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EMBROIDERERS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
90 East Gate  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 2C3

WINTER 1974/75  
CH II - 2

THE EMBROIDERERS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA is a non-profit organization, founded in September 1973. Its purpose is to encourage and promote the practice and knowledge of the art of embroidery in all its forms; to have a fellowship of persons who enjoy Embroidery - not necessarily skilled craftswomen but, primarily, those who enjoy needlework and wish to learn and share their knowledge and thereby work towards maintaining higher standards of design, color and workmanship - in all forms of embroidery and canvas work.

- \* To function as the Parent body or Chapter for all;  
Chapters, Guilds, Individuals
  - \* To serve as an informational source for individual  
needlewomen throughout Canada. (Memberships extend  
beyond our boundaries)
- \*\* Study Boxes
  - \*\* Lending Library
  - \*\* Workshops
  - \*\* Seminars

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No Organization can function without a positive working capital and, therefore, we are offering the following types of membership:

- \* Life Membership ..... \$100.00
- \* Contributing Membership ..... Any amount over and above membership
- \* Individual Membership ..... \$ 10.00
- \* Chapter Membership ..... \$ 5.00

THE PARENT CHAPTER OF EAC MEETS REGULARLY THE FOURTH THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE CORNISH LIBRARY, corner Cornish and Westgate, at 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. If visiting in Winnipeg, you are welcome to attend any of the meetings or telephone EAC Headquarters at 774-0217.

LIBRARY: Anyone wishing to, may make a contribution of a book, or funds for the purchase of a book, for the E.A.C. Library. These books, eventually, will be available upon request, through the mails, to assist Embroiderers in their study or to help those who are working alone. Additional contributions as follows:

EXOTIC FLORAL PATTERNS IN COLOR - E. A. Segvy ..... Leonida Leatherdale  
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"OUR SINCERE THANKS FOR OUR GROWING LIBRARY"

\*\*\* NOTES FROM YOUR PRESIDENT \*\*\*

I think you would appreciate knowing how we will function as a National Association for your individual benefit. At this time in our young life, all work is being done voluntarily and we are maintaining one address for your Headquarters. Winnipeg is geographically located in the centre of Canada, easily accessible from East or West and almost the centre of the Continent to assist our neighbors and American members to visit us.

Main types of Membership are: INDIVIDUAL - which brings you the QUARTERLY that we hope to keep as educational in content as possible for those who are working alone. They are members who do not live within a radius of an Embroidery Group/Chapter.

LIFE - Are welcomed at any time and can also be a convenience to members, not having to worry about renewals.

CONTRIBUTING - Are over and above Individual Memberships but are a way of making a contribution to help further our work; also entitles you to receive the QUARTERLY with all full Membership benefits.

CHAPTER - Local Chapters are individual organizations with their own Officers and Rulings for their areas. They will function under the By-laws of the National Association and Dues will be payable through your Chapter to National. Dues may vary in each locale, although a set amount is set aside for each member to be sent in to National Headquarters, and you will receive, individually, a copy of the QUARTERLY.

Through the QUARTERLY we hope to keep you well endowed with educational material, projects, helpful assistance and resolve any questions you may have. We would welcome any articles, helpful tips, stitches, or articles that you would like to share with other members. Our QUARTERLY will be only as good as you help to make it. In time we expect to have travelling Study Boxes and should you have a contribution to make towards these boxes, they will be appreciated. We would like examples in various Embroidery media and, if working up a special piece it should be approximately 5" x 7" to fit into a page of a loose-leaf notebook. However, anything worthy of study will be graciously accepted.

Our Lending Library is growing, is in the process of being catalogued and will, hopefully, be ready to offer to members for lending by next QUARTERLY. You will be informed.

Workshops will be arranged as they become available. The SEMINAR is of current interest and we look forward to meeting many of the members. Pre-registrations are very encouraging for our initial success.

Kathleen Whyte of the Glasgow College of Art and author of "DESIGN IN EMBROIDERY", will be coming to Canada and we have the opportunity of having her for a workshop the middle of June. Please write or contact EAC if you would be interested in spending time with her. I have had her book for some years, find it most interesting and from it have found many sources of inspiration. Am sure a Workshop Experience with Kathleen Whyte would be most beneficial.

I realize this follows on the heels of the National Seminar but, of course, these opportunities usually present themselves at a time when the teachers are relieved of their winter duties enabling them to travel and share their knowledge with us.

Then, there are those who may not be participating fully in SEMINAR and may wish this added stimulus to tide them over the Summer months. So, write or telephone your thoughts!

Your next QUARTERLY will be immediately following the SEMINAR, so that you will have the full, fresh report on happenings. Meanwhile, we are all working hard on preparing for your sheer enjoyment of the SEMINAR and look forward, eagerly, to attaching all the names to faces. This being our FIRST, don't expect perfection; we are trying very hard to please everyone and will always appreciate helpful criticism from which we can all benefit. We hope you will help in the "fun" of the SEMINAR by working on an entry for the "ENNY" AWARD which should open new doors for some of us in various Embroidery Media.

Write in to EAC at any time. You will always receive a prompt reply.

*Leonida Leatherdale*

NEWS FROM KENORA: Our member - Helen Russell, who is an extremely talented Canvas worker, is now teaching a course in Embroidery on Canvas at the Confederation College in Kenora, Ontario.

NEWS FROM WINNIPEG: Our member, Helen Cunningham, is one of the featured contributors to the excellent book titled, "SAMPLERS FOR TODAY", by Cecile Dreesman. This is an informative book for those particularly interested in counted thread work and we are justly proud of the lovely sampler Helen did of her family, thoughtfully and lovingly executed, and her inclusion in this very beautiful book.

NEWS FROM VICTORIA, B. C. - Representative: KATHLEEN CUPPLES

The Embroiderers' Guild of Victoria began its 1974-75 season with great enthusiasm and many new faces. There is a full and interesting program laid on for our monthly meetings. Usually, they consist of a guest speaker who assigns an exercise on the evening's design or stitchery topic, to be completed for the next meeting, and a "Show and Tell" of the previous month's projects.

Visitors are always welcome to our meetings which are held the last Wednesday of each month at 7:45 p.m. at 536 Broughton Street.

Two of our members, LORRAINE CALVERT and JOAN SCARBORO were featured at the "Artists at Work" at the Victoria Art Gallery in November. The Guild has been invited to take part in the Victoria Hobby Show in the Spring.

LORRAINE CALVERT opened her Needle Arts Studio in September with a full roster of canvas needlework classes and a good supply of threads and other necessities for completing canvas pieces. MIRIAM BIRKENTHAL, from Winnipeg, opened her shop in Victoria to promote canvas stitchery as well as handcrafted pottery and jewelry. She also sells custom designed canvases. We wish them well in their enterprises.

NEWS FROM ALBERTA - Representative: LAURA TAYLOR

The Edmonton Guild offered an exciting evening with LEE BEAMS demonstrating Batik and Fabric Painting last November. Mrs. Beams is a graduate of Mount Royal College in Calgary and now lives in Red Deer, Alberta. Her work is on view at many galleries across the country and she has done commissions for theatre and private individuals.

The Guild is at present finishing a banner in various media, using only black and white materials, for the Duggan Community Services Centre which offered its facilities and services free of charge to the Guild during its formation last winter. The theme of the banner is "Links", depicting the services offered by the Centre in strengthening the ties of family and community.

