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PLATE 5 — Portrait of Mary Cornwallis, attributed to George Gower, English, circa 1573. Courtesy of the City of Manchester, Gallery of Fine Arts.

NOTES ON EMBROIDERY IN ENGLAND  
DURING THE TUDOR AND STUART PERIODS

by

GERTRUDE TOWNSEND

THE exploration of records of embroidery in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and comparison of the documentary evidence with the relatively small number of surviving examples, open inviting vistas and tempting paths for the student of needlework.

For these notes, I shall quite arbitrarily restrict my illustrations of actual embroideries to a few examples of Tudor and Stuart embroidery, including the years of the Civil War and the Commonwealth, in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

I cannot pretend to cover the ground that has been so ably and brilliantly covered by others to whom I am deeply indebted, but I should like to wander down documentary paths and byways, some well worn, some overgrown and obscured, in an attempt to recall the brilliance that embroiderers, in several categories, contributed to the English scene. A distinguished pioneer in the study of textiles as a decorative art, Francisque-Michel, in his enchanting volumes, *Recherches sur le Commerce, la Fabrication et l'Usage des Étoffes de Soie, d'Or, et d'Argent* (Paris 1852 and 1854) used no pictorial illustrations, only documentary evidence drawn from contemporary records and literature. By this method he opens to our view so rich a scene that, after reading these volumes, one could be unprepared for the disappointment of discovering the relatively small number of examples of woven and embroidered textiles that have survived from the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance.

If we follow this method into England of the Tudor and Stuart periods, we should remember that a balanced picture of the scene, and of the varied contributions made by the embroiderer, as well as by other artists and craftsmen, cannot be fully realized by the examination of surviving examples. Though these notes are mainly concerned with English embroidery, I should like to add that national boundaries were not as precisely drawn as they supposedly are today, and that the lines which existed were repeatedly crossed by claims and counter claims of sovereignty. The pomp and circumstance of royal marriages, and the consequent international meetings with pageants and the exchange of gifts, flourished through the

sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century. Though the display of wealth continues in modern pageantry, it is improbable that the “Field of the Cloth of Gold” will be repeated.

Francisque-Michel (*opus cit.* vol. 2, p. 363) cites among the monuments of the embroiderer’s art four sets of church vestments sewn with pearls and beaten gold: “*quatre paires d’ornemens d’Eglise, semez de perles à or battu (esquels estoient signez la representation de la benoïste Trinité, & du mont Olivet, & les images de Saint Michel & de Sainct Georges)*,” given in 1396 by Charles VI of France to his son-in-law Richard II of England. This is quoted from the account of an exchange of gifts incident to the marriage of the King of England to the daughter of the King of France, described by Jean Juvenal des Ursins in his *Histoire de Charles VI Roy de France* (edited by Denys Godefroy, Paris, 1653, p. 121). The connection between this gift of embroidery from a king of France to a king of England in 1396 and Henry VII, the first Tudor king of England, may seem tenuous, but Isabelle, the child-bride of Richard II, was the eldest sister of Katharine of Valois, Henry VII’s grandmother. That Henry VII did not underestimate the significance of his descent from the daughter of a king of France, and the widow of a king of England, is clear from the wording of his will, dated March 1509, in which he orders that his body be buried within the Monastery of Westminster: “Forasmuch as that the body of the glorious King and Confessor Saint Edward, and divers others of our progenitors, and specially the body of our granddame of right noble memory Queen Katherine, wife to King Henry the Fifth, and daughter to King Charles of France, be interred within our Monastery of Westminster.” (Nicolas, Nicholas Harris, *Testamenta Vestusta*, London 1826, pp. 26-36). In the chapel where his grandmother was buried and to which he proposed “shortly to translate thither the body and reliques of our uncle of blessed memory King Henry the sixth,” his father’s half brother, he directed that a tomb be built according to a plan, signed with his hand, which should be “sufficiently large both for our dearest late wife the Queen and ourself, and that her body be removed from the place where it is now buried, and laid with our body in the said tomb, if it be not done by ourself in our days.” This is followed by several bequests and provisions, including a bequest to the Monastery of Westminster “for a perpetual memory there to remain while the world shall endure, the whole suit of vestments and coopies [copes] of cloth of gold tissue, wrought with our badges of red roses and portcullises, the which we of late caused to

be made at our proper costs and charges, bought and provided at Florence in Italy." "Wrought" in this sentence does not mean "embroidered," although at a considerably later date it frequently has been used to indicate needlework decoration. Here it refers to designs "wrought" upon a loom.

A cope believed to be part of this set of vestments, now the property of Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, was exhibited in 1930 at the Victoria and Albert Museum in their *Exhibition of English Mediaeval Art* (No. 755), as well as a chasuble (No. 666), probably from the same set of vestments. It is illustrated on plate 80 of *Needlework as Art* (1886) by Lady Marion Alford. The elements of the design are English, though the drawing of the design and its preparation for the loom, as well as its execution, are undoubtedly Italian. There is a splendid sweep to the undulating stems of the pair of rose bushes framing three crowned portcullises, which bear not only Henry's badge, the red rose of Lancaster, but also the white rose of York in honor of his wife, Elizabeth of York. Whether the embroidered hood and orphrey which now complete the cope were originally on it I do not know. They are, however, of English workmanship and date from approximately the same period. In this embroidery, with the Annunciation on the hood, and saints under canopies on the orphrey, we see, in contrast to the superbly designed weaving of velvet and cloth of gold, that no longer can English ecclesiastical embroidery, *opus anglicanum*, celebrated throughout Europe during the Middle Ages, be considered the finest in western civilization.

The dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII cannot be held responsible for the decline in the quality of church embroidery in England, though the Reformation was the cause of the dispersal and destruction of a great part of the rich stores of ecclesiastical needlework then in England, both in churches and monasteries, and in private chapels. Some idea of the wealth of ecclesiastical embroideries in private hands prior to the severance from Rome of the English Church in 1534 can be gleaned from extracts from wills of both men and women published by Nicholas Harris Nicolas in *Testamenta Vetusta* (London 1826). In the will of Katherine Lady Hastings (*opus cit.* vol. II, pp. 450-456), dated Nov. 22, 1503, among similar bequests, she leaves to George, Earl of Shrewsbury, "a vestment of purpure velvet, with a crucifix and images of St. Peter and St. John embroidered upon that oon of them," and to the Lady Shrewsbury, "a cope of cloth of gold with lillyes embroidered, and that oon with the image of the Trinitie, with a frontrail for an altar." Certainly not all the

hangings and ornaments for house and chapel were decorated with embroidery. In a long list of bequests to her son Edward, Lord Hastings, we find "an old hangyngs of counterfeit arres of Knollys, which now hangeth in the hall; and all such hangings of old bawdekyn or lynen paynted as now hang in the chapell," but many of her bequests are specifically described as embroidered. To her two sons Richard and William she bequeathed "two hangings for an aultar, with the twelve Apostles embroidered with gold, with a crucifix and the Salutation of Our Lady." In the will of Thomas Lord La Warre (*ibid.* pp. 605-606), dated 8 October 1524, he bequeathed to the Church of Broadwater his "Mantle of blue velvet of the Garter," and his "gown of crimson velvet belonging there to make two altar cloths." In doing this he follows an old tradition, but one which was revised in England after 1534, when ecclesiastical vestments were remade for secular use.

Surviving examples of fifteenth and early sixteenth century English embroidery, compared with those of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, show, not only that the late pre-Reformation embroideries lack the exquisite grace and variety of earlier work, but also that the embroiderers, though deft and effective workers, had lost the subtle skill of their predecessors. There is, however, often a certain primitive charm in the designs, worked with silk and gold on linen, as well as a warmth and richness in the velvets and damasks on which they were applied.

Here we may turn to the *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York* dated 1502 (edited by Nicholas Harris Nicolas, London 1830) for a firsthand account, though confessedly brief, of the embroiderers' craft, and of some of the embroiderers who worked for Henry VII's consort during the last year of her life. From the order in which they are listed, we can gain some idea of the embroiderers' functions and methods, and learn something about the work they produced. For this year at least, the queen's chief embroiderer was one "Robynnet," very variously spelt. On May 23 (*opus cit.* p. 13) he was paid thirteen shillings and fourpence as a reward, and on November 4 he was given five shillings for one ounce of flat gold, and eight shillings eightpence for two ounces of round gold at four shillings fourpence the ounce. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one can trace the fluctuating value of currency by the prices paid for "gold" used by embroiderers. The recurring restrictions on both the importation and the manufacture of gold and silver wire point to the ever present fear that too lavish a use of silver and gold by embroiderers would cause a

shortage of metal for the mint. (Stewart, Horace, *A History of the Worshipful Company of Gold and Silver Wyre-Drawers*, London 1891.) The goldsmiths, and the gold and silver wire-drawers who prepared metals for the embroiderers, used a variety of techniques. There is, of course, the familiar flattened silver and gilded silver wound on a silk core, used by both weavers and embroiderers. Among the embroiderers' materials we find fine wire, flat or round, of various weights, twisted in a spiral to form a fine hollow tube, which could be cut in lengths and stitched with almost invisible stitches to the ground fabric. Thus the effect of low relief sculpture in gold could be produced, with the various weights and textures of the wires defining areas in the design. This is the gold purl (derived possibly from "pirl" to twist) or the French *cannetille* (gold or silver), which in 1611 Cotgrave translates as "purle." In the *Dictionnaire Universel de Commerce* by Jaques Savary des Bruslons and Philemon-Louis Savary (1759 edition) *cannetille* is described as follows: "C'est un morceau de fil d'or ou d'argent trait, fin ou faux, plus ou moins gros, qu'on a roulé sur une longue aiguille de fer par le moyen d'un rouet." Farther on it is stated: "Quand la cannetille est plate et luisante pour avoir été serrée entre deux roues d'aciers, on l'appelle bouillon." Ephraim Chambers in his *Cyclopaedia*, the encyclopaedia from which Diderot drew the inspiration, and even the words, for many of his articles, describes the procedure for making gilded silver thread as follows: "Gold *thread* or *spun gold* is a flattened gilt wire, wrapped or laid over a thread of yellow silk, by twisting it with a wheel and iron bobbins. Gold *wire* is a cylindrical ingot of silver, above an inch thick, two feet in length, and weighing about twenty pounds, superficially gilt, or covered with gold, at the fire, and afterwards drawn successively through a great number of little round holes of a wire-drawing iron, each less than the other, till it be sometimes no bigger than a hair of the head" (*Chambers Cyclopaedia*, London 1778-1788, edited by Abraham Rees, s.v. "Gold;" first ed. 1728).

