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# THE BULLETIN OF THE NEEDLE AND BOBBIN CLUB

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The members of the Needle and Bobbin Club wish to dedicate  
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to the Memory

of

*Norris W. Harkness III*

# A SURVEY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE OF EMBROIDERY 1840 - 1940

By

Joan Edwards

Books on embroidery fall into four main categories:

1. historical surveys
2. reference books
3. books on design and colour
4. ephemera.

With a few notable exceptions the authors are women and the majority are teachers. Their object in writing is didactic. They seek to inform their readers about the history of embroidery, to instruct them in the use of its tools, materials and methods, to teach them about colour and design, and to supply them with patterns.

From the books themselves emerges an interesting picture of the changing face of embroidery over a hundred years. Here is the end of the sampler as a means of recording patterns, alphabets and numerals, and the emergence of new and more liberal attitudes towards the teaching of needlework generally; the demise of Berlin work and the influence on the patterns of embroidery of the Arts and Crafts Movement, *art nouveau* and *art deco*; the growing use and appreciation of the Textile Study Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum, on whose collections so many authors have relied for their illustrations; and the opening rounds of the controversy over the relative importance of design and technique which effectively divided and sometimes still divides the progressive from the traditional embroiderer.

The minor publications, the ephemera, consist chiefly of patterns and instructions for working small accessories of costume, and a quite astonishing assortment of useful and useless objects. Not infrequently they are put together through the enterprising collaboration of a publisher, a journalist, and a number of anonymous but inventive needlewomen to meet the demands of an enormous but not necessarily very selective mass market. Like ground swell below the mainstream of embroidery, they serve to make the point that embroiderers come from all walks of life, represent an amazingly broad cross section of society, and are people to whom embroidery means many different things.

## I. HISTORICAL SURVEYS

The first book on the history of embroidery was published in 1841. It was called *The Art of Needlework* and was edited by Mary Margaret Egerton, Countess of Wilton. It is dedicated with the usual flurry of compliments to the Dowager Queen Adelaide. The publisher was Henry Colburn and the printers William Clowes & Sons, a firm that is still in business today. The book contains 405 gilt-edged pages and 25 chapters covering amongst other subjects the needlework of the Tabernacle and of the Greeks and Romans, the Bayeux Tapestry, needlework on costume, the needlework of royal ladies ("It is well known that Queen Adelaide, and, in consequence of her Majesty's example, those around her, habitually occupied their leisure moments in ornamental needlework"), and *modern* needlework by which the writer means chiefly Berlin Work and the needle paintings of Mary Linwood.

For some unaccountable reason the name of the author of this very comprehensive survey was firmly suppressed. She was, however, Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, and this was the first of eighteen books she subsequently wrote; they include seven written under the pseudonym Sutherland Menzies, four of which were history text books for junior classes published simultaneously in 1873 in Collins School Series. Obviously a widely read young woman, Elizabeth Stone described herself as "a humble and industrious pioneer" in the field of embroidery history. At the end of the book she wrote:

This is, I believe, the first history of needlework ever published. I have met with no other; I have heard of no other; and I have experienced no trifling difficulties in obtaining material for this. I have spared no labour, no exertions, no research. I have toiled through many hundreds of volumes for the chance of finding even a line adaptable to my purpose: sometimes I have met with this trifling success, oftener not.

She claims the leniency in criticism usually accorded to the adventurer on an unexplored track, and hopes that others will build upon the foundation she has laid. Her chance remark that in writing she has tried to avoid "the dry technicalities of the art", coupled with the fact that she was later to write text books on history, seems to indicate that she may not have been keenly interested in the practice of embroidery.

Within a year *The Art of Needlework* had gone into its third edition, and in 1844 a New Edition was issued. Then in 1847, without changing the format, and still bearing the imprint of Henry Colburn and William Clowes, it was bound up with a book of knitting, netting, crochet and

embroidery patterns compiled by Mrs. Henry Owen of Upper Baker Street, entitled *The Illuminated Book of Needlework*, though on another page it appears as *The Illuminated Ladies' Book of Useful and Ornamental Needlework*. The publisher was Henry G. Bohn of York Street, Covent Garden. It contains thirteen pages of hand-coloured patterns on point paper.

The new joint venture has a magnificently coloured title page by M. & N. Hanhart, lithographic printers, of Charlotte Street, on which it is surprising to find Mrs. Owen taking precedence over the Countess of Wilton, the title of whose book has now become *A History of Needlework*. The overall publisher is Henry Bohn. My own copy belonged to a Miss E. A. Bohn though whether this is purely coincidental I shall probably never know.

Mrs. Owen had already one small publication to her credit, *A Hand-book of Knitting* published in 1845, but no other books are attributed to her in the British Museum catalogue, nor does it seem that *The Illuminated Book of Needlework* was ever issued as a separate volume. It is tempting to think that the cost of printing it and colouring the patterns may have been greater than anticipated, and the sales of *The Art of Needlework* having declined (the embroiderer's appetite for history being notoriously limited), the two books were put together as a matter of commercial expediency. In doing this the publishers had before them the example of a book in which historical and practical information were combined in about equal proportion and which seems to have found a ready market. This was Miss Lambert's *Hand-Book of Needlework* which, since it was first issued in 1842, had gone into three editions and had been hailed by one reviewer as "the most complete and erudite treatise on the art of needlework that has ever been compiled." Her idea was that if a brief historical sketch was attached to the various techniques of embroidery - gold work, canvas work, applied work, bead work, braiding, etc. -, the book would be of more interest than "a mere Manual of directions and examples." She also tempted the would-be purchaser with passages on the history of textiles and threads.

But the path of the embroiderer with an original idea for a book is not necessarily a smooth one. In 1851 a publisher named Willis P. Hazard of Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, issued a pirated edition of her book to which he added two small pattern books by English ladies: Mrs. Gaugain's *Miniature Knitting, Netting and Crochet Book* and *The Royal Shetland Shawl, Lace Collar, Brighton Purse, and China Slipper* by Mrs. J. B. Gore. The Duchess of Gloucester to whom Miss Lambert dedicated her book has gone, and in her place this notice, calculated to enrage any author, appeared: "To the Ladies of the United States, this Volume is most

respectfully dedicated, by The Publisher." It was not the first time Miss Lambert had been exposed to this type of abuse. Quickly she dipped her pen in vitriol and wrote an Advertisement which was printed in front of subsequent English editions. It reads:

Without alluding to many petty piracies, the writer cannot refrain from noticing the reprint of this Treatise in America as an original work "dedicated to the Ladies of the United States:" a circumstance which she is fain to accept as a compliment, as there is no redress for the substantial wrong. To imitators at home it may be as well to hint that all designs in this book are copyright.

So it was, we see, the patterns - not the history - that Miss Lambert grudged to the less than honest. It was the patterns that sold the book and which, more than a hundred years later, still sell embroidery books.

As if this was not enough to bear, however, another pirated edition was published in America in 1859. This time the firm was T. B. Peterson who also operated from Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and who may well have had some connection with Willis P. Hazard. They made it into an entirely new book and changed the title to *The Ladies' Complete Guide to Needlework and Embroidery*.

The next major historical survey was angled from the artistic rather than the practical point of view. It was intended to complement another *Handbook of Needlework* published in 1880 by Miss L. Higgin, secretary of the Royal School of Needlework, or as it then was, the School of Art Needlework. In editing this purely practical text book Lady Marian Alford, one of the School's first patronesses, had promised that she herself would provide a sequel on history and design, and in 1886 her *Needlework as Art* appeared. It is a very large book which the *Edinburgh Review* described as "a contribution of no light value to the literature of Decorative art." Lady Alford herself ingenuously admitted it was likely to be considered "too shallow for the learned, too deep for the frivolous, too technical for the general public, and too diffuse for the specialist." Lest we should wonder why, in Heaven's name, she wrote it, she disarms us by saying that her pleasure in doing so was sufficient to excuse these defects. Unfortunately some of her opinions have not stood the test of time. Greatly admiring, for example, the Durham stole and maniple and the Worcester fragments, she nevertheless despised later medieval vestments describing the designs as weak and childish.

Occasionally an important exhibition of historical embroideries has inspired a textile historian or a collector to write a book. This is particularly true when the author has also been responsible for compiling the catalogue, the book thus becoming an extension of it. In March 1900 an exhibition of Old English Tapestry Pictures, Embroideries and Samplers was held in the rooms of the Fine Art Society. The catalogue was prepared by a collector named Marcus Bourne Huish. It included samplers by the Brontë sisters and Ruskin's mother and grandmother. Encouraged by the interest created in the exhibition, Huish proceeded to publish a lavishly illustrated book called *Samplers and Tapestry Embroideries*. He has some hard words for Lady Alford whom he accuses of "dismissing samplers in a single line." Mrs. Head, author of *The Lace and Embroidery Collector*, contributed a few useful practical notes. Only six hundred copies were printed at two guineas each, a price which Huish considered extortionate. Greatly to his surprise it sold well, and in 1913 a revised and enlarged edition was issued.

One of the most prolific writers on the decorative arts during the first half of this century was Margaret A. Jourdain. In 1902 she revised Mrs. Bury Palliser's *History of Lace*, originally published in 1865, and in 1910 her own book on *The History of English Secular Embroidery* appeared. It is arranged in historical periods with additional chapters on quilting, stumpwork, samplers, etc. Generally reliable she does, however, occasionally stumble. Black work, for example, she equates with "Spanish work" and believes it to have been introduced into England by Catherine of Aragon.

In 1905 an important exhibition of English medieval vestments was held at the Burlington Fine Art Society. The catalogue was compiled by a member of the staff of the Textile Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum named A. F. Kendrick, and in 1906 he published *English Embroidery* devoting sixty pages to the *opus anglicanum* and cramming the whole history of secular embroidery into the remaining forty. He is obviously aware of the controversy over the origin of black work, but as a young man at the outset of his career, is not yet ready to express a firm opinion on it. This had to wait until, in 1933, he published *English Needlework* and set the record straight by quoting from English documents prior to the reign of Henry VIII in which it is mentioned, and drawing attention to the even earlier portraits of English, French, German and Italian nobles on whose clothes it appears. In 1967 *English Needlework* was revised by Patricia Wardle and is likely to remain the standard survey of



English embroidery for many years to come. It is all the more to be regretted that the publishers, A. & C. Black, should have seen fit to issue it in an old fashioned format unrelieved by a single colour plate.

