregular shape which can be moved into any required position and outlined as a beginning. The templates may be overlapped, turned about and about and used as desired. They obviate the necessity for drawing a difficult outline by hand.



Apron and table mat worked in D.M.C. cotton on linen.

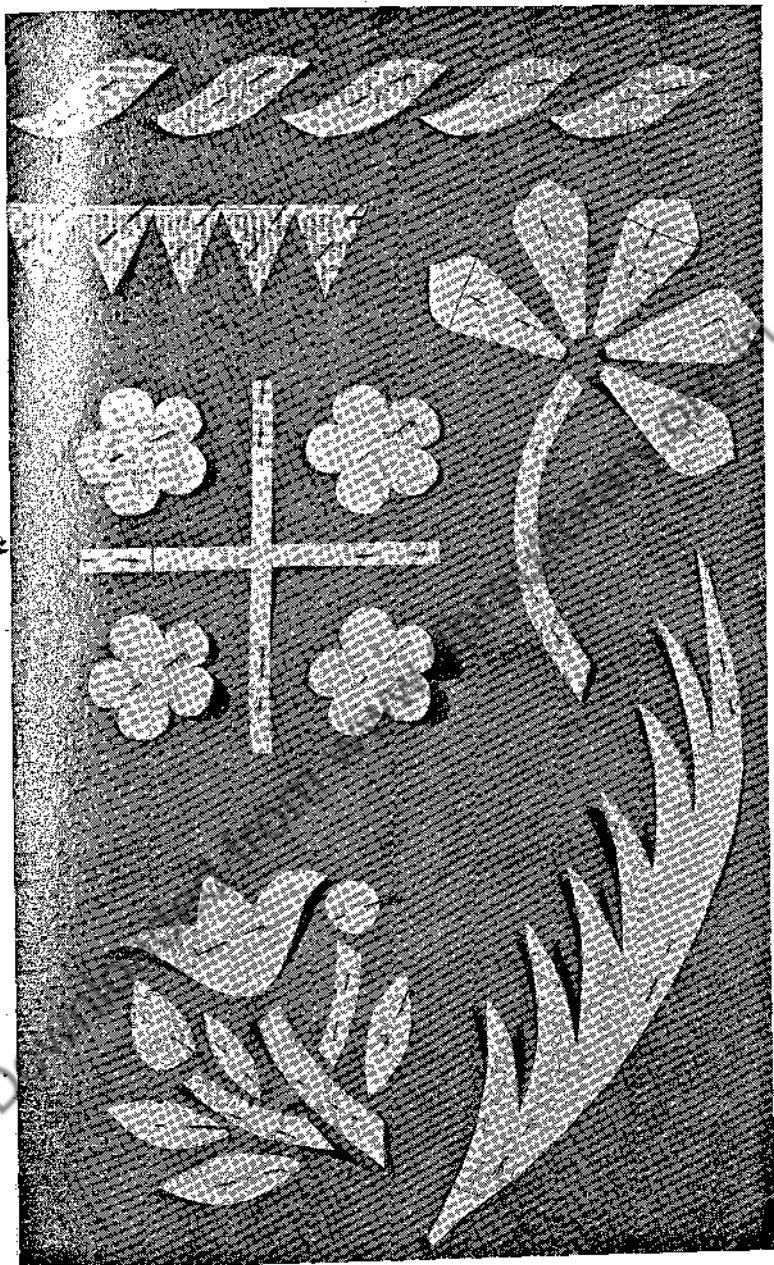
Free Brush Designing: To develop confidence in designing, the student should practice by painting boldly on large sheets of newspaper, using a pointed brush and keeping the arm and wrist loose. First exercises may consist of pothooks, waves round O's, zig-zags, etc. The elbow rests on the board to form curves with a loose wrist. The whole arm swings from the shoulder for bolder lines and shapes. Each shape should be repeated rhythmically in lines across the paper. Patience and practice will bring a rewarding ability to draw and design with increased confidence and freedom.

