

THE · BULLETIN · OF
THE · NEEDLE · AND · BOBBIN
CLUB

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THE BULLETIN OF THE NEEDLE AND BOBBIN CLUB

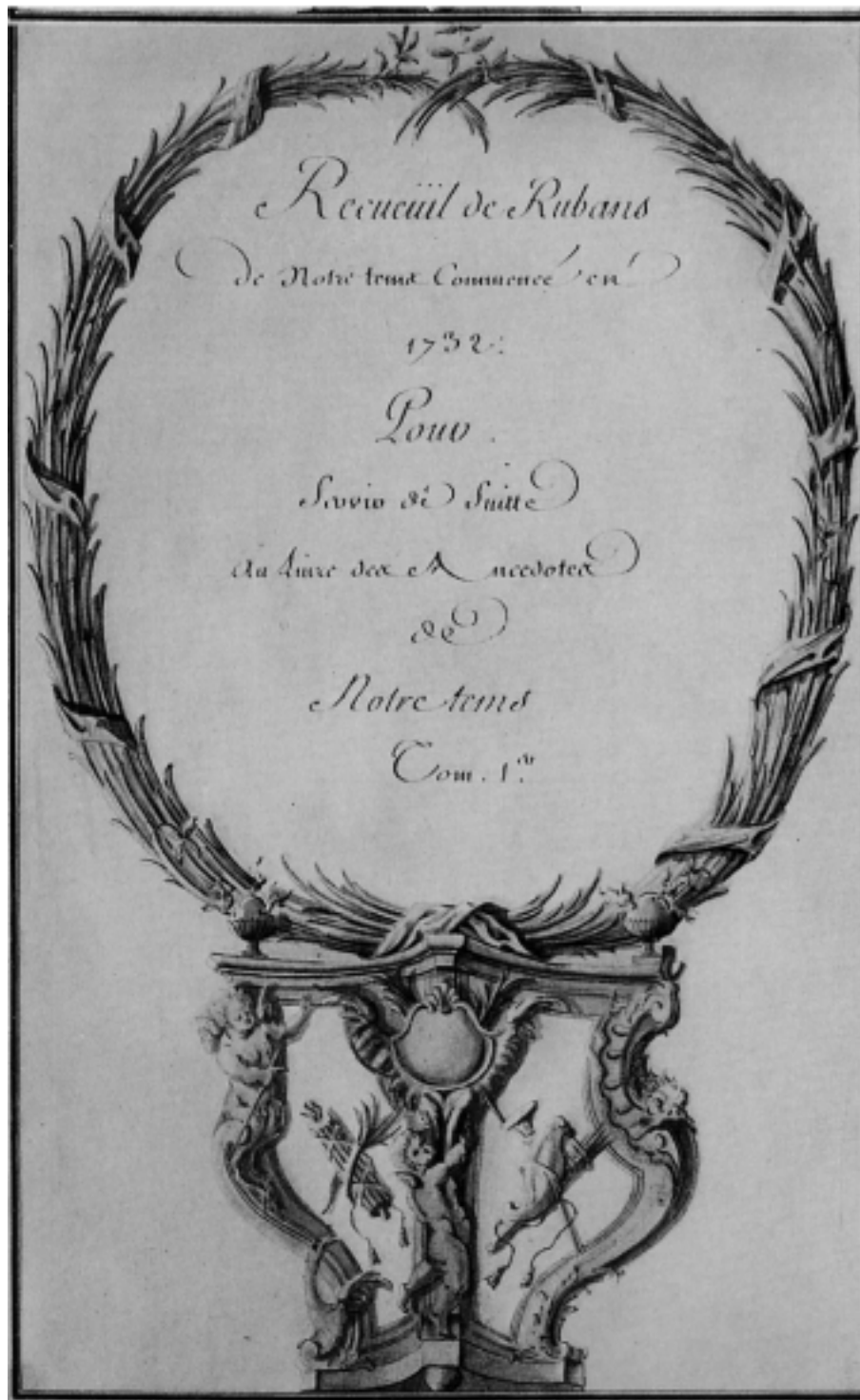
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Richelieu Collection of Samples.....	3
GERTRUDE WHITING	
Cotton Printing in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century.....	15
FRANCES LITTLE	
The Praise of the Needle.....	24
JOHN TAYLOR (1580-1653)	
Book Reviews	29
Club Notes	37
List of Officers	39



FRONTISPIECE

TITLE PAGE FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES IN THE *Bibliothèque Nationale*,
PARIS.

THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES

by
GERTRUDE WHITING

LONG ago I read that Marshal Richelieu, a grandnephew of the famous Cardinal, had made a collection of samples of all kinds of textiles of both French and foreign manufacture between the years 1732 and 1737. Later, when in Paris, I obtained a permit to visit the manuscript department of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, where I found the collection,¹ which consists of seven large volumes full of samples of silks, of cotton, linen and woolen stuffs, of ribbons, gauzes, and laces. Each sample was carefully annotated with the name of the material, the place of manufacture, the date, and the price. The interest and importance of such a collection to students of textiles is obvious, and a painstaking and systematic study of this vast array of samples would surely revise and extend our knowledge of European textiles of this period in many respects.

One whole volume was devoted to ribbons made in the various cities and provinces of France (Plate I), while another was filled with ribbons made in Italy and Holland. Many pages of other volumes showed samples of common woolen, linen, and cotton cloth; some of these were examples of the weaving done by prison labor of the time, and others were samples of the fine table linen woven for the Royal Household in 1736 (Plate II). Among the more elaborate materials were small scraps of the handsome silks made for the Queen, Marie Leczinska, in 1735 and 1736.² Samples of gauzes were also included, those light materials used for horned caps (cornettes) and sleeve ruffles (engageantes), or used over colored taffetas in gowns (Plate IV). These gauzes resemble the Far Eastern examples

¹ *Rubans de France et des Pays Etrangers, 1732-1737. Echantillons d'Etoffes et Toiles des Manufactures de la France recueillis par le Marechal de Richelieu.* 7 vols.

² A page of these silks is illustrated in *The Romance of French Weaving* by Paul Rodier (Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1931, p. 274), who describes this work more fully. None of the samples illustrated in the Rodier volume are duplicated in this article.

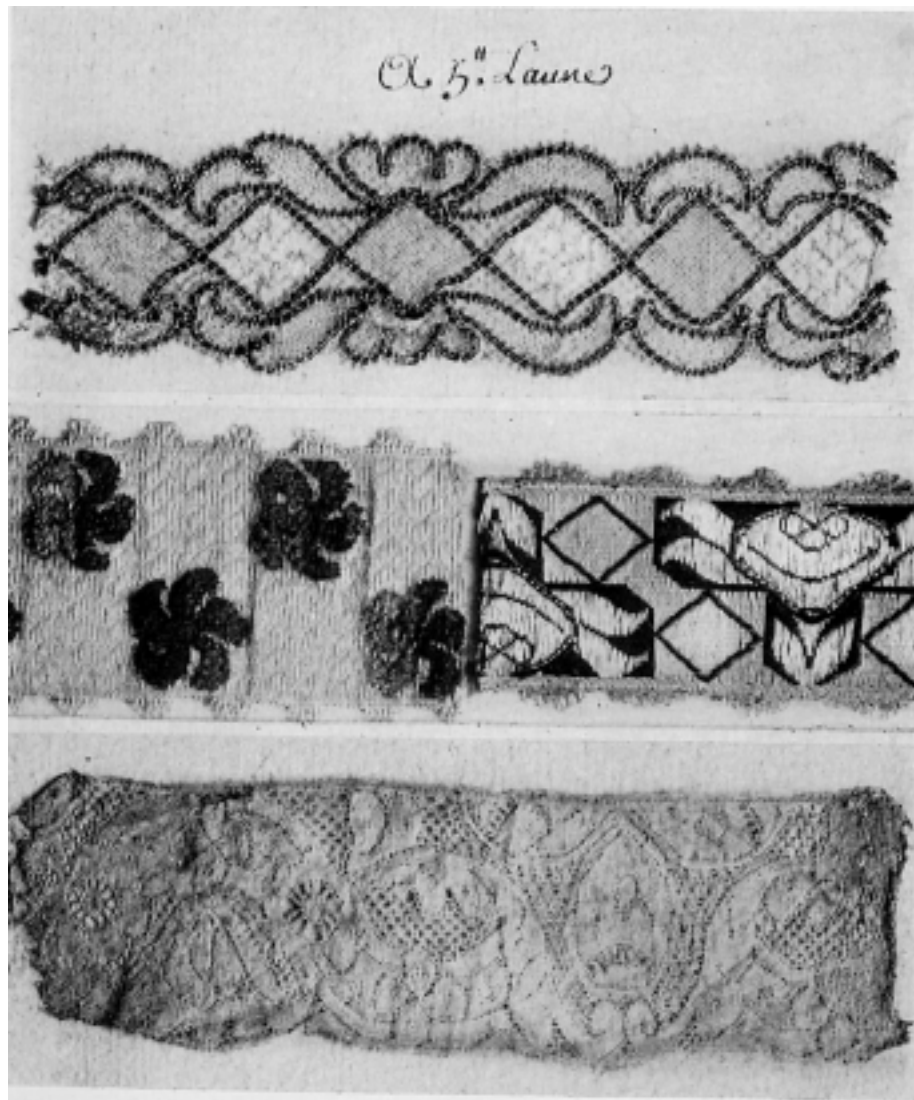


PLATE I

EXAMPLES OF RIBBON AND LACE FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