Any Alberta resident wishing information on the Guild may phone: FLO DUTKA (President) 466-8706; MARGARET COPELAND (Secretary) 434-5459; or LAURA TAYLOR (Alberta Representative for the EAC) 434-2689; all in Edmonton.

NEWS FROM ONTARIO - Representative: JOAN BLACK

In Thunder Bay, Ontario a group of about a dozen of us who are stitchery enthusiasts got together in the Fall of 1974 to form a Stitchery Guild. Our organization is quite informal with our Executive consisting of President: CATHY PINEAU and Secretary-Treasurer: BEV BUSHBY.

We hope to keep the emphasis on "doing" rather than administration. So far, three of us in the group have plans to attend the Winnipeg Spring SEMINAR. We are constantly finding more people who would like to join our group. Several guild members are involved in teaching stitchery in the community. Our next meeting is planned for February 10, 1975 when two members will make presentations on design and technique in a kind of "Mini-Workshop".

NEWS FROM B. C. MAINLAND - Representative: MARGARET NORDSTROM

"Have just returned from Vancouver where I saw the Embroideries of Modern China at the Vancouver Museum. Am enclosing a little outline of what I saw. Words can't describe the scope and the minute detail - beautiful work. Other art objects were just as beautiful; carved ivory, jade and sandalwood, ornaments and fans; some jewelry. The bulk of the exhibit, of course, was the embroidery; a few pieces of needlepoint but most of it Crewel work. Would like to have gone again - can't absorb it in one visit."

EMBROIDERIES OF MODERN CHINA

The embroideries, carvings, ornaments of Modern China have been on display in the Vancouver Museum. One embroidered mural of immense size, depicted modern China - its people, their work and accomplishments. Smaller pieces of intricate detail and expert craftsmanship were a joy to the eye. Some designs were double-sided, between two glasses in a frame, and presented the same design both back and front but, frequently, the colors were different. Flowers, scenery, animals were all there; a white kitten was most enchanting and was double but the back and front, in this case, were the same design and color. There were a few in needlepoint but most of them were long and short stitches and the shading was exceptional -- everything looked alive.

NEWS OF INTEREST -- WHERE TO GO

+ + + The Fifth Annual ASSEMBLY FOR EMBROIDERERS - 1975 presented by the Textile Resource & Research Center, Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia - offers three days of Workshops and one day of Conservation of Costumes, Textiles and Home Furnishing Textiles, Teachers Certification and Show Owners Forum. Registration for Members- \$94.50 and Non-member - \$105.00. Shop Owners Forum an additional \$15.00 and Teacher Certification an additional \$100.00. For full schedule of events, write: VALENTINE MUSEUM, TEXTILE RESOURCE & RESEARCH CENTER: 1015 East Clay Street; Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

+ + + ERICA WILSON will be holding her "SEW-IN" in July at Nantucket. For further details write: ERICA WILSON NANTUCKET SEMINAR; 717 Madison Ave., New York. N. Y. 10021.

+ + + Regional Seminar of the NATIONAL STANDARDS COUNCIL OF AMERICAN EMBROIDERERS; Southeast Region will be held in Pensacola, Florida on March 10, 11 & 12, 1975. If vacationing in that area you might want to take it in. For further information write to: Mrs. W. M. Colmer, Sr., Chairman, Regional Seminar; 555 El Cerrito Place, Pensacola, Florida, 32504.

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## THE HUSBAND'S COMPLAINT

I hate the name of German wool  
 In all its colours bright,  
 Of chairs and stools in fancy work  
 I hate the very sight  
 The rugs and slippers that I've seen  
 The ottomans and bags;  
 Sooner than wear a stitch on me  
 I'd walk the street in rags.

Oh Heaven preserve me from a wife  
 With "fancy work" run wild  
 And hands which never do aught else  
 For husband and for child;  
 Our clothes are rent, our bills unpaid  
 Our house is in disorder  
 And all because my lady wife  
 Has taken to embroider.

WHAT IS EMBROIDERY? - DESIGNING FOR EMBROIDERY - Constance Howard, London, England

What is embroidery? In a dictionary of 1895 its derivation is given as from the French "broder". It further says, "to ornament with raised figures of needlework, executed with coloured silks, gold or silver thread, or other extraneous material". It also says "This is a very ancient art. The Egyptians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians all excelled in it. The adornments of the Tabernacle in the wilderness were of tapestry (embroidery) worked in blue, scarlet and gold". From this it is inferred that embroidery was thought of as very rich, precious and executed for special purposes. According to our associations and what we have seen, embroidery could mean the faceless, crinolined lady in her garden of hollyhocks, still perpetrated in teacosies, traycloths and cushion covers; it could mean colourful decoration of peasant dress, or it could mean large, appliquéd and textured wall hangings, or exquisite gold work of the 13th and early 14th centuries.

The word "embroidery" is often linked with plain sewing and thought of as an inferior craft, practised by those who can do little else. In England we are trying always to raise the status of the craft but I do not intend to change the ancient word, which means exactly what it says. We have not found another word which means the same thing and although the image created in the minds of many people is of "useful" articles with pictures or flowers worked on them in stranded cottons, there are more people who realize that embroidery has many facets and that, approached from the right angle, is an exciting craft. "Stitchery" on the other hand, to us means plain sewing, although to you in Canada and the U.S.A. this word means something lively and "modern", while embroidery is old-fashioned and fusty. Let us raise the status of "embroidery" by creating work worthy of the ancient meaning, unless someone does think of an all-embracing better word.

In the 19th century embroidery was considered as a hobby, to be practised by those with ample leisure and little artistic skill, to while away the time. Designs were copied from old prints and other sources and Berlin wool work was the craze of the century, lasting well into the '80's. This embroidery, on canvas already charted and stamped with a design, required the knowledge of cross-stitch or petit point only. A knowledge of drawing or design was considered unnecessary and articles such as braces, smoking caps, watch pockets, stool tops and other things, of little intrinsic value or artistic merit were carried out in Berlin wool work. The craft suffered also by imitation of other media, etchings being interpreted in human hair or fine black silk, while at the 1851 exhibition a number of copies of "The Last Supper" were shown, proudly, carried out in Berlin wool work. This imitation was not new as towards the end of the 18th century the copying of masterpieces by famous painters was perpetrated by more than one embroiderer, Mary Linwood being the most famous exponent in the art of copying such artists as Rubens and Gainsborough.

These same articles are today collector's items, partly for their historic value, partly for their rarity and curiosity value. Fashion plays a strong part in our lives and it is time to say that what is rejected by one generation is collected by the next, even when there is little artistic merit in those articles collected. Embroidery is governed to some extent by fashion and work executed ten years ago can be dated, but if it is good of its period, showing a character typical of the craft of an era, this will give it a value both artistically and historically. Styles in design change, colour schemes change but the approach to design is basically the same at any time.

To embroider on fabric is to work on a two-dimensional surface, although fabric may be manipulated in various ways. It may be gathered or bunched up, stuffed, stretched over metal or wooden framework such as in furniture; it may be soft sculpture in which more than one treatment of fabric may be employed; but embroidery on the surface of this fabric is essentially flat, even if detached buttonhole shapes are worked as leaves or petals, or for clothing as seen on the 17th century stumpwork pictures;

In designing for embroidery a knowledge of techniques is useful as there are limitations in what can be done with fabrics and threads. Awkward shapes with fine points are sometimes impossible to translate into stitches or as good patchwork. One design may be suitable for working out in several ways or in one way only. Ideas for design are all around us if we look for them but learning to observe is not easy as on some days everything has meaning and is interesting while on others we are bored. This is true of most of us but our environment is the best source from which to find ideas and there may be a time when everything we look at turns into embroidery before our eyes.