Forms from Nature: Leaves and flowers, ferns and shells, stones, animal and bird forms will always continue to be a source of inspiration to the designer. The ways in which they may all be used are legion and cannot be exhausted. Sometimes the traced outline of one or any of these may inspire an idea or the beginning of one. The main thing to remember is that continued practice in designing brings confidence, develops powers of observation, and above all, a sense of selection.

Reference may be made to the photograph on page 39. The apron and dinner mat are examples of a design based on familiar objects using a linear treatment. They were the work of a beginner in design who used shapes. The trick of setting shapes crosswise (as shown in the dinner mat) often produces an effect interesting in itself as also the method of allowing the outlines of objects to dictate a design as exemplified in the apron. These are only two of many ways of obtaining some effect of design. It is important to keep in mind the object to be decorated. Very often articles suggest their own type of decoration. It is true, too, that many articles impose their own limitations. The ability to recognize these comes with experience.

Quite often existing designs worked out in other mediums are a very good basis for embroidery designing. A piece of wrought-iron, lace, a poster design, or a pottery design, may inspire an entirely fresh idea because of the change in medium. Embroidery is so very adaptable with its varied materials of texture and thread. Ideas such as these are invaluable to a beginner who often finds it difficult to make a start.

Too many false starts should be avoided. It is better to stick to one idea after reasonable experiment, and develop that. In this way some sense of achievement is arrived at. Design for embroidery is best treated as a separate branch of study and regular disciplined practice should lead to some measure of success. Where possible it is a good idea to obtain criticism from a more knowledgeable person willing to help and encourage. In consequence powers of judgement and criticism are gradually developed.



Cut shapes as aids in design.

Colour

MANY beginners in embroidery feel at a loss when confronted with the question of colour. The brief notes contained in this section can only touch the fringe of the subject. There are, however, many books of reference on colour.

Roughly speaking colours divide themselves into warm, cold, and neutral groups. The division may be as follows :

Warm: Crimson, red, orange red, orange, orange yellow, yellow, yellow green, green.

Cold: Green blue, blue, indigo, violet, purple and so back to crimson.

These colours if used in this particular order are called harmonies and any group of three or four in their natural order will produce a natural harmony. Warm and cold colours when used in pairs, one warm one cold, produce what is called contrast. Colours in their natural order take their character from the spectrum and appear to have natural tone values, which means that yellow, which is the lightest of all colours, and purple, the darkest, are in their *natural order*. Now, if this order is reversed so that yellow is deepened to a deep ochre and the purple lightened to pale mauve then the result is *discord*. The same applies to any pair of contrasting colours when the tones are reversed. The neutrals are white and black, although intermediate greys, fawns, and browns can exercise a neutralising influence. These few clues on colour may encourage the interested embroideress to pursue the subject further. Armed with a little elementary colour knowledge the worker can often discover why a piece of work fails to work out satisfactorily—too many colours perhaps—too much discord—not sufficient neutral colours, or a scheme requiring a touch of discord. As a rule harmonious colour gives the most satisfactory result. Two separate harmonious schemes very often give enough contrast, especially if steadied by the use of neutral colour.

A common experience of the embroideress, who is unaccustomed to choosing colours for working a piece of embroidery, is to select colours that are too dark in tone for use on a white or light coloured ground. The result is that all the colours tend to look even darker than in the skein. Too much contrast in the use of tone tends to give a black and white effect. Light, bright colours are more satisfactory on white or cream if a very definite colour effect is required. Small quantities of any colour deepen in tone against white. Larger areas of colours have more reflecting power and therefore tend to change less.

Methods of Transferring

THE inexperienced embroideress immediately thinks of the manufactured transfer when the problem of placing a design on material arises. There are legitimate uses for these as in certain edgings and for smocking, but for work of an individual and creative character other methods give the worker much more scope.

