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Needlework

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Honors Project
"Needlework"

Connie Bowie

Mrs. Hazel Thomas
Fall 1972

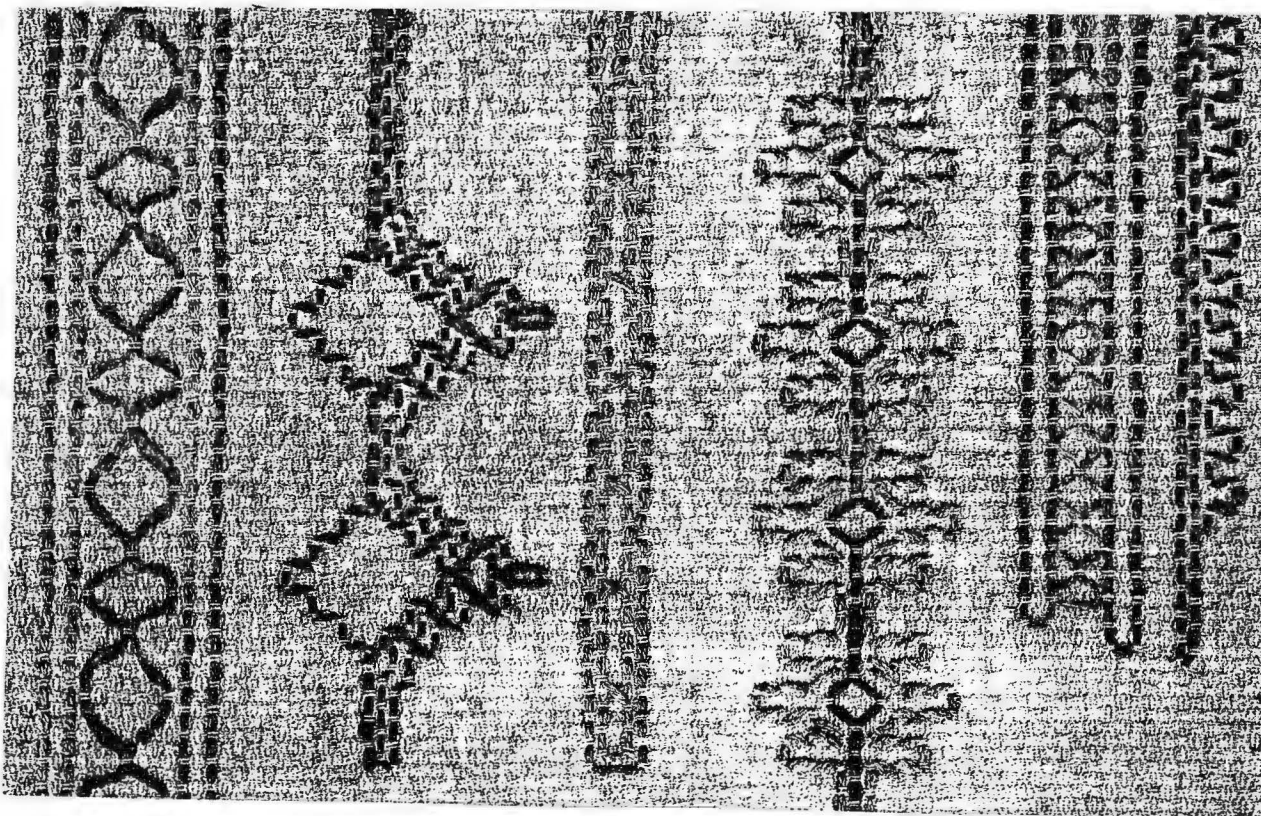
Huck Embroidery

This type of embroidery gets its name from the fabric it is worked on, which is huck toweling, a textured fabric with the raised threads on both front and back. Huck embroidery is actually short for huckaback, and is also known as Swedish weaving. It can be done with six-strand cotton, pearl cotton, fine wool yarn, or other kinds of embroidery threads. The technique is simply running the thread under the pairs of raised threads on the wrong side of the huck. A blunt needle is used so the pairs of threads can be picked up easily without going through the fabric. Knots should not be used; weave ends back into the same row of embroidery. Huck weaving can also be done on the right side of the fabric where prominent raised single threads appear.

You can center a design on huck by starting the first row at the center and working to each side. If you are not centering the pattern, start at lower right corner and work across to left.

Huck-style weaving done on a variety of smooth-textured fabrics opens up possibilities for designing many new patterns. the basic huck weaving stitch is used, with stitches being taken through the material, picking up a few threads of the fabric pattern to form the design. A wide range of effects can be achieved by using different materials--checks, dots, tiny-patterned fabrics. Good fabrics to use are diagonal or square checks, dotted Swiss or other dotted cottons, fabric with very close patterns in even or alternating lines, waffle pique or monk's cloth.

I made a sample with huck embroidery using 17 different stitch patterns. Yellow huck fabric was used and various colors of embroidery thread make each pattern distinct. The examples below show a few of them.



Using huck fabric for a hand towel, I decorated a border on both ends. A double line of huck embroidery in variegated colored thread was enclosed by a single line of stitching. Hemstitching on the hem gave the towel a finished look.

Drawn Work: Hemstitching

Drawn work describes those kinds of embroidery in which some of the warp or weft threads are drawn from the fabric; the remaining threads are pulled together with a fine needle threaded with a matching or contrasting color. This may be used to finish hems and make borders. Suitable fabrics for hemstitching vary from the finest linen to burlap. Threads, too, can be widely varied.

Any linen or cotton fabric with a plain weave may be used for hemstitching. To draw out threads, insert a pin under one thread near edge of fabric and pull it up; then carefully draw the thread from fabric all the way across. Try to ease it out without breaking it. Hemstitching is done on wrong side of fabric, from left to right.