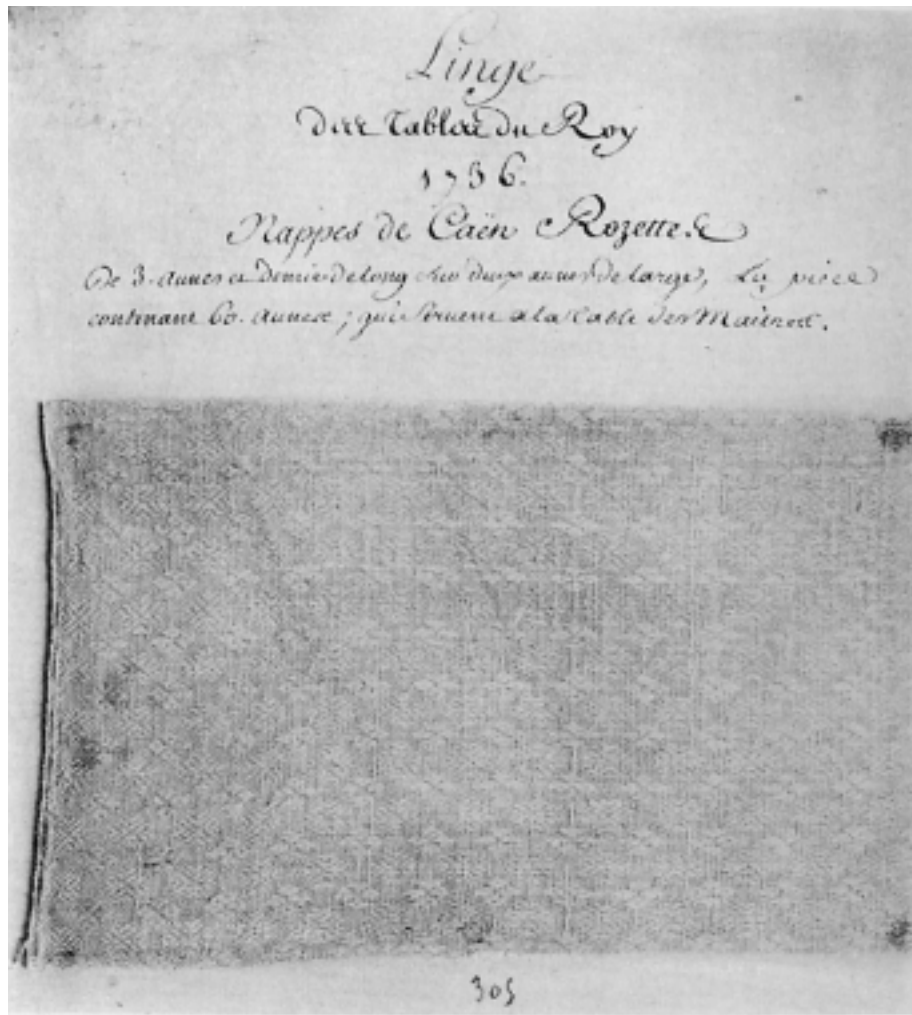


PLATE II
TABLE LINEN WOVEN FOR THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD IN 1736.
FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

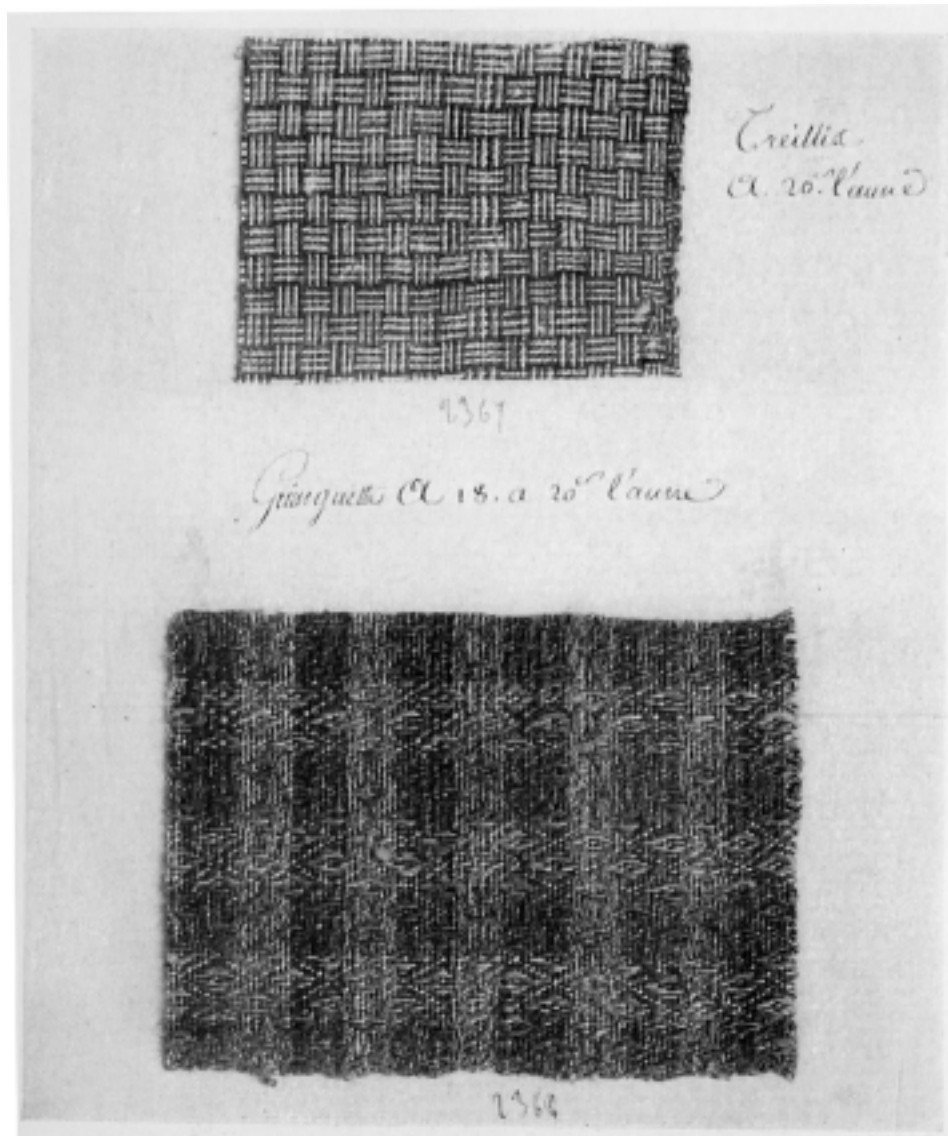


PLATE III
WOVEN MATERIALS FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

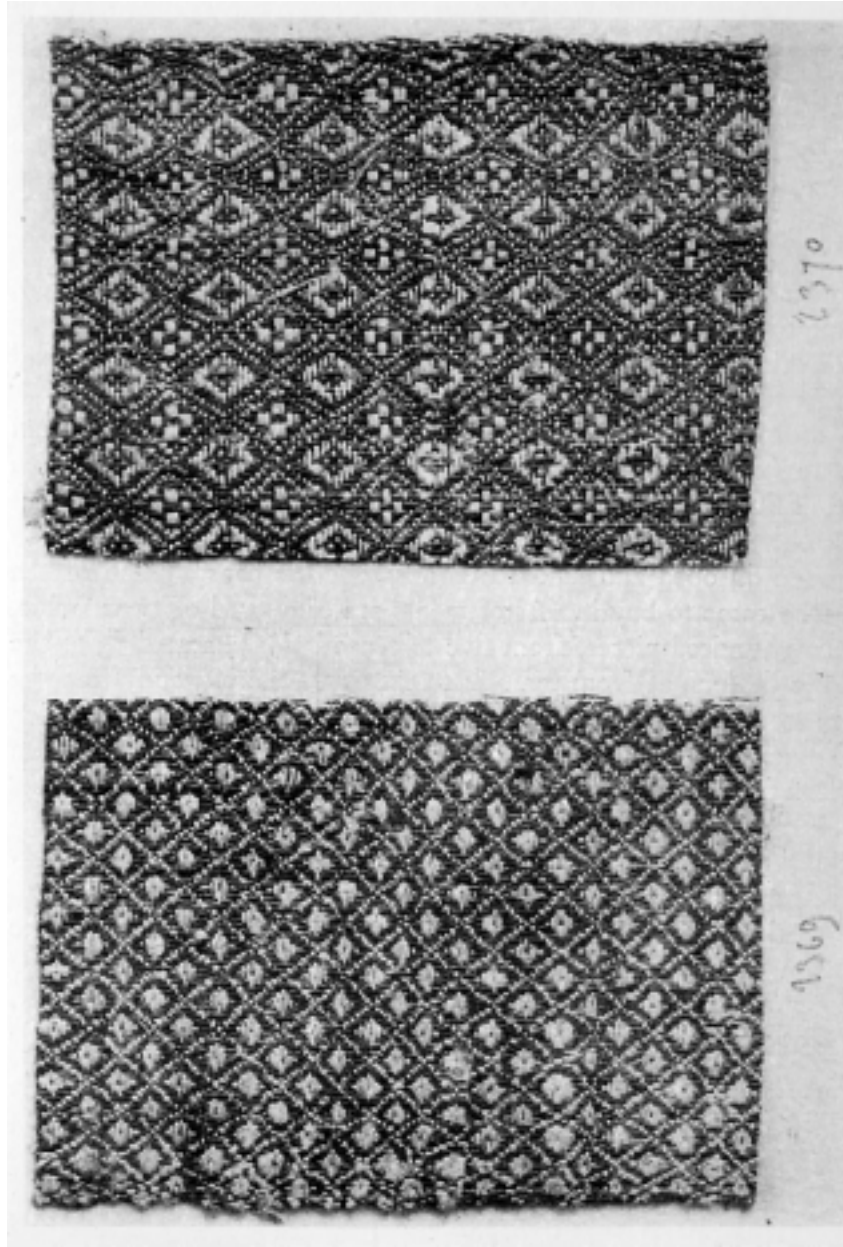


PLATE IIIa
WOVEN MATERIALS FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

from which they may have been copied. Finally, there are samples of various laces (Plates V-Va). Many familiar types are present, for example, *points d'esprit*, spiders, *tulle double*, *fond de la Vierge*, or *cinq trous* perhaps, the whole general Marli type, and *fond de Paris*.

It was surprising and confusing to find in carefully turning over page after page that the samples so closely resemble later fabrics and patterns. The accompanying illustrations, therefore, may not seem especially rare or superior, but they date authentically from the years 1732 to 1737, and present a unique index of the range and variety of textiles made in this period.

One page from the original preface is reproduced here (Plate VI), and a free translation of it has been added to the above notes to give an idea of the kind of information Richelieu gathered regarding the lace and textile industries of his day.

"The ordinary price of lace made in Havre and its environs is from ten *sols*³ to six *livres* the ell, Paris measure, from a barely visible width to a good four fingers wide.

"It is sent to the French islands of America, and principally to the French Cape, in open and kindred designs, for the consumption of the Spanish who come to buy it. Assortments are composed of twenty-five, fifty or one hundred pieces, from five to ten ells long, according to the wish of the dealers, at from ten *sols* to six *livres* the ell, and from the width of a good four fingers upward. It is also sent for the consumption of the French who are established there, and for them these laces are finer, priced from twenty *sols* to eight *livres*, and of a width of two fingers upward.

"At the time of the departure of the Spanish fleets, Havre often furnishes great quantities of lace, there to be loaded and transported to Peru, assorted as described above for those sent to the French Cape for the consumption of the Spanish.