The long gap between Kendrick's two books was bridged by Mary Symonds (Mrs. Guy Antrobus) and Louisa Preece who, in 1928, published *Needlework through the Ages*. Already, in 1915 Mary Symonds had published *Elementary Embroidery* and in 1924 had collaborated with Louisa Preece in writing an admirable book on *Needlework in Religion*. Artists and sculptors had long since discovered African art, and scholars had begun to study systematically the non-European cultures. The artifacts they brought back from their field trips aroused the interest of English craftsmen. Going along with this the authors of *Needlework through the Ages* declared that "embroidery is not only aesthetic and historic but also ethnographic." They included illustrations of the work of North American Indians, Lapps and Maoris, and invited the noted archaeologist and expert on Greek Island embroidery, Professor A. J. B. Wace, to write the preface. In their introductory remarks they describe Greek Island embroidery as "unconscious" art, explaining that it results from the woman's spontaneous and natural desire to make her clothes and household linen interesting and attractive. With fine scorn they dismiss Lady Alford's art needlework as "a class of work that is as futile as it is dangerous in art."

In 1933 A. F. Kendrick had apologized for passing over the *opus anglicanum* in a somewhat cursory manner in *English Needlework* but this, he explains, is because "the subject has engaged the attention of a diligent student and experienced needlewoman for many years" who will, he hopes, be ready to publish the results of her research in the not-far-distant future. In 1938 Mrs. A. H. Christie's famous and comprehensive book on *English Medieval Embroidery* appeared. It represents the consummation of years of patient study inspired originally by the exhibition of 1905. As Kendrick realized, Mrs. Christie was unique - a successful and original embroiderer whose technique was also impeccable; an excellent teacher; a clear and coherent writer; and a fine editor. There is no department of contemporary embroidery in which her influence is not still apparent. No textile historian has attempted to improve upon her *magnum opus* on English medieval vestments.

Announcement of the forthcoming publication of Mrs. Christie's book was made to embroiderers in 1937 by Mrs. K. Harris in *The Embroideress*. She recommended it to them as filling an important gap in the history of embroidery, and also for its completeness, "no field of research

having been neglected that might yield material of interest or hitherto unknown examples." The publishers, the Clarendon Press, offered readers a special pre-publication price of nine guineas, subscribers' names to be printed at the back. The edition was limited to 350 copies, and on publication the price rose to twelve guineas.

In February *Embroidery*, the journal of the Embroiderers' Guild, paved the way with an article on the *opus anglicanum* by A. F. Kendrick, and in the following issue came the review. The writer compliments Mrs. Christie on providing so enthusiastic a catalogue and praises the stitch diagrams and line drawings; but the lack of colour and the indifferent quality of the reproduction of the photographs call forth reproof. Curiously enough, it is the fact that many of the quotations are in Latin and that the book is of considerable size and weight that cause her to wonder whether it will appeal to many embroiderers. She wrote:

It is a fatiguing book to review - it measures 15-3/4 ins. by 11-3/4 ins., is 2 ins. thick, and weighs 9 lbs. Seriously I wonder if it would not have been better to issue the matter in a series of volumes of more practical size and less awe-inspiring price. But whoever buys it will get twelve guineas worth, and Mrs. Christie deserves the thanks of all who take pride in our heritage of English embroidery, and welcome the opportunity of making an exhaustive study under expert guidance of its beautiful and treasured remains.

They had every reason to be grateful to her not only for the years she spent on *English Medieval Embroidery* but also for all the other well written books and articles she left behind. Posterity has had no difficulty in recognizing their worth.

## II. REFERENCE BOOKS

Two years after *A Hand-Book of Needlework* appeared Miss Lambert had another book ready for publication. The subject, which had proved more difficult than she anticipated, was *Church Needlework*. "I was hardly aware at the commencement of my task," she wrote, "of the difficulties I had to encounter, or of the contested ground on which I was treading." Once again there is a little history. She begins with an account of the introduction of Christianity to Britain, and continues through the Anglo-Saxon, Romanesque and Gothic periods to the dissolution of the monasteries and the Reformation. But it is the current revival of interest in ecclesiastical architecture and church furnishings that has moved her to write:

The interest lately evinced in all subjects connected with the Internal Decoration of Churches has led me to suppose that the present volume might not be unacceptable; the more so as authors of works on Church Architecture and Ecclesiastical Furniture, although they have pointed out where the decorations of the needle are required, are but little conversant with the practice of this branch of art.

So she sets to work to provide them with sensible, clearly drawn motifs and a great deal of practical information about how and where they should be applied to vestments. A charming touch that makes this a prettier book than the first, in which the text was enclosed with a double ruled border, are the symbolic roses, passion flowers, pomegranates and grapes that drift in long trailing sprays down the pages.

Another substantial book on ecclesiastical embroidery appeared in 1867. This was *Church Needlework Ancient and Modern* by Mrs. Anastasia Dolby; and the following year she brought out *Church Vestments, their Origin, Use and Ornament*. It was Mrs. Dolby who, a few years later, was to become one of the founders and first Director of the School of Art Needlework. Her sudden death within a short time of its opening caused her colleagues to feel that the key stone had dropped out of the arch.

The first general reference book on embroidery was *The Dictionary of Needlework* published in 1882 by Sophia Frances Ann Caulfeild and Blanche C. Seward. Both ladies had already contributed articles on embroidery to *The Queen*, *The Bazaar* and *The Girls' Own Paper*. Miss Seward had published a book on *Artistic Flower Decorations* and in 1884 wrote a practical handbook on *Decorative Painting*; while Miss Caulfeild, in 1886, produced what must be - for posterity - one of the most entertaining accounts of the activities of various small sewing and embroidery

societies entitled *A Directory of Girls' Societies, Clubs and Unions conducted on Unprofessional Principles*. Each and every one was dedicated inexorably to good works.

The Dictionary begins with Abaca "the native name for the Manilla hemp produced by one of the banana tribe" and proceeds slowly and conscientiously through the alphabet to Zephyr Shirting and Zulu Cloth. In between it deals systematically with "the History of the various Works, the Stitches employed, the Methods of working, the Meaning of Technical Terms, and other information bearing on the subject." It was a marvelous compilation, illustrated by upwards of eight hundred engravings. With sound business acumen the publishers, Upcott Gill & Son Limited, issued it first in monthly parts between 1881 and 1882. When the set was complete the purchaser could return it to them for binding. They were asked to enclose a remittance of 20s.0d. for plain edges, and 22s.6d. if they wished them to be gilt. In October, 1882, the Dictionary received the supreme accolade when the authors proudly reported that Her Majesty The Queen had been graciously pleased to receive a bound volume.

In 1903 the Dictionary was re-issued. There were now well over one thousand two hundred illustrations as well as a number of colour plates. The pictures of the various laces are of particular interest being reproduced in relief in white on a coloured ground. Well might the authors claim that they retained "all the delicacy and richness of real lace." Seldom if ever has an embroidery book enjoyed such lavish presentation.

How deep an impression had been made on Mrs. A. H. Christie by the 1905 exhibition comes out strongly in her first book, *Embroidery and Tapestry Weaving*. It was issued in 1906 by Isaac Pitman & Sons, Limited, in their Artistic Crafts Series of Technical Handbooks. Mrs. Christie deals patiently and thoroughly with every aspect of her subject. Already the style is clear and concise, and a number of line drawings that will be used again in *English Medieval Embroidery* appear here for the first time. Among them are the two diagrams illustrating the technique of underside couching. It is interesting to find that this now familiar term has not yet been coined, and Mrs. Christie calls it simply "an ancient method of couching."

The same pair of diagrams have a place, too, in Mrs. Christie's next book, *Samplers and Stitches*, first published in 1920 by B. T. Batsford. With remarkable perception the editor of *The Embroideress* put her finger

on the special quality which makes this book the yardstick against which all other embroidery reference books are measured. She wrote:

No serious student of embroidery should be without it, for it will not only teach you all you can possibly want to know about stitches, but it will also teach you style into the bargain, and that is what many embroidery books are unable to do.

Mrs. Christie herself described it as "a textbook of modern embroidery and design." To the third edition published in 1934 she added chapters on quilting and applied work; and in 1947 when the fourth edition came out there was a second colour plate and some new drawings. But in essence *Samplers and Stitches* has remained the same for over fifty years and its stitch diagrams have reappeared in countless other books. Imitation, being, as Miss Lambert knew, the sincerest form of flattery.

In 1912 an enterprising publisher Percy Lund Humphries & Company of London and Bradford, issued a loose leaf portfolio of *Stitches from Old English Embroideries*, the samplers for which had been worked at the request of A. F. Kendrick for the Textile Study Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum, by Louisa Frances Pesel. Subsequently she published *Stitches from Western Embroideries and Stitches from Eastern Embroideries* in the same format. Like Mrs. Christie, Miss Pesel was a pioneer in collecting and deciphering stitches long since lost or not previously recorded. Plagued by the perennial question: "How does one know which of two different methods of working a stitch is the right one?", she gave the reasonable answer that as it is impossible to know with absolute certainty which is the original method, the embroiderer should always use the one that suits her best. She wrote:

I never consider that a stitch is a good and useful stitch, or that I have discovered the right way of working it, if, after a little practice, I do not find it easy to do. . . . So long as the back and front both look exactly like the model, so long as the silk twists and interlaces in the same manner, it does not seem as if it could possibly matter in which way it is worked.

Louisa Pesel also published *Leaves from my Embroidery Notebooks, Cross Stitch and Practical Canvas Work*, but is best remembered today for her work in connection with Winchester cathedral, the chancel of which she and the Cathedral Broderers furnished with kneelers, almsbags and cushions.