The use of these spiral wires can be followed through inventories under the word *purl*, but one must be prepared for confusion with *pearl*, due to the vagaries of sixteenth and seventeenth century spelling. Both pearls and seed pearls were used to enrich embroideries. The context usually indicates which word is intended. In addition to gold and silver wires and small spangles, the goldsmith, if we may judge from contemporary chronicles, also provided, for embroideries, plates of gold, probably gilded silver, in decorative forms, including letters of the alphabet.



Gold and silver were not, of course, the only materials used by embroiderers. On the same day in November 1502 that Robynet was paid from the privy purse of Elizabeth of York for an ounce of flat gold and two ounces of round gold, a mercer of London, Henry Bryan, was given thirty-two pounds, six shillings, as an installment on his bill, which totaled one hundred and seven pounds, ten shillings, “for certain silkes and other stuf of his occupation by him delivered to th’ use of the Quene.” We do not know whether this was silk yarn for embroidery or whether it was woven silk. If it was silk for embroidering it could have been used in working the “elne of lynnyn cloth for a sampler for the Quene,” for which on the tenth day of July 1502 eightpence had been paid to Thomas Fisshe (*Privy Purse Expenses-Elizabeth of York*, p. 30).

Examining these expenses, we note that the embroiderers who worked for Henry VII’s consort were paid by the day for their work; the number of hours is not given. They were also paid board-wages, which were reckoned by the week. Even though the embroiderers did not work on Sundays and Holy Days, nevertheless they must be fed every day.

On Christmas Day, 1502, the sum of one hundred and thirteen shillings, and one penny was given to Robynet, repaying him for money he had already expended, for work done by several assistants “upon the riche bedde” (*ibid.*, p. 82). This included payments to one Anthony for forty-one days at fourpence the day, and for board wages for seven weeks and three days at sixteenpence the week. There were two other men working on the bed, William and James, and there were three women, Margaret Stokes and Joan Pote, and another Joan. I do not find, in this brief account, any wages paid to Robynet listed, in addition to board wages, other than the thirteen shillings and fourpence given him in reward, previously mentioned, but he also received thirty shillings for his house rent for three quarters of a year. Another payment to an embroiderer, made on Christmas Day, was to John Bolok (*ibid.*, p. 82) for six days’ work upon altar cloths. One item in this account is quite clear: five shillings were paid for candles for the space of seven weeks and four days. The item that follows puzzled me for a long time: twopence was paid “for searing candelles for the awter clothys.” It was only after I had examined at some length under a microscope a fragment of a contemporary ecclesiastical embroidery (English late fifteenth or early sixteenth century) in the Boston Museum’s collection (51.1726) (fig. 1) that I understood this and the words that follow: “Item

for blake crewle to purfulle the rosys vjd. Item for searing candelles for the white and red rosys and clowdes Vd.”

On the museum’s fragment, probably part of a band or pane from an altar hanging, there is an angel standing on a wheel, feathered in gold, carrying a scroll, the words on which are now indecipherable. This figure was worked on linen, then cut out and applied to the velvet ground. Mrs. Archibald Christie, in *Samplers and Stitches* (3rd edition, London 1934, p. 143) suggests, in working similar designs for ecclesiastical purposes, that paste be used to prevent fraying along the cut edges of linen, and that after the figures are applied to another ground fabric, the edges be masked by couching a cord braid or a hank of thread. The photograph of a detail of the Boston Museum’s fragment (fig. 1a) taken under magnification (21X) shows that in this case wax, not paste, was used to prevent the cut edges of the linen from fraying. This wax, I believe, provides the explanation of the item “searing candelles” found in the accounts of Henry VIII’s Queen. In the Boston Museum’s fragment of embroidery, it is only where black crewels have been used, not silks, to mask the cut edges, that the edge of the linen can be seen and the wax identified. Where crewels were not used, there are several strands of tawny silk, some wound with gold threads, outlining the applied figures. Where black crewels have rotted away, undoubtedly due to the effect of the black dye on the wool, a crevice around the figures is clearly visible in the pile of the velvet. In these crevices small tufts of black crewel, used for couching the outlines, remain. It is along these crevices that cut edges of the linen are visible and uneven ridges of clear wax.

In the Oxford Dictionary we find that the verb “to cere,” to smear or cover with wax, was, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, spelled sometimes with a *c*, sometimes with an *s*, quite indifferently. It is true that a cere cloth used in embalming was covered with wax, and that wax was sometimes used to gloss cotton cloth. Wax has also been used to wax sewing thread.

I believe that it would be very helpful to those studying embroideries of this period, now to be found in widely scattered collections in Europe and America, if photographs, taken under precisely the same magnification, could be exchanged. Valuable comparisons of techniques could be made without the necessity of bringing the embroideries together in one place. Only by careful examination of many pieces of English appliqué embroidery can we learn whether smearing with wax was a regularly employed pro-

cedure during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The Boston Museum is not as yet fortunate enough to include other examples of this type of embroidery in its collections. The fragment under discussion is one of two formerly in the collection of Leopold Iklé which were sold at auction in Zurich in September 1923. The numbers in the auction catalogue are 775 and 776. One of these two fragments, illustrated on plate 132 of the catalogue, now in the St. Louis Museum, shows an angel between two floral figures. Our piece shows only one floral figure, but there are traces of the lower part of a modified Gothic letter, which has been removed. The adhesive was glue.

The angel on the embroidered band in Boston from the Leopold Iklé collection, and presumably the angel on the band now in St. Louis, are clothed in feathered garments of gold (silver-gilt) thread couched in pairs. Silk thread forms the core around which the silver-gilt is wound. The outer parts of the spread wings are similarly executed, while the feathers visible within the outstretched wings are embroidered with silks shading from yellow-green to vivid green, with stitches simulating the directions of the soft fringe of the feathers, the central shaft indicated by a line of split stitch in tawny silk. Where black still outlines the feathers, it has been found to be silk; where the outlines are gone, there are traces of black crewels.

The halo is pale peach-colored silk in laid work, held down by three concentric bands of gold thread, yellow silk closely wound with gilded silver, while the orange silk with which the hair is worked is crossed by yellow silk in split stitch. The ermine collar, of black and white silk, is couched with silver thread (silver wound on a white silk core). The angel stands on a wheel. This is the wheel that, though with varying numbers of spokes, is found in many examples of English Medieval and Renaissance embroidery. The cope in the Vatican Treasury, illustrated by A.G.I. Christie in *English Medieval Embroidery* (Oxford, 1938, plates XLVI-XLIX) shows angels within stars standing on wheels. These angels Mrs. Christie describes as "seraphims," one of the nine orders of angels. The wheel is perhaps an allusion to the wheel seen in a vision by Ezekiel (*Ezekiel*, Chapter X), though it lacks the attributes of the "thrones," or wheels of fire, as defined in medieval angelology, who are the third in the first order according to the Oxford English Dictionary, but the first according to Didron in his *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne* (Paris, 1845, pp. 71-74). In the King James version of the Bible, it was "cherubims", described as tetramorphs, that Ezekiel saw in his vision, and it was seraphims that Isaiah described (Chapter VI, verse

2): "each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he did fly." This is the angel, with variations, to be found in late fifteenth and early sixteenth century English ecclesiastical embroideries. However, the repeated use of the word "angel," without reference to the orders of angels, in English records of this period, makes it appear doubtful whether the designers intended any particular classification. Though the Boston Museum's angel is clothed in a feathered garment which comes to his ankles, and with feathers that stand out on each side like fringed coat tails, only one pair of wings is clearly visible. In similar English embroideries, the angels are often depicted with two clearly defined pairs of wings. Usually one pair is raised high and one pair outstretched, as the wings in this embroidery. Some of these angels are poised in mid-air, many stand on wheels, though some, as half figures, rise from clouds.

That there were many professional embroiderers working in England at this time is unquestionable. Their fame was fleeting, but from time to time a name appears on a record. John Flee was paid six shillings and eightpence in 1503 "for brouderers" and other workmen working for the "Queene of Scottes" (Bentley, Samuel, *Excerpte Historica*, p. 130). There is no indication here whether John Flee was himself an embroiderer, or what type of embroidery he provided for young Margaret Tudor, but it was probably part of her marriage outfit. It was in September 1503 that she married James IV of Scotland, a marriage that a hundred years later united the crowns of England and Scotland under her great-grandson James Stuart, Sixth of Scotland and First of England.

The importance of the embroiderers' craft and the monetary value placed upon it during the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) is vividly illustrated in contemporary wills. When Sir Robert Radclyffe in his will, proved the 19th of May 1498, bequeathed to his daughter Ann "a bed of gold," it was probably a set of golden embroidered hangings and cover, the furnishings for a bed. He also bequeathed to the Parish Churches of Hedersel and Wymandham, "each a black vestment of velvet, with my arms and the arms of the Lady Cromwell, late my wife, and to the Church of Tattershall a vestment." (Nicolas, Nicholas Harris, *Testamenta Vetusta*, London 1836, vol. II, p. 434). Until Henry VIII's breach with the Church of Rome, 1531-1535, and the progressive dissolution of the monasteries, gifts to the church were almost invariably an important part of the provisions for the disposition of even a modest estate. Probably the armorial bearings on the black velvet vestments in Sir Robert Radclyffe's will were embroidered.