"There are made in Havre many laces of questionable superiority, beginning at a good two fingers in width, priced from fifteen *sols* to three

³ The coinage signs used in this document correspond to those tabulated under *livres*, *sols* and *deniers* in various manuscript copy books of the period; as for instance, *Les Exemples de Lettres Financière et Bâtarde of Lesgret, l'ainé* (Paris, 1694), and the *Nouveau Traité d'écriture of Glachant* (Paris, 1754). The *livre*, *sol* and *denier* formed the universal money of accounting throughout France until the Revolution and they have left their mark on the English money symbols of today in the £, *s.*, *d.* The *livre*, the value of which varied at different times, was the equal of a pre-war *franc*; the *sol* or *sou*, five *centimes*, and the *denier* the twelfth part of a *sou*. The *ecu*, which does not appear in this manuscript, was a larger coin varying in value from three to six *livres*. The *franc* and *centime* were adopted toward the close of the century.

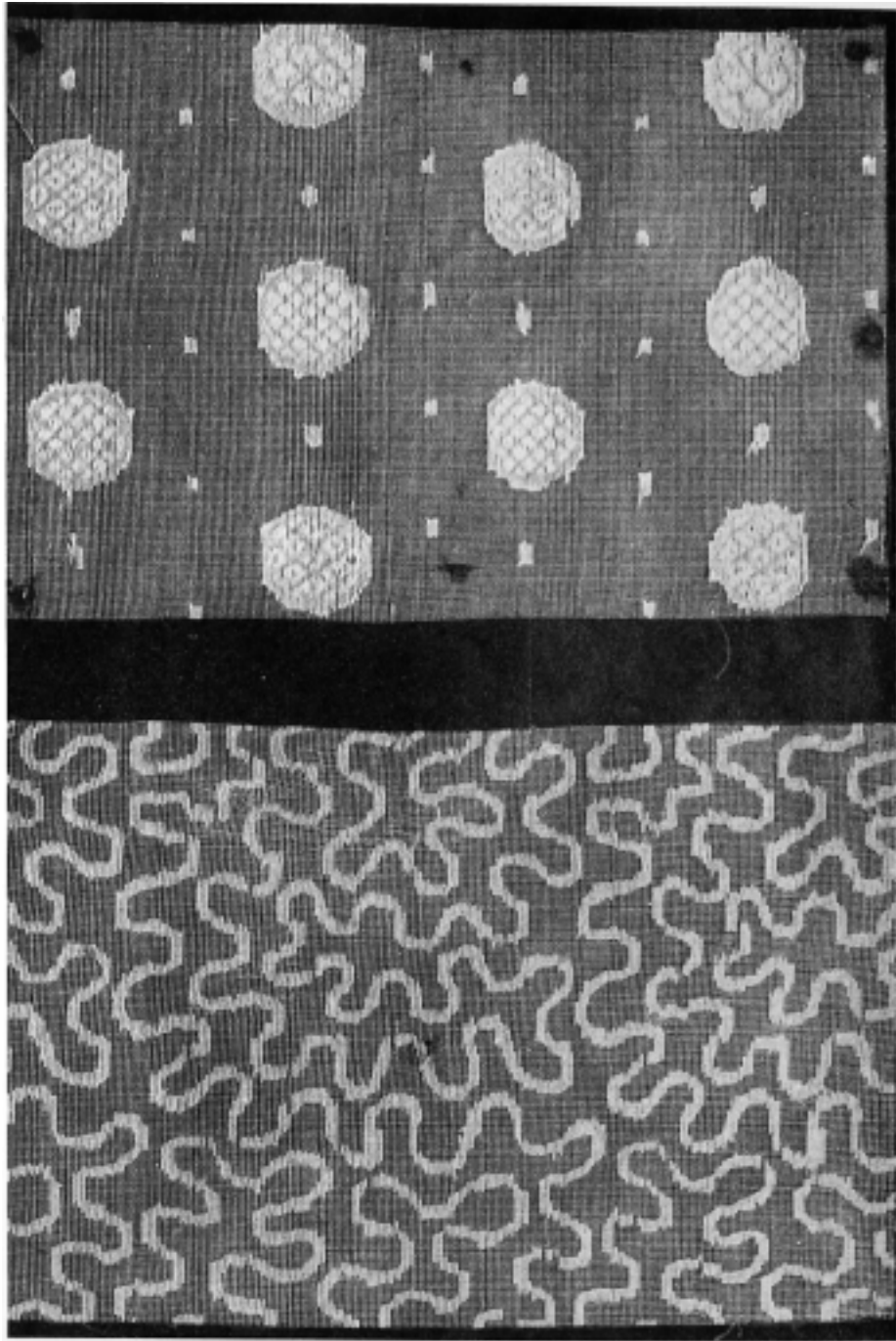


PLATE IV
SAMPLES OF GAUZE WEAVING, DATED 1736. FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

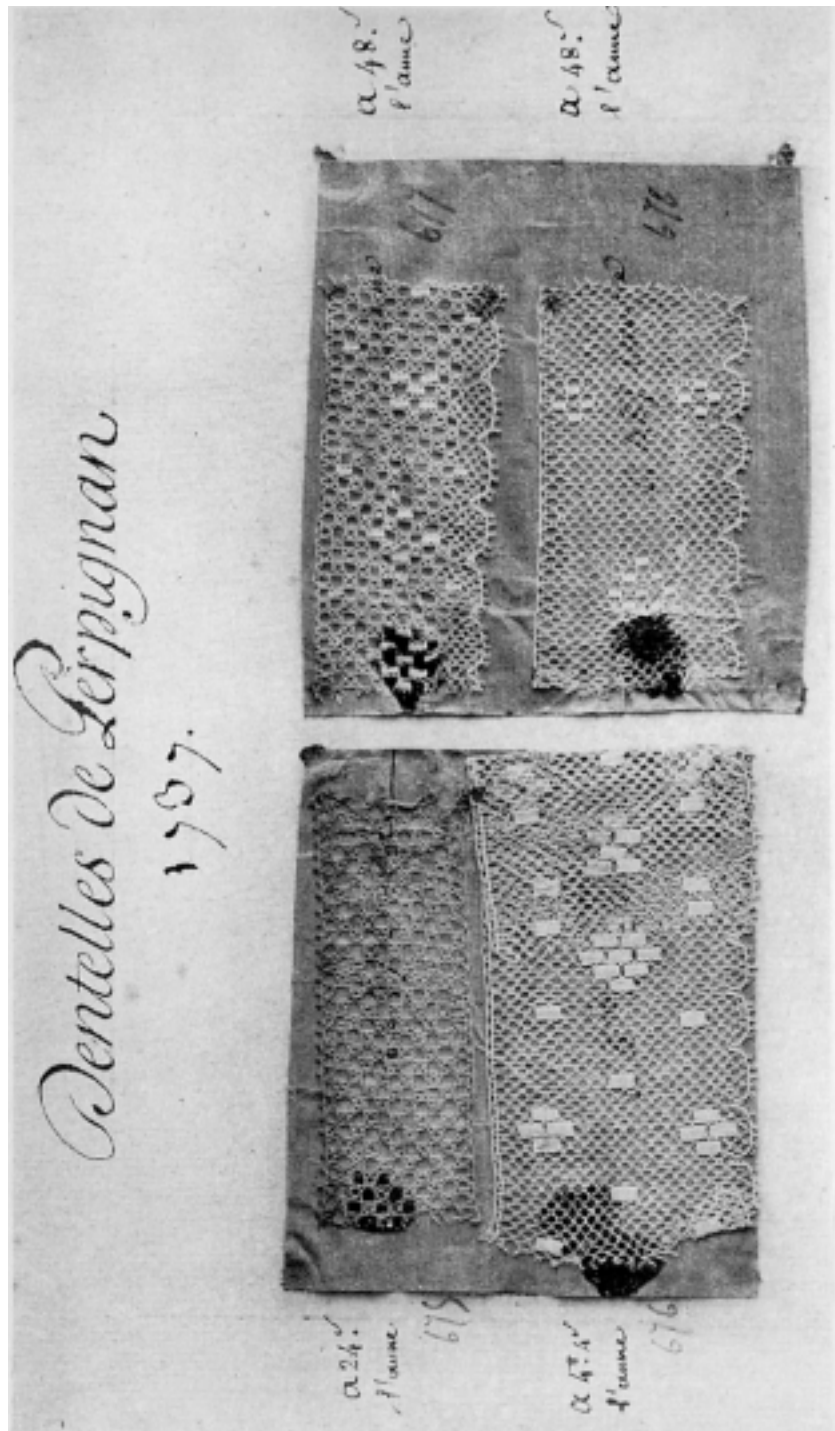


PLATE V
LACE OF PERPIGNAN, DATED 1737. THE PRICE BY THE ELL IS INDICATED BESIDE EACH SAMPLE. FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

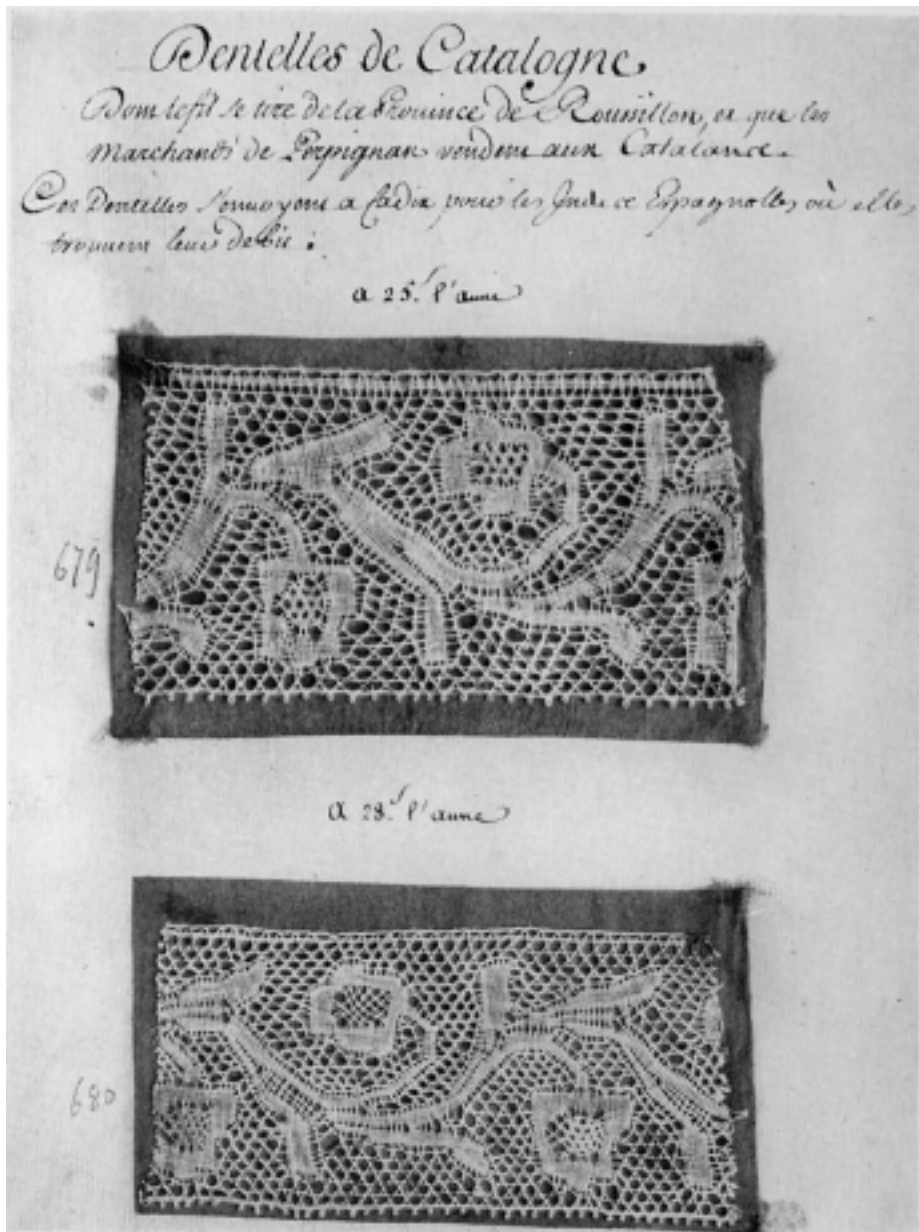


PLATE Va

LACE OF PERPIGNAN, DATED 1737. THE PRICE BY THE ELL IS INDICATED BESIDE EACH
 SAMPLE. FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