Finally, note must be taken of *Mary Thomas's Dictionary of Stitches* of 1934 and *Mary Thomas's Embroidery Book* of 1936. Mary Thomas has enthusiasm and personality and is helpful in a neighbourly, well-intentioned way. Her knowledge is reasonably sound and her diagrams satisfactory. She has something for everybody and knows how to keep a toe in two camps at once. Here for instance she is on the side of the embroiderer whose aim is "to express herself in original designs," and over there is hastening to defend the use of printed transfers. Today it all looks terribly dated but in 1936 it was just the kind of book embroiderers wanted, and the reviewer in the *Church Times*, whose perception one cannot but admire, declared it "sufficient to make most women's fingers itch for needle and thread." It did.

When the Second World War was over there was dear, familiar Mary Thomas, a slightly dowdy but nevertheless faithful friend, waiting to help them into the brave new world where all embroiderers would draw their own designs.

### III. BOOKS ON DESIGN AND COLOUR

The first "modern" book on embroidery was published in 1893 by May Morris, the younger daughter of William Morris. She called it *Decorative Needlework*. She writes as an artist, designer, professional embroiderer (since 1885 she had been in charge of the embroidery workrooms at Morris & Company), and as a teacher. She addresses herself to the embroiderer's mind as well as to her fingers. She is writing for serious students who know that embroidery is art as well as craft; that the practice of embroidery need not be an end in itself; and that design and colour are every bit as important as technique. But the beginner is not to be frightened by the skills that have to be mastered; she is to take them "easily and naturally." As she progresses she is to learn about the *positive* and *relative* values of colour for "clear and beautiful colouring, sometimes complex, sometimes simple, is one of the principle features of fine embroidery." But she is also to learn to draw and to make her own designs. "Draw flowers you must," she wrote. "The flower borders you draw for embroidery can be only a rough sort of note or *symbol* of the loveliness of garden and field; but the symbol reminds us pleasantly of spring and summer." Nobody had ever before tried to stir the embroiderer's imagination in just this way.

But the student must also learn how to look at historical embroideries; to examine the technique, the way in which the colors are used, and how the design has been composed; and eventually she will do better embroidery because she has experienced these things. More than twelve years before the 1905 exhibition Miss Morris was, we find, studying medieval vestments. If Mrs. Christie could produce a profound scholarly catalogue on the subject, May Morris makes us want to look at them and to find out - from the embroiderer's point of view - what we are looking at. She makes the designs intelligible and relates them to the other decorative arts of the period.

By 1899 the embroiderer was ready for a book on design. It was written for her by W. G. Paulson Townsend, one of the government examiners in art, who taught drawing at the School of Art Needlework. Amongst his collaborators was Louisa Pesel. The book is called *Embroidery or the Craft of the Needle*.

Paulson Townsend knew that the embroiderer was frightened of both drawing and design. Long experience had taught him that the best place to learn about design is in a museum. "The advantage offered by our museums of being able to examine old methods of embroidery is not sufficiently appreciated by the modern needleworker," he wrote. To help her,

he took fifty-six examples of embroidery ranging through the centuries from the *opus anglicanum* to the latest designs his contemporary, Walter Crane, was drawing for the School of Art Needlework, and analyzed them in terms of method, design and colour. He wrote, he said, for the intelligent embroiderer, who was bored with the monotonous filling in of little squares on specially prepared canvas with certain fixed colours, and who was convinced of the ugliness of the prevailing fashion for "fancy work."

Hard on the heels of this came a book by another teacher and designer, Lewis Foreman Day, who in 1900 published *Art in Needlework*. Determined not to be accused of writing a man's book on a woman's subject, he chose Mary Buckle as his collaborator. Lewis Day was surprised and delighted by the variety of different effects that can be created with stitches, and by the ways in which the appearance of a design can be changed according to the stitches or method in which it is worked. He believed that through her knowledge of stitches, the embroiderer would inevitably - sooner or later - learn to make her own patterns. He teaches her about stitches, materials and textures. In this he is the precursor of Rebecca Crompton.

In 1915 Isaac Pitman & Sons published a book on *Embroidery Design* by Joan Drew. The author described it as "a handbook on the principles of decorative art as applied to embroidery." In 1920 and again in 1922 she was in charge of a course held at the Victoria and Albert Museum for teachers of needlework subjects, and in particular for those who taught in village institutes. In the context of the Museum she brought together history, design and decorative stitchery. In 1926 she published a portfolio of her own designs, not with the intention that they should be copied, but that those who were unable to visit a museum might have something to adapt for their own embroidery.

As early as 1896, Jessie Newberry had begun to teach embroidery at the Glasgow School of Art. In 1911 her student and eventual successor as head of the department, Ann Macbeth, collaborated with a colleague, Mary Swanson, in writing a book called *Educational Needlework*. Their object was to persuade teachers in primary schools to encourage their pupils to decorate the things made in needlework classes with simple stitch patterns of their own invention. Years later - in July 1932 - embroideries by these two progressive embroiderers were included in an exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum under the auspices of the British Institute of Industrial Art. It was the first large scale exhibition of modern



embroidery. Another teacher whose work was exhibited was Kathleen Mann who wrote *Design from Peasant Art* and *Embroidery Designs and Stitches*.

Out of the exhibition came a Studio Special Publication by Mary Hogarth entitled *Modern Embroidery*. It was published in 1933. The author was a painter of some distinction who had studied at the Slade School of Art and was a member of the New English Art Club. Her sympathies were all with the embroiderers who looked before rather than behind them; and although she herself preferred to interpret designs drawn for her by Wyndham Tryon and Duncan Grant, she was whole-heartedly committed to the idea that the embroiderer should draw her own patterns. Her forthright views shocked many traditionally minded embroiderers but she cared for none of them. "Modern embroidery should be the invention of today, and technique should be governed by design," she wrote. For many this was revolutionary talk indeed. In *Modern Embroidery* she declared that "the design should be built up by stages on the material" and that the designer and the embroiderer should be one and the same person.

Two years later Molly Booker produced a book called *Embroidery Design* in which she too contended that the embroiderer generally paid too little attention to design and too much to technique. Like May Morris she thought people should draw flowers. "Sketching from nature is a necessity," she wrote, "for flowers and leaves of some kind are certain to be required in a design sooner or later."

Finally in 1936 came Rebecca Crompton's *Modern Design in Embroidery*, the book that by no means all embroiderers were ready for. The battle between design and technique was warming up, and the reviewer in *Embroidery* wrote:

Mrs. Crompton's main interest is with colour and design: Stitchery and technique are secondary matters to her, and one feels bound to add that neither stitchery nor technique is her strongest point. . . . She fails to keep clear the real difference between embroidery and painting. She proves once again that it is possible to make a picture without paint as other artists have done before her, but she does not make an equally valuable contribution to embroidery as an applied art. . . . It should, however, be taken seriously, especially by those who disagree with it most.

Like Mary Thomas, Rebecca Crompton was ready when the war was over, for the next generation of embroiderers. There can be little doubt that the influence of her book was inestimably the greater.

#### IV. EPHEMERA

Because embroiderers are people of widely varying tastes and interests, no survey of the literature of embroidery would be complete unless some brief reference was made to the minor publications which are, in effect, receipt books of "artistic nonsenses." The fact that they enjoy astronomical sales does not, however, prevent serious embroiderers from being constantly saddened by the banality of many of them.

As Miss Caulfeild's *Dictionary of Girls' Societies, Clubs and Unions* shows, innumerable Victorian ladies of all ages were prepared to devote a certain amount of time each week to sewing for charitable purposes. More often than not this included the manufacture of endless small articles to grace the stalls of the Fancy Fairs, church bazaars and missionary teas that featured so prominently in their lives. Patronage began at the top. Miss Lambert, in dedicating her *Handbook of Needlework* to the Duchess of Gloucester, makes it clear that few fairs are without at least one example of her work; and here is Mrs. Mary Mallet, one of the Maids of Honour to the Queen, who writes from Balmoral on 1st June, 1899, about a stall for a bazaar to be held at Bagshot on 17th July, every article on which is to be of Royal Manufacture. Needlework is, she reckons, "a excellent outlet for the artistic energy with which the Royal Family is gifted." Inevitably, therefore, the market for books of patterns and diagrams accompanied by detailed instructions for making novelties of every description was a flourishing one.

One of the first major works in the field was a stout little book published by Ward Lock & Company in 1855 entitled *Treasures in Needlework*. The authors were Mrs. Eliza Pullan and Mrs. Matilda Maria Warren, and a precious pair they were. Their snobbishness is unbelievable.

We hope (they wrote) that while the book may grace the Boudoir of the Peeress, it will also penetrate to the cottage of the Poor; and that while it may be a useful recreation to the Rich, it will also prove a reliable aid to the industrious effort of the Poor; though how the latter would pay for a copy we do not know.

Both ladies wrote on a number of other subjects connected with household economy, and Mrs. Pullan was the proprietor of a needlework shop at 126 Albany Street, Regent's Park, where readers were naturally advised to buy their materials. In 1861 she collaborated with Madame Marie Girardin in writing a companion volume entitled *Elegant Arts for Delicate Fingers*.

1861 saw also the publication by Ward Lock & Company of Mrs. Beeton's famous *Book of Household Management*. Having got this underway, she turned her attention to needlework, and in 1870 her *Book of Needlework* appeared. Sad to relate, she did not live to see its completion and her husband, S. O. Beeton, publisher of the great middle-class periodical, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, penned these words by way of an introduction:

The idea of combining a series of minute and exact instructions for fancy needlework with useful patterns, was conceived many years ago by one whose life was devoted to the inculcation of the practical duties of a woman's life, to assisting her sex in their daily work of Household Management and Refinement. Her great wish was that her *Book of Needlework* should be as valuable in its way to her Countrywomen as her work upon Household Management was useful in providing for the diurnal wants of families. Other hands have brought to a conclusion her original plans. The best available workers have contributed to this volume. Only those who know the extent of the late Mrs. Beeton's design will miss, in the pages before them, "the touch of a vanished hand."

But the *Book of Needlework* enjoyed nothing like the same enduring popularity as the *Book of Household Management* and has never been reprinted.