Vestments such as those Henry VII had woven to his order in Florence must have been rare and far more costly. In August of 1498, Ann Lady Scrope willed "to my Lady my Lord's mother" her embroidered psalter (Nicholas, Nicholas Harris, *Testamenta Vetusta*, vol. II, p. 435). Embroidered book bindings of the seventeenth century are numerous, surviving examples of sixteenth century date are less frequently found. There are two in Oxford, in the Bodleian Library, that are associated with Queen Elizabeth I. The earliest (No. 20, *Catalogue of Exhibition of British Embroidery from the 13th to the 19th century*, City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, February-March 1959) is said to have been worked by Elizabeth when she was eleven years old as a gift for her step-mother, Queen Katherine Parr. This is a small book, written by Princess Elizabeth, a translation from French into English of *The Miroir or Glasse of the Synneful Soule*. The dedication, "To our most noble and vertuous quene KATHERIN," is dated 1544. When I saw this book in the Bodleian in April 1960, I was puzzled by the description, in the Birmingham Exhibition Catalogue, of the ground as "corded blue silk." It seemed to me probable, but of course no microscope was available to me then, that the ground was worked with silk or linen with a stitch today called a plaited "Gobelin" stitch, a variation of encroaching "Gobelin" stitch, worked back and forth so that the slant of the stitches varied with alternate rows. This same stitch worked with metal thread is used for pansies in the corners of the covers. It is a stitch sometimes used for the silver ground of a needlepoint picture. The interlacing knot design, like a Tudor garden, and the K.P. for Katherine Parr on each cover of the Princess Elizabeth's gift to her step-mother, are worked with silver-gilt thread, wound on silk, in plaited braid stitch. There is in the British Museum another small manuscript book believed to have been written by Princess Elizabeth for Queen Katherine Parr, in an embroidered binding similarly worked, with a cypher formed from the letters of Katherine's name, and an H above (Mrs. Head, *The Lace & Embroidery Collector*, New York 1922, plate XXX, pp. 163-164). Another sixteenth century embroidered binding in the Bodleian Library which was shown in Birmingham in 1959 (cat. no. 28) (A. F. Kendrick, *English Needlework*, London, 1933, p. 97; A. F. Kendrick, *English Decorative Fabrics of the XVI to XVIII Centuries*, Benfleet, Essex, 1934 p. 30, p. V.) is also associated with Elizabeth Tudor; dating from her later years, it is undoubtedly the work of highly skilled professional embroiderers. It is the cover of a Bible, printed in 1583 by Christopher Barker. It is believed to have been the printer's presentation copy to the Queen on New

Year's Day, 1584. In this we see a formal, symmetrical design with interlacing stems bearing roses, rose-buds, and foliage, a skilful transformation of Persian arabesques into a purely English pattern of Tudor roses. The ground of the embroidery is crimson velvet. This binding I fortunately had an opportunity to examine under a good light. Though I did not have a microscope, with my magnifying glass (10x) I could easily see that the delicate and brilliant execution of the designs was due, in large part, not to intricate stitches, but to the clever combination of various types of metal wire, silver and silver-gilt, flattened and round, of several weights, with untwisted silk in various colors: green, blue-green, yellow, pale ivory, and crimson. The stitches are simple, but the design could not have been executed without the many types of gold and silver wire and other ornamentation including spangles, specifically prepared for embroidery. Horace Stewart, who in 1888 held the position of Master of the Gold and Silver Wyre-Drawers, discusses at great length and in a rather rambling manner in his *History of the Worshipful Company of Gold and Silver Wyre-Drawers* (London 1891) what was known to him of this craft. Despite the interest of his account, he is certainly in error when he states (p. 19) that the first allusion to "spangles" is to be found in the Wardrobe Accounts of Henry VIII. It is always rash to make dogmatic statements concerning the earliest appearance of some aspect or variation of a craft if the materials used, and the tools, are known to have existed for a very long time. In the *Wardrobe Accounts of Edward the Fourth* for the year 1480 (Nicolas, Nicholas Harris, London 1830), there is, among lists of trappings for his horses, "an hoby harneis of grene velvett enbrowdered and wroght with ageletts of silver and gilt and spangles of silver and gilt" (p. 115).

For centuries, materials for sumptuous embroideries, silver and silver-gilt as well as silk, had come to England from across the Channel. Cyprus gold, gold of Venice, Lucca, Florence, and Genoa appear repeatedly in records of English trade. Stewart, quoting (p. 17) from Beckmann's *History of Inventions*, states that "Andrew Schultz, in 1545, brought to Augsburg the art of drawing very fine gold and silver wire as he learnt it in Italy; and that Gabriel Marteningi and his son Vincent were invited from Italy to teach the Art of making Gold Fringe." From records of an earlier date, the fourth year of the reign of Henry VII, 1489, Stewart reports that the "Wardens and Fellowship of Broderers obtained an Act of Parliament against the deceitful weight and working of Gold of Venice, Florence, and Jeane (Genoa) and the untrue packing thereof." The Act he quotes as follows: "No person should sell for a pound weight of such Gold, less than

twelve ounces, nor Gold packed differently from the outward show thereof, viz:—Not wrought in greatness of thread, in color, according to the outward show.” The Charter granted to the Broderers Company by Queen Elizabeth three years after her accession to the throne was certainly not their first charter. Because many records were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666, only after long and painstaking gleanings from scattered references could one even attempt to reconstruct the history of the “Broderers” of London, and their various associations and organizations. There is ample evidence in chronicles and other records that for long periods the embroiderers and the goldsmiths were closely associated. John Stow in his *Survey of London* written in 1598 and first published in 1603 (new edition edited by William J. Thoms, London, 1842, pp. 197-198) lists the companies that in the 23rd year of the reign of Henry VIII had a place at the mayor’s feast in the Guild Hall, and gives the order in which they were ranked. “Frankly,” he writes, “I speak by precedent, for I was no feast-follower.” Among the sixty companies he lists, the *Broderers* are in the thirty-fourth place. The *Goldsmiths* are fifth, and the *Weavers* in the fifty-third place. John Stow reports very favorably (p. 43) on “Edward Hall, gentleman of Gray’s inn, a citizen by birth and office, as common sergeant of London and one of the Sheriffs’ court,” and author of “a famous and eloquent chronicle entitled *The Uniting of Two noble Families, Lancaster and York*.” Edward Hall died in 1547, the same year as Henry VIII. Much of his vivid description of events of the reign of Henry VIII has been copied in *Holinshed’s Chronicles of England Scotland and Ireland*, for which the plans were made by Raphael Holinshed, who died in 1580 (?), but who was assisted by other writers in the execution of these plans.

It is therefore to Hall that I turn (Hall’s *Chronicle containing the History of England of Henry the Fourth to the end of the reign of Henry the Eighth* collated with the editions of 1548 & 1550, London 1809) for the account of the accession of Henry VIII and the account of how the (p. 506) “interment and funerall pompe of the late kyng were sumpteously prepared and done”; with “an image or a representation of the late kyng laied on Cusshions of golde and the saied image was appareled, in the kynges riche robes of estate with a croune on the hed, and ball and scepter in the handes.” This was on the ninth day of May 1509. On the tenth day of May, after three masses were solemnly sung by the bishops (p. 507), the mourners returned to a great and sumptuous feast. There is no indication here of the extent to which embroiderers contributed to the sumptuousness of Henry VII’s funeral, but the evidence of his will, and the contem-

porary ornaments that survive, including the Stonyhurst Cope, and the two hearse cloths (one in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and one in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), point to the probability that gold-figured velvet took an important place in the preparation for his obsequies. In the case of the two hearse cloths, the royal arms and his badges, the Tudor rose and the portcullis, are applied embroidery on crossed bands of wine-colored velvet.

On the third day of June in 1509 the marriage between Katharine of Aragon and the young king was solemnized, although according to Hall there was a question as to its legality even then, though a dispensation had been received from the Pope permitting him to marry the widow of his brother Arthur. From the description of the preparations for the coronation, which followed on the twenty-first day of June, there is no doubt that embroiderers contributed to its splendor. "If I should declare, what pain, labour, and diligence, the Taylers, Embrouderours, and Golde Smithes took, both to make and devise garmentes, for Lordes, Ladies, Knightes, and Esquires and also for deckying, trappyng, and adorning of Coursers, Ianetes and Palffreis it wer to long to rehersse" (Hall, p. 507). The value of the gold, silver, and precious stones used for embroidery was too great for them not to have been later melted down and converted to other uses as needs and fashions changed. Henry must have been a dazzling sight (Hall, p. 508): "The features of his body, his goodly personage, his amiable visage, princely countenance, with the noble qualities as of his royall estate . . . I cannot expresse the giftes of grace and of nature, that God had endowed hym with all: yet partly to describe his apparell, it is to bee noted, his grace ware in his uppermost apparell, a robe of Crimosyn Veluet, furred with Armysyn [ermine], his jacket and cote of raised gold, the Placard embrowdered with Diamonds, Rubies, Emeraudes, greate Pearles, and other riche stones . . ." Phrases such as "Gold Smithes woorke and Brouderie," "Broudered with Bullion Golde" appear over and over again. From the celebration of the coronation, Hall leads us through the ceremonies attendant on the birth of a son on January 1, who lived only long enough to arouse hopes that were not fulfilled. The account of the christening is relatively brief, but in the description (p. 517) of the pageant that was held on the thirteenth day of February, as a continuation of the celebrations, it is specified that "the rockes, hilles and dales, with divers and sundrie trees, floures, hathornes, ferne and grasse" were brought into the palace, and that "all the trees, herbes, and floures, of the same Forrest were made of grene Velvet, grene Damaske, and silke of divers colours,