L'epine ordinaire des Dentelles fabrique du Linné a 11.
 des courbes, en largeur 10^{es} jusqu'à 6.^{es} l'autre mesure des
 Dents, de la largeur d'un a 4. bon doigt.

On en envoye aux Isles françoises de l'Amérique, et
 principalement au Cap françois en dessein de passer et a porteur
 pour la consommation des Espagnols qui viennent en acheter
 les assortimens sont composés de 25... So... en six pains, depuis
 5. jusqu'à 10. au de l'un; suivant la volonté de l'importateur
 depuis 2.^{es} a 6.^{es} l'autre et de la largeur des a 4. bon doigt
 doigt. On en envoye aussy pour la consommation des
 françois qui y sont établis, et pour lors ces dentelles sont plus
 fines et de prix de 2.^{es} a 8.^{es} l'autre de la largeur des a 2...
 doigt au plus.

Lors du départ de floces d'Espagne on fournit souvent
 un très grand nombre de Dentelles de l'autre pour y être
 embarquées, et transportées au Linné, et elles s'achètent
 comme il en est ordonné, de celles qui en envoye au Cap françois
 pour la consommation des Espagnols.

Il se fait au Linné beaucoup de Dentelles de hauteurs diverses
 de 1. a 2. bon doigt de prix de 15. a 5. l'autre qui sont
 consommés dans l'intérieur du Royaume, les fils dont on se
 sert pour fabriquer toutes les dentelles sont en Linné et
 tirés de la Flandre françoise.

C'est aux femmes qui travaillent les dentelles avec de
 filans: les plus habiles ouvrières espagnoles y a 8. au plus de
 par jour, les moyennes ouvrières ne gagnent que 4. a 5. et
 les plus pauvres qui sont en bien plus grand nombre ont peine
 à gagner 3. au bon et leur journée se travaille le de
 nuit et les autres depuis le grand matin jusqu'à six heures.

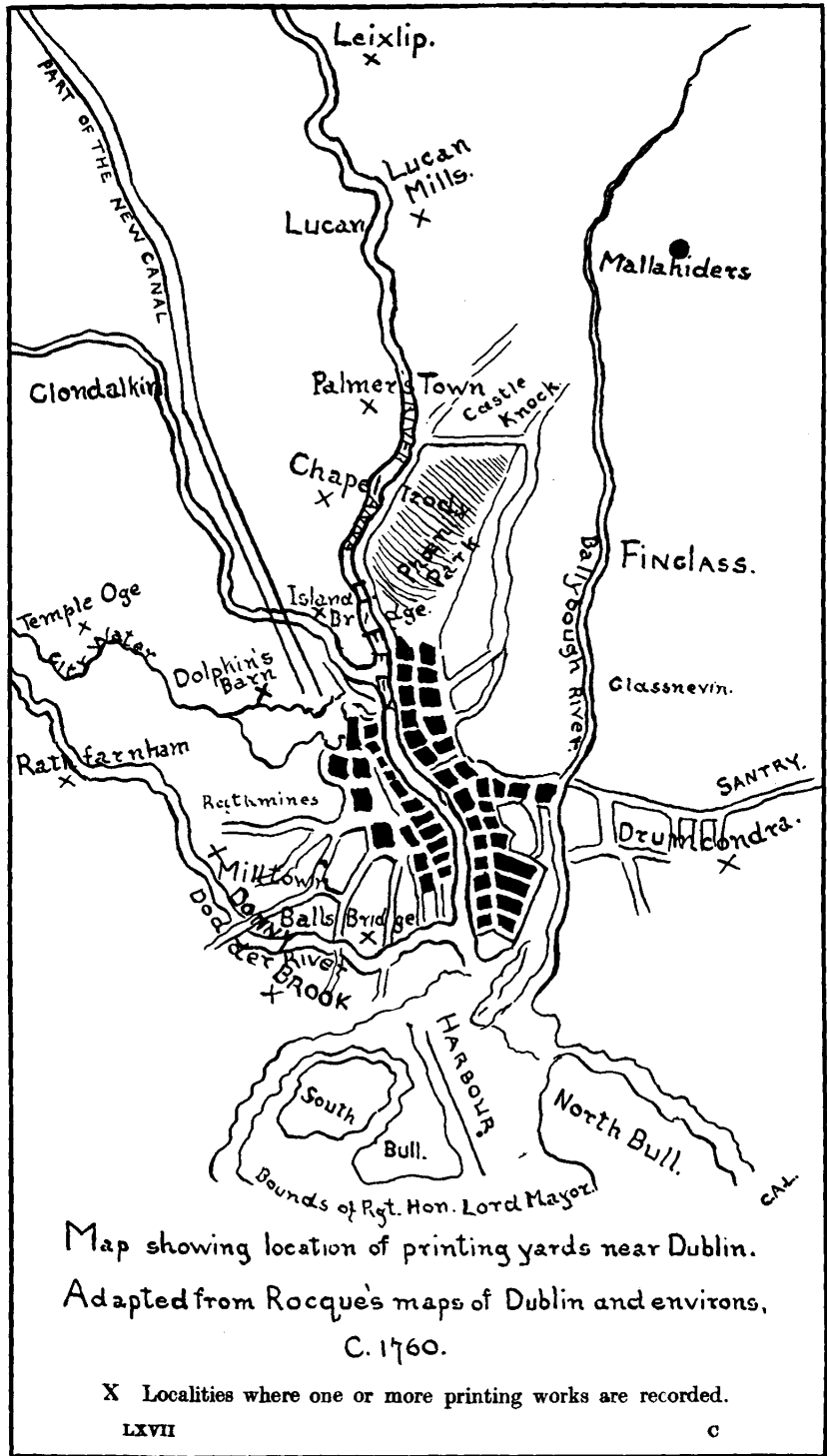
Le débouché est plus considérable lors des expéditions de
 floces d'Espagne, on en vend plusieurs années ensemble
 à peu de chose du Linné et des environs pour 30000. de dentelles
 de toute espèce chaque année; cette fabrique a soulé
 considérablement, depuis qu'on porte en France des dentelles
 de 15. et des assortimens les autres.

PLATE VI
 PAGE OF ORIGINAL PREFACE FROM THE RICHELIEU COLLECTION OF SAMPLES.

livres the ell. The thread used for home consumption, serving for the fabrication of all the laces, is in skeins, and is drawn from French Flanders.

“Women work the lace with bobbins: the cleverest workers earn seven to eight *sols* at the most a day; the lesser workwomen earn but four to five *sols*; the inferiors, who are much greater in number, with difficulty attain three *sols* at the end of their day, working from sunrise to dark.

“The export is more considerable at the time of the clearance of the Spanish flotillas. Taking several years together, Havre and its environs can export on an average some three hundred thousand (300,000) *livres* worth of lace of all kinds each year; this manufacture has fallen off considerably since the wearing of silk lace and embroidered muslin in France.”



REPRODUCED FROM ADA K. LONGFIELD'S "HISTORY OF THE IRISH LINEN AND COTTON PRINTING INDUSTRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, VOL. LXVII, JUNE, 1937.

COTTON PRINTING IN IRELAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by
FRANCES LITTLE

THE appearance of a chintz pattern in this country and its identification by a piece in the National Museum in Dublin has led to the discovery of a cotton printing industry in Ireland that, like its European contemporaries, had its beginnings as early as the seventeenth century. Its development as well followed closely along the lines of French and English manufactories, and it even preceded them upon occasion in the matter of technical improvements. That Ireland had such an industry at this time undoubtedly has been known to every reader of a chintz book, and various must have been the conjectures about the "excessively pretty" linens printed with copperplate, which were seen in 1752 at Drumcondra¹ by the celebrated Mrs. Delany.² But what these prints were has not been known, for Irish cotton printing has been shrouded in the same obscurity that surrounds the greater part of the manufactories that operated throughout Europe in the eighteenth century. The record, however, has always existed in the form of premiums, petitions, advertisements, and directories of the day, until now from these documents a narrative has been built up of an industry that numbered in all nearly a hundred concerns and that produced in its later phases the same type of work that was done at the great Jouy manufactory in France.³

Irish cotton printing—a slightly inaccurate term since its materials during the first half of the eighteenth century were mostly linens—dif-

¹ In the vicinity of Dublin. For this and other centers, see map.

² Mrs. Mary Granville Delany, whose letters and journals furnish a very complete picture of life in the eighteenth century. In a letter to her sister she wrote, "Burke made me go with her to *Drumcondra*, half a mile off, to see a new manufactory that is set up there of printed linens done by copperplates, they are excessively pretty."

³ Longfield, Ada K., M.A., LL.B., "History of the Irish Linen and Cotton Printing Industry in the 18th Century," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. LXVII, June, 1937.

ferred in one respect from that of its European contemporaries. Its market, owing to English restrictions, was almost wholly domestic, and shipments, when they could be made, were of necessity to distant countries, of which one was Spain, and another possibly Portugal. On the other hand, cotton printing in Ireland did not have to contend, as it did in France and England, with the powerful weaving trades, but on the contrary received every aid and encouragement from both local organizations and the Irish Parliament. The idea was generally held that an industry of this kind established at home would prevent the expenditure of large sums of money for the importation of the same type of material abroad. With all Europe busily engaged in the manufacture of chintzes, it was only logical that a demand for them would be created in Ireland.