The best of these methods is the one of pouncing (see Fig. 22). In this case the design to be transferred is traced on a sheet of tracing paper. The outlines are then pricked with a needle into lines of small holes. The fabric is placed flat on a board or table and pinned down and the pricked design placed carefully in position. With a roll of felt about 4" wide, which has first been dipped in finely powdered charcoal, the design is lightly powdered and dabbed over the surface. Minute grains go through the holes and, after the design has been completely covered, the tracing is lifted clear with both hands and is then ready for painting. The lines of the design are then painted in

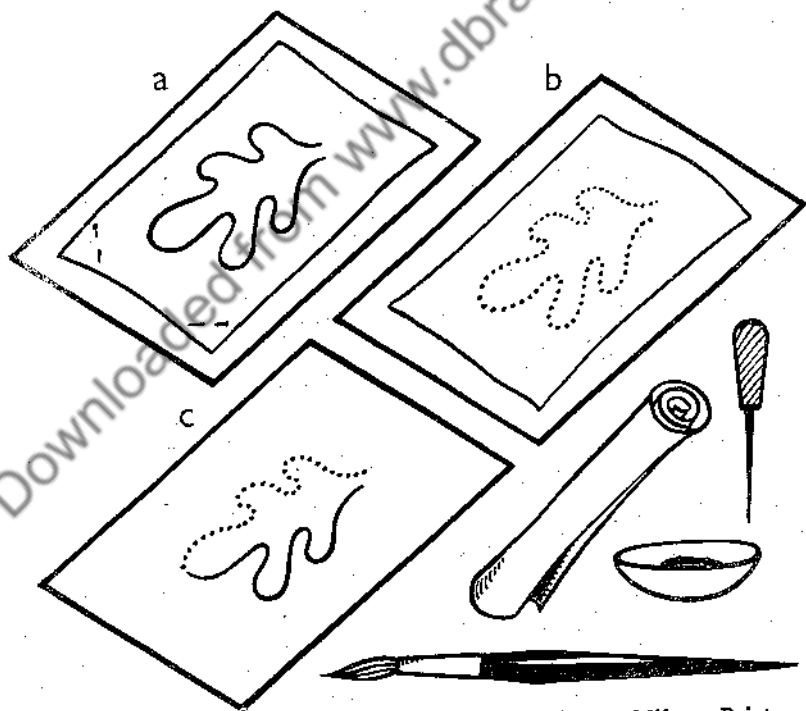


Fig. 22. Transferring. a. Trace and prick. b. Pounce and lift. c. Paint.

with ultramarine or French blue (not Prussian as it cannot be washed out), using a fine brush and beginning at the right hand bottom corner in order to avoid smudging. After completion, the remains of the charcoal can be lightly blown away. In the case of a dark fabric powdered pumice may be used instead and the painting done with Chinese white or lemon yellow.

All inexperienced workers should avoid carbon paper. It needs very great skill in handling and easily ruins the material by taking every impression.

One other simple method for use with light fabrics is to trace the design as for the pounce method and using a soft pencil, B or 2B, to mark the lines very accurately on the underside. The design should be pinned into position and by using an ivory or bone handled pen-knife, an accurate impression of the design can be made. The outlines should be painted as before. The paint should not be too thin. Very thin, watery paint 'spreads' on the fabric. A little practice will soon establish the right consistency.

How to Use a Frame

A FRAME which is in common use is of the type illustrated in the diagram (Fig. 23). It is made of two round pieces of wood with a mortice at each end. Strips of webbing are nailed along these and extend the full width between the mortices. The work is sewn on this webbing.

For the sides of the frame two flat pieces of wood with holes bored through at even intervals pass through the mortices. The width of the frame is adjusted and the work kept taut by metal pins which are inserted in the holes by each mortice. The edge of the material and the edge of the wood is laced over and over with string, making it possible to stretch the work to whatever tension is required. Frames vary in size according to the type of work in hand. In placing material in a frame the centre of the material and the centre of the webbing should be marked and placed together, then oversewn outwards from the centre. In placing a long narrow panel in a frame, the material is rolled round the top and bottom of the frame with only a section left free for working.