The 1880's saw Ward Lock & Company with a new series in hand. With unerring instinct for the taste of the market to which it was addressed, they chose Sylvia for the name of the editor. Sylvia was interested in every aspect of home life. She was kind and reliable and inexpensive. She had an inexhaustible supply of patterns for nonsenses and was delighted to share them with everybody. There was *Sylvia's Book of Artistic Knick-Knacks*, *Sylvia's Book of Bazaars and Fancy Fairs*, *Sylvia's Book Ornamental Needlework*, *Sylvia's Fancy Needlework Instruction Book* and *Sylvia's Illustrated Embroidery Book*. Many other publishers jumped eagerly onto this profitable bandwagon, perhaps the most memorable being *Weldon's Practical Needlework Series* issued, unfortunately, without a date and apparently reprinted about 1900.

With the new century came the great craze for crewel work - familiarly if erroneously called Jacobean work - and an insidious desire to convince people that embroidery was easy. The ubiquitous Lazy-Daisy-Stitch made its appearance, and such publications as the perennially popular *Good Needlework Gift Book* was crowded with coloured illustrations

and large scale stitch diagrams for "Jacobean" firescreens and cushion covers, First Easy Designs for Applied Work and such irresistible trifles as The Simplest Cottage Cosy to grace the suburban breakfast table, and shadow work "showers" to throw over laden afternoon tea trolleys.

Looking back over this brief and necessarily idiosyncratic survey, it now becomes clear that while the books on design and colour highlight the controversy between the traditional and the progressive embroiderer over the relative importance of design and technique, the popular catchpenny books that are here today and gone tomorrow underline the difference between the embroiderers who count time and effort as nothing, and those for whom embroidery is a gentle amusement. In *Art in Needlework* Lewis Day had some hard things to say about the latter. "If they are not prepared to work," he wrote quellingly, "let them give themselves up to their play." The art of embroidery could, he thought, do very well without them. But whatever strong feelings may be aroused by the "popular" books on embroidery, there is no denying that every woman has the right to use her needle in the way that best pleases her, or that the books she buys will reflect her personal taste in embroidery and her appreciation or lack of appreciation of it as a decorative art.



**Therese de Dillmont**

# THERESE de DILLMONT AND HER ENCYCLOPEDIA OF NEEDLEWORK

By

Ruth P. Hellmann

## *Introduction*

There have been published in the last few years many books on a wide variety of decorative and plain needlework. These for the most part have been specific for one kind or other of the various uses of the needle taken in its comprehensive meaning.<sup>1</sup> It is then of interest that nearly 100 years ago Thérèse de Dillmont was able to master all the basic forms of needlework sufficiently to write and illustrate an encyclopedia covering their techniques and designs which "still remains a reliable text-book and a valuable source of reference."<sup>2</sup>

## *Her Life*

Surprisingly not much is known about Mlle. de Dillmont's early life. She was born, the last of five children, on October 28, 1846, in Wiener Neustadt and christened Theresia Maria Josefa Dillmann von Dillmont.<sup>3</sup> Her father, Ferdinand, a minor nobleman<sup>4</sup> from Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen (Transylvania) followed a military career, becoming after 20 years' service a Professor of Fortification and Civil Architecture in the Imperial and Royal Military Academy of Wiener Neustadt.<sup>5</sup> He married a local girl, Franziska Schwendenwein (1814-1894) in 1838 and retired three months before Mlle. de Dillmont's birth to a country estate, "Dillmonthof", near Wiener Neustadt, where he died in 1857. Subsequently her mother moved to Vienna with the children.

In 1864, when Mlle. de Dillmont was eighteen years old, her mother applied to Emperor Franz Josef (1830-1916) for assistance in educating her daughter to become a "a governess and teacher."<sup>20</sup> Franz Josef approved the petition with his signature, but where Mlle. de Dillmont studied is not known.

As daughters of a nobleman, Mlle. de Dillmont and her sister, Franziska, may have had tutors and perhaps attended a private girls' institute where needlework would be a major subject. She undoubtedly showed an early interest in and aptitude for needlework.

While living there, she and her sister could have attended the well-known and highly regarded Imperial and Royal School of Art Needlework.

If so, they would have been contemporaries of such noted people as Emilie Bach (1840-1890),<sup>6</sup> future director of the School and herself a writer of pamphlets on needlework, as well as Tina Frauberger<sup>7</sup> and Luise Schinnerer<sup>8</sup> who were already studying the Coptic textiles recently brought from archaeological excavations in Egypt and would decipher the method for making the double plaiting called "sprang".

In Vienna, Mlle. de Dillmont and her sister opened an embroidery studio probably to sell thread and material and perhaps to give elementary instruction in needlework. Franziska stayed in Vienna where she published under the name of Fanny von Dillmont, two small pamphlets on crochet work.<sup>9</sup> She died there in 1920 and was buried in the cemetery of the Military Academy, Wiener Neustadt.

Mlle. de Dillmont,<sup>10</sup> on the other hand, moved to a small estate in Dornach, a village close to Mulhouse in Alsace.<sup>11</sup> Records which would have given her reasons for the move and the date along with other pertinent information have been destroyed in the various wars. Perhaps she had friends there or family connections or perhaps she wanted to be near the well-known thread manufacturer, Dollfus-Mieg et Cie. (DMC)<sup>12</sup> whose products she undoubtedly knew while still in Vienna. She must have already been well-known as an expert needlewoman either in Vienna or through a studio which she operated in Dornach, for it is a matter of record that on October 26, 1884, she entered into a business arrangement with DMC which would prove mutually beneficial;<sup>13</sup> she was helped financially, and DMC was able to begin their needlework library based on albums she would produce under the trade name of *Thérèse de Dillmont* - the "House of Thérèse de Dillmont" became an associate of the thread manufacturer whose products it used. "Tenui filo magnum textitur opus."

#### *Her Work*

Among her first efforts in writing were a number of albums giving designs for the more popular types of needlework and the methods for working them.<sup>14</sup> Included in these were two of special interest. "Ouvrages nouveaux de Style Ancien" by Emilie Bach (Director of the Royal School), was edited by Mlle. de Dillmont and perhaps provided an inspiration for her. Also "Motifs de Broderie copte" (Motifs for Coptic Embroidery) written by Mlle. de Dillmont reflected her continued association with the textile research being carried out in Vienna as well as the popular interest in this form of art needlework.

Soon, however, she realized the great need for a complete work, one that would be useful as reference for the expert needlewoman but would also enable a novice to learn the techniques for herself. Still under the

aegis of DMC and with the knowledge she had been gathering through years of research and practice, she began her Encyclopedia. Her work when completed in 1886 was published in both German and French in a large format (8<sup>o</sup>) and shortly afterward in English and Italian translations in a small size (16<sup>m0</sup>) with which we are familiar. The acceptance was immediate; within 25 years it had sold over three quarters of a million copies.

Mlle. de Dillmont probably edited two more albums, "Le Tricot" and "Le Crochet".<sup>15</sup> But her life's work was accomplished. She died in Baden-Baden on May 22, 1890,<sup>16</sup> four months after having married a businessman from Vienna, Joseph Friedrich Scheuermann,<sup>13</sup> perhaps a victim of a flu epidemic raging at that time. Originally buried in Baden-Baden, she was transferred to the Dillmont family vault in Wiener Neustadt in 1909.<sup>20</sup>

### *Changes*

Following editors,<sup>17</sup> while preserving the essential features as established by Mlle. de Dillmont, have succeeded through many editions in keeping the *Encyclopedia* up to date by various means. Some chapters were expanded to meet changing tastes. In some cases a catch-all chapter that had included more than one technique was divided and sections enlarged. The 614 pages with 16 chapters grew to close to 800 pages and 20 chapters. At the same time nomenclature was changed to reflect a change in usage. Eventually some of the more time-consuming examples were replaced by less demanding but always artistic substitutes.

Through these editions and several additional translations the title page has remained essentially the same, always giving the name of Th. de Dillmont in her capacity as "editor", even after her death, and the DMC Library's emblem. However there have been changes in the corporate name of the organization concerned with the production and marketing of the book. These names include "House of Thérèse de Dillmont", "Comptoir Alsacien de Broderie, anc't Th. de Dillmont", "Société Anonyme d'Industrie Textile". In 1927 DMC established as a subsidiary "Editions Th. de Dillmont" which is at the present time given as the publisher.

### *The Encyclopedia*

The lasting value<sup>18</sup> of the *Encyclopedia* which Mlle. de Dillmont produced can be attributed to a number of remarkable features. Perhaps the most important is the detailed development of each technique, from the equipment necessary, through the basic units, to advanced artistic designs. In addition, these descriptions are accompanied by over 1,000 engravings



all taken from models prepared specifically for this work, which illustrate each step so clearly that in many cases they can be used without explanation. This is a great asset since many stitches and sometimes even patterns are known by different names in different countries or in different times. It is rather curious that the Encyclopedia which is so valuable as a reference for these units has no index. The table of contents, while complete, is only a substitute.

Of equal value to the method of instruction is the comprehensiveness with which regional and cultural techniques were researched, analyzed and described. The Encyclopedia serves not only as a record of these cultural attributes but also as a means for making them known to other societies. In addition, while frankly advertising the DMC products, the listing of colors and types of thread to be used in making each design not only helps the novice but assures that the final needlework will faithfully reproduce in fineness and coloration the original which served as model.<sup>19</sup>

Mlle. de Dillmont did not write a "How to" book; she does not tell how to make a sweater. But she does teach how to sew a fine seam, how to execute artistically hundreds of patterns in dozens of techniques and does suggest ways to use them. The *Encyclopedia* she wrote is for the serious worker who wants a sound foundation in the art of needlework. It may be a classic.