The earliest reference to cotton printing in Ireland occurs in a Signet Office Paper, dated 1693, and preserved in the Record Office in London. It recommends the petition of John Ponsard and David Cossart to introduce their extraordinary invention of staining and printing in colors on linen, "never found out in our Kingdom of Ireland." But this novel enterprise apparently went no further than the suggestion. Cotton printing actually did not begin until about 1720, when an English printer named Grant settled at Palmerstown, near Dublin. Here, and at a time when Europe was only beginning to work out some of the Indian processes of dyeing, Grant started a small venture that was destined to become not only one of the earliest but one of the most important factories in Ireland, and which was to continue under the direction of this one family for nearly half a century. He also was a pioneer in a locality which later became a center for cotton printing, with the River Liffey and its tributaries for water supply and with Dublin for a market. At first this printer, as did others, used the resist method, or "wax work,"⁴ as it was termed in local parlance. Later he progressed to color processes and dyed his linens in imitation of what he termed "calicoes," indubitably the painted cottons of India. What these early prints were we do not know, but they could have been no more than a crude attempt to emulate by means of the few colors and methods available the brilliant and sophisticated fabrics from India that in the preceding century had so captured the fancy of Europe. This also applies to the printed cottons made throughout Europe prior to the establishment of the Jouy manufactory in 1760. During Grant's lifetime the work continued under his direction, after which, in 1776,

⁴ A coating of wax applied to parts of the fabric, which allows only the unprotected surfaces to take the dye.

it passed first to his wife and then in turn to his daughter. By means of one of these public petitions for Parliamentary aid that combine fortuitously business concerns with domestic affairs, we learn how Grant's daughter, Mrs. Mary Knabbs, came into possession of her property. This was not arrived at, it is clear, without dissension among the heirs; for one thing, Mrs. Knabbs and her husband resented the action of a brother in taking out secretly letters of administration. Finally the matter was turned over to an old acquaintance, Mr. Daniel Simpson, for settlement. Mr. Simpson, in his turn, consulted various of his colleagues and they agreed, one and all, that it was Mrs. Knabbs, competent and enterprising, who was best qualified to carry on the business. Their judgment was well founded, for the new owner, first purchasing equipment with the six hundred pounds from her mother's estate, set herself to increase the business. So successful was she that within eight years she was printing more material than any other two yards in Ireland, and in so superior a manner that linens were sent to her from as far away as Cork for this purpose. She made, according to a contemporary, the same kind of prints with wood blocks that were being done at Drumcondra by copper plates, and so skilfully, on the same evidence, that the two could not be distinguished the one from the other. Her business continued to grow until in 1765 her yearly output was valued at more than four thousand pounds. After this year all reference to her name ceases.

In the meanwhile, Samuel Grant, the brother in question, at about the time that his sister entered into the possession of the family works, and probably actuated thereby, went to Ballsbridge, also near Dublin. Here he took over buildings which the Trustees of the Linen Hall⁵ in 1727 had leased trustingly for an earlier but incompetent cotton printer named Daniel Chappell, whose efforts by 1735 had come to naught. Upon these buildings, which he was allowed to hold for years rent-free, and upon their equipment, Samuel expended more than five thousand pounds. Here he began what proved to be a sound and well-established business, for the proprietor, like his sister, had been brought up in the printing business and had increased his knowledge by visits to foreign manufactories. Furthermore, with wide and intelligent vision, he had at times taken some of his workmen abroad with him and allowed them to remain for a time for their own improvement. Like so many of his contemporaries, Grant also copied the familiar Indian chintzes, and his work, he

⁵ An association, which together with the Dublin Society, was interested in the promotion of cotton printing.

estimated, was as good as any imported from abroad, not only as regards design but also in excellence of dye—the goal of all cotton printers. He also introduced the printing of silk handkerchiefs in India designs. These apparently met with great favor, for by 1763 he estimated that they were being sold in and about Dublin to the amount of twenty thousand pounds yearly. Along with handkerchiefs, he printed linens, cotton, muslins, and cambrics, in the course of which he employed more than a hundred persons, besides millwrights, carpenters, and smiths. He carried on the business until 1776, when he died intestate and his daughter was entrusted with the administration of his property.

In addition to these two early and well-established factories there were others in the same general locality whose history runs concurrently. One, and it was ranked as important as that of Grant's, belonged to Jonathan Sisson of Lucan, north of Dublin. This printer, as probably was the case with many others, copied his designs from imported materials.⁶ The fact is quite evident since in 1758 he was advertising for two good cutters of prints, capable of drawing and altering patterns from foreign originals. The firm existed until 1800 and received during its existence many a premium from the Dublin Society for its chintzes.

There was also John Fisher, an Englishman, and Joseph Chappell, kin perhaps to the unfortunate at Ballsbridge, who in 1742 had a printing house at Rathfarnham where they printed in china blue, reds and purples. Another worker was Thomas Ashworth, at Donnybrook, who printed in 1753 his wallpapers to match his chintz patterns for hangings. He was succeeded in business by his widow, who continued the work on the same lines; in 1763 she proclaimed herself also ready to match any pattern or color in furniture hangings.

As may be seen, block printing was the method employed by the greater part of these early eighteenth century printers. But in 1752 we come to the copperplate prints of Drumcondra, so much admired by Mrs. Delany. This manufactory, although its early history is somewhat obscure, seems to have been founded by Theophilus Thompson and Francis Nixon, and certainly by 1755, since in that year they issued a petition for aid in carrying on this new business. The two partners deemed themselves the innovators of the copperplate process; they described it as "a Method never practised in any country, nor yet known to any Person, except the *Peti-*

⁶ In 1862 Edward Braughall, a dealer in cotton prints in Ireland, stated that 35 years before, when he was an apprentice, the dealers imported all their printed goods from Holland.

tioners.” In reality Holland ⁷ is credited with the invention of copperplate impressions, but the statement, at least in a circumscribed locality, was not unreasonable, for it was not until six years later that Benjamin Franklin was to send home to his wife from London cotton printed “curiously” (as he termed it) from copperplate, and the invention was not introduced at Jouy until 1770. These copperplate linens from Drumcondra were printed in a single color and sold at the factory’s warehouse in Dublin. By 1754 the firm was advertising not only linens but cottons, lawns, and cambrics, printed in what they termed the most elegant patterns and lasting colors and from plates engraved by the best artist that could be procured at Paris. They turned out materials for dresses, for men’s waistcoats, for furniture coverings and for hangings, and to identify their fabrics beyond all chance of error they stamped them at each end with the manufactory’s mark: His Majesty’s Arms in the centre, Hibernia with the Attributes on one side, a Cypher on the other, and underneath the name DRUMCONDRA in large letters. These Drumcondra prints attained an enormous success, so much so that their fame reached the outside world. As a result, about 1757 the industry was transferred to “another Kingdom,” generally considered to have been England, and all the remaining goods, dress materials, hangings, chair covers, and window curtains, as noted in the *Universal Advertiser* of that year, were sold at a reduction of 15 shillings in the pound.

With Drumcondra leading the way, other printers were quick to follow their example. An establishment of note was the factory at Leixlip, to the north, where Samuel Dickson and Company in 1758 were printing with copperplates, linens, cambrics, lawn, and cottons, in what they designated as an entirely new manner. They specialized, it would seem, in flower patterns, copied as closely as possible from nature. This was doubtless the idea of Samuel Dickson, for he painted in watercolors and had made for himself quite a reputation with his flowers and birds. Later the firm extended its patterns to include animals, fruit, landscapes and architectural designs. All of these, as it was stated in public notices, were portrayed in their natural colors and all were warranted to bleach and wash without harm. Notwithstanding the variety of design and the

⁷Jenny-Trümpy, *Handel und Industrie des Cantons Glarus und Schweizerische Baumwollindustrie*, p. 43. Romeyn de Hooghe of Amsterdam in 1658 engraved copperplates and invented a machine to adapt them to printing. As this reference is included in a work which deals with cotton printing, it would seem logical to believe that the passage refers to printing on materials.

excellence of their goods, the undertaking failed. Dickson gave it up about 1764 and went to London to keep a picture shop. The manufactory continued, but under other owners, until the year 1786, when it was put up at auction; its building, its copperplate machines, its block printing tables and engraved metal plates, all to be let for the sum of eighty pounds a year. There was also a factory at Temple-Oge in 1758 where linens and lawns were printed, again "very Curiously" from copper plates. This firm did excellent work apparently, for it pleased very highly the members of the Dublin Society. These latter considered the Temple-Oge prints not only quite as good as the linens stamped at Drumcondra and Leixlip, but were of the opinion that the work of this later concern was perhaps rather better.⁸

But the manufactory that is of the greatest interest, since here was printed the "Volunteer Furniture"⁹ which is illustrated (Plate I), was that of Edward Clarke at the same Palmerstown where, many years before, Grant had started his printing. Not only did he have a factory for turning out his prints, but he had a warehouse in Dublin where he disposed of them. He stocked both his own materials and those of other printing yards, in order to have a good choice from which country dealers and upholsterers might choose. He specialized in purple, red and copperplate cottons and linens for hangings and covers, though he sold also a wide range of chintzes made in Ireland for dress wear. By 1787 he increased his business by uniting with Messrs. O'Brien and Comfords, who had a cotton factory at Balbriggan.¹⁰ The new firm now combined both manufacturing and printing and turned out prints of the same type as were sold in London and Manchester. Again Irish enterprise made use of a new and advanced process, for by 1787 the manufactory was printing with copper cylinders, not long after the invention had been introduced into English work, and some years before it was to be adopted at Jouy. The business was continued, and successfully it is hoped, up until 1793.

The chintz with the military subject appears, starred, as it might be said, in one of Clarke's advertisements:

⁸ Cotton printing was also done, both by copperplate and woodblock, by Hugh Holmes at Richardstown, Co. Louth, in 1764; by Anderson and Willisson, who also marked their fabrics, at Blarney near Cork, in 1771. There are also records of industries of this kind in Belfast, toward the end of the century.

⁹ The word furniture in this connection refers to hangings and upholstery material.

¹⁰ Cotton manufacturing began in Ireland, in the south, about the year 1750. Gill, Conrad; *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry*, p. 227, Oxford, 1925.