Don't despair if this doesn't happen -- keep on looking and many things will be seen that at first appeared of little interest; such as shapes and shapes between shapes - negative and positive; shiny and dull objects, smooth and rough textures, reds or blues which are not just "red" or "blue" but very dark, or bright or mottled or different in other ways. These observations lead to the conclusion that contrast is of strong interest and this is one of the essentials of design. Listening to music or a conversation on a particular topic can start off a train of thought which is the basis on which an idea can develop and a vocabulary of shapes can be built up from unlikely sources.

Design does not aim to copy reality but to interpret it in a way suitable to the craft. The basis of a design may be the same for different crafts but could be interpreted differently as it is developed, for repetition, such as in textile printing, for metal work which could probably be three-dimensional, or for embroidery. This again may be planned differently for work in counted thread as against surface stitchery, for gold work or machine embroidery where shapes could be modified to suit the chosen technique.

Having obtained an idea for an embroidery several things must be known before the design can be worked out:

- (a) The size and shape of the article, as the shape is a part of the total design
- (b) Its purpose
- (c) Materials suitable to the purpose
- (d) Methods suitable to the purpose and the material

The purpose determines whether the article is for hard wear or decoration only -- a garment, a household article or a wall hanging and (c) and (d) can be chosen accordingly. Embroidery where the stitch integrates with the fabric, such as in counted thread work or machine stitchery, or where a free use of surface stitchery is required can be a guide in developing the design.

If there is uncertainty in designing from reality, simple geometric patterns make a good introduction to embroidery. A spot pattern consisting of those of an equal size can be made interesting by using a different stitch for each of two or three spots, or a different colour, or a different texture of thread. Similarly, lines can be worked in this way. Spots and lines can be combined, different sizes of spot and varieties of line can be put together until quite elaborate patterns result.

The spacing of shapes is important; also the space surrounding shapes. A small area of really rich embroidery can look more impressive surrounded with a plain area than with other patterns around it. A design consisting of large shapes with small shapes will probably be more interesting than if the shapes are of equal size but not necessarily of shape. Colour and texture can make shapes more, or less important and in embroidery colour and texture are two attributes to be exploited.

The manner in which a design is developed is up to the individual. A simple way to begin is to cut the main shapes in paper as they can be moved around or discarded or torn into smaller pieces until a satisfactory arrangement is achieved. Shapes can be drawn around for circles and squares, leaves too; one shape can be enlarged or made smaller and repeated until a number are cut. Objects can be cut straight away in paper in different sizes; in fact a collection of paper shapes can be made from which a selection is made for a final design.

Try arranging:

- (a) One shape spaced equally
- (b) Unequally spaced
- (c) Each shape facing one way
- (d) Facing different ways, etc.

Then arrange smaller and larger similar shapes together, far apart, crowded or overlapping to make other shapes. From this arrange several different shapes together, always remembering that all these arrangements fit into already defined areas of your own choice. You can see that the permutations are endless and with trial and error you should come up with some good results; but this is only the beginning as the choice of threads and stitches must be considered, also the colour of the background fabric in relation to the colours of the threads. The pattern may be worked solidly or in outline or partly in both ways. All these considerations make embroidery a fascinating but difficult subject.

From cutting out paper or tearing it up, the next stage is to put down on paper by drawing, all kinds of things seen that interest you. It doesn't matter if the drawings are peculiar, as long as you are looking at reality you will see shapes and textures and colours that you cannot imagine. By trying to put them on paper you must look carefully; also draw what you see, not what you know is there. Use any means to draw, pen and ink, ballpoint pencil, crayons, paint; it doesn't matter. You will find with practice that you will begin to draw better each time and your marks on paper will be meaningful. This must be your aim in using threads -- the stitches made by the threads must have some meaning and the only way that they will, is that whatever you create must have meaning. In other words you must have something to say.

This is the beginning of design but if you persevere and try to remember these main points, adding your own findings to them you will see again that designing becomes easier each time, but you will always have a different problem to tackle. This in itself makes embroidery a subject never to be left alone once you have begun. However frustrating or annoying it may be at times, it "gets" you.

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#### EXPERIMENTING WITH TEXTURE IN EMBROIDERY - Jane Dams - Terra Cotta, Ontario

One of the most important facets of embroidery is texture. Working with many varied fabrics and threads, it is possible to make either literal reproductions of the surfaces of objects or surroundings, as well as enriching and exploiting a certain texture for the sake of design. Everything around us is comprised of texture, whether it be man-made or a product of nature. The sensation of texture is transmitted to us via sight and touch. To touch is the obvious way of finding out the surface quality of an object, but texture is also interpreted by the eye. While looking at a particular area the eye can discern whether it is rough or smooth because of the way the light is absorbed or reflected by the surface and by the variation in colour.

Texture is used in design to create an illusion of the third-dimension, as well as variety and interest. The surface texture of an object is what sets it apart from another object. This makes two or more objects, when they come together, more interesting because of that difference in their surface characteristics. This creates contrast in design and makes it more pleasing to the eye. So, when designing, it is a good idea to mix rough and highly textured surfaces with smooth areas.

There is a danger, however, of trying to use too many textures in one design. Not so much by the texture you are trying to create yourself but by the textures of the fabrics and threads themselves. It is very easy to get carried away and incorporate too many closely related textures of fabric and thread. Indiscriminate use of texture often results in a jumbled, confused design. It is a much better idea to sort through and restrict yourself to four or five different types of fabric (if working with appliqué) and thread, especially if the piece you are working on is small.

After you have selected your design source of inspiration and you are faced with the problem of having to represent or interpret a texture, it is a good idea to work several small samples. These trial runs are the equivalent of an artist's thumbnail sketch. Always keep these and file them in your notebook. Even if you cannot use them in the project you are working on they may suggest further ideas or possible uses for future projects. While designing it is important to remember the end product as this will interpret and restrict just how "textural" you can become. In the case of designing a wall panel or wall hanging this is not such a problem but you must be careful with things that are to receive hard wear or are to be washed.

Embroidery is a very textural art in that the materials we are working with are already textures unto themselves. We use them to express other ideas both concrete and abstract. For example, if you wished to simulate the bark of a tree you would perhaps choose a heavy slubbed weave for a background to give the illusion of bark. Suede might be applied to that same cloth to suggest lichen growing on the bark. You could use actual fabric then to create your required texture.

Apart from the textures of the fabrics and threads themselves the choice of stitch, and how it is worked, can create a limitless variety of surfaces. Satin stitch, when worked in a shiny thread, can suggest a smooth hard surface, whereas that same stitch, when worked in varying densities from open to closed, can suggest a broken irregular surface. Knotted stitches, such as French knot or Spanish knot, when worked packed tightly together, suggest a rich, deep, highly textured surface as well as introducing the third dimension.

Threads couched to the fabric are a good way of implying a very deeply grooved surface. Strips of fabric, as well as string and cords, can be couched for heavier textures. It is a very interesting experiment to make your own cords from unusual threads such as mohair, raffia or plastic. When a cord is made from mohair it resembles a fat caterpillar and it can be used with other threads, if a thick line is required. Couching need not lie flat on the fabric. By pulling up the thread between the stitches that hold them down, either all along the couched line or occasionally, a nubbly surface is created.