## NOTES

1. While basically "needle" refers to a thin rod with a point at one end and a hole in the other through which to pass a thread to be used in sewing in whatever way, it has become a comprehensive term to indicate an instrument of whatever form used to manipulate thread, in this way including knitting needles, crochet hooks, both netting and tatting shuttles and even bobbins. - Caulfeild and Saward *ENCYCLOPEDIA* (Dover Reprint 1972) v. 2, p. 354. Also Irene Emery, *PRIMARY STRUCTURES of FABRICS*, (1966) p. 246.
2. Sylvia Groves, *HISTORY OF NEEDLEWORK TOOLS and ACCESSORIES*, (1966) p. 126.
3. Information re Mlle. de Dillmont's family was obtained through private communication from the Municipal Administration of the City of Wiener Neustadt, November 18, 1974, and from the Austrian State Archives, April 8, 1975.
4. Her ancestor, Sebastian, according to family tradition, came into the Old Austrian hereditary dominions from the Walloon region of Belgium sometime before the beginning of the 18th century during the reign of Ferdinand III. By mid-century the family was settled at Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen (now Brassov in the Transylvania part of Roumania). Her great, great grandfather, Ferdinand Dillmann, became a member of the Hungarian nobility under Emperor Karl VI as the Imperial and Royal Fiscal Inspector of Tolls at the Tabor [Gate] in Vienna on August 23, 1717 with the designation "von Dillmont". - Brünnner, *Genealogisches Taschenbuch der Adelligen Häuser*, v. 8 (1883) p. 125 f.  
  
At this time Austria and Hungary were united, the ruler being the Emperor of Austria and the King of Hungary. Until World War I all government institutions were designated Imperial and Royal.
5. The Academy occupied a 12th century castle which had been converted by Maria Theresia in 1752.
6. Sophie Pataky, *LEXIKON deutscher FRAUEN der FEDER*, v. 2, Berlin (1898) p. 475.
7. Peter Collingwood, *THE TECHNIQUES OF SPRANG*, New York (1974) p. 35-36.

8. Luise Schinnerer, ANTIKE HANDSRBEITEN, Vienna (1895?). Introduction by Alois Riegl.
9. Pataky, LEXIKON, v. 1, p. 155-156.
10. Mlle. de Dillmont never used the name Dillmann professionally and preferred "de" to "von". Even though Mulhouse was under German rule after the Franco-German War (1870-1871), the social and cultural inclination was toward Paris.
11. Dornach was incorporated into Mulhouse in 1914. - E. Meininger, HISTOIRE de MULHOUSE, Mulhouse (1923) p. 139.
12. Founded in 1746 for the printing of calico by Samuel Koechlin, a financier, Jean-Jacques Schmalzer, a technician and Jean-Henri Dollfus, a designer, the company which was originally known as Koechlin, Schmalzer et Cie., went through organizational changes and expansions becoming in 1802 the Dollfus-Mieg et Cie. involved in spinning and weaving as well. In 1841 they began the manufacture of threads for sewing and embroidery, which would become so important that, by the beginning of the 20th century the weaving would be dropped.
13. Private conversation with Mr. Hassenforder, business editor of "Editions Th. de Dillmont", Mulhouse, Alsace, September 19, 1974.
14. Eight by Th. de Dillmont were listed in the 1886 edition of the Encyclopedia as being available from *La Maison Th. de Dillmont, à Dornach (Alsace)*. In addition to the above:

*Albums de Broderies au Point de Croix*

*La Broderie sur Lacis*

*Alphabets et Monogrammes*

*Le Macramé*

*Le Filet-Richelieu*

*La Broderie au Passé*

*La Soutache et son Emploi*

15. These were advertised in later editions of the Encyclopedia over her name.
16. Communication from the Office of Vital Statistics, Baden-Baden, West Germany.
17. Mlle. de Dillmont was followed by *Alice Morawska* whom she hired in 1887. She retired in 1939.  
  
*Hélène Dostal* who had studied with a student of Luise Schinnerer in Vienna, 1935 - 1943, and after an interruption of 21 years due to the war, was rehired in 1964 and retired 1975.  
  
*Hélène Lerdung* - Hired 1968 -
18. Margaret Brooke in comparing over 50 books on lace gave the Encyclopedia the highest rating - "invaluable". (LACE IN THE MAKING WITH BOBBINS AND NEEDLE, London, 1923.)
19. Emilie Bach described these advantages in the introduction to her OUVRAGES NOUVEAUX DE STYLE ANCIEN, Dornach (n.d.).
20. Information received from Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst in Wien, Nov. 6, 1975.

## APPENDIX 1

### Chapters in the Encyclopedia - 1886? (French edition)

	Page
1. La Couture . . . . .	1
2. Le Racommodage . . . . .	17
3. Les Jours sur Toile . . . . .	25
4. Jours sur Toile et Points Damassés . . . . .	55
5. La Broderie . . . . .	79
6. Broderie au Passé et Broderie d'Or . . . . .	109
7. Tapisserie et Broderie sur Toile . . . . .	133
8. Le Tricot . . . . .	179
9. Le Crochet . . . . .	237
10. La Frivolité . . . . .	357
11. Le Macramé . . . . .	377
12. Le Filet . . . . .	431
13. La Dentelle Irlandaise <sup>x</sup> . . . . .	475
14. Dentelles Divers . . . . .	511
Bobbin Lace . . . . .	511-545
Needle Lace . . . . .	546-558
15. Ouvrages de Fantasia . . . . .	559
(includes cords, crochet sur métier, point Turc triangulaire, point Gobelin, appliqué, soutache, Chinoise, etc.)	
16. Recommandations Divers . . . . .	595 to 614

x. Underwent a name change and became "dentelle Renaissance" as part of the chapter "Les Dentelles à l'Aiguille" in later editions. They were made with what were known as "lacets anglais" - English tapes.

## APPENDIX 2

### Chapters in the Encyclopedia - 1913 (French edition)

	Page
1. La Couture à la Main . . . . .	1
2. La Machine à Coudre et à Broder . . . . .	23
3. La Raccommodge . . . . .	31
4. La Broderie sur Blanc . . . . .	39
5. La Broderie sur Toile . . . . .	81
6. La Broderie sur Soie et Velours . . . . .	149
7. La Broderie d'Or . . . . .	169
8. La Broderie-application . . . . .	187
9. La Tapisserie . . . . .	199
10. Le Tricot . . . . .	229
11. Le Crochet . . . . .	289
12. La Frivolité . . . . .	387
13. Le Macramé . . . . .	411
14. Le Filet . . . . .	463
15. Les Jours sur Toile . . . . .	515
16. Les Dentilles Brodées . . . . .	551
17. Les Dentelles à l'Aiguille . . . . .	595
18. Les Dentelles aux Fuseaus . . . . .	643
19. La Garniture des Ouvrages . . . . .	681
20. Recommandations Divers . . . . .	725 to 742
English edition . . . . .	789

## NOTES FROM ABROAD 1976

One of the most exciting events in embroidery in England at the moment is the removal of the Embroiderers' Guild to new premises. The Guild, which has since 1906 been a haven to embroiderers from all over the world, will finally have its own premises. The new headquarters will provide an expansion of the Guild's many services, which include an excellent library and a loan collection of portfolios containing embroideries by people like Louisa Pesel; and the officers of the Guild are always delighted to answer personal or written queries from members. The new Secretary is Miss Elizabeth Haworth. Until further notice, however, the Guild is in temporary quarters open only by appointment, at 2 Greycoat Place, Westminster, London SW 1.

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The Embroiderers' Guild is holding an exhibition of members' work in October, 1976. The exhibition will be held at the spacious Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery in London and overseas members of the Guild are warmly invited to submit embroideries for jurying. No item must be sent to the Guild: it is important that all overseas entries are submitted via a British "agent".

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Other big embroidery exhibitions are planned within the next year. 1976 is London's "World of Islam Festival" and embroidery will be included in many of the smaller displays being mounted and there is one special collection of Hausa embroideries that will be featured at the Commonwealth Institute in May. The collection, and the catalog, are the responsibility of David Heathcote, an embroidery historian who lives in Zaria. A further "African" exhibition planned is that of embroideries from South Africa, scheduled for 1977.

I have just returned from a lecture tour of Australia. In many parts of the country I found great interest in embroidery. Some of the creative artists skillfully employ in their works the subtle and muted coloring of the mulga and eucalypt (gum trees) around them. Australian embroiderers are well encouraged by The Australia Council, the federal body overseeing all art forms: one of the most outstanding embroideries I saw actually in preparation stages was a collage of American First Ladies, a giant portrait being worked by Dawn Fitzpatrick and Lee McGorman.

It is sometimes surprising to realize that South Africa is in fact one of the leading embroidery countries in the world today. The Voortrekker "tapestry", a needlepoint canvaswork saga with fifteen panels telling incidents in the history of the Republic, is an outstanding example of 20th-century design with a historical theme. All around the Republic there are keen groups of embroiderers, and the standard of technical skill is almost without comparison. Those American embroidery enthusiasts who do not have the chance of seeing South African pieces *in situ* should, therefore, be able to see selected items in the 1977 exhibition which will open in England and then proceed to other countries. Further details from the Information Attaché, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London WC2.

\* \* \* \* \*

A really international display of embroideries is to be held in Annecy, in Haut Savoie (fifty miles from Geneva) late in 1976. The items displayed will be mainly large creative wall-hangings and an average of three artists from each country in Europe are being invited to take part. Further details from Le Conservateur, Musée Chateau d'Annecy, 74000 Annecy, France.

\* \* \* \* \*

How can the visitor to England see and study private collections not open to public exhibition? A specialized group which has had long experience in putting art lovers in touch with owners of private collectors is Country House Tours (138A Piccadilly, London W1). Philippa Abrams is delighted to arrange for individuals or small groups to visit some of the many British country houses that have outstanding collections of embroidery.

— Mary Gostelow



## BOOK NOTES

Jean-Paul Asselberghs, *Les Tapisseries flamandes aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique, Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*, Brussels, 1974. A volume in the series *Artes Belgicae*.

Jean-Paul Asselberghs spent three months in America in 1970 studying Flemish tapestries as the beneficiary of a Fulbright-Hays grant. Early in 1973 he was killed in an automobile accident. He was then only thirty-eight, but his position as an authority was well-established, he had many achievements to his credit and much more was expected of him, including a book on his American journey. His notes for this were found to be sufficiently in order to enable his successor at the Musées Royaux in Brussels, Guy Delmarcel, to put together the well-illustrated and indexed small volume that has now been published.