Satyn and Sercenet . . . This Forrest was drawn, as it were by strength of two beastes, a Lyon and an Antelop, the Lyon floryshed all over with Damaske golde. The Antelop was wrought all over with silver of Damaske, his beames or hornes and tuskes of golde: these beastes were led by certayne men apparelled like wild men or woodhouses, their bodies, heddes, faces, handes, and legges, covered with grene Sylke flosshed." Then follows a description of the jousts held on February 13 and 14, which are illustrated in the Westminster Tournament Roll, belonging to the College of Heraldry (no. 760, *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Mediaeval Art*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1930, and pl. 21, vol. I of *Vetusta Monumenta*, Society of Antiquaries, 1747). For this momentous occasion (Hall, p. 517), the King entered under a pavillion, "embroudered, and poudered with H. & K. of fyne golde." After him followed his three aides, each one of them (pp. 517, 518), "under a Pavilion of Crymosyn damaske and purple poudred with H. and K. of fyne golde, valenced and frynged with golde of damaske . . . Then next these Pavillions came XII chyldren of honor, sitting euery of them on a great courser, richely trapped and embroudered in seuerall deuises and facions, where lacked neither brouderie nor goldsmythes worke, so that euery chyld and horse in deuice and facion was contrary to other, whiche was goodly to beholde." The pageants and jousts continued through the day, and in the evening after supper in the Palace of Whitehall, before the Queen, a "deuice or pageant upon wheels was brought in" and in this "pageant" was a garden of pleasure, with every pillar and post covered with gold, and "therein were trees of Hathorne, Eglantynes, Rosiers, Vines and other pleasant floures of divers colours, with Gillofers and other herbes all made of Satyn, damaske, silke, siluer and gold, accordingly as natural trees, herbes, or floures ought to be" (Hall, p. 519). In this description of an early sixteenth century pageant we see prefigured on a large scale the miniature gardens that decorate some of the embroidered boxes of the seventeenth century. Both the Queen and her ladies, and the King and five attendant knights, were dressed in garments "embroudered full of H. and K. of golde, knytte together with laces of golde of damaske." Hall's *Chronicle* is printed with Roman letters, but the Westminster Roll shows that the form of the letters was a modified Gothic. The five knights attendant on the King were adorned with their names, *Cuer loyall*, *Bone volure*, *Bone espoier*, *Valyaunt desyre*, and *Bone foy*, in letters of "massy gold." That this was not merely stage gold but precious metal is testified by the scene which followed: "After the kyng and his compaignions had daunced, he appointed the ladies, gentlewomen and the Amba-

sadours to take the letters of their garmentes, on token of liberalitie, which thing the common people perceyuyng ranne to the kyng, and stripped hym into his hosen and dublet, and all his compaignions in likewise. Syr Thomas Kneut stode on a stage, and for all his defence he lost his apparell. The ladies likewise were spoyled, wherfor the Kynges garde came sodenly, and put the people backe, or els as it was supposed more inconuenience had ensued." At this banquet, "a shipeman of London caught certayn letters," which he sold to a goldsmith for three pounds, fourteen shillings and eightpence. The prince, whose birth on January 1 was the occasion of these festivities, died on February 22, a tragedy that though "The kyng lyke a wyse prynce, toke this dolorous chaunce wonderous wysely, and the more to comfort the Quene, he dissimuled the matter," was a prelude to many changes in English life (Hall, p. 519).

It is in Hall's descriptions of the royal festivities that followed year by year, descriptions copied by other chroniclers, that the full richness of the early years of the reign of Henry VIII can be envisioned, and the embroiderers' contributions to this richness realized. In these accounts of gaieties and court ceremonies we see the taste for decoration and embroidery which survived, though on a diminished scale, through the seventeenth century. In the description of the banquets and jousts (Hall p. 584) held in the year 1517 on the 19th & 20th day of May, in honor of Henry's sister Margaret, Queen of Scots, the King, the Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Essex, and Nicholas Carew appear. Their own apparel and that of their horses was of black velvet, covered all over with branches of honeysuckle "of fine flat gold of damask, of lose worke, every lefe of the braunche mouing, the embrouderie was very conning and sumpteous." The semi-detached petals found in floral needlework, sometimes as decoration on garments of the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods, though usually worked in silks, not metals, give evidence of the same pleasure in the simulation of the free motion of living flowers.

Not all the rich furnishings taken across the Channel in 1520 for the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the meeting near Calais of Henry VIII and Francis I, were decorated with embroidery, nor was it all of English origin. Hall says (p. 606) that there were "great Cushyns of riche woorke of the Turkey makyng," and in a chapel that were "Coopes and Vestements so riche as might be prepared or bought in the citie of Florens." These apparently were the vestments ordered in Florence by Henry VII and mentioned in his will.

Even though a chronicle be the work of a contemporary, an eyewitness to this or similar scenes, one may object that enthusiasm has carried the writer into a world of exaggeration. There are, however, records whose credibility is reasonably assured and which provide ample evidence of the splendor of Henry's court. One such source is the *Inventory of Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset* (edited by John Gough Nichols, *Camden Miscellany*, Vol. III, London, 1855). This son of Henry VIII, not born in wedlock, was greatly cherished by his father, and his death in 1536 was a deep sorrow to the king. It is not surprising to find in this inventory, prepared just prior to the break with Rome and before Henry had separated from Katharine of Aragon, not only rich garments worn by Henry Fitzroy, but also vestments for his private chapel. Brief extracts from the inventory follow: "Furst, a Gowne of crymsen Damask embroidered alle over with golde and furred with lyzardes, vij grete buttons of golde, and iiij pair aglettes. Item, a Gowne of blak velvet, embroudered with a border of Venice golde, the same lyned with blak velwet and satten of Bridges [Bruges]" (p. 1). Of especial interest among the "Chapelle Stuff" is a "Vestymnt of purple velwet, with angelles and floures, with all thinges to the same belonging" (p. 13), and again: "Item, ij Copes of purple velvet, with angelles and flowres embroudered" (p. 14). Though this inventory dates from the eighteenth year of the reign of Henry VIII, the description of these last vestments suggests that the style of ornament had not necessarily changed from that of the time of Henry VII. In the inventory of the "Wardrobe Stuff" of Katharine of Aragon, taken in 1535 by order of the king (*Camden Miscellany*, Vol. III p. 23), which remained in "Baynardes Castille," there were hangings of velvet embroidered with the arms of England and Spain, crowned with an imperial crown, having borders embroidered with fleurs de lis and pomegranates, and beds with "ceelours and testours," also "square beddes and sparvars, with their counterpoyntes." Of these, a square bed of blue velvet is described as embroidered with roses and also with letters crowned, and fringed with red silk and gold (p. 26). There are cushions too, one a "long cusshyne, the outside of nedille worke, and the backside grene damaske" (p. 29). There is no indication of the design of this cushion, but there are listed (pp. 37, 38) both paintings and embroideries with religious subjects such as "a riche clothe of launde, with a picture of Criste therein wroughte in golde withe nedilwork; baptized by Seynte John, likewise wrought, and garynsshed aboute the edges with Venysse golde." Of course we do not know whether the needlework pictures that follow were brought or sent from Spain, whether

they were embroidered by Katharine and her ladies, or whether they were the work of English professional embroiderers. The first is described as a “smalle table of nedillworke of the image of Christe.” The next is described as a “like a table of nedillworke”; then, “a table of nedillworke of our Ladye and Seynte Anne,” and another of “Josephe and oure Ladye.” There is also “one small clothe of nedillworke of our Ladye and her Sonne.” It is not impossible that these are all the work of Katharine and her ladies, for the inventory includes “two working stoolis for gentilwomen whereof the one is covered with grene velvete and garnysshed with silver, and the other covered withe crymsen velvete garnysshed withe gilte nayles.”

Vivid and surprising glimpses of Englishwomen working with the needle are to be found in the writings of John Skelton (1460-1529). Among the most entrancing of his verses for the student of embroidery are those in *The Garland of Laurel* (1523), in which he recounts how “Occupation” brought him to “a goodly chamber of estate, Where the noble Countess of Surrey in a chair/Sat honourably, to whome did repair/Of ladies a bevy with due reverence.” It was these ladies for whom “Occupation” had contrived a goodly work, “a coronal of laurel with verdures light and dark.” This garland of laurel “Occupation” had devised “for Skelton, her clerk.” The description of the intricacies of the work that follows includes the winding of silk and the “pirling of gold.” The manner in which the garland was devised, with the flourishing of flowers and “in needlework raising birds in bowers,” suggests embroidery in relief, perhaps with some of the characteristics of seventeenth century “stump-work.” This does not mean that it resembled it, only that the sixteenth century embroiderer was ready to experiment with the needle to achieve the desired ends. The often quoted line, “The sampler to sew on, the laces to embraid” (O.E.D.), is found in this same poem, and in an earlier poem by Skelton, *Philip Sparrow* (1508), there is a reference to a sampler, which indicates that sometimes in the sixteenth century a free and personal design was used for a sampler, much in the manner in which twentieth century samplers are occasionally worked. In this poem a young girl laments the death of her pet sparrow, killed by “Gib, our cat.” The tragic event is recounted, repeated, and ornamented with references to classical mythology. Then, to give herself some consolation, she takes her sampler,

“To sew with stitches of silk  
My sparrow white as milk,  
That by representation

Of his image and fashion  
To me it might impart  
Some pleasure and comfort,  
For my solace and sport,  
But when I was sewing his beak,  
Methought my sparrow did speak,  
And opened his pretty bill,  
Saying, 'Maid, ye are in will  
Again me to kill.'

She thought her needle turned red with Philip's blood, she was too frightened to say more than "alas, alas," and her fingers, "dead and cold," could not hold her sampler. Was this story of a young girl who took her needle in hand and started to work a sampler, without any pattern to guide her, pure invention, the product of the poet's imagination? Certainly it is a long way from late sixteenth and seventeenth century samplers, on which motifs and patterns are either scattered on the surface, or arranged in horizontal bands, ready to serve as anthologies from which to draw designs for many types of needlework decoration.

In the *Privy Purse Expenses of Princess Mary* (from December 1536 to December 1544), edited by Frederick Madden, London, 1831, wages for embroiderers and materials for embroidery appear beside such pleasant items as five shillings given to a woman who brought cakes and cheese to my Lady's Grace, and twenty pence given to a servant of the Lady Derby bringing roses and other things (May 1538) (p. 70). In December, 1536 (p. 4), twenty shillings were given to "Blase the Browderer" for working, and again, in January, 1537, twenty shillings, "for brawderyng a payre of sleeves for my ladys grace." In the same month, the sum of seven pounds, seventeen shillings, was paid to the "golde drawer for Pypes and pyrles for a gowne to my lady's grace" (p. 12). Here are the materials from which were made such gold-encrusted costumes as are seen in many of the portraits signed HE, Hans Eworth ("The Painter HE," by Lionel Cust, *Walpole Society, Second Annual Volume, 1912-1913*). In December 1537, twenty shillings were paid for gold to embroider a cushion for Mr. Wriothesley, and twelve shillings for silver to embroider a box for my Lady Elizabeth's Grace. Two embroiderers were paid twenty shillings for working at Richmond, seven shillings and sixpence for damask to line a cushion, and two shillings and eightpence for fringe to trim it. Perhaps the most interesting items relate to patterns for these embroideries. In January

1543 (p. 101), one of Lady Derby's servants was given a reward of five shillings "for drawing a wourke for my lady's grace." In August 1543 (p. 128), John Hayes received fifteen shillings "for drawing her graces quishin," and, in January 1544 (p. 150), seven shillings and sixpence were given him for drawing a pattern for a cushion for the Queen. Princess Mary received many presents of embroidered garments and in April 1540 she paid fifty-three shillings and fourpence to the king's embroiderer for embroidering a coat for the prince. This was her young brother Edward, who succeeded his father on the throne in 1547 (p. 89).