The choice of technique by which you wish to work can also affect how much texture is created. Padding and quilting are obvious choices but if you stitch on the actual work first, either by hand or machine, and then pad or quilt after, a very rich effect is achieved. After an area has been padded, needleweaving can be worked over it so that the contours of the padded area are followed and accentuated.

Beadwork can be used to achieve very lush textures. They work well when mixed with other techniques. For example, beadwork mixed with hand stitchery combats that often sterile quality of machine embroidery. Bugle beads, when placed on end, create highly textural areas, especially as bugle beads are usually varying lengths and, when placed on end, create a very three-dimensional, uneven surface.

It is very easy when designing to become involved with only one technique but, if it is practical and suitable to the item that is being embroidered, it is good to experiment with more than one. For example, hand stitchery and Canvas work can work well together. Areas of Canvas work can be cut out and incorporated with stitchery, introducing coarse rough areas of texture, depending on the size of canvas mesh. Very high textural relief can be achieved by tying cork (balls) and various sized beads into soft fabrics; the same technique as tie dyers use - the spot tying method. The bead is trapped in the fabric by binding at the base with thread or fine string. After tying the fabric is smoothed out as much as possible and hand stitchery is worked between the cloth-covered beads.

There are limitless variations on the subject of how to create texture but only by constant experiment can you evolve new methods. Not only visually must these experiments be considered but, technically, they must be sound and of a high quality. One of the nicest things about embroidery is that it is not a restricting art. There is a great deal of scope for experiment and the imagination. With a combination of both, the Artist-Designer can produce all manner of textures, whether they be natural or man-made from the world around us, making their work lively, interesting and exciting.

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WITH YOUR NIGHT CAP, WHITE CAP, NIGHT CAP ON - Researched by Ruth Horner

If you were a male of any age or rank during the period 1580-1650 in England, you would likely wear a nightcap of white linen indoors during the day, especially for social hours, and at night for sleeping, a plain knitted cap called a "biggin".

Throughout this period, the nightcaps have a great similarity. 'Though sometimes made from a richer material such as velvet, usually they were made of white linen but all were embroidered in the blackwork method and often with gold thread. Many had the typical coiling stems and flower design. Sometimes small gold spangles speckled the background design and the turned up band was edged in gold bobbin lace and decorated with dangling spangles.

An entire cap was cut from a single piece of cloth and had petal-shaped sections that were joined to make the crown and a band that was later folded back. The embroidery was worked in a frame.

In her book, "EMBROIDERY MASTERWORKS", Virginia Churchill Bath adapts a late 16th century man's cap for contemporary use, suggesting velvet with metal threads for an evening or theatre costume, woollen material and crewels for a winter hat or linen with silks for a summer hat.

Needles of bronze wire were superseded by steel needles imported into England in the 16th century from Europe where they had been manufactured since the second half of the 14th century. It was not until the 17th century that the manufacture of steel needles was established in England. The Worshipful Company of Needle makers were granted their Charter in 1656 and it is significant that in 1669 the importation of foreign needles into England was prohibited.

SEMINAR NOTES - Leonida Leatherdale

Last October I attended the Seminar of the EMBROIDERERS' GUILD OF AMERICA in Portsmouth, N. H. and one of the workshops taken was with JOAN PETRAKIS on Greek Embroideries. It was most thoughtfully presented, Joan being a most generous and thorough teacher. Her research, understanding and experiences had uncovered so much valuable information that I think it should be shared with you. It is followed by recipes from Greece, which were tasted at the Seminar, tested at home and found to be equally delicious. Try them!

THE COLORED EMBROIDERIES OF GREECE - Joan Petrakis

During the last fifty years, experts have been working at preserving and classifying old embroideries of Greece and have succeeded in classifying them according to the provinces or islands from which they originated. The art of embroidering was nearly completely dead before anyone thought it worth making collections or attempting to classify the different styles of work.

Embroideries from Greece date from the 17th, 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. During this whole period, the traditional styles hardly changed. Although there are no books referring to embroideries before the 1500's, it is assumed that embroidery, because of its close connection with the silk trade, was done much earlier than that. The well known mosaic at Ravenna, of Empress Theodora, indicated the use of embroideries on fabrics.

The silk industry came to Constantinople in about the year 550. Two monks, who had lived in or near China, smuggled silkworm eggs to Emperor Justinian. The manufacture of silk in Europe remained a monopoly of the Emperors of Byzantium until Roger of Sicily carried off Greek silk weavers from Thebes, and began the silk industry of Western Europe.

Greek embroideries are essentially a peasant art, made for use in girls' dowery chests, clothing, home furnishings or churches. Only the gold work in men's clothing was done in professional workrooms, as were the ecclesiastical things.

Technically, the Greek embroideries may be classed in two main categories; XOBLIASTA (metrita), those in which the patterns are created by counting threads without a previously sketched design; these are worked on canvas, and, therefore, the designs have no round lines -- the canvas must be worked "over the fingers" in order to be worked properly. GRAFTA - those in which the designs are freely drawn on the fabric and covered with stitch work which varies according to local traditions. This work is done with the aid of a hoop.

The "Grafta" embroideries allow a greater freedom of design and a rendering of more naturalistic scenes. However, this freedom is restricted by two basic aesthetic canons -- austerity and symmetry which have developed in these centuries-old local traditions. A third canon that governs Greek embroidery is the fear of leaving an empty space. This has led to crowded designs and filling in the large areas of cloth with many small ornamental motifs.

Silk, linen and cotton were cultivated in Greece and were readily available for weaving fabrics. All of the articles chosen for needlework, such as dresses, pillow cases, bed curtains and valances, etc., were made of sturdy, handwoven, unbleached linen.

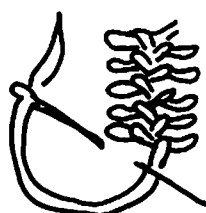
The texture of the linen fabric varied according to location. Fine linens were found on the islands along the Turkish coast. Coarse fabrics were found in the Southern Cyclades and Southern Dodecanese.

The embroideries were almost always done in silk threads. Linen and cotton were hardly ever used. Peasant embroideries in the Northern sheep country and Macedonia were often done in wool. The silk threads varied in thickness to suit the style of embroidery and the weight of the fabric background. The silks used in the Aegean area seemed to be softer and had a more brilliant sheen than those from the West coast.

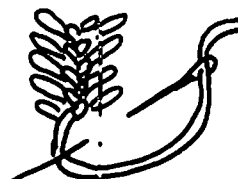
It is interesting to note that the stitches used in the traditional embroideries are universal. The Greek embroideries include such stitches as regular and long-armed cross, satin, chain, herringbone, fly, gobelin to name but a few. The oldest and most-used stitch was the cross, called the "Phrygian" Stitch. There are however, three stitches that were used in Greece that are worth mentioning. They are: (1) the CRETAN FEATHER - used in "Grafta" embroideries (2) the RHODIAN STEP STITCH - used in counted work (3) the ASTYPALEAN THREADED CHEVRON - used in counted work.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. CRETAN FEATHER STITCH - used for "Grafta" embroideries

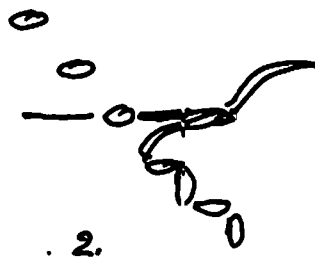


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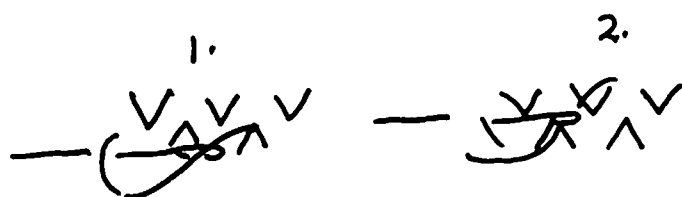


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2. RHODIAN STEP STITCH - used in counted work



3. ASTYPALEAN THREADED CHEVRON - used in counted work



2.