The author does no more than mention the great collections of Flemish tapestries in the chief museums of New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, but he describes over two hundred sets and individual tapestries in such diverse locations as Boston University, the Currier Art Gallery in Manchester, N.H., the John Woodman Higgins Armory in Worcester, Mass., the J.B. Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky, Grace Cathedral in San Francisco and the Bob Jones University Collection of Sacred Art in Greenville, S.C. Sometimes we are treated to a short essay of great value, such as the entries for the *Ulysses* tapestry in the Fogg Art Museum, the *Triumph of Spring* in the Detroit Institute of Arts (with reasons for attributing it to Bruges), the *Roman Triumph* in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, or the *David and Abigail* in the Walters Art Gallery; sometimes, for a given collection, there is only a list of titles and dates. Twenty-five tapestries in the United States are illustrated and, an unusual and very welcome feature, there are also eleven plates of comparable pieces elsewhere that are referred to in the text. The full and accurate footnotes give details of previous publications, where these exist.

Clearly this is not the book that Asselberghs would have published himself, but even in its uneven state it is of immense value. No comparable survey has ever been made and no-one interested in tapestries should be without it. For the author's friends - and everyone who met him became his friend - it is a melancholy reminder of the great scholar and generous colleague whom we have lost. The latest volume of the *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire* (6th series, 45th year, 1973) consists mostly of the papers read at the International Colloquium he

organized in Brussels in late 1972, "L'Art brabançon au milieu du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle et les tapisseries du chateau du Wawel à Cracovie;" Geneviève Souchal here contributes a warm appreciation of Asselberghs' personality and work and R. de Roo a summary of his career and a bibliography. "Asselberghs" will be quoted in footnotes for many years to come, but it is tragic indeed that we shall not see his name again on a title-page.

— Edith Appleton Standen

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N. Birioukova, *Les Tapisseries françaises de la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les collections de l'Ermitage*, Aurora, Leningrad, 1974.

The tapestry collection of the Hermitage Museum is not as large as the great imperial or royal accumulations in Vienna, Madrid and Paris, but it is quite substantial and remarkably varied. The rulers of Russia, though they started late, did quite well from presents in the 17th, 18th and even the 19th centuries; the museums, especially the Stieglitz Museum of decorative arts, made important purchases. The Stieglitz was amalgamated with the Heritage after 1917, a time when, in Dr. Birioukova's words, "a large number of tapestries were acquired from private collections" (quoted from her article, "Decoration and diplomacy: eighteenth-century French tapestries," *Apollo*, vol. 101, June 1975, p. 458).

Dr. Birioukova's most recent book is, despite its title in two languages, almost entirely in Russian. Her previous publication, *Gothic and Renaissance Tapestries*, 1965, appeared in English and German; and it is to be hoped that the French tapestry catalogue will also be translated. A brief introduction and the names of the pieces are in French. The black and white illustrations are the same muddy brown as those of the earlier book and the color plates are rather strident and frequently look dirty, but this may reflect the actual condition of the tapestries. Dr. Birioukova accepts Tournai as French and includes *millefleurs*, but even so can hardly justify the 15th century in her title. The 17th-century Paris *ateliers* and the Gobelins are magnificently represented, even down to 1888; the Beauvais group is interesting from its variety; the Aubussons, as usual, are depressing. Only specialists, probably, will want this book until it is translated, but for them it is essential.

— Edith Appleton Standen

*Bobbin Lace; First Series. (Les Dentelles aux Fuseaux)* Mulhouse, France: Thérèse de Dillmont Editions, 1910. Republished in three parts by Gale Research Co., Detroit, 1974.

"Beginning bobbin lacemakers — need a reliable book of clear, thorough instructions —" wrote Mary McPeck in a forward to her translation of *Les Dentelles aux Fuseaux*. This work, she continues — has been recognized for generations as the standard in its field". It is indeed fortunate that this authoritative work is again available.

*Bobbin Lace* had its origins in an earlier work. In the 1880's, Thérèse de Dillmont, under the aegis of the eminent thread manufacturers, Dollfus-Mieg et Cie. of Mulhouse (Alsace) wrote a textbook, *Encyclopédie des Ouvrages de Dames* known to us as *Encyclopedia of Needlework*, which dealt with all branches of needlework. Subsequently she and after her death (in 1890) those who succeeded her as editor of the DMC Library, developed and expanded parts of the *Encyclopedia* into separate "albums" covering specific techniques. Among these were two books on bobbin lace: Series 1 describing the torchon-type laces and Series 2 those laces based almost exclusively on braids. Both, originally published in French and German, have been out of print for many years.

This reprint of Series 1 consists of the original French copy in hard cover, the 80 patterns printed on separate 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" cards held in a pocket and an English translation, soft-bound by Mary McPeck, an American teacher of bobbin lacemaking, also in the pocket.

Those who are familiar with French will recognize the careful step-by-step development originating in the *Encyclopedia*, which enables even a beginner to learn to make bobbin lace. With the exception of "une passée" for twisting two pairs of bobbins and crossing the inner two, Mlle. de Dillmont used no abbreviations but wrote out each motion completely. This approach was continued in the present work. While this leads to a certain amount of tediousness through repetition, especially when dozens of bobbins are being manipulated, yet if a worker knows the basic motions of twisting and crossing, any pattern can be followed.

It was to shorten the lengthy, repetitious directions that Mary McPeck has developed a code for indicating those combinations of movements which are basic. This is an innovation, for almost all books giving directions for bobbin lacemaking do not use abbreviations.<sup>1</sup>

With the use of the code, the directions in this English translation are reduced to practically no words. For instance, after defining half stitch as H st and torchon ground (meaning t c pin t c or twist, cross, place a pin, twist, cross) as tor gr, her antiseptic translation for the Virgin ground is: Pr 1, 2 H st/ pr 3, 4 H st; pr 2, 3 tor gr at 1; pr 1, 2 tor gr at 2 pr 3, 4 tor gr at 3; etc.

Mlle. de Dillmont was much more liberal in the original: Twist the 1st and 2nd pairs once, cross = twist the 3rd and 4th pairs once, cross = twist the 2nd and 3rd pairs once, cross, stick a pin at 1, one passée = twist the 1st and 2nd pairs once, cross, stick a pin at 2, one passée = twist the 3rd and 4th pairs once, cross, stick a pin at 3, one passée — etc. (as taken from the *Encyclopedia*, English translation<sup>2</sup>).

Some better way of writing directions for making bobbin lace was badly needed. This is a step in the right direction. But perhaps if the = sign had been kept to indicate a change in the 4 bobbins being used instead of the / and the ; or if the position of the pins was indicated in black type instead of being underlined, the directions would not look so formidable. Certainly an index or better a glossary of stitches would be an asset.

In spite of the astringency of the translation this reprint package is invaluable to any one interested in bobbin lace. It is a classic which with a minimum knowledge of French can be followed particularly with the clear illustrations and the separate pattern sheets. The translation into coded English is of great interest particularly in this day of the computer. Perhaps some day a translation will be made as a companion to the *Encyclopedia*. It remains to be seen whether this notation developed by Mary McPeck is the best shorthand that can be devised.

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#### NOTES

1. An exception of, of course, was the *Modern Priscilla*, which did use a few; for example c t c for cross, twist, cross.
2. The basic instruction is the same in both the book and the *Encyclopedia*.

— Ruth Hellmann

A. Bühler, *Ikat Plangi Batik*, Hansrudolph Schwabe, Basel, 1972 (in German).

The three-volume work of Professor A. Bühler, *Ikat Plangi Batik*, has the appearance of being the definitive book on the subjects specified by the title.

One volume contains the text and some illustrations; the next volume contains the tables and diagrams; and another volume has the photographs with some more tables and diagrams. On initial examination the volumes, attractively bound in a machine-made ikat from southeast Turkey, exude knowledge, scholarship and detailed precision. The difficult text, the complicated tables and diagrams, the photographs and other illustrations seem to support this. On further examination, however, the knowledge, scholarship and precision which should act as an aid to benefit the reader become instead more of an obstacle to surmount.

Certain aspects of the subject, such as the historical development of ikat-weaving in the Near East and the regional cross-currents of technique, are given minutely detailed analysis occupying a disproportionate number of pages and are tabulated with an extremely complex method of references. A general background information, however, for example of Central Asiatic Uzbek ikat-weaving does not exist. With further study, the volumes, which initially give the promise of being veritable mines and sources of information, become instead puzzles of statistics and mazes of schematic diagrams. Tables of figures become challenges for an inventive code-breaker. Dr. Bühler, who is Professor of Ethnology at Basel University, is undoubtedly very knowledgeable about Ikat, Plangi and Batik, as one might know from his previous publications on the subjects. The three volumes certainly demonstrate his vast scholarship. But the validity of such a work would have been strengthened by its being more accessible to a general reader who is familiar with the subjects. Because Dr. Bühler's book is similar in its style and attitude to a doctoral thesis with theories to be proved by the most complicated methodology, the general use of the volumes is severely curtailed.

The volumes are certainly no "coffee-table" books. One's disappointment is not due to that fact. What the work studies in detail and theorizes on appears to be a random selection of favorite topics of Dr. Bühler rather than being a comprehensive analysis of the subjects. There does not seem to be an order for what is left out and what is included and examined in a painfully detailed manner. Undoubtedly, for the researcher

with a specific problem the volumes will be of great interest and value, once the codes are broken and the cross-references are deciphered. Unfortunately, however, for the reader with a general interest in the subjects of Ikat, Plangi or Batik, although these volumes add substantially to the existing literature, they do not by any means fill the vast gap which exists in terms of general reading matter on the subjects.

— Ocsi Ullmann

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Joan Edwards, *Crewel Embroidery in England*, William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, 1975, 248 pp. 40 pages of colored photographs, 55 black and white photographs, 80 line drawings.

Among the many books on embroidery which flow off the presses, *Crewel Embroidery in England* stands out as one which is a pleasure to read, a joy to look at, and a useful guide to employ. Miss Edwards' style of presenting her extensive and carefully researched material with a "Prologue, Entr'acte I, II, III, IV and Epilogue" is a literary delight. One with no knowledge of embroidery techniques will enjoy reading this book. The author acquaints the reader with the settings, the people, the places, and with the trends of thought over the 800 year period (1066-1900) of her survey.