In the *Literary Remains of Edward VI* in vol. I of the Roxburgh Club publications (1857), there is, in the appendix, a description of the coronation of Edward VI taken from *Leland's Collectanea*, in which the king's apparel for Saturday the 19th day of February, "being the day afore his coronation," is described. He wore a rich gown of cloth of silver, "all over imbrodred with damaske golde, with a square cape furred with sables." His jerkin was white velvet wrought with Venice silver, garnished with precious stones, as rubies and diamonds and "treuloves of perles." There was a doublet and a cape of white velvet, similarly embroidered. His buskins were white velvet and his horse was caparisoned with crimson satin embroidered with pearls and damask gold.

Henry VIII, his consort, and his courtiers had in the early years of his reign taken part in many pageants and revels recounted by Hall. Records of the preparation of highly organized professional entertainments during the reigns of Edward VI, Mary Tudor, and Elizabeth I, edited by Albert Feuillerat (*Documents relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary*, Louvain 1914 and *Documents relating to the office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*, Louvain 1908) give precise information concerning the responsibilities of the Master of the Revels, as well as the names of the artists and craftsmen who worked under him, and indicate the variety and fantasy of the costumes. Airing and cleaning were an important feature of the maintenance of the costumes. Not only had costumes to be designed, cut, and made up for different masques, but often they were recut and used again. The materials, particularly those woven and embroidered with silk and gold, were too valuable to be discarded. In various forms and shapes, these materials were used as long as possible. Tailors, embroiderers, and painters are prominent among the craftsmen listed. Materials were provided by haberdashers and others. Repeatedly in the accounts for "necessaries," we find not only

threads of sundry sorts, colors and prices, but also charges for “cering” candles. Candles and candlesticks to light the workers are listed separately. Without the evidence of wax along the cut edges of the linen in the Boston Museum’s fragment with an angel on a wheel, I would have supposed that these cering candles had been used to form a glossy surface on some of the fabrics. Wax may have been used for this purpose, but there are many indications, in both accounts, that much of the embroidery was applied work, sometimes taken, or “translated” from other costumes, or “taken owte of hangings payned with old embrodered gardes.”

Painters are among those recorded as designers working on the preparation of the Revels. In 1548, “To Anthony Totto, sergeant paynter for his paynes and dilgens drawing patrons and other necessaries during the whiles ther maskes were making,” twenty shillings were paid (Feuillerat, *Revels, Time of King Edward VI*, p. 32). Anthony Totto was appointed Serjeant Painter by Henry VIII, a position he held under Edward VI and Mary Tudor, and his name appears repeatedly in the accounts of the Office of the Revels. In June 1551 he received twenty shillings for “drawinge and devisinge for painters and others.” Between December 12, 1551 and January 7, 1552, his tasks included the “drawing, tracing and setting owte of workes for paynters aforsayd.” For these tasks he received forty shillings (p. 67). His name appears many times during the reign of Edward VI. Not all the patterns used for the Revels were painted. Early in 1553, Robert Bristowe was given ten shillings “for money by him payed to an Italian for dyuers printed patterns for the lyke.” This followed a payment to Anthony for patterns he had drawn after the Master’s device.

The artist whose name appears most often in the *Documents relating to the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (Feuillerat, Louvain, 1908) is the painter who signed many of his portraits with the monogram HE. His name can be found variously spelled: Hans Eworth, Jan Eeuwowts, and, in the records of the Office of the Revels, as Haunce Eottes. It was through the evidence of these records that Lionel Cust in his article on “The Painter HE” (published in the *Second Annual Volume of the Walpole Society*, 1912-1913) completed his identification of the painter. From even a cursory study of his portraits, the delight that Haunce Eottes took in the precise and brilliant rendering of the richness of embroidery, brocade, jewels, and goldsmith-work decorating the costumes of his subjects is self-evident. It is in no way surprising that he should have been called upon to design masques, costumes, and properties, for Queen Elizabeth’s Revels.

In June 1572 he was paid four pounds, nineteen shillings, "for drawing and paynting of dyvers and sundry patternes." These patterns were for the chariot, "with all the personages apparell and instruments set out in apte colour." Again on New Year's Day 1573 and Candlemas 1574 Haunce Eottes painted patterns for masques. Certainly not all his designs were for embroidery, but it seems probable that some at least of his patterns were used by the embroiderers who appear among the craftsmen working for the Master of the Revels. Flowers "wrought with needle worke" were presented to her Majesty, and "the residue garnished maskers heads." William Bowll, the silk weaver, provided long flowers, stalks, and "fflowers in branches." He was also paid for paper for patterns, and leaves of trees and other garnishings. William Pilkington, the embroiderer, was paid for cutting seventy-two leaves, which were cut three time double, "videlicet ij tymes on paper and ones in sattin." William Pilkington, listed here as "Thimbroder," was paid for tufting six large kirtles of green satin with gold sarcenet "all over wrought," and Martyn Hardrett, a milliner, set pearls upon silver bone lace for the maskers' heads.

Occasions on which Queen Elizabeth indulged her pleasure in fine clothes, as if she were the sole actor in a private masque, are described by Sir James Melvil, when in 1564 he was sent by his sovereign, Mary Queen of Scots, "to deal with the Queen of England." Having been advised by the Queen of Scots "to leave matters of gravity sometime, and cast in merry purposes," he conversed lightly with Elizabeth about customs and costumes of other lands. The Queen asked what "country weed" he thought best becoming to gentlewomen, for she said she had clothes of every sort. Thereafter, as long as he was at the English Court, she changed her fashion every day. One day she wore English clothes, another French, and another Italian. When Sir James, in answer to her question, which became her best, replied "Italian," she was pleased.

That she was also pleased by gifts of fine articles of dress cannot be doubted after reading the alluring lists of "New Year's Gifts to the Queen," transcribed by John Nichols, the printer, and published in his *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*. The first edition, later destroyed by fire, appeared in 1788. The second edition from which the following items were taken was published in London in 1823. Not all these gifts were articles of dress, nor were they all decorated with embroidery, but a great number of them were. Among the gifts, not wearing apparel, is "a feyne carpett of needleworke, theverende frienged and buttoned with



gold and silk," the gift of Lady Knowlles, New Year's Day 1652 (vol. 1, p. 113). In the same list is "a cushion cloth wrought with black silk and fringed with gold and purpel silk, with a pin pillow embroidered." This was the gift of Mrs. Skypwyth, a gentlewoman (vol. 1, p. 116). Gentlemen also made gifts of embroidery. The hour-glass given by Thomas Hennage was enclosed in a case of black velvet embroidered with silver (vol. 1, p. 117), and William Huggyns gave "a greete swete bag of taphata with a zypher and a border of rosses and spheres embrodered with Venice gold and pearles" (Vol. 1, p. 118). Gifts of wearing apparel in the same year include, from the Lady Racllyef, "a peire of sleeves of cameryk, all over sett with purle and two sweet bags," and from the Lady St. Lowe, "one peire of sleeves of fine cameryke embrodered with goldsmith's work of silver gilt, and a piece of purle upon a peper to edge them" (p. 113, vol. 1). It was to celebrate the New Year, 1575, that the Earl of Leicester presented the Queen with "a doublet of white satin garnished with goldsmith's worke and set with XVIII very fayre payre of claspes of goldsmiths worke enamuled." Every one of these clasps was set with rubies and diamonds, and the doublet was trimmed with passement lace of damask gold and damask silver (vol. I, p. 412). It was in the beginning of the year 1578 that the Earl of Warwick's gift to the Queen was "a gowne with hanging sleeves of black vellat alov with small wyer of golde lyke scallop shelles set with spangills embrawdred with a garde with sondry byrds and flowers embossed with gold, silver, and silke set with seede perle" (vol. II, p. 66).

In the same document we find, as the gift of the Marquess of Northampton, "a kyrtyll of white satten embrawdred with purles of golde like clowdes and leyed rownde about with bone lace of Venice golde." (vol. II, p. 67). Among the gifts that follow is "a fore parte and a peir of sleeves of white satten set with spangills, and lyned with tawney sarceonet," from Lady Drury (vol. II, p. 73). From Sir William Drury, "a fore parte of asshcollored satten, embrawdred with clowdes and wormes of golde and silver, lyned with yelowe sarceonet" was received (vol. II, p. 75). Among the gifts from gentlewomen are "two small pillowbyers wrought with silke of divers collors," "Two peir of gloves perfumed," "a sute of lawne floured black with byrds and beasts, edged with bone lace, white and black," "a night coyf of linnen alover embrawdred with Venice golde and silke of sundry collors" (vol. II, p. 76). Another gift is described as "a night coyf of camerick cutworke and spangills, with forehed cloth, and a night border of cutworke with bone lace" (vol. II, p. 77).

It was in August of this year, 1578, that, according to tradition, Queen Elizabeth presented to the wife of Roger Wodehouse the doublet with a stomacher and matching coif and forehead cloth, embroidered with gold and silver, on linen, and trimmed with gold and silver bobbin lace that is now in the collection of the Boston Museum (figs. 2, 2a, 2b). The occasion for this gift is believed to have been the visit made by the Queen to Kimberley in Norfolk, a few days after she had knighted Roger Wodehouse at Blickling, as reported by John Nichols in his *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth* (vol. II, p. 214). These pieces remained at Kimberley House in the possession of the Earls of Kimberley, descendants of Sir Roger Wodehouse, until they were shown at the "Art Treasures Exhibition" in London, in 1932 (*Apollo*, vol. 16, pp. 158-164 and *The Illustrated London News*, Oct. 8, 1932, p. 533). In 1943 they came to Boston as the gift of Miss Elizabeth Day McCormick of Chicago.