A hem may be made at same time hemstitching is done. Turn fabric over twice to make hem desired width, and baste. Draw out two or three threads across the fabric just below edge of hem. Put needle under next three or four upright threads of drawn section from right to left (Fig. 1). Pull thread taut, insert needle in second row of threads above drawn section and pull thread tight. Continue across, as in Figs. 1 and 2, always picking up same number of threads. The bottom edge of the drawn section may be hemstitched also.

PLAIN HEMSTITCHING

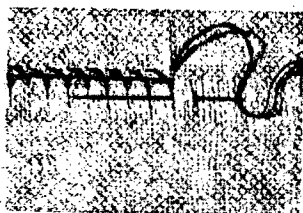


FIG. 1

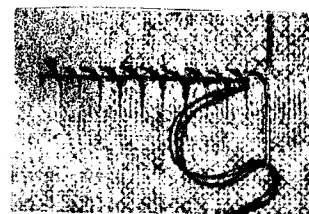


FIG. 2

Needlepoint

Needlepoint is embroidery on canvas. It has come down to us from various countries and in various stitches. The term needlepoint-tapestry shows the relation of needlepoint to the tapestry designs of the middle ages. This early work was done on a loosely-woven material like coarse linen. Later, canvases were made especially for the purpose.

It is very difficult to give exact dates and even places where the technique originated. Canvas work dates back to the 16th century, but reached its peak during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Needlepoint was extremely popular in Colonial America where it was used for pictures, as an upholstery fabric, and for fashion accessories.

The current revived interest in needlepoint started to gain momentum during the late 20's and continues to increase in popularity with the ever-growing interest in handcrafts.

Needlepoint designs are available in different forms. The majority of imported needlepoint pieces have the center already worked, with only the background left to be filled in. On others, the design is painted directly on the canvas in colors corresponding to the yarn colors to be used in working the needlepoint. Chart forms are available for many designs and needlepoint pictures. Each square on the chart represents a stitch in the canvas.

When this embroidery stitch is worked on canvas 20 meshes to the inch or smaller, it is called petit point. When worked on 14 to 18 to the inch mesh, it is simply called needlepoint. On 8 to

12 to the inch mesh, it is called gros point. Larger meshes, 5 and 7 to the inch are quick point.

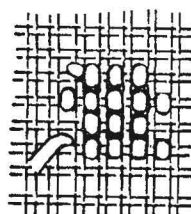
The three basic needlepoint stitches are half cross-stitch, continental stitch, and diagonal stitch.

The half cross-stitch is practical when working a picture or areas which will not receive hard wear. It is a yarn saver since almost all the yarn appears on front of the canvas.

HALF CROSS-STITCH



HALF CROSS-STITCH

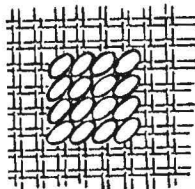


BACK

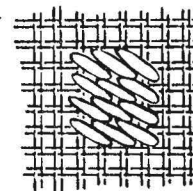
Continental stitch is the most promoted. It uses more wool than the half cross-stitch because it covers the canvas on both front and back. The finished piece is more attractive and wearing quality is increased. The slight padding on the back makes it durable and practical for upholstery pieces and rugs.

CONTINENTAL STITCH

CONTINENTAL STITCH

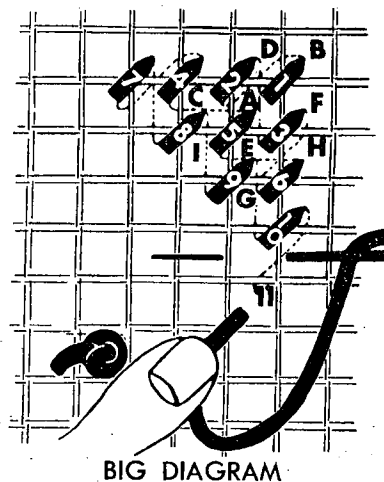
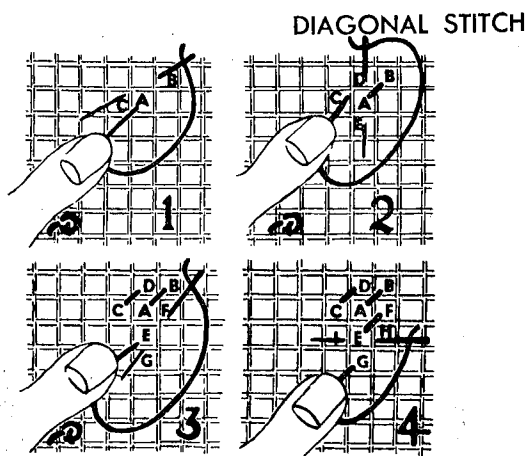


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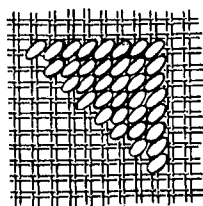


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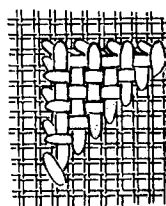
Contrary to popular belief the diagonal piece does not use more wool than the continental stitch. This stitch covers the canvas and reinforces it, as it is actually woven into the canvas.



DIAGONAL STITCH



FRONT



BACK

Needlepoint offers a variety of other interesting stitches ranging in size and texture for various patterns on canvas.

Needlework was my choice for honors project because I have never done any of it before and it has always fascinated me. This project made me aware of the hundreds of stitches, techniques, and different kinds of needlework. I would love to be able to do each kind!

These three needlepoint pictures had the design painted directly on the canvas. Matching thread was included as part of the set. There were 10 meshes to an inch, making them gros point. I used the half cross-stitch on all three pictures.