The connoisseur will appreciate the colored photographs of exquisite embroidery now mostly housed in Museums. An historical background is provided for each piece of embroidery, by giving the name of the ruling monarch, events and arts of the time as well as the names of prominent living people.

To the needlewoman of today the author's outstanding contribution is her help in making it easy to use motifs from the excellent colored photographs. Besides providing the colored picture a nearby page portrays a line drawing. From this simple black and white drawing the embroiderer can transfer a design to her fabric. Inserted extra sketches of enlarged portions of the design indicate stitches to be employed and the proper direction of the needle. Nothing is omitted as the author gives directions for enlarging the size of the design. Also there are illustrations of the many crewel stitches used.

— Edith Achilles

Mary Gostelow, *A World of Embroidery*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1975.

Take the countries of the world, list them alphabetically, visit as many as you can, talk to their museum directors, curators and embroiderers, throw in a little geography, history and many excellent photographs, add an extensive bibliography, a section on stitches duplicating that to be found in any number of embroidery books, and you have "A World of Embroidery." This survey method has its limitations, but the reader cannot help being impressed by the earnestness with which the author employs it to bring together a very great deal of information.

Mary Gostelow is a journalist whose beat is embroidery. She describes herself as an embroidery student and is fortunate in having the collaboration of her husband who is a first-class photographer. She is an enthusiastic collector and shopper, and there is much information on where and how to buy embroideries, with lists of items to be sought for in various bazaars and marketplaces everywhere.

For these reasons, the book can be a useful addition to the embroiderer's and collector's library. The pictures are glorious, there is much information, some misinformation as well as gossip as the enthusiasm of the author leads the reader from one country to another to admire, and to study how many different ways there are to use a needle, thread and background textile. From Paracus textiles to the Coronation Cape of the Holy Roman Emperors down to Dorset Feather Stitchery, from American quill embroidery to Zaire raffia work, all (and all points in between) are described with copious illustrations.

However, this comprehensive collection of information and photography is marred in places by poor editing. One typical error occurs in the section on Iceland. There is a diagram for a darning stitch redrawn from *The Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club*. No one, no matter how skilful, could make that darning pattern from the diagram as redrawn. Nor could any American help but be confused by the outlining of the history as the author jumbles the centuries, weaving backward and forward in time.

Mrs. Gostelow's book, however, made possible by her enthusiasm, the airplane and international good will, is pioneering in its scope. To glance through the index is to realize how she widens the range of our information about embroidery, whether decorative, symbolic or historical.

— Frieda F. Halpern

John Irwin & Margaret Hall, *Indian Painted and Printed Fabrics and Indian Embroideries*. Volumes I & II - Historic Textiles of India at the Calico Museum, Ahmedabad, 1971-1973.

In the vast world of textiles, the frontiers of our knowledge expand and contract as scholarly books appear, and then go out of print, becoming inaccessible to the average reader. After thoroughly exploring the field of Indian chintzes made for the European market, in a collaboration with Mrs. K. B. Brett of the Royal Ontario Museum, John Irwin has returned to a study of Indian fabrics made for the domestic market, this time, with the cooperation of Margaret Hall.

We are grateful for the extension of our knowledge of Indian fabrics and embroideries. Truly, Mother India is the great progenitor of a rich variety of techniques and designs, in painting, printing and embroidering cottons and silks, as attested in these two volumes, the first of a projected series of catalogues of the holdings of the Calico Museum at Ahmedabad. Each volume is well illustrated in color, and black and white, and fully annotated, with excellent glossaries and bibliographies. We are eagerly awaiting the two subsequent volumes now in preparation, one on painted Indian cloths, the other on Indian costume.

— Cora Ginsburg

\* \* \* \* \*

Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff, *Ikatgewebe aus Nord- und Südeuropa*, Geographisch-Ethnologischen Gesellschaft und Museum für Volkerkunde und Schweizerisches Museum für Volkskunde, Basel, 1969 (in German).

*Ikatgewebe aus Nord- und Südeuropa, Ikat Weaving from North and South Europe*, is the sixth volume in a series, published under the editorship of Professor Alfred Bühler by the Geographisch-Ethnologischen Gesellschaft and the Museum für Volkerkunde und Schweizerisches Museum für Volkskunde, Basel. In this dissertation prepared at the University of Basel under the direction of Professor Bühler, the author acknowledges her debt to his "Materialien zur Kenntnis der Ikattechnik"<sup>1</sup> and presents a system of comparative analysis specifically for European ikat weaving.



The author follows Bühler in defining ikat as a Southeast-Asian term used broadly to designate a method of preparing yarns by grouping and binding them at various intervals with a material that prevents absorption of the dye in one or more baths. A pattern emerges as the yarn is woven. Effects in cloth woven with such yarns can be in warp ikat, weft ikat, double ikat (warp and weft patterns designed to coincide) or combination ikat (patterns alternate between warp and weft). The author was entrusted with research materials compiled earlier by Bühler and Fritz Iklé. As a base of this study of ikat weaving from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries, Iklé's collection, now in the Schweizerischen Museum für Volkskunde, Basel, provides about two hundred examples, with about as many again drawn from collections mainly in Europe. The purpose of this review is to introduce the book to English-speaking readers and not to comment on its thesis.

The introduction defines terms for ikat weaving and reviews published literature, with special reference to the observations of Bühler. The material is presented in three sections: technical, descriptive (formal analysis), and comparative (historical background and stylistic analysis). Theories about the origins of ikat weaving in Europe are presented in a concluding summary. There is a bibliography of literature mainly in German, French and English on ikat weaving and related textile history in Europe. The absence of an index is an inconvenience in a book whose text and illustrations are well-coordinated. There are ten representative colour plates of high quality and black and white renderings illustrating each different type of ikat discussed.

The first section deals with technical information. There are explanations and maps showing the areas of concentration for various yarns and cloth structures. A terminology for ikat motifs is accompanied by their representation on point paper and an indication of the groups of threads required to make the pattern. There are diagrams of the various arrangements of the ikat motifs in relation to non-ikat areas. According to the nature of this information, broad categories are designated to serve as the basis for discussion of specific examples in the following sections.

In the second, descriptive part, the textiles are grouped according to these categories within their probable country of origin. A general discussion of each group is accompanied by at least one illustration of a typical example. Specific pieces are recorded in a chart with information tabulated as follows: collection, provenance, yarn and direction of twist for warp and weft, structure, number of ends and picks, disposition and type of motif, pattern thread count, and colours.

In the absence of written records of ikat processes, the author acknowledges that her attributions must be conjectural and generally relates them to those in earlier studies by Bühler, Iklé and Scheller. The lively textile industry in Italy was producing in the 17th century simple designs which served as models for future development of the technique in Europe. At first under Italian influence, ikat weaving in France evolved a characteristic style which in turn was sought after and imitated. There are excerpts from the only available contemporary sources on the process of ikat weaving. These describe the lengthy procedure for the elaborate warp ikats - *chiné* silks - of the second half of the 18th century, and record the stages of mechanization ending in warp printing which in the early 19th century supplanted the true ikat technique. With a commentary on changing styles in the periods of Louis XV - XVI, the examples chosen show how contemporary taste coincided with the painterly style of *chiné* silks to produce a flowering of the technique as applied to upholstery, drapery and dress fabric. In the case of Majorca, both historical and contemporary examples are considered. Though hindered by the competitive secrecy of some workshops, the author was able to observe procedures in the one which adheres most nearly to the original technique. In this connection, she makes her only reference to dyestuffs; namely, the introduction of a chemical dye to replace the indigo still used by the last generation of craftsmen. In this longest of the descriptive chapters, many of the ikat weaves suspected by the author of being warp printed are included presumably to illustrate the continuity at least in effect of the "tela de lenguas", the lozenge motif typical of Majorcan ikat tradition.

Concerning the northern European countries, the ikat weaving of Finland is most strongly represented by a large collection in the National Museum in Helsinki. Still there are enough examples from the late 18th and 19th centuries in Sweden, Norway and Denmark to give evidence of a collective style. This group of textiles seems to be the product of rural weaving for clothing and home furnishings. The examples are usually in wool with some linen or cotton and almost all are weft ikat. In connection with this form, the use of a dye or binding stick in Finland is described. Though warp and combination ikats are found in Scandinavia, this study considers such examples imports from central Europe.

The third comparative section of the book discusses the forms of ikat weaving within the general textile history of each country and attempts to relate their occurrence and distribution. Emphasis is on the south and north since ikat and related techniques from the end of the 18th century in central Europe - Germany, Switzerland and Austria - are considered totally dependent on French and Italian influence.

There is a brief history of early silk weaving in Sicily and subsequent development of the textile industry in centres on the mainland. In this rich tradition may be found some conditions contributing to the production of ikat weaving in Italy, whose active trade in woven goods spread knowledge of the technique to the north. A review of the silk industry in France from the 13th century shows how encouragement from the state brought this country to pre-eminence in the field in the 18th century. Beginning with simple designs based on Italian models, the French developed their refined geometric and floral warp ikats. The printed velvets popular in the Empire are considered as the last expression of the *chiné* tradition. As a background to the discussion of ikat weaving in Majorca, there is a brief history of the textile industry as it can be traced in Spain, with special reference to the influence of the changes from Moslem to Christian rule. For Majorca in particular, though the importance of weaving as a source of wealth is recorded in the history of the guilds from the 13th through the 19th centuries, information specifically on ikat weaving can only be gathered from surviving examples. In the absence of sure dates, the author relates these to Italian and French models of the 17th and 18th centuries respectively. Whether from these sources or from earlier local ones, ikat was absorbed to produce a vigorous national tradition still seen in the small workshops. In Finland and Sweden, ikat weaving seems to have appeared in the course of the 18th century and ended in the first half of our own. The technique itself is considered to have been adapted from neighbouring countries but the predominant weft ikats of the rural type in Scandinavia owe little to the possible weft ikat models of France and Majorca. The northern countries interpreted the basic technique in native materials, and it is suggested that they tended to transpose patterns derived from warp ikat models for use as weft ikat motifs.