Although no exact parallels can be found between these pieces and the descriptions of gifts received by Queen Elizabeth, many points of resemblance can be noted, both as to designs, materials, and uses. In the list of New Year's gifts transcribed by John Nichols, I have noted ten doublets, in addition to many pairs of embroidered sleeves, embroidered partlets, smocks, "kyrtills" and foreparts, and a great number of embroidered cushions, cushion cloths, "pillow beres," pin cushions, and sweet bags. These gifts must have been very costly, and often a considerable burden on the donor, for not only was the workmanship fine and intricate, requiring a skilled craftsmanship, but the materials had intrinsic value. Venice gold and silver, damask (Damascus) gold, gold "owes," gold purl and plate, all these could be melted down and used again by goldsmiths or minters of coin. Jewels as well as seed pearls were part of the embroiderers' materials. By the year 1589, though Queen Elizabeth's love of rich finery had not diminished and there was no skimping on the quality of the gifts she received, the burden was sometimes divided. Among the Queen's New Year's gifts for that year, we find that the Earl of Ormond gave "part of a petticoate of carnation satten embroidered with a brocade garde or border of antyques of flowers and fyshes of Venis gold, silver, and silke, and all over with a twist of Venis gold" (Vol. III p. 2), and that the Countess of Ormond gave the other part of the same petticoat (Vol. III p. 3). Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, gave part of a gown of "black sticht cloth, florished with gold, and some owes" (vol. III p. 5), and the Baroness Hunsdon gave another part of the same gown (Vol. III p. 6). Lady South-

well gave "a doublett of lawne cuttwork, florished with squares of silver owes" (Vol. III p. 8), and Sir Robert Southwell a forepart to match the doublet (Vol. III p. 10).

M. Channing Linthicum, in *Costume in the Drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries* (Oxford 1936) pp. 186-187, corrects the *Oxford English Dictionary's* definition of a forepart as "a stomacher," and describes it as "the elaborate accessory worn with the kirtle to fill the triangular opening in front." To quote again from Linthicum: "The sixteenth-century kirtle worn by women was used over petticoats and farthingale as an outside dress," and farther on: "The Spanish kirtle needed a triangular accessory for the opening in the skirt. This accessory was known as a 'forepart.'" Several descriptions of foreparts among the articles of apparel listed in the Queen's Wardrobe for 1600 (vol. III, p. 507) have designs far too elaborate to have been confined in the narrow limits of a stomacher. It is true that one of white satin is described as "embroidered with daffadillies of Venice golde, and other flowers," and daffodils are the flowers that ornament the doublet and stomacher from Kimberley, but there is another "of white satten embrodered verie faire with borders of the Sonne, Mone, and other Signes and Planetts, of Venice golde and silver, and silke of sondrie colours, with a border of beastes beneath, likewise embrodered." Another also of white satin was "embrodered all over verie faire like seas, with rocks, shippes, and fishes, embrodered with Venice golde, sylver, and silke of sondrye colours, garnished with seede pearle." It does not seem probable that patterns such as these could have been developed in the restricted area of a stomacher.

Among the Queen's New Year's gifts for 1600 is a doublet "unmade" of "white satten, embrothered all over like snakes wounde together of Venyce sylver, richly wroughte, and puffes of lawne embrothered with Venice silver, like wheate eares." This was the joint gift of the Countess of Shrewsbury, daughter-in-law of Bess of Hardwick, and the 7th Earl of Shrewsbury. Under each name, a part is listed separately and carefully described. (*Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. III, pp. 446-447).

An inventory dating from about the same time, listing not costume but plate, furniture, and household stuff at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, prepared for "Bess of Hardwick," Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury, gives a vivid picture of the furnishings of one of the great houses of England at the end of the sixteenth century. Hardwick Hall, where I was fortunate enough to spend a day in September 1949 studying the embroid-

eries, still contains an amazing amount of its sixteenth century furnishings. In the spring of 1960, I spent many hours in the Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum studying a typewritten copy of the Hardwick Hall Inventory circa 1600. Now comparing my notes made in Hardwick Hall in 1949 with those made in 1960 in the Victoria and Albert Museum, I realize that, though naturally much of the household stuff has disappeared during the past three hundred and fifty odd years, many of the outstanding embroideries have survived. It is not surprising that some of the cushion covers have been framed as panels or pictures. One of these, number 29 in the Exhibition of British Embroidery held in the Museum and Art Gallery of the City of Birmingham during February and March, 1959, is described in the Countess of Shrewsbury's inventory as a "long quition of nedleworke silke and Cruell of the storie of the Judgment of Soloman between too women for the childe, with frenge and tassels of blew silk and lyned with blew damask." It is the fringes, tassels, and linings that today have often disappeared. The companion piece to this cushion, referred to in the Birmingham catalogue, is described in the inventory as a "long quition of nedleworke of silk and cruell of the storie of the sacrifice of Isaak with frenge and tassells of blewe silk and lyned with blew damaske." On both these panels, once cushion covers, the actors in the Old Testament dramas are dressed in elaborate Elizabethan costume, except for Solomon and Abraham, who wear long, flowing robes. The silk and worsted yarns with which they were worked are greens, blues, yellows, and fawn colors softened by time. These two cushions are fifteenth and sixteenth in a list of nineteen "long quitions" in the Hardwick Hall inventory. Evidently two cushions exactly alike, "crimson satten imbrodered with strawberries and wormes, with blewe silk frenge and tassells and lyned with blewe damask" were given one number, "4." The last four on this list are "square quitions of Arras worke;" the others were all embroidered. Sometimes the ground was velvet with figures in needlework, sometimes the cushions were worked in cross stitch. One, the story of Atalanta, is described as a "long quition of pete poynt wrought with silk." The sixth in the list of long cushions is "the storie of Acteon and Diana," number 33 in the Birmingham catalogue, where it is stated that it was "framed in Chatsworth moulding by the 6th Duke of Devonshire, c. 1845." This is the year that the Duke's *Handbook of Chatsworth and Hardwick* was privately printed.

Probably a relatively small number of the embroideries listed in the 1600 Hardwick Hall inventory were made for the house that now stands,

since it was not begun until the last decade of the sixteenth century, after the death of Bess of Hardwick's fourth husband, George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury. Some of the furnishings, including embroideries, probably came from Chatsworth, but it was a very different Chatsworth from the house as it stands today, for it has undergone a complete metamorphosis since the sixteenth century (Thompson, Francis, *A History of Chatsworth*, London, 1949).

The dating of the cushion and pillow covers on the basis of records and inventories can only be very tentative. Descriptions are not explicit, and often, as might be expected, they are noted as "old." In the inventory of the household goods of Sir Thomas Ramsay, among furnishings listed after his death in 1590, there were four cushions of green velvet and a long pillow, as well as four "needleworke cushions of the grocers armes," eight "needleworke cushions of the honeysuckle" and four "olde needleworke cushions" (*Archaeologia*, vol. 40, part 2, page 323). In the inventory of plate and household stuff taken in March 1594 at Gillinge, belonging to Sir William Fairfax, there was in the Old Study "a bedsteade, a teaster of cremysine sattan and velluett ymbroodered with armes and letters of N and ff." These are the initials of Sir Nicholas Fairfax, Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1578, and father of Sir William Fairfax. In the Great Chamber at Gillinge in 1594 there were five "quishions of Nedleworke," and in the "Newe Lodginge" there was "a teaster and vallens of black and cremsyne veluet ymbroodered with cuttes of clothe of golde and frindged with cremsyne silke and golde." In an inventory of house stuff at Walton dated 1624, belonging to the same family, the contents of a cypress chest in the wardrobe are noted. Here we find "One Nedle work Cushion, not all sewed," "A peece of coarse canvas to work in," and "Crewle fringes and a bagg of other crewles of divers sortes of coloures" (*Archaeologia*, vol. 48, part I, pp. 123-156).

One inventory, which dates from between the two Fairfax inventories, that of the effects of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, taken at his death in 1614, is exceedingly rich in plate and household stuff, including embroideries. The several uses that could be made of one piece of needlework are indicated by this item, "the flowers slippes and borders of an imbrodered cloke with silver cut forthe into pieces to imbroder some furniture for the howse withall." There is, among other embroidered furniture, a long list of pillowbeeres, of which only two were plain holland linen. Among the embroidered pillowbeeres was a pair "in slippes of roses faire

silke and gold,” another pair “never made upp wrought with beastes and flowers silke and golde,” and another pair “imbrodered with water lilly leaves, kinges fishers, and other birds and flowers silk and gold.” One pair was “imbrodered with runninge work of pomgranets grapes and roses silke and golde,” and another “with roses and other flowers in coulers silke and golde and a gold lace” (*Archaeologia*, vol. 42, part II, pp. 348-374). Was the pillow cover (fig. 3) once one of a pair like those in the Howard inventory? Certainly the description of the last two pairs of pillow covers suggests this possibility. Here is a running work with grapes, strawberries and acorns, daffodils, roses, and pansies embroidered in colors with silk and gold on linen. Among the other flowers that, with a firm disregard of nature, grow side by side from coiling stems, are cornflowers, honeysuckles, and carnations. The stems are worked in plaited braid stitch, the fine tendrils in chain stitch, with silver-gilt thread. The silks no longer have their full colors; the two-toned carnations have lost the bright pinks from which their name derives, though the crimson silk is still dark. The semi-detached petals of the flowers, worked with colored silks in needlepoint filling, recall the taste for moving flowers shown in Hall’s description of branches of honeysuckle “of fine flat gold of damask, of lose worke, every lefe of the branche mouing,” that decorated the trappings and apparel worn by horse and man on the occasion of Henry VIII festivities held in 1517 in honor of his sister Margaret, Queen of Scots. In the *Documents relating to the Office of Revels in the time of Queen Elizabeth* (published by Feuillerat), more than once there is a reference to flowers wrought with needlework. Were they worked like those on this pillow cover with fine buttonholing? Probably for the Office of the Revels a less intricate and more expeditious technique was employed for the flowers “wrought with needleworke,” some of which were presented to the Queen, and some used to decorate masquers’ headdresses. To identify precisely the stitches found in Tudor and Stuart embroideries with those found in contemporary pattern books and treatises on embroidery is often difficult. Some terms are still in use, such as “chain stitch,” and easily recognizable, but others present unanswered questions. “Raised work” is a most convenient term to describe many of the stitches used in these embroideries; it is to be found both in the poem, “The Praise of the Needle” by John Taylor the “Water Poet,” that introduces the book of patterns called *The Needle’s Excellency* by J. Boler (10th edition, 1634), and in *The Academy of Armoury* by Randall Holme (1688), which gives in Book III, Ch. 5, a list of materials required by a teacher of embroidery and a long list of embroidery stitches. Even he can-

not name them all, for the list ends as follows: "all of which are several sorts and manners of works wrought by the needle with silk of all Natures, Purle, Wyres &c., which cannot be described."