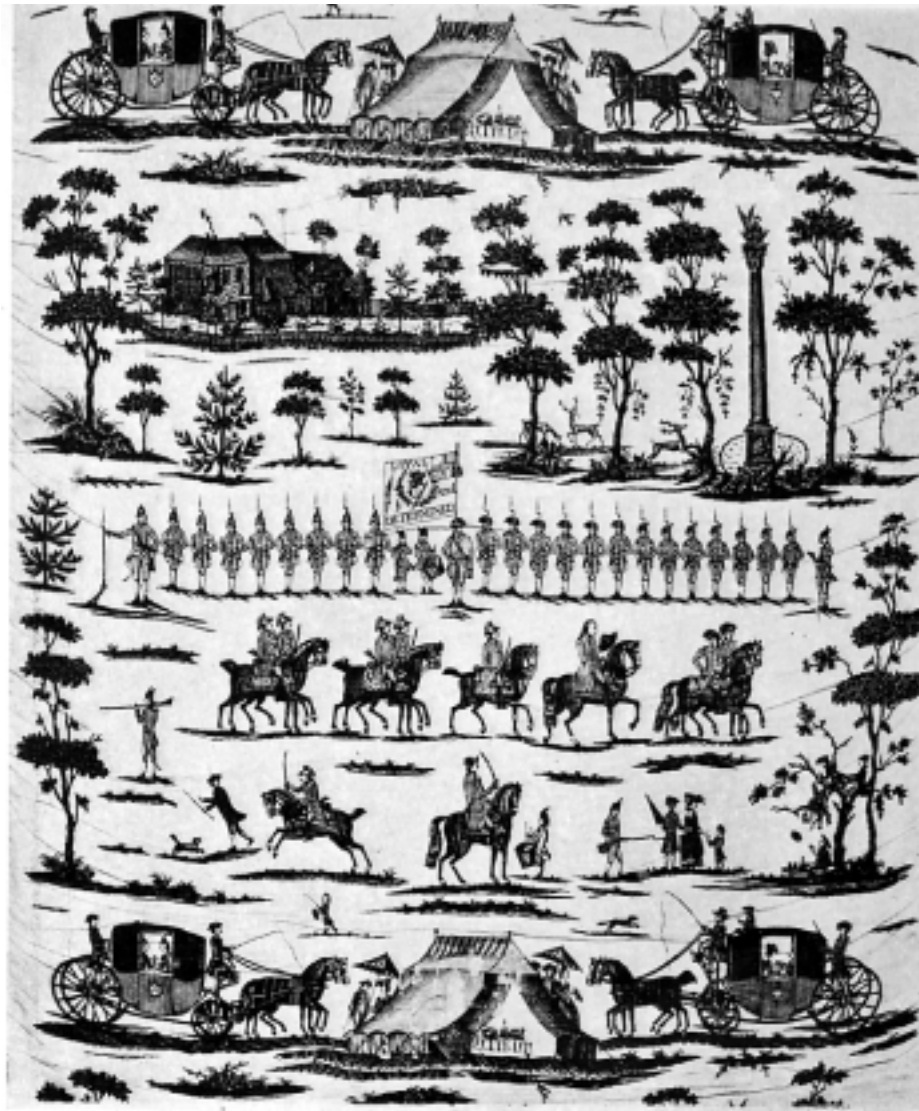


PLATE I

CHINTZ PRINTED FROM COPPERPLATES REPRESENTING THE LAST PROVINCIAL REVIEW BY LORD CHARLEMONT IN PHOENIX PARK, DUBLIN, 1783. NATIONAL MUSEUM, DUBLIN.

Dublin Evening Post, November 25th, 1783
Furniture, Cotton and Linen Warehouse, Werburgh St.

“Proper Encouragement for ready Money will be given to all persons furnishing of Houses, by Edward Clarke, Linen Draper, Proprietor of the Irish furniture, Cotton Linen Warehouse, No. 12 Werburgh St., Dublin; who has now ready for inspection the greatest Variety of Chintz and other new and elegant Furniture, Cotton Linens (finished from Copperplates) ever offered for sale in this kingdom; particularly a Volunteer Furniture, which is an exact representation of the last provincial Review in the Phoenix Park; with a striking likeness of Lord Charlemont, as reviewing General, and every other matter fully represented that was worth observation at that Review; and also every pleasing object in and about the Fifteen Acres (the Review ground.)

This military chintz (Plate I) apparently is the only authentic example located from all the quantities of printed cottons that were produced in Ireland during this period. It was found in 1840 in a house in Ireland where it might well have hung from the day when it left the loom and printing shed. It was part of a set of bedroom curtains which the new occupant of the house had made up into small quilts and sent to the descendants of the original owners. The pattern, printed on a mixed cotton and linen material, shows in the center Lord Charlemont,¹¹ hatless, and escorted by cavalry, riding down the lines before troops who are presenting arms. Below are scenes relative to the review, carriages with feminine occupants, a tent lends itself to entertaining speculation, a guard repressing a too-curious family group, and a soldier driving back a harmless spectator; also the perennial dog. On the door panel of each carriage is a letter, one a C and the other an M. The first refers in all probability to Lady Charlemont, and the second to Lady Moira, wife of the first earl of Moira. The large building at the left, near the top, is the Lodge of the Chief Secretary, and at the right is the Phoenix Column. It is an extremely sophisticated and decorative pattern and gives some indication of how excellent these lost Irish chintzes were.

Although the “Volunteer Furniture” is the only Irish chintz that has been identified with certainty,¹² many other examples must still exist. But it is doubtful, since they were patterned after a universal type of design, whether, without an identifying mark, they could be recognized. The subject, however, is one that captures the imagination and leads to enter-

¹¹ James Caulfield Charlemont, first Earl of Charlemont (1728-1799) was an Irish peer and statesman. In 1778 he was placed in command of the First Volunteers, an association formed during the war with America to protect the country against foreign invasion in the absence of regular forces.

¹² Two other pieces are preserved, one in the First Volunteer Masonic Lodge of Ireland and the other in the Royal Irish Society of Antiquaries.

taining speculation. What greater adventure, for example, could be vouchsafed to a lover of old chintzes than the discovery, unknown or forgotten, of one of these Drumcondra prints with “His Majesty’s Arms in the center, and Hibernia with the Attributes at one side.”



CHARLEMONT HOUSE, DUBLIN, 1793
BY JAMES MALTON. IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

THE PRAISE OF THE NEEDLE

by

JOHN TAYLOR (1580-1653)

THIS famous old poem is here reprinted from a photostatic reproduction of the copy in the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, of *The Needles Excellency*, 10th ed. (London). Printed for James Boler, 1634.

The author, John Taylor, was known as "The Water Poet" (1580-1653) because he was actually a Thames waterman, as well as a very prolific writer.

Although his collected works were published in 1630, this was not among them; so that it may have first appeared in the volume from which it is here reproduced.



The Praise of the Needle.

It will increase their *estate*, enlarge their *floor*,
 To use their tongues less, and their Needles more,
 The Needles that provide profit, yeelds, and pleasure,
 But sharper-use of the tongue, bites out of measure.
 A Needle (though it be but small and slender)
 Yet is it both a *maker* and a *mender*;
 A grave Retriever of old Rents decayd,
 Stops holes and Leakes, and desperate cuts displayd.
 And thus without the Needle we may see,
 We should without our Bills and Biggins bee;
 No Hats or Smocks, our nakedness to hide,
 No Garments gay, to make us magnifice:
 No Shadows, Shapparoones, Cauls, Bands, Ruffs, Kuffs,
 No Kerchiefs, Quoytes, Chin-cloths, or Merry-Muffs,
 No Crav-cloaths, Aprons, Hand-kerchiefs or Falls,
 No Tab'c-boards for Parlours or for Halls,
 No Sheets, no Towels, Napkins, Pillow-beavers,
 Nor any Garment man or woman wears.
 For is a Needle prov'd an Instrument
 Of *profit*, *pleasure*, and of *ornament*.
 Which such y^e Queens have grac'd in hand to take,
 As high borne Ladies such esteeme did make,
 That as their Daughters Daughters up did grow,
 The Needles Art, they to their children show.

And as 'twas then an *exercise of praise*,
 So what deserves more honour in these dayes,
 Than this which daily doth it selfe expresse,
 A most all enemy to idleness.
 The use of Sewing is exceeding old,
 As in the sacred Text it is enold:
 Our *Parents* first in *Paradise* began,
 Which hath descended since from man to man:
 The Mothers taught their Daughters, Sires their Sons,
 Thus in a line successively it runs
 For general profit, and for recreation,
 From generation unto generation.
 With works like Cherubims Embroider'd rare,
 The Covers of the *Tabernacle* were.
 And by th' Almighty great command, we see,
 That *staves* Garments beseyded works should be;
 And further, God did bid his Vestments should
 Be made most gay, and glorious to behold.
 Thus plainly, and most truly is declar'd
 The Needles worke hath fill bin in regard,
 For it doth ART, so like to NATVRE frame,
 As if IT were HER Sister, or the SAME.

§ Gen. 3. 7. ¶ Embroidery ancient. Exo. 26. 1. Ch. 23. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6
 Flowers

The Praise of the Needle.

Flowers, Plants, and Fishes, Bees, Birds, Flies, and Bees,
 Hills, Dales, Plains, Pastures, Skies, Seas, Rivers, Trees;
 There's nothing near at hand, or farthest sought,
 But with the Needle may be shap'd and wrought,
 In clothes of Art as I have often seen
 Mens figur'd constitutions like have been,
 That if the parties selfe had been in place,
 Yet ART would vie with NATVRE for the grace.
 More over, Poets rare, and Anagrams,
 Significat searching sentences from Names,
 True History, or various pleasant fiction
 Inundry colours mixt, with Art commixion,
 All in Dimension: Ovals, Squares, and Round;
 Arts like includ'd within Nature's bounds;
 So that Art seems not merely naturall,
 In forming shap'es to Geometrical.
 And though our Country every where is fill'd
 With Ladies, and with Gentlewomen, skill'd
 In this rare Art, yet here they may discern
 Some things to teach them, if they list to learn.
 And as this booke some cunning workes doth teach,
 (Too hard for weakes capacities to reach)
 So for weakes learners, other workes here be,
 As plain and easie as are A B C.

Thus skillfull, or unskillfull, each may take
 This booke, and of it, each good use may make;
 All sorts of workes, allow'd, that can be run'd,
 Here are directions how they may be fram'd,
 And for this Kingdomes good are hither come,
 From the remotest parts of Christendome
 Collected with much paines and industry,
 From scorching Spains, and freezing *Majesty*,
 From fertile France, and pleasant Italy,
 From Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany,
 And some of these rare Patterns have beene set
 Beyond the bounds of faithlesse Mahomet:
 From spacious China, and those Kingdomes East,
 And from great *Atenes*, the Indies West.
 Thus are these workes, *ferre fetcht*, and *dearely bought*,
 And consequently, *good for Ladies bought*,
 Nor doe I deigrate (in any case)
 Or doe esteeme of other writings base,
 For Text-workes, *Knit-workes*, *Lace-workes*, *Flax-workes*, *Wet*,
 Most curious *Paris*, or rare *Italian* *Car-workes*,
 Fine *Irish* *Flax*, *Irish* *Flax*, *New* *Flax*, and *Chaine* *Flax*,
 Beare *Bird* *Flax*, *Flyer* *Flax*, *Irish* *Flax*, and *Guern* *Flax*,
 The *Spanish* *Flax*, *English* *Flax*, and *Atenes* *Flax*,
 The *Martin*, *Py* *Flax*, *Black* *Flax*, and the *Cross* *Flax*.