5

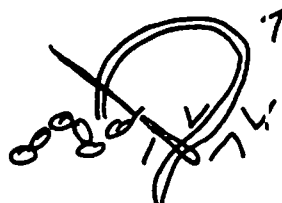
6



4.

7.

8.



The best of the counted thread work was done in pattern darning. Both versions of cross, satin and holbein were used very frequently. Cross stitch was used often with pattern darning.

"Grafta" were usually worked in darning, double running, split, satin, chain, herringbone, Cretan feather, back, etc. Some embroideries from Jannina were worked entirely in a tightly done herringbone that was often outlined with a row of back stitching in a contrasting color. Buttonhole stitches were used to finish up raw edges, but never as a decorative stitch.

All silks used for embroidering were locally dyed with home-made vegetable dyes. These vegetable colors ensured that there would be no harsh tones and that all the colors would blend well together without any ill effects.

Most of the Cretan embroideries exhibit the use of very bright colors. Epirus on the West coast, however, used colors that were muted and sombre. The Southern Dodecanese Islands often used dark heavy colors and lots of browns. The Turkish influence of pastel colors appears in the Northern Sporades and in some work of Epirus.

The color schemes used were: polychrome, monochrome, two colors of equal quantity and three colors where one dominates the two others. Often an embroidery was done in one or two colors and accented with small touches of many colors.

All of the motifs used may be traced back to other countries such as Persia and Turkey; the Greeks, however, worked them always in their own style. The number of motifs used was small and appeared repeatedly in forms that were changed by the style and stitches adopted in the island where they were worked. Thus, a peacock, as it appears in an embroidery in Crete, would be entirely different from one in the Ionian Islands or in the Dodecanese.

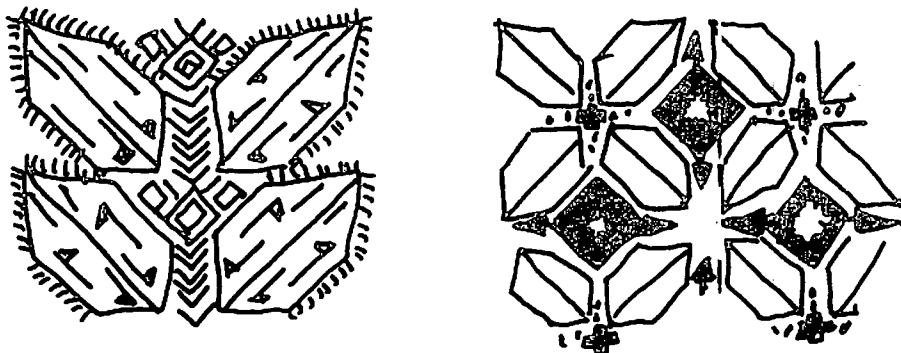
Animals and birds and geometric figures are a primary role in Greek embroideries. They occur in both drawn or counted thread designs, sometimes actually used in a pattern or just scattered about in a manner similar to Early English samplers; or else among foliage as in Jacobean work. They are usually confined to a strictly traditional form of presentation and have little to do with the animals of the islands. The two most commonly used animals are the peacock and double-headed eagle. Other animals included the stag, lions, winged griffins, cocks, parrots and horses, and also small birds and other small animals.

The peacock, because of the legend of the incorruptibility of its flesh, is used as a symbol of longevity and in the Byzantine Church became an emblem of immortality. The "Tree of Life" design, as found in the islands nearly always has peacocks as its supporters. The counted thread work in the Cyclades includes extremely stylized peacocks worked into a geometric pattern making it almost unrecognizable -- it can be recognized only by the tail standing in an erect fan pattern over its back. In Epirus the peacock was done in darning, and in the Ionian Islands in cross stitch with their tails erect making them resemble cacti.

The double-headed eagle looking East and West came to be associated in the minds of the people, during the Turkish occupation, with the former glory of their country and became a symbol of their hopes for freedom.

The geometric designs of the Dodecanese and the Cyclades were analyzed by Mr. A. J. B. Wace. He divides them into three main patterns that form the basis for all other abstract designs and names them the "King", the "Queen" and the "Glastra" (the Greek word for "flower pot"). A fourth type of geometric design from the Dodecanese is called the "Dixos" and resembles the "Glastra".

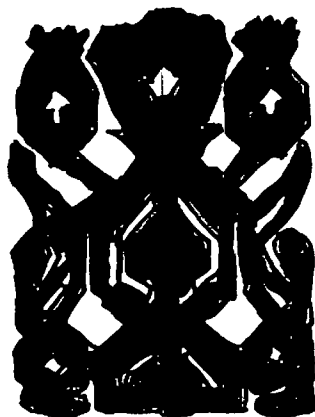
The "King" pattern consists of two sets of leaves set at a forty-five degree angle on each side of the stem. Pairs of leaves may be set vertically above each other forming a long stem with leaves growing symmetrically from it; or one pair may be inverted below another to form a square filled with four leaves.



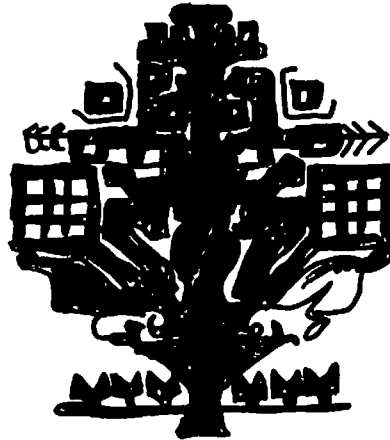
The "Queen" pattern may be described briefly as filling the bottom half of a diamond pattern with geometrically shaped cypress trees, peacocks, etc. "Queen" pattern is often used alternating with the "King" pattern. "Queen" pattern is also used placed vertically one above the other to form a border. Examples of this pattern have also been found in Serbia and Yugoslavia.



The "Glastra" and "Dixos" patterns are used only in the Dodæcanese. They are always used as single units, placed in rows either vertically or horizontally. The "Glastra" appears to be a derivation of the "Tree of Life" with a vase of flowers taking the place of the tree.



The "Dixos" is purely an abstract pattern, which roughly fills a lozenge shape. It is composed of geometric flowers.



Flowers play a secondary roll in Greek embroidery. In their natural forms they are used only in the "grafta" embroideries. They appear in the counted thread work in abstract and stylized forms. The two most important flowers used are the formal carnation, which originated in Persia, and the rose and serrated leaf, which are Turkish in inspiration. Other flowers used include tulip, hyacinth and the Turkish cypress tree.

The human figure is very often used in Greek embroidery, and is displayed in great detail. For example, a man may be serenading a lady with a fiddle, or a dove-tailed mermaid may be holding her tail in her hands. Frequently, the tail turns into flowers so that she appears as a torso in a vase of flowers.

To date, very little has been written on the subject of Greek embroideries. Hopefully, in the near future, more research will be done that will enrich the presently available materials.