The unfinished sleeve (fig. 4) is worked with stitches similar to those on the pillow cover and with a related design. The sleeve, since it was never used, is in far better condition than the pillow cover. The linen ground is firm, not broken and darned as in the case of the pillow cover. The flower petals and green leaves are semi-detached, being caught to the linen ground only on one edge, though others, as in the case of the pillow cover, are attached along the edges, but otherwise loose from the linen. The roses, unlike the rosettes on the pillow cover, are all five-petalled Tudor roses. In addition to flowers and fruits, there are birds and insects, including butterflies, dragon flies, and "worms," filling spaces between the flowers. These are all characteristic and familiar elements on the embroidered garments listed among gifts received by Queen Elizabeth, and are seen in many surviving English embroideries attributed to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. No metal threads were used on this sleeve. The coiling stems have never been worked, except for small radiating tendrils in green silk. We cannot know whether the embroiderer intended to use silk or metal thread for the lines of the stems, which exist only in clear black drawing on the linen.

A portrait (fig. 5, frontispiece) of Mary Cornwallis, daughter of Sir Thomas Cornwallis of Brome, Suffolk, attributed to George Gower, hanging in the Gallery of Fine Arts of the City of Manchester (Lancs) shows her wearing a dark kirtle with white sleeves patterned with dark monochrome flowering vines, apparently embroidered. They are veiled faintly by sheer white silk, called cypress, though cypress could be black or white. This is one of the ephemeral materials very frequently used for veiling embroideries of silk and gold, giving them subtle qualities which today we can only guess at. The tentative date given to Mary Cornwallis's portrait, 1573, is based on a bill dated 1573, among the records of Hengrave Hall, Suffolk, for several portraits by George Gower. Two are presumed to be the portraits of Mary Cornwallis's sister Lady Kitson, and her husband Sir Thomas Kitson, now in the Tate Gallery. The intricate design in black on white on the forepart worn by Mary Cornwallis gives no sense of texture. I hesitate to attempt to identify the material.

An embroidered coif for a woman is decorated with the familiar polychrome flowers in needlework, growing from coiling stems worked in

double chainstitch with silver gilt (fig. 6); it probably dates from the late sixteenth or the early seventeenth century. To attempt to pinpoint the dates of these embroideries on one or the other side of 1600 seems to me rash, though certainly they were worn well into the seventeenth century.

A round cap for a man (fig. 7), worked with black silk, silver, and silver-gilt, is very worn and has lost its trimming, probably a narrow gold bobbin lace. It may be a little earlier in date than the woman's coif (fig. 6), but a portrait (fig. 8) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, of Richard Tomlins, a benefactor of the University, dated 1628, shows that this style of cap continued in use at least through the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Sir Thomas Roe, who in 1615 went to India as ambassador from King James I to the court of the Emperor Jahangir, recounts in his journal for March 13, 1617, that he sent as a compliment to Asaph Chan "a faire wrought night-cap of mine owne, and a rich paire of gloves, which he returned as uselesse in this country; the cap he received." In a letter to the East India Company dated February 14, 1618, discussing commodities to be sent to India, he says, "They imitate every thing wee bring and embroder now as well as wee." A little later he writes, "Many things alsoe, as gloves, will give nothing nor bee accepted as guift, but as patterns to picke out woorke."

The cover (fig. 9), perhaps made to be used as a cradle cover, a christening cover, or even as a table cover, with five bands of linen with coiling stems alternately embroidered with silver and silver-gilt, in a heavy raised braid stitch, and bearing flowers worked directly on the linen in tent stitch or petit point, is another piece that I hesitate to date precisely. The flowers, skilfully embroidered with polychrome silks, are the familiar ones already seen on the pillow cover (fig. 3), the embroidered sleeve (fig. 4), and the embroidered coif (fig. 6). Not every flower is found in each of these pieces. The daffodil on the Kimberley doublet, the pillow cover, and the coif, is here. The thistle, which appears once on the sleeve, is seen regularly in each embroidered band on this cover. Another flower, not seen on the other three embroideries, is the lily. When the thistle appears in English embroideries, one is tempted to associate it with the thistle of Scotland and the accession of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England. This seems a reasonable attribution, yet there are other possibilities. The Order of the Thistle, or the Order of St. Andrew, was not the only order that used a thistle. The Order of the *Ecu d'Or* in France was given the added designa-



tion of *Notre Dame du Chardon* by Louis II of Bourbon, who died in 1410. The collar of this order was composed of lilies and thistles. In exploring the sources of traditions in the use of floral ornaments, it is dangerous to be dogmatic.

In the inventory of the wardrobe and other effects of Mary, Queen of Scots, prepared at Chartley, June 13, 1586, before her execution, and published by Prince Alexandre Labanoff in *Lettres, Instructions et Mémoires de Marie Stuart* (London 1844, vol. 7, pp. 231-271), there are many embroideries listed, some complete, some unfinished. Among the work not yet complete is "autre quarré en fond rouge, non encore rehaulsé, semé de roses et de chardons par compartiments, dependant du lict" (p. 240). Were these hangings worked with roses and thistles on a red ground ever completed and hung on a bed? But there is other evidence that thistles were not unusual as elements in designs for embroideries in England before 1600. The enchanting Elizabethan linen tunic embroidered in red, green, blue, and yellow silk, with growing flowers in horizontal bands alternating with rainbows, in the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester (Lancs), includes sturdy thistles growing between carnations and roses. There are thistles under fruit trees on a very handsome cushion cover of appliqué work in the Victoria and Albert Museum (T. 79-1949), attributed to the late sixteenth century, and there are thistles on two embroidered caps for men, also in the Victoria and Albert Museum (T. 15-1925 and 814-1891).

An embroidery (fig. 10) which, when it was received from Miss McCormick, was framed as a picture, was found, upon being removed from the frame, to be a complete cushion cover, similar in many ways to the cushion cover in Lord Middleton's collection, illustrated and described by J. L. Nevinson in part I of his illuminating articles on "Unrecorded Types of English Embroidery in the Collection of Lord Middleton," published in *The Connoisseur*, January 1939 (vol. CIII, pp. 16-20, no. IV). Like Lord Middleton's, it is complete with satin back and silk ribbon ties. Unlike Lord Middleton's, this cover is open on the ends, not on the top and bottom, and the ribbons are woven with both silk and tinsel. The satin is not white as in the case of Lord Middleton's cover. It was originally a deep salmon, now faded, but, like Lord Middleton's cover, the distance between two green selvages is exactly 21 inches. The design of the cushion cover in Boston lacks the handsome precision of the symmetrical strap-work, but it includes, as shown in the enlarged detail (Fig. 10a), an exquisitely worked miniature portrait seen in a mirror held by a very small detached hand.

Below this, on a much smaller scale, there is a woman holding a mirror sitting on a grassy bank. The great variety of both materials and stitchery with which the strange embroidered figures, applied to the satin ground, were worked is, I believe, best indicated by the last phrase in this line in the *Academy of Armoury*: "all of which are several sorts and manners of works wrought by the needle with silk of all Natures, Purle, Wyres &c., which cannot be described." Though words may be inadequate, unless in the form of a scientific catalogue, and a complete analysis of each element in the design is impossible, the detail of the metal frame-work about the grass plot on which the woman is seated, magnified 14x, gives some idea of the contribution of the gold and silver wire-drawer to the preparation of materials for the embroiderer. This flattened wire, coiled or purled, but without any silk or linen core, and the carefully flattened loops of the finer round wire which edges it, give only a glimpse of the variety of metals used in working this single cushion cover. The man seen in the mirror appears to be a portrait. From the fashion of his ruff, it does not seem possible to date the portrait within a decade. This ruff is very like the one worn by Richard Tomlins (fig. 8) in 1628, but Richard Tomlins was not a young man, and his beard, though pointed, covered his chin. Portraits of Shakespeare's patron Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Northampton, in delicacy and general cast of features, show a certain resemblance to the gentleman in the mirror but in none of those of which I have found illustrations has the hair been pushed back to show an ear. The only illustration of a portrait which includes points of resemblance in the fashion of the ruff, the features, and the manner in which the long hair is brushed back showing the ear, is a portrait of Sir John Petre of Inगतstone Hall, Essex, still hanging there in the Long Gallery, and believed to have been painted about 1590 (Emmison, F.G., *Tudor Secretary*, Longmans, London, 1961, illustration 18).

A sampler (fig. 11), with a scattering of designs, both geometric and natural, served both as a practice sheet and as a record of patterns for future use. The growing plants presumably are designs which could be cut out and applied to satin or velvet. The small-scale all-over patterns must have been useful in decorating a great variety of small objects such as purses, pin-cushions, and covers for books. A panel (fig. 12), with a sturdy figure symbolizing Spring, probably once covered a small cushion. Here are flowers, which may have been designed for appliqué embroidery, worked on the linen, the ground worked with silver thread, silver wound on a white silk core. The detail (fig. 12a) of Spring's headdress shows her curls of coiled round wire, magnified 14x.

A small satin case (fig. 13), resembling a book-cover, was lent to a "Church Loan Exhibition" in 1887 and was described by the lender, the Hon. Mrs. Powell of Hurdcott, as a "needlecase, 17th century." The magnified detail (fig. 13a) shows the use of different widths of flat purled wire at the base of the tree on the right.

King Ahasuerus extends his golden sceptre to the kneeling figure of Queen Esther, a favorite Old Testament subject (fig. 14) for seventeenth century needlework pictures. The ground and most of the figures are worked in tent stitch, but there is silk and metal moss-work; metal and pearls decorate the crowns and the canopy of the throne, and accent the towers of the castle in the background. This illustrates the scene in the first 3 verses of Chapter 5 of the Book of Esther. The subsidiary characters often combined with this to complete the story have been omitted.