For framing a small piece of embroidery, calico should be stretched in the frame first and the embroidery (with centre lines marked) placed on it and herringboned down the middle. Then the calico should be cut away from the back.

A note on unpicking embroidery—never attempt to pull out the threads. Always cut through the stitches and pull carefully from the back of the work.

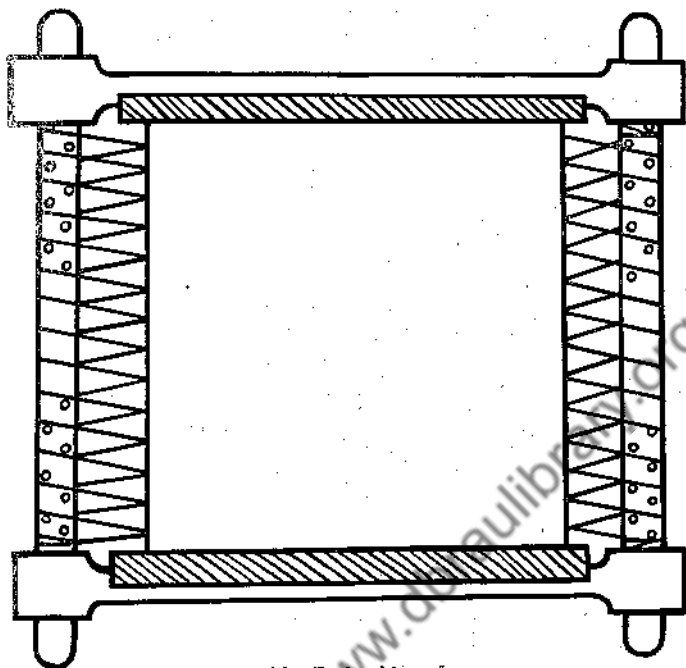


Fig. 23. Embroidery frame.

Cleaning and Care of Embroidery

From time to time the embroideress will find that the necessity for cleaning embroidery will arise. In most cases where such ground materials as linen, cotton, silk or canvas have been used with self colours or fast dye colours, then washing in warm water with soap flakes is by far the safest and simplest method to adopt. Washing should be done quickly, swishing the embroidery through the soapy water, and squeezing it gently, rinsing two or three times in clear tepid water. Never rub or wring embroidery of any kind.

The work should then be placed between towels and lightly pressed by hand until most of the moisture has been absorbed. Place work face downwards and iron immediately on a clean ironing cloth with several layers of soft blanket underneath. An extra dry cloth should be placed between the work and the iron. Press carefully outwards from the centre and into any corners. Pull out all edges and iron into position.

Some delicate needlerun nets, laces and shadow embroidery can often be straightened on glass, a mirror, or a window-pane, by pressing

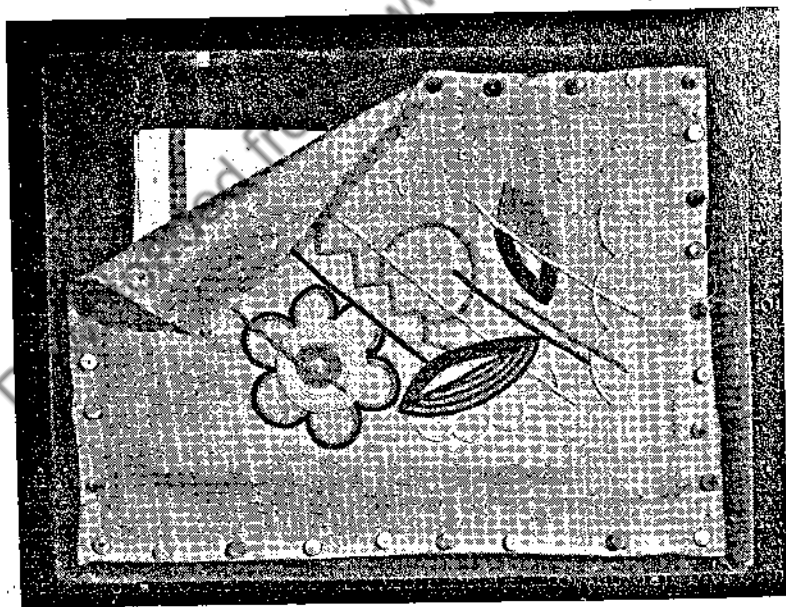
and stretching smoothly into position and then left until dry. The iron will easily straighten unsatisfactory corners if used over a damp cloth.