The Praise of the Needle.

All these are good, and these we must allow,
And these are every where in practice now,
And in this Booke, these are of these some store,
With many others, never lesse before.
Here Practice and Invention may be free,
And as a Squirrel skips from tree to tree,
So Maids may (from their Mistresse, or their Mother)
Learne to leave one worke, and to learne another.
If here they may make choise of which is which,
And skip from worke to worke, from stitch to stitch,
With, in some, deliquitfull practice shall
(With profit) make them perfect in them all,
Thus hoping that these wokes may have this guide
To serve for ornament, and not for pride:
To the rich vertue, to the idle waste,
For these ends, may this booke have good success.

Here follow certaine Sonnets in the Honorable
memory of *Queens and great Ladies*, who
have bin famous for their rare Inventions,
and practise with the Needle.

King David by an apt Gentlewife
Durst sew, with Mary, she chere her worke,

And to a Kings faire daughter, doth allude,
Where to her Spouse, he bravely brings her fode,
In Garments wrought of Needleworke and Gold,
Richer then and more glorious to the eye,
Whose out-fare much more glory did unfold,
The presence of th' eternall Majesty.
Thus may you see Records of holy Wits
Set downe (what Death or Time can nere deface.)
By these comparisons, comparing fit,
The noble worth of Needle-worke high grace.
Then learne faire Daughters, leaue your games to spend
In this, which such high praises doth commend.

Katharine first married to Arthur, Prince of
Wales, and afterward to Henry the 8.
King of England.

I Read that in the seventh Kin. *Henris Daigee*,
Faire Katharine, Daughter to the Castile King,
Came into England with a pompous traine
Of French Ladies, which she thence did bring.
She to the eighth King Henry married was,
And afterwards divorc'd, wasse virtuously

(Although

The Praise of the Needle.

(Although a *Queene*) yet she her dayes did passe,
In working with the Needle curiously,
As in the Tower, and places more beside,
Her excellent memoriall may be seene:
Wherby the *Needles* praise is dignified
By her faire Ladies, and her selfe, a *Queene*.
Thus for her paines, have her reward is full,
Her worke proclaime her praise, though she be dull.

Mary, *Queene of England, and wife to Phillip,*
King of Spaine.

Her Daughter *Mary* here the Scepter swaid,
And though she were a *Queene* of mighty power,
Her memory will never be decaid,
Which by her worke is likewise in the Tower.
In *Windsor Castle*, and in *Rampase Court*,
In that most populous roome call'd *Paradise*:
Who ever pleaseth thither to resort,
May see some worke of hers, of wooddow price.
Her greatest heild in neede of reputation,
To take the Needle in her Royall hand:

Which was a good example to our Nation,
To be imitated from another Land:
And thus this *Queene*, in wisdom thought it fit,
The *Needles* worke pleas'd her, and the *grace* dit.

Elizabeth *Queene of England, and Daughter*
to King Henric the eight.

When this great *Queene*, whose memory shall nee
By any terme of time be overcaid,
For when she world, and all things in shall see,
Yet shall her glorious fame for ever last,
When first a *Maid*, had many troubles past,
From *Isyle* to *Isyle*, by *Maries* angry spleene
And *Windsor*, and the *Tower* in prison fast,
And after all, was *Englands* *Perceles* *Queene*.
Yet howsoever fortune came or went,
She made the *Needle* her companion still,
And in that exercise her time she spent,
As many living yet, doe know her skill.
Thus was she still a *Captive*, or else *Crownd*.
A *Needle-woman* *Royall*, and renowned.

The

The Praise of the Needle.

5
The Right Honourable, Vertuous, and learned
Lady, Mary, late Countesse of
Pembrooke.

A Patience, and a Patientie she was
Of vertuous industry, and studious learning:
And she her earthly F^rustrage did passe
In Acts, which were high honour most concerning.
Rave *V*illan booke in *W*ildiers well can show,
Her admirable workes in Art fraid:
Where men, and beasts, seeme like, evens seeme to grow,
And Art (surpass'd by Nature) seemes afraid.
Thus this renowned Honourable Dame,
Her happy time most happily did spend;
Whole worth recorded in the mouth of Fame,
(Vntill the world shall end) shall never end
She wrought so well in Needle-work, that she,
Nor yet her workes, shall ere forgotten be.

6
The Right Honourable and religious Lady,
Elizabeth Dormer, Wife to the late Right
Honourable, the Lord Robert
Dormer deceased.

*T*his Noble Lady in times time past,
Durst to time present, teach us how to come,
And longer on her life, her lead shall last,
Workes shewes her worth, though all the world were
And though her Reverend frile, with many dayes (dumb,
Of honourable age is leaden deepe,
Yet with her Needle (to her worthy praise)
Shee's working often, ere the Sunne doth perpe.
And, many times, when Phoebe in the West
Declined is, and Lasse shines her head:
This ancient honour'd Lady rests from Beed,
And workes when still shee goes to bed.
Thus then the Needle makes her recreation,
Whose well spent paines are others imitation.

T

The Praise of the Needle.

To all degrees of both sexes, that love or live by
the laudable employment of
the Needle.

*I*f any ask to whom these lines are writ,
I answer, unto them that doe inquire:
For since the worlds Creation none was yet,
Whose wants did not the Needles helpe desire.
And therefore, as to him, or her, or thee,
Or them, or they, I doe not write at all:
Nor so particulars of he or she,
But generally, to all in generall.

Then let not Pride looke scornfully a-ferwe,
Without the Needle, Pride would makee goe:
Nor yet let *S*orrow cry pittie, and weepe,
Sorrow is forgetfull much in doing so.
Nor yet let any one presume to prate,
And call these lines poore trifles, by me pend:
Let not opinion be perjurate,
But mend it, ere they dare to discourte,
So fare thou well, my well deserving booke,
(I meane, the workes desires, and not my looke)
I much presume that all that on it looke,
Will like and lend the workemans good desire.
Foolles play the Foolles, but 'tis through want of wit,
Whil I to wisdomes course doe take it.

FINIS

John Taylor.



PLATE XLVII

DETAIL OF AN ENGLISH VESTMENT PRESERVED IN THE VATICAN.
FROM "ENGLISH MEDIEVAL EMBROIDERY," BY A. G. I. CHRISTIE.

BOOK REVIEWS

ENGLISH MEDIEVAL EMBROIDERY. By A. G. I. Christie. A brief survey from the beginning of the tenth century until the end of the fourteenth, with a descriptive catalogue of the surviving examples. With 160 plates, two in color, and 153 illustrations in the text. Folio, cloth, 1938.

This is a truly monumental work on one of the great arts of the middle ages, of which too few examples remain. These examples of the *Opus Anglicanum*, however, are not found only in England, but were so well known and appreciated, especially during the time known as their Great Period (1250 to 1350), that they were much desired as precious gifts from kings and prelates to cathedrals and churches all over Europe.

Although many of those that remain have now been gathered into museums, where their conservation is perhaps more assured, even if their surroundings are more prosaic, many are still in the sacristies of ancient and remote churches as well as in great cathedrals.

It is therefore fortunate that such a careful and complete record of these precious works of art has been made while yet there remain some that may be doomed to destruction in this turbulent modern world.

Mrs. Christie has made a careful study of the history of the art as far as it can be known. She cites medieval documents of the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries which mention names of ancient embroiderers, records of purchases and quotations from inventories such as those of the Vatican and other great ecclesiastical treasuries like Canterbury or St. Paul's Cathedral.

Her descriptive catalogue begins with the Anglo-Saxon embroidery known as St. Cuthbert's stole, now preserved at Durham Cathedral, and made, according to the inscription worked on it, for Bishop Fridestan at the order of Queen Ælflæd, wife of Edward the Elder. It must have been worked before the year 916, as the Queen died in that year. For intricate and skilful workmanship, and careful use of precious material, this stole could not be surpassed at any period.



DRAWING BY A. G. I. CHRISTIE, FROM
"ENGLISH MEDIEVAL EMBROIDERY." FIG. 12.

According to Mrs. Christie, this work "reveals what exquisite needlework was being produced in England before the Norman invasion," and proves a previous long-standing tradition. She adds: "It can scarcely be doubted that the Norman conquest was a disaster to Anglo-Saxon art; the existing embroideries of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, although interesting, show a distinct decline in ability when compared with the earlier work." Her greatest emphasis, however, is laid on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when the art had risen again to its greatest importance and when these English copes and other vestments were among the most highly prized treasures in many parts of Europe. When one thinks of the two marvelous copes still in the little medieval church of St. Bertrand de Comminges (in the foothills of the Pyrenees), to which they were given by the Pope Clement V in 1305, or the group of vestments in the ancient Cathedral of Anagni where they have been since the time of Benedetto Cætani who became Pope Boniface VIII in 1294, one reflects with awe at the survival of these precious and perishable treasures.

Mrs. Christie's lifelong study of ancient needlework has made it possible for her to analyze intricate and laborious techniques, and her very clear style of drawing both for details of design and as diagrams of stitches, add greatly to the understanding and appreciation of the plates.

In beauty and perfection of technique the ecclesiastical embroidery produced by the master craftsmen of the Middle Ages has never been surpassed and the Club is indeed proud to number among its members an author whose valuable work on the subject is so notable a contribution to the history of medieval art.

PERSIAN TEXTILES AND THEIR TECHNIQUE. By Nancy Andrews Reath¹ and Eleanor B. Sachs. Yale University Press, New Haven, Oxford University Press, London. 1937.

This important volume marks a long step forward in the solution of the perplexing question of provenience in the history of Near Eastern textile fabrics.

Published by the Yale University Press, the volume is an attractive piece of book-making and its enlightening text and explanatory diagrams

¹ It is to be regretted that Miss Reath did not live to see the book published. Her thorough and conscientious work can ill be spared in a field of such widening interest.