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\*\*\*KOURABIEDES (from the book "Athens A La Carte")

350° - 20 minutes \*\*\* Approximately 60 tea size cookies

|                                 |                                                |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 4 1/2 C flour                   | 1 lb. sweet butter or Mrs. Filbert's margarine |
| 3/4 C confectioner's sugar      | 1 1/2 Tablespoons cognac or brandy             |
| 2 tsps. vanilla                 | Whole cloves                                   |
| Additional confectioner's sugar |                                                |

METHOD: Sift flour. Cream butter until lemon colored and fluffy. Sift sugar and add gradually, creaming well. Add cognac and vanilla. Gradually work in flour to make a soft dough. Take out a ball of dough about the size of a walnut, roll into a ball shape and then pinch the top up to form a pear shape. Insert a whole clove in the top. Place on cookie sheet and bake until sandy colored (not brown), about 20 minutes. Remove from oven and sift generously with confectioner's sugar. These cakes keep fresh a long time if stored in airtight containers.

+++++

\*\*\*KOULOURLAKIE (from Mrs. Ann Bountress - Kensington, Conn.)

350° - 20 minutes \*\*\* Approximately 100 tea size cookies

|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 4 1/2 C Flour  | 3 Eggs                    |
| 1 C Sugar      | 1 1/2 tsps. Baking Powder |
| 1/2 lb. butter | 1/2 tsp. vanilla          |

METHOD: Divide the flour in half and sift one-half with baking powder. Sift remaining half into a bowl by itself. Cream shortening and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time and beat well. Add flour-baking powder mixture into creamed mixture. Slowly add the other sifted flour to make a soft dough that will hold its shape when rolled -- better have a slightly sticky dough than a dry one.

Take about one tablespoon of dough -- form into a ball and roll into a pencil shape. Beginning at both ends, roll in opposite directions to form an "S" shape. Place on a greased cookie sheet. Brush with 1 egg yolk that has been mixed with 1 tsp. water. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake until gold in color. Shape of finished cookie

+++++

\*\*\*BAKLAVA

350° - 45 minutes \*\*\* 60 - 1" squares -- 9 x 13 pan

|                      |                |                                                   |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 3 C ground nuts      | ) mix together | 1/2 lb. filo dough (Purchased at import store)    |
| 3 Tablespoons sugar) |                | 1/2 lb. melted butter or Mrs. Filbert's margarine |

|                          |                    |                            |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>SYRUP</u> : 2 C sugar | 1 tsp. lemon juice | Rind of 1 lemon & 1 orange |
| 2 C water                | 3 cinnamon sticks  |                            |

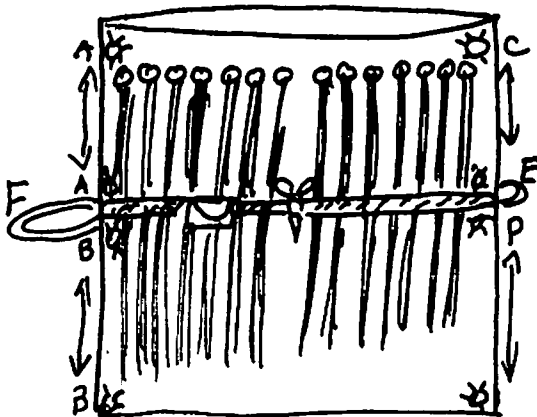
METHOD: Place all ingredients in pan and cook to 235 F on candy thermometer. Remove from stove and remove rind and cinnamon sticks. Pour over baked Baklava.

TO ASSEMBLE BAKLAVA: Butter 9 x 13 pan. Place 6 filo sheets, spreading melted butter between each layer. Sprinkle with nuts-sugar mixture; spread another layer of filo, butter, sprinkle with nuts and continue in this manner until all of the nut mixture has been used. Place 6 layers of filo, alternating with butter on the top. With a heavy knife, carefully cut into squares. Bake until golden brown. Remove from oven & recut squares being sure to cut all the way through. Pour syrup evenly over baklava. Allow to remain in pan about 2 hours. Remove from pan and place on cookie sheet to dry over night or for a few hours. This recipe makes a hard and dry Baklava that can be frozen with no ill effects.

"POCKET" NEEDLEPOINT ORGANIZER - Joyce Hunter

For Canvas up to 20" x 20"

MATERIALS:



Quilted fabric approx. 22" x 22"  
 Lining fabric approx. 22" x 22"  
 1 pkge. (14) plastic or metal rings  
 (1 inch size)  
 1 1/8 yd. one-inch tape. (It helps if  
 it is a bit stretchy)  
 4 large dome fasteners  
 1 small dome fastener  
 1 1/4 yds. bias binding  
 Felt - approx. 4" x 8 1/2 for thimble  
 pocket

DIRECTIONS:

1. Bind one side of each square of fabric with bias binding
2. Take lining piece. With bias binding at top, place stretchy tape across centre leaving about 4 inches extending at right and 16 inches extending at left.
3. Near centre of tape, stitch across tape through lining twice to form a holder for scissors. (See diagram). Pin ends of tape together to keep them out of the way temporarily.
4. Make felt pocket to hold thimble and needles, and attach small dome fastener for closing. On left side of lining attach pocket to tape ONLY. See Diagram
5. With right sides of quilted and lining fabrics together, stitch raw edges together to form a pocket. Turn and press if necessary.
6. Unpin tape. (Refer to step 3). Form a loop at each side, handstitching to pocket.
7. Following diagram sew large domes in matching pairs on pocket.
8. On lining space rings evenly about one inch below bias binding and handstitch in place through lining only.
9. To fold pocket, match domes "A" to "A", "B" to "B", etc., then fold in half passing loop "F" through loop "E" to form a carrying handle.

NOTE: (The advertisement I saw listed this pocket at \$12.00 plus tax. I managed mine for about \$3.50)

+ + + A reason for taking up EMBROIDERY for personal satisfaction (From the WINNIPEG TRIBUNE:

KIDS' CLOTHES: SEWING THEM IS LEAST OF WORRIES - by Erma Bombeck

Be honest, ladies. You know and I know that God never meant for women to sew for children. Sure, the patterns are adorable and easy to follow, the fabrics are enough to blow your imagination, and sewing machines nowadays do everything but answer the door. But take a look at the "wearee" of children's fashions:

Do you know I once spent two weeks trying to find a two year old's waistline? It's like trying to dress an avocado. Sometimes when I dressed her for bed, I'd swear I saw it and then when I'd put a dress on her and start punching it would disappear. One day I put a dress on her and asked: "If you could have a waist, where would you wear it?" "Right here!" she said pointing to her navel.

NAVEL MARKED WAIST: From there on in, her waistline hung around her navel, making her look like a sissy gunslinger. Creating a waistline was a breeze compared with dealing with rubber ankles. I first noticed the ankles when I bought a pair of boots for her. They would remain firm until I got the boot over the toe. Then they would go as limp as cooked spaghetti. I never tried to fit a pair of slacks over her feet that I didn't question God's purpose for not putting a bone in a child's ankle..

I don't know why the knees never matched. She always seemed to come out even when she was kneeling or sitting on a chair, but when she was upright and standing still, her hem was always about two inches higher on one side. The bony shoulders, the no-bust bust, the way they grow out of a dress while you are at that very moment putting \$8 worth of appliqué on it... all that is tolerable.

But probably the most conclusive argument I have against sewing for children is their endurance quotient. CAN'T STAND STILL. I'm not sure if it is in the Guinness Book of Records, but the longest a child ever stood still for a fitting was 12 seconds. It is held by a woman in Passaic, N. J., and the child was inadvertently basted to her mother's blouse.