It may be better in some cases to re-stretch the work as suggested in the section on stretching of work. This leaves longer time for drying and avoids rusting through lack of care in placing drawing pins.

There are cases where the dirtying of a piece of work is only slight, not sufficient to need washing. In such cases the work should be stretched out over a dry pad on a board and moist breadcrumbs rubbed very gently in a circular motion over the surface of the work, removed from the board and shaken. Some old embroideries, too delicate for washing or stretching, will respond to a gentle brushing with breadcrumbs with a soft clean clothes-brush.

In caring for embroideries, whether old or new, freedom from damp and dust presents the main problem in storage. All embroidery when not in use should be carefully folded in layers of clean fresh tissue-paper, especially at the folds. Today the use of polythene wrappers and bags has added tremendously to satisfactory storage. These transparent wrappers can be sealed with sellotape against dust and moths.

For the convenient packing of embroideries, ordinary cardboard dress boxes can be recommended. They are of a convenient size and are light in weight. These should be stored in a dry place and labelled clearly with a list of contents.



To show how embroidery is stretched after completion.

Stretching of Work

NEVER iron any embroidery after completion. When a piece of embroidery is finished it is usually necessary to straighten it. The best way of doing this is to sew tape round the edges with an overcasting stitch, then place the work, with right side uppermost, over a well damped pad resting on a drawing board. A clean damp tea towel, or two tea towels, make an excellent pad. Drawing pins can then be pressed through the tape, working from the centre outwards on all four sides until the work is straight. Cover with tissue paper, folds of newspaper, and a layer of books, and leave for at least twenty-four hours. By this time the work will look fresh and clean and entirely free from creases. Sometimes, halfway through, a piece of work will begin to pucker and this can be quickly remedied by means of this stretching method.

It may not be necessary to tape the edges of the work and the drawing pins can be pinned directly through the ground fabric. All work with hemstitched edges should be taped, however. The common-sense of the embroideress is the best guide over a decision of this nature.

Samplers and Study

To the serious embroideress the working of samplers of stitches is a necessity. Samplers show a record of stitches and methods of working to the best advantage. There are many ways of arranging samplers and in the course of time an interesting and instructive collection may result. The keeping of a notebook alongside the sampler collection is to be strongly recommended. In such a book can be recorded from various sources the diagrams of stitches traced or drawn; information as to stitch origins; types of work; information on materials and threads and of equipment. The names and addresses of various firms of manufacturers of embroidery materials, etc., may be written at the back of a notebook, and are always at hand if required. Collected scraps and cuttings relating to embroidery might be kept either loose in a folder or in scrap book form. All these supplementary aids to learning more about embroidery are important. In cases where an embroideress enjoys sketching, many museums are able to offer exhibits of embroidery, many of which are often worth recording and studying. The Victoria and Albert Museum is an embroideress' paradise—with its rich, collections. In all such cases it is advisable first to obtain permission to sketch but it is very rarely refused.

Collecting old embroideries and old samplers, lace, cutwork, and beadwork, is very interesting and valuable for its own sake and for the knowledge acquired. These old pieces are becoming harder to find but the hunt is always exciting. Family heirlooms handed down from grandmothers and aunts become even more cherished.

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