The comparative section closes with a discussion of possible sources of ikat weaving in Europe. There is circumstantial evidence for the existence of ikat in Majorca and in Italy as early as the 9th and 10th centuries respectively. A comparison with Yemenite examples shows similarities in structure, motifs and colour with those of the Majorcan tradition. But no conclusions can be drawn on the transmission of the technique through Islamic culture to Majorca or through Sicily to Italy. The author also points out structural and stylistic similarities between north Italian and Turkish warp ikats. The close trade links and active textile industries in the two areas since the Renaissance might account for the introduction of the technique to southern Europe.

In the concluding summary, the author sees Italy and Majorca as closest to the sources of ikat weaving, whether absorbed through Islamic

culture or transferred through trade links with Asia Minor and the Near East. She groups together the southern centres whose inter-dependent forms and sources determined production in central Europe. The appearance of ikat weaving in the north too was probably due to the diffusion of goods and styles from the south. But there may have been additional influences through Russia and in any case the technique was interpreted in an independent way.

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NOTE

1. Bühler, A. (1943) "Materialen zur Kenntnis der Ikattechnik", *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, Supplement zu 43. Leiden.

— Lucy Fellowes

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Riitta Pylkkänen, *The Use and Traditions of Medieval Rugs and Coverlets in Finland*. Archaeological Society of Finland, Helsinki, 1974.

The studies of Icelandic medieval rugs and related arts by Riitta Pylkkänen have recently been published under one cover and translated into English by the Archaeological Society of Finland. It is a most extensive and informative text with an exceptionally large bibliography which serves as excellent source material for the serious student and professional. The change of pace from the technical to the historical and social environments of the times also makes her book appealing to the lay reader. There is a vast amount of information concerning the various weaving techniques employed and description of the development of design, which is well illustrated in black and white as well as color.

Archaeological excavations since the Bronze Age have been the basic source of her exhaustive research as well as materials found in later day

church treasuries, castles and manor houses of the area. The influence of other than Icelandic countries is carefully noted; in particular, the Far East, Spain and France.

Both "gilt membrane" counterpanes and the course or shaggy "ryijy" rugs were used in Finnish castles in the 16th century, the former as textile furnishings and the latter as bedcovers.

Textiles of wool intarsia served as hearse and tomb clothes (called päll in Sweden) and later as tent and bridal cloths and canopies. Medieval cloths preserved from as early as the 14th century gives evidence of stylized heraldic images; griffins, unicorns, etc., reminiscent of ornamentation that entered European art in the 11th century from Oriental and Byzantine silk fabrics. Applied representations of saints, done often in silver and gold threads, became fashionable at the end of the 15th century. In addition, textiles and their designs often served as models for works in other materials; for instance, marble slabs, ivory caskets and sculptured capitals.

The authoresses' detailed accounting of castle and manor house inventories of rugs and other coverings, including dates purchased and disposed, could have been abbreviated without affecting this excellent and extensive exploration of the subject.

Our inspiration for the "modern" stylized woven designs of today is most evident in many of these medieval weavings of the Icelandic lands as described in this book.

— Florence Bell Martin

\* \* \* \* \*

Leslie Tillet, *American Needlework 1776-1976*, New York Graphic Society, Boston, 1975.

This original selection of designs or their adaptations presented in *American Needlework* in celebration of our Bi-Centennial comes from many sources generally overlooked by contemporary designers when commemorating our history.

Whether the scrimshaw whales in a paisley motif, the Benjamin Franklin bouquet, the tea chop label, designs from American textile-painters, Crazy Horse and General Custer from an Indian drawing, designs for "The Spirit of '76," "United We Stand" or "Don't Tread on Me," or an adaptation of a fire-screen worked by Martha Washington (discovered by the author), this is a memorable collection of Americana and a noteworthy addition to our design history, now available in embroidery.

Of particular interest to canvas workers is a background stitch which the author calls "Basket Weave Bargello." The effect is of woven ribbon and is a most welcome addition to tent or diaper stitch background.

Mr. Tillett was trained as a color chemist and his color chart as well as the original and alternative color schemes repay serious study.

— Frieda Halpern

## NOTES ON AUTHORS

*Edith M. Achilles, Ph.D.*, is a valuable and devoted member of the Needle and Bobbin Club and of the Embroiderer's Guild of America, Inc.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Joan Edwards*, a well-known London embroiderer and specialist in historical embroidery, does not plan to return to this country, so we are especially happy to have her fine article.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Lucy Fellowes* is a handweaver. She has studied and woven in England and Scotland as well as in this country.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg* is a collector and connoisseur of costumes and textiles. She is writing a book on American costume.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Mrs. Frieda F. Halpern* is an experimental embroideress, teacher and writer in the field of embroidery.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Mrs. Norris W. Harkness*, President Emeritus of the Needle and Bobbin Club, originated, among many things, the popular safaris taken each spring and fall by the Club.

*Mrs. R. K. Hellmann* holds a graduate degree in chemistry from Columbia and has studied lace and needlework as a collector, historian and practitioner.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Mrs. Alan Rhys Martin* has lived in many parts of the world where rugs are made.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Edith Appleton Standen* is Curatorial Consultant to the Western European Arts department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and is writing a tapestry catalogue for them.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ocsi Ullmann*, a connoisseur and collector of textiles, runs the Artweave Gallery.



## CLUB NOTES

Mrs. Rudolph von Fluegge cordially invited the members of the Needle and Bobbin club to her apartment for the first meeting of the year, on Thursday, January twenty-ninth. Mrs. Gillian Moss gave a charming lecture on "Samplers, a History of . .", followed by a sumptuous tea.

\* \* \* \* \*

Through the hospitality of Mrs. H. Beecher Chapin, Mrs. Carl Dauterman, Mrs. Paul C. Guth and Mrs. Russell Viet, the Needle and Bobbin Club held a meeting on Wednesday, March twelfth, at the Academy of Sciences. Mrs. Gregory Petrakis spoke on Greek Island embroideries. Tea on a novel horseshoe table arrangement followed.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Annual Meeting of the Needle and Bobbin Club was held on Tuesday, April twenty-second, at the Academy of Sciences, through the kindness of Miss Alice Baldwin Beer, Miss Mildred McCormick, Mrs. Malcolm Smith and Mrs. Robert McC. Marsh. Miss Helen Lowenthal of London gave an illustrated lecture on the Stoke Edith embroideries. A festive tea followed.

\* \* \* \* \*

On May first, we went down to Helen Williams' new house in the country, clutching our works of art to our breasts, for we had planned a Show and Tell. And we had just that. Helen had delicious sandwiches, cake and drinks. She is marvelous - always so kind and thoughtful of everybody.

— Dorothy Harkness

October eighth in the morning we started our bus trip to see the beauty of the autumn leaves at Helen Smith's, also on Long Island, where we found a gem! After welcome drinks, we looked at her unusual valances painted painstakingly by her. (She is so modest, I doubt that she will ever speak to me again!) We went to her club for lunch.

— Dorothy Harkness

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On November twentieth, Thursday, Mrs. Warren Adams kindly invited the members of the Needle and Bobbin Club to her apartment to hear Mrs. Ann Parker Neal give a beautifully illustrated slide lecture on "the Mola Embroideries of the San Blas Indians" and to enjoy a delicious tea afterwards.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Guth offered a most delightful tea and cocktail party to members and their husbands and escorts on Friday, December twelfth. A very happy time was had by all.

IN MEMORIAM

The Needle and Bobbin Club cherishes the memory of members who have died during the year.

*Mrs. Stuart Allen*

*Mr. Norris W. Harkness III*

*Mrs. Daryl Parshall*

*Mrs. John B. Trevor*

*Miss Frances Williams*

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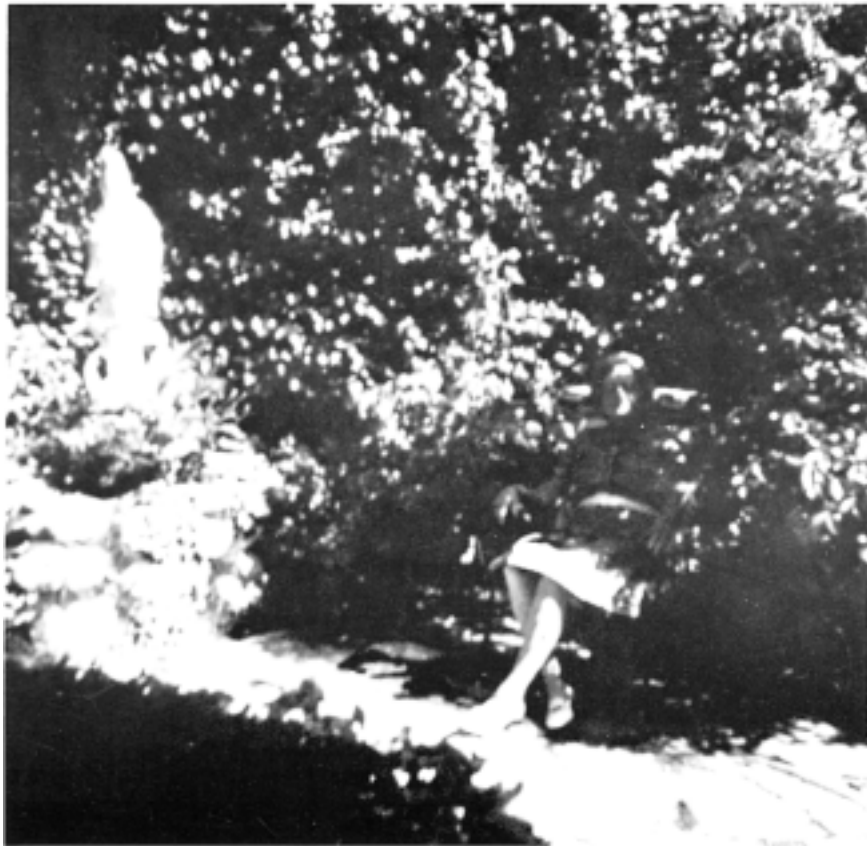
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