The last outfit I made for my daughter was a Sunday deal. We were going to church when I noted one sleeve stopped at the wristbone, the other covered the entire hand. The top had enough room for a friend or puberty, whichever came first. And the matching bonnet was off-centre with saliva-saturated ribbons that hung tiredly. Couldn't she wear that under a coat?" asked my husband. "It is the coat," I sighed.

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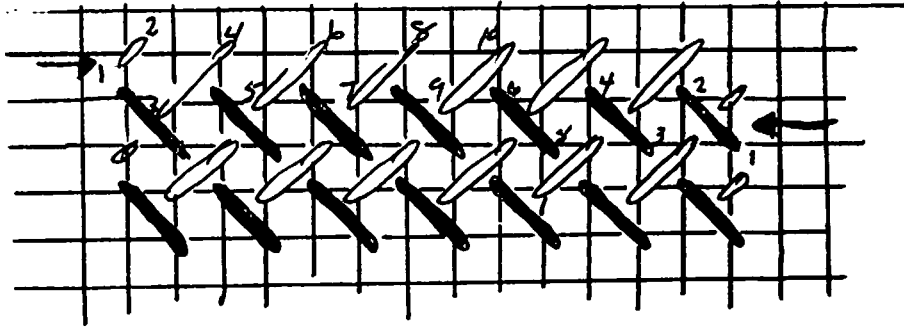
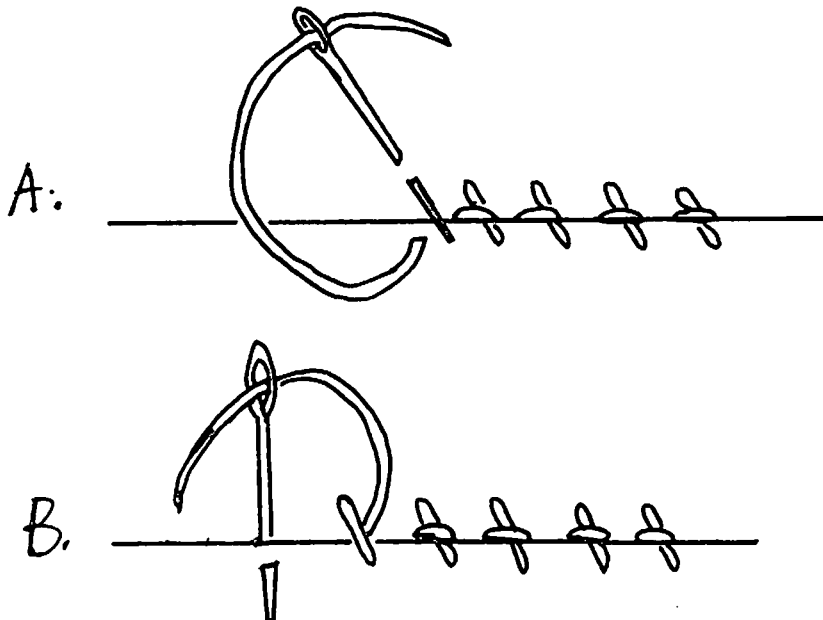
"No female character can be quite perfect without a knowledge of all sorts of needlework, and a downright hearty lot of it too. Many a heartache has been buried in the growing petals of a silken rose, and the sharp edge of sorrow been dulled by the sweet calm monotony of a shining bit of steel." -- Anonymous

\* \* \* \* \*

"Take your needle, my child, and work at your pattern; it will come out a rose by and by. Life is like that -- taken one stitch at a time, taken patiently and the pattern will come right out like embroidery". -- Oliver Wendell Holmes

STITCHES FROM CHOTTIE ALDERSON:

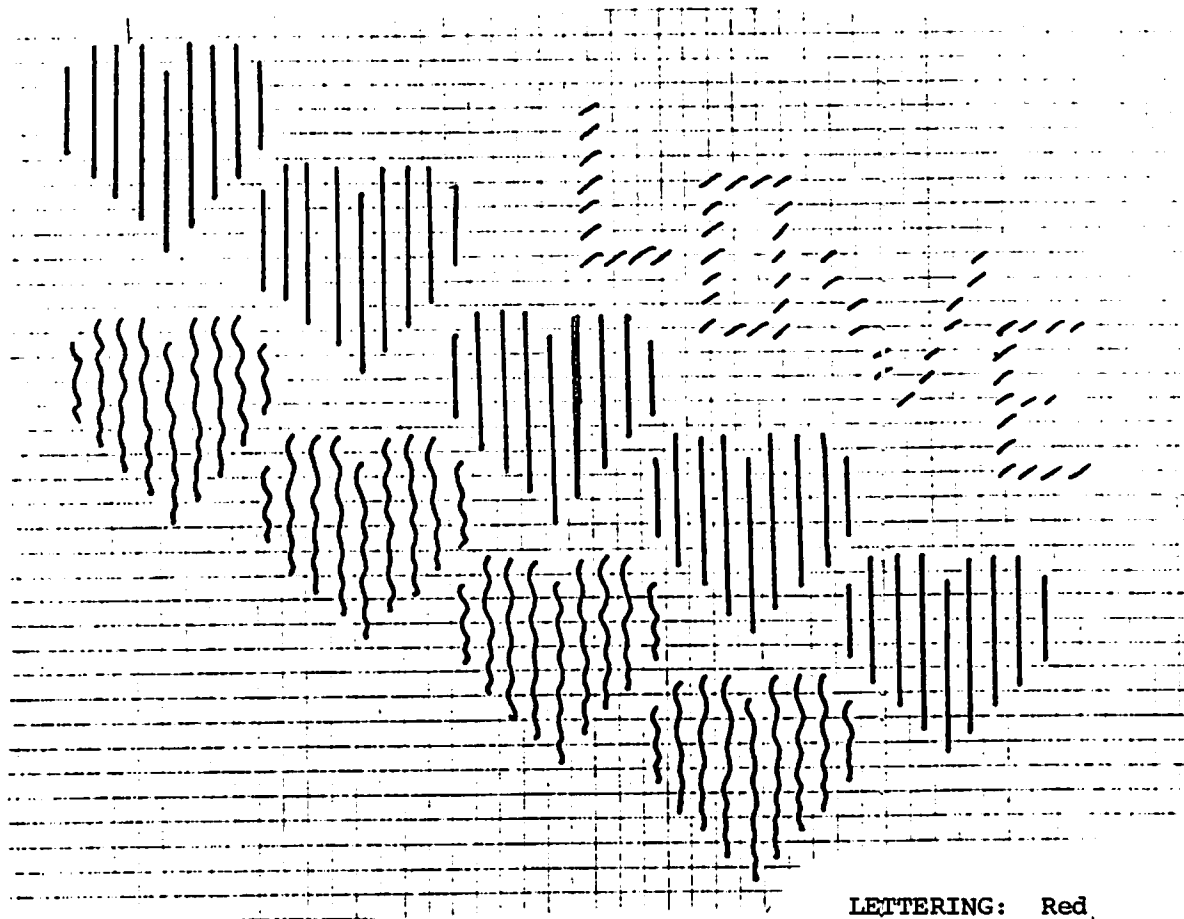
DIAGONAL WEAVE STITCH: Try on 14 Mono Canvas with two-ply Persian Yarn. The WHITE Stitch is the first row, the BLACK Stitch is the second row. You do not necessarily have to use two colors; one can be quite interesting.