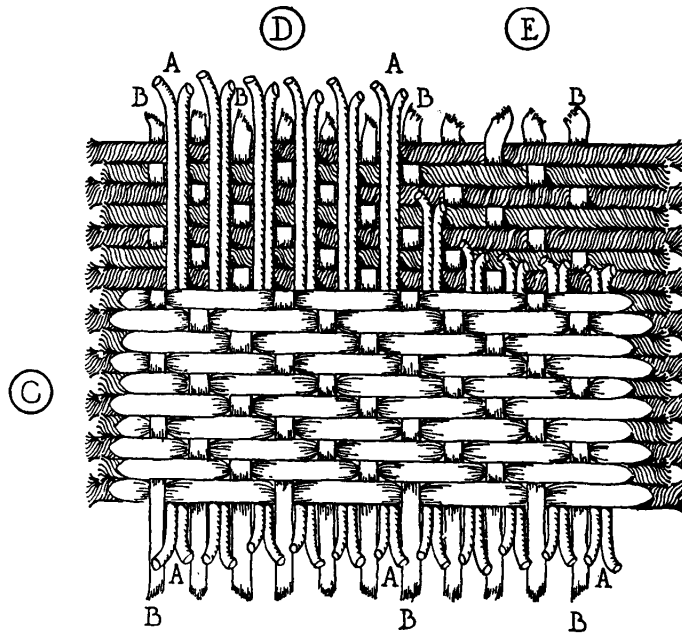


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE TECHNIQUE OF A PLAIN COMPOUND TWILL,
FROM "PERSIAN TEXTILES AND THEIR TECHNIQUE."

- A. INNER WARPS, WHICH NEVER APPEAR ON THE FACE OR BACK OF THE FABRIC, BUT LIE BETWEEN. A PAIR OF INNER WARPS MAY BE SEEN NEXT EACH MAIN WARP, B.
- B. MAIN WARPS, WHICH BIND THE WEFTS ON BOTH FACE AND BACK.
- C. SECTION OF FABRIC INTACT, SHOWING TWILL WEAVE MADE BY MAIN WARPS AND WEFTS; THE INNER WARPS ARE HIDDEN BY THE WEFTS.
- D. SECTION WITH SURFACE WEFT THREADS REMOVED, SHOWING POSITION OF INNER WARPS WITHIN THE FABRIC.
- E. SECTION WITH SURFACE WEFTS AND INNER WARPS BOTH REMOVED, SHOWING EXTRA WEFTS CARRIED ON THE BACK AND BOUND BY THE MAIN WARP.

will well repay the serious attention of all interested in the fascinating art of weaving.

In planning this work it was not possible, nor was it the purpose of the authors, to include in the study every known piece of importance—such a complete survey it is hoped will be included in the forthcoming publication of the American Institute of Iranian Art and Archæology—but it was their aim to discover, if possible, in a carefully selected group of fabrics chosen from Museums and private collections, the characteristics of Persian textiles by a scientific analysis of the weaves produced in that country from the Sasanian through the Safavid periods; and the ninety-four pieces chosen amply illustrate the technical features under discussion.

Most of the Persian weaves that have survived to this day are of silk, although a few rare fragments of complicated texture and showing strong resemblance to certain early medieval silk textiles² are of cotton and wool, a heavy material such as might have been used for the trousers of huntsmen. In the analytic study of the silk weaves it was found by comparing them with textiles from other countries that certain types persisted in Persia throughout all periods and that the remarkable results attained by the skilled craftsmen of the Near East were due to their ability and ingenuity in developing only a few types; as for instance a compound twill and a compound cloth, two weaves that were in constant use from the Sasanian period to the nineteenth century; and two other weaves—double cloth and compound satin—which first appeared in the Seljuk period and continued through the later centuries.

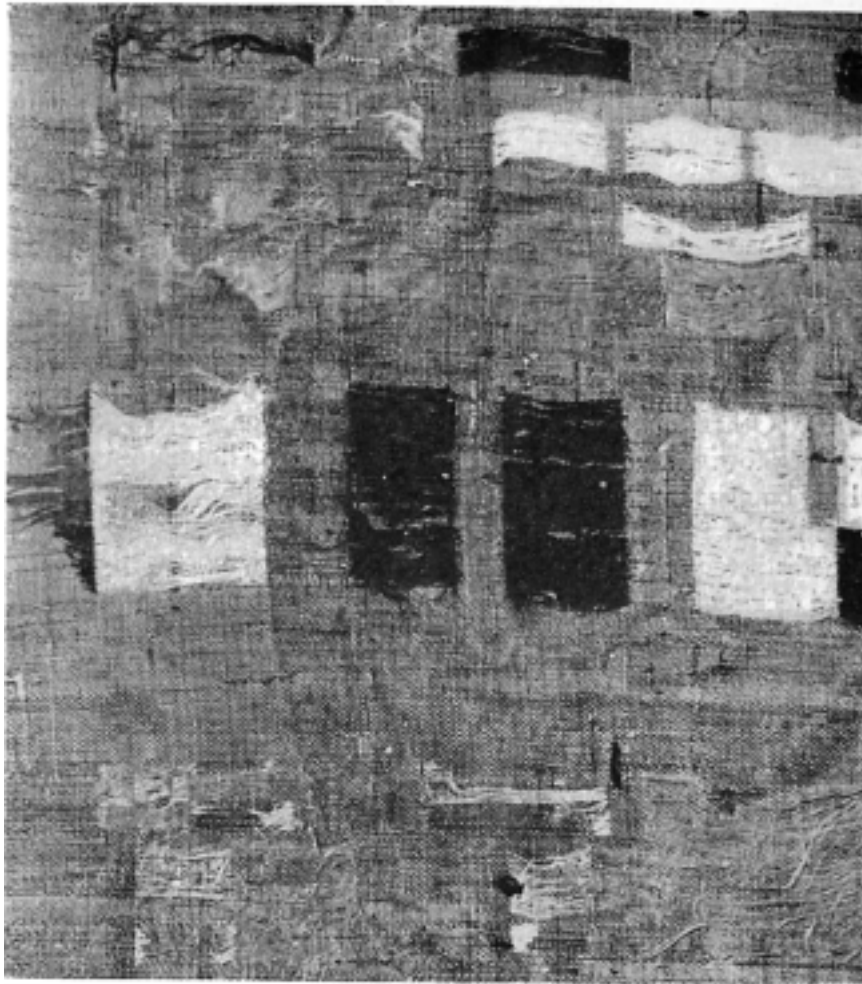
It was, however, in the sumptuous Safavid silks of the seventeenth century that the looms of Persia surpassed all others in the beauty and intricacy of their weaves, fabrics of gold and silver texture reflecting all the pomp and splendor that then prevailed in the court of an Oriental potentate. These weaves, as stated in the chapter devoted to distinctive types, “exemplify in a striking manner the continuation and development in Persia of early weaves, since they are fundamentally of the same structure as the compound twills and compound cloths of the Sasanian and Seljuk periods. The basic form of weave, with the inner warp construction, is identical, although an entirely different effect is produced in the later pieces by the use of metal thread and by brocading.”

² Cf. Lamm, Carl Johan: *Cotton in Medieval Textiles of the Far East*, Paris, 1937, p. 17 ff.



FRAGMENT.

PLAIN COMPOUND TWILL, SASANIAN PERIOD, V CENTURY.
PLATE 45 IN "PERSIAN TEXTILES AND THEIR TECHNIQUE."



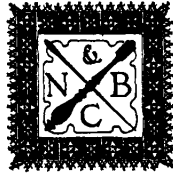
DETAIL OF THE BACK.
SHOWING FLOATED PATTERN WEFTS.
PLAIN COMPOUND TWILL, SASANIAN PERIOD, V CENTURY.
PLATE 45A IN "PERSIAN TEXTILES AND THEIR TECHNIQUE."

These few references to the technical value of the work indicate the thorough and painstaking effort involved in its preparation. As to the illustrations the order followed in the arrangement of the plates corresponds to the classification developed by Miss Reath from an article on weaving by Thomas William Fox, published in the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a classification now used in most of the large museums.

Among the early silks reproduced are those from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the famous Gryphon piece; the winged horse fragment from the Musée Guimet; and the precious elephant fabric woven in Khorassan in the tenth century preserved in the Louvre. Of the several treasures from the Museo Cristiano, perhaps the one illustrated herewith is the most important feature of the book for it enables one to see the front and for first time the reverse of the famous cock piece³ familiar to all students. Other documents from this noted collection are the well-known fragment showing the Sasanian duck-like bird motif holding in its beak a scrolling branch while a second piece is important from a weaving point of view as it shows on the flank of a large animal motif a disk in which an intermediate tone is produced by the use of alternating wefts—a complicated technique clarified by the application of a scientific analysis of the weave. This was made possible, thanks to the cooperation of the Vatican officials, through whose courtesy the precious fabrics here described were made available for study, a study that is now fortunately recorded.

The work which reflects able scholarship combined with patient perseverance and a keenly appreciative art sense, is a valuable addition to the bibliography of textiles.

³ Another fabric of this pattern is preserved in the Hermitage Collection.



CLUB NOTES

The Annual Meeting of 1938 was held at the residence of Mrs. William H. Moore, 4 East 54th Street, on the afternoon of Wednesday, February the sixteenth. The usual business meeting, held at three o'clock, was followed by an address by Phyllis Ackerman, Ph.D., who spoke on silks of the Seljuk period. Dr. Ackerman's interest in Persian art enabled her to speak fluently and delightfully on the subject, and her study of Seljuk silks was an interesting presentation of historical and technical detail. The value of the lecture was further enhanced by the opportunity to study the superb examples of Seljuk weaving in Mrs. Moore's splendid collection. This collection has since been given to Yale University by Mrs. Moore, and it is hoped that in the near future the Club may be able to arrange a trip to New Haven to see the collection in its new installation.

On March the thirtieth the Club held its Annual Luncheon in the Ballroom of the Cosmopolitan Club where Miss Lillian Burke spoke on the Cape Breton Home Industries. For some ten years or more Miss Burke has been devoting all her energies to the development of this work which is carried on by the natives in their simple homes, homes and families that are supported by healthy toil, raising the sheep, spinning the wool and dyeing the thread necessary to their work. Thanks to Miss Burke's enthusiasm and untiring zeal the splendid rug technique of these people is now so perfected that their rugs, beautiful in design and color, find a ready market. What is more, the product retains all the charm of

fine hand work; it is a flourishing home industry unspoiled by commercialism.

On Monday, April the twenty-fifth, members of the Club met at the Museum of the City of New York where through the courtesy of the Director, Mr. Hardinge Scholle, they were able to visit the store-rooms and see many of the costumes held in reserve for special exhibitions. Miss Isabel Miller, one of our members and one of the curators of the Museum, gave an interesting gallery talk which was continued when the costumes not on exhibition were brought out for inspection. As all of the costumes in this Museum are associated with the history of New York, Miss Miller was able to furnish many interesting details both as to the history of old New York families as well as to the historic dating of certain features of costume. The afternoon proved one of the most successful of the Club's winter program.

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AS OF FEBRUARY 16, 1938

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