DIAGONAL WEAVE STITCHHALF-HERRINGBONE STITCH

Chottie learned this stitch in Sweden but can't recall it's true name. It is a dandy stitch to use for hems on your embroideries; or to join two pieces of fabric together using a cotton pearl thread for a pretty stitch interest. Also, use when appliquéing fabric.

The HEART STITCH, also from CHOTTIE ALDERSON, can be used and developed in many ways and we have chosen to use it for this season of year as a VALENTINE - but it can be used all year "round to help to express our feelings and thoughts:

VALENTINE OR "LOVE" PATCH



Work the Lettering in TENT STITCH in the DARKEST RED

Work the HEARTS immediately under lettering in the PINK

This works best diagonally from left to right to make the drop down to next heart.

For background, use any filling stitch, bricking, diagonal tent, etc.

USES: As a patch for a jacket. A pocket on a skirt or sweater -- line it first. As a pincushion top. As an insert on fabric for a Mini-pillow. And you may think of other uses too!!

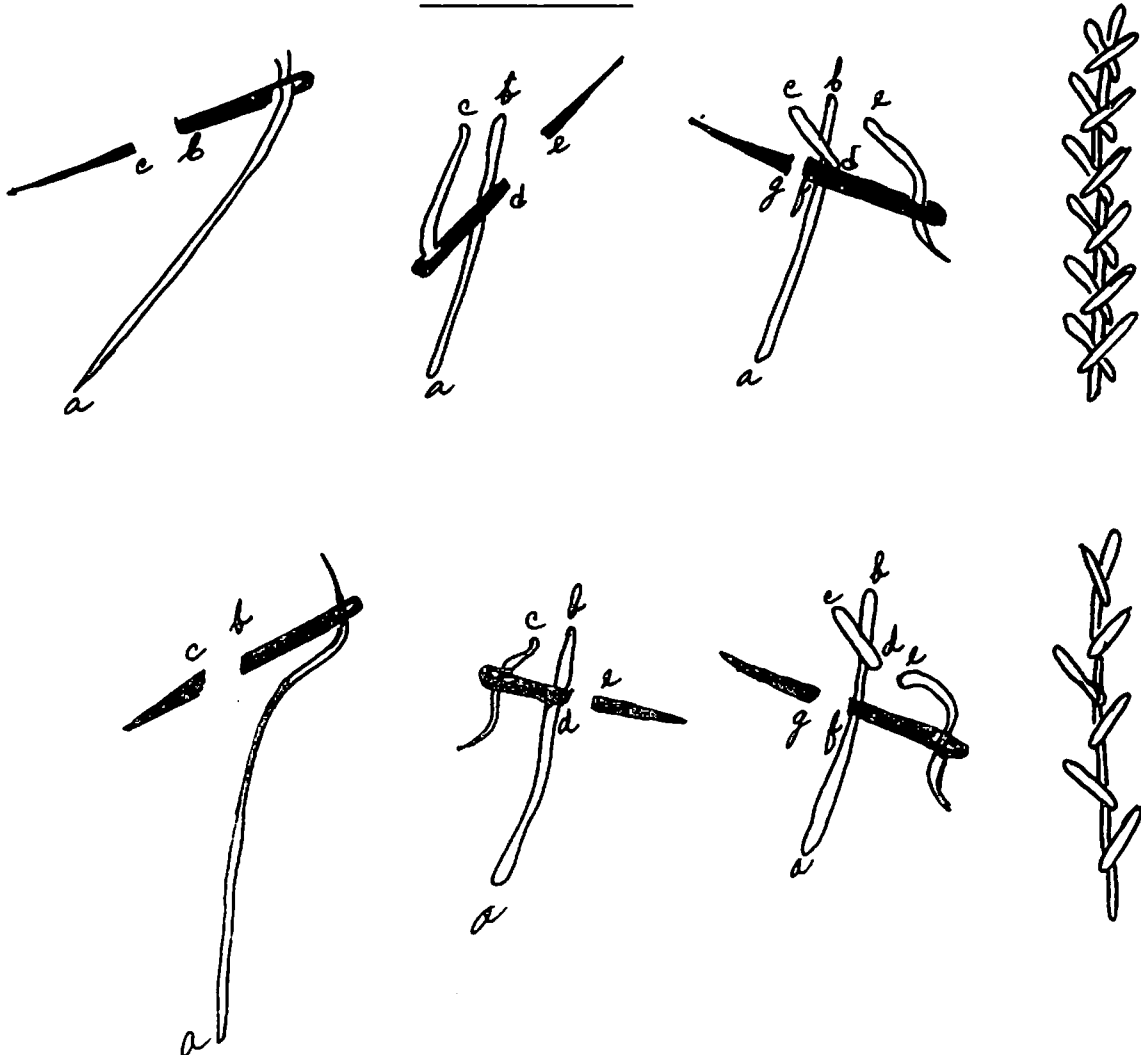
MAKE ONE FOR YOURSELF AND ONE FOR SOMEONE YOU "LOVE"

HERE ARE TWO WAYS TO DO "THORN" STITCH: - Leonida Leatherdale

This is a nice stitch to use for a stem of a flower where you wish it to appear textured or thorny, as in some of the roses or other flora:

1. You may lay a thread, as in couching, then work a close thorn stitch over, criss-crossing the laid thread.
2. You may lay a thread and open up the thorn stitches - OR
3. You may do just the thorn stitch over an already worked Stem Stitch or Crewel Stitch.

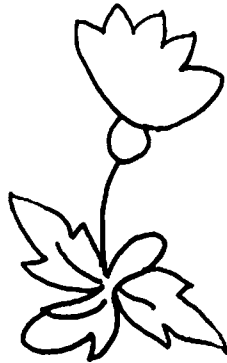
"THORN" STITCH



WHICH ARE YOU?

Some members keep their organization strong,  
While others join just to belong,  
Some volunteer and do their share,  
While others lie back and just don't care.  
On meeting days, some always show,  
While there are those who never go.  
Some always pay their dues ahead;  
Some get behind for months instead.  
Some do their best, some build, some make,  
Some never do -- just sit and take.  
Some lag behind, some let things go,  
Some never help their group to grow.  
Some drag, some pull; some don't, some do --  
Consider -- which of these are YOU?

-- Author Unknown

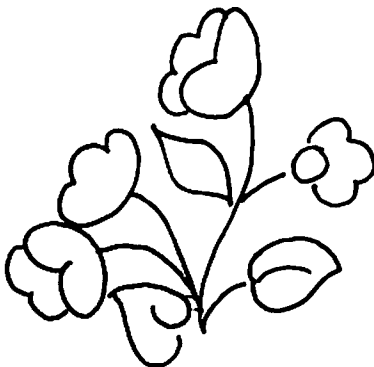


TO AVOID CRITICISM:

DO NOTHING!

SAY NOTHING!

BE NOTHING!



YOUTH IS A GIFT OF NATURE

BUT

AGE IS A WORK OF ART

BEGIN TODAY

So brief a time we have to stay  
Along this dear, familiar way;  
It seems to me we should be kind  
To those whose lives touch yours and mine.  
The hands that serve us every day,  
Should we not help them while we may?  
They are so kind that none can guess  
How soon they'll cease our lives to bless.  
The hearts that love us, who may know  
How soon the long, long way must go.  
Then might we not their faults forgive  
And make them happy while they live?  
So many faults in life there are  
We need not go to seek them far;  
But time is short and you and I  
Might let the little faults go by.  
And seek for what is true and fine  
In those whose lives touch yours and mine;  
This seems to me the better way  
Then why not friend, begin today:

-- Author Unknown



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