A lace and embroidery sampler dated 1656 (fig. 15) is worked all in white linen. The age of the needlewoman, whose initials E.B. appear at the bottom of the sampler with the date, is not known, but her skill in the execution of the needlepoint lace, as well as the embroidery, is unquestionable. Skill too was needed for the execution of the needlepoint cabinet (fig. 16), dated one year later, 1657. There is of course, no connection between the sampler and the cabinet other than a relative nearness in date. The cabinet, which is signed A. K. as well as dated (figs. 16a, 16b), is illustrated (plate XLVIII) by Marcus Huish in *Samplers and Tapestry Embroideries*, London, 1900, at which time it belonged to Mrs. Percy Macquoid.

Another cabinet (fig. 17) now in the Boston Museum is an example of embroidery in the round. Here on the end of the cabinet we see Isaac meeting Rebekah; the faces and hands are carved from wood, and the garments fashioned of silk needle point lace, the little figures standing out like dressed dolls against a landscape embroidered on satin. Miniature dolls have, as far as I can learn, always amused adults as well as children. In the inventory of the furniture and possessions of Barbe d'Amboise, Dowager Countess of Seyssel-la Chambre, taken in August, 1575 (published by Marc de Seyssel-Cressieu, Paris 1896) there are, among pieces of embroidery, canvas for embroidering, designs on paper and on canvas, and wool to work with, little boxes containing small pastoral figures, or rather dolls, "une popée de bergerie, ayans bergier et bergière, avec plusieurs animalux et ung arbre, le tout fil de d'or et argent faulx, avec son estuy de carton." These dolls were kept in a card-board box; the figures on the

outside of this satin-covered cabinet are also dolls, but since the whole casket illustrates the story of Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau, they are intended not merely to entertain, but to instruct.

The last embroidery selected from many others in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston, to illustrate these notes (fig. 20) is a very simple panel embroidered with crewels and dated 1686. The crewels on the face of the panel are a soft faded blue, but an examination of the back shows that they were originally green, in two tones. The design shows no indication of the influence of the semi-oriental patterns, discussed by John Irwin in his article, "Origins of the Oriental style in English decorative art," in the *Burlington Magazine* (vol. XCVII, April 1955, pp. 106-114). There is a set of bed curtains with a closely related design, though more professionally executed, part of them in the Victoria and Albert Museum (T. 21-1926) and part of them in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh (1926.153). The colors are much the same, having faded from two greens to a soft blue. The curtains are designed in a repeating pattern, a Renaissance vase similar to the one in the Boston panel, enclosed in bands formed by a vertical guilloche. There are slight differences in the flowers. On the Boston panel, which includes the initials R. H., the stitches are very simple, stem stitch and speckling, with some of the darker areas filled in with herringbone stitch. The date worked on this panel is 1686. During March of the following year, Judge Samuel Sewall of Boston in New England writes in a letter to his friend and business associate, Daniel Allen, in London, that he has two small daughters who begin school, and that his wife requests that Mrs. Allen be asked "to buy for her, white Fustian drawn, enough for curtins, wallen counterpaine for a bed, and half a duz. chairs, with four threeded green worsted to work it." On the same day Judge Sewall wrote to Mr. Edward Hull directing that he furnish Mrs. Allen "with what money she calls for towards a piece of service My wife Intreat her help in, that so she may set her two little daughters on work and keep them out of Idleness" (*Letter-Book of Samuel Sewall*, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 1, 6th Series, Boston 1886, p. 44). We can only regret that, as far as is known, this example of English needlework in New England has not survived.

Note. The embroideries illustrated in this article have been published in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. XL, April, 1942, pp. 25-36, "Notes on Elizabethan embroidery" by Gertrude Townsend (figs. 2, 2a, 2b, 3, 6 and 7) and vol. LIV, Autumn 1956, pp. 67-75, "Notes on embroideries worked with gold and silver thread," by Gertrude Townsend (figs. 2a, 2b); also in *Antiques*, April 1944, pp. 180-183, "Flowers in English needlework, as shown in the Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection," by Gertrude Townsend (figs. 2, 2b and 16).

## GARRICK ON COTTON

by

EDITH A. STANDEN

**A**MONG the surprises of the 1955 exhibition at Manchester, "English chintz: two centuries of English taste", was the appearance of an example of a well-known *toile* that had always previously been called French. Its subject had not then been identified and the exhibition catalogue (no. 18) merely suggested that the "mixture of classical and Chinese elements seems English rather than French", though it noted that an example in the Musée de l'Impression at Mulhouse had always been called English. If the example in the Metropolitan Museum (Pl. 19) had been shown instead of the one from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the assembler of the exhibition and author of the catalogue, Peter Floud, could not have failed to note the blue warp threads in the selvages, required by the English Act of 1774. But, when the second, improved edition of the exhibition was shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1960, not only had the English origin of the design been established, but Mr. Floud and his assistant, Mrs. Barbara Morris, had identified the subject, so that the piece could be titled *Scenes from "Lethe,"* a short play by David Garrick, first produced at Drury Lane in 1740.<sup>2</sup>

As this play, though very successful, is now little known, it may be of some interest to describe it briefly and to identify the characters seen on the chintz. The action takes place in the underworld, on the banks of the Styx, where Charon and Aesop are discussing Proserpine's anniversary gift to mortals, a discriminating drink from the waters of Lethe that will enable them to forget merely what they wish to. The two fountains on the cotton, a very prosaic-looking pump under a Chinoiserie canopy and a jet springing from a classical ruin, presumably represent Lethe's waters, though they are not mentioned in the printed play. Mercury then escorts various characters onto the stage and each one tells Charon what he wants to forget.

At the bottom left-hand corner of the illustration, Aesop, distinguished by his hunch-back and wearing a ruff (perhaps to suggest that he is not a contemporary figure?) is seen in conversation with Lord Chalkstone, Garrick's own part. This figure is taken from an engraving by Gabriel Smith<sup>3</sup>; this shows Garrick flanked by standing figures, who are the Fine Gentleman and Aesop in the play, with Mercury behind them, and a river in the background. There are five quatrains below, the first and last reading:

“Well done old Boy! pshaw damn the Gout!  
The Chalkstones never fail;  
Thy Spirits, tho’ thy Limbs give out,  
Are brisk as bottl’d Ale.

---

Chalkstone! thy Rank thou truly knows’t,  
The Nobleman I see!  
And, Heav’n be prais’d! our Isle can boast  
Of many a Lord like Thee.”

Lord Chalkstone, though a martyr to gout and rheumatism, does not say he wants to forget them. He tells Aesop, “‘I came merely for a little conversation with you, and to see your Elysian Fields here’ (looking about through his glass) ‘which, by the bye, Mr. Aesop, are laid out most detestably. No taste, no fancy in the whole world! Your river there—what d’ye call—’ Aesop: ‘Styx.’ Lord Chalkstone: ‘Ay, Styx—why, ’tis as straight as Fleet-Ditch. You should have given it a serpentine sweep, and sloped the banks of it. The place, indeed, has very fine capabilities; but you should clear the wood to the left, and clump the trees upon the right. In short, the whole wants variety, extent, contrast, and inequality!’ (Going towards the orchestra, stops suddenly and looks into the pit.) ‘Upon my word, here’s a very fine hah-hah! and a most curious collection of evergreens and flowering shrubs!’”

This, presumably, is the moment shown in the engraving and the chintz, as Lord Chalkstone is raising a glass to his eye and stares straight ahead of him. We can be sure that Garrick, as great in comic as in tragic parts, paused here for his laugh. The character of Lord Chalkstone was added when the play was rewritten in 1749 and the passage just quoted makes fun of a figure recently come to prominence, Launcelot (Capability) Brown (1715-1783), the landscape gardener. The phrase that won him his nickname is included, and the words “serpentine” (still preserved as the name of the ornamental water in Kensington Gardens), “clumps”, “ha-ha,” and “slopes” are frequently found in contemporary writing about gardens. An admiring poet (William Whitehead) makes Brown address the following lines to Nature:

“Who thinn’d, and who group’d, and who scatter’d the trees?  
Who bade the slopes fall with such elegant ease?”

The feminine lead in *Lethe* was played by Kitty Clive (1711-1785),

who is shown in the centre of the chintz, with Mercury politely ushering her in; the be-turbaned negro page, holding her fan, is not mentioned in the cast of characters. The figure is again taken from a print, this one by A. Moseley, dated 1750.<sup>4</sup> It is inscribed: "Shew me to the Pump Room then, Fellow. Where's the Company? I die in Solitude, etc.," and priced at sixpence. The pugdog under her right arm is more conspicuous in the engraving. She is Mrs. Riot, or the Fine Lady, one of Mrs. Clive's best parts; a contemporary says of it that "such sketches in her hand showed high finished pictures." Kitty Clive was one of the finest comediennes of the century. Horace Walpole wrote the inscription for her tomb, concluding with the lines, "The comic muse with her expired And shed a tear when she retired," but perhaps the rarest compliment was paid her by Dr. Johnson, who said to Boswell, "Clive, Sir, is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say." She played frequently with Garrick and said of him, "Damn him, he could act a gridiron."

The unhappy figure on the right is probably the Old Man, who tells Aesop that he wishes to drink from Lethe because "I would fain forget, if you please—that I am to die." He says, however, that he is rich and Aesop suggests that he drinks to forget this. The idea is not well received, but the Old Man agrees to drink a little to "forget how I got my money", and adds that his servant, who accompanies him, is to drink "to forget that I have any money at all." The figure above him is the Fine Gentleman, played by Henry Woodward; it bears some resemblance to this character in the Gabriel Smith engraving, though not taken entirely from it. It might otherwise represent the French Marquis, who wanted to forget that, in his own country, he was only a barber.

The play concludes with the decision by all the characters that they will think things over before drinking. Its popularity is attested by the prints mentioned and others that are not related to the chintz, by Bow figurines (c. 1750) of the actors in these parts,<sup>5</sup> and by the *toile* under discussion. This cannot be as early as the figurines, since it is a copperplate engraving, a technique first used (in Ireland) in 1752. Possibly a command performance of the play in 1766 was the occasion it commemorates. But the example in the Metropolitan Museum must date, as noticed above, from 1774 or later. As usual, most examples of the chintz have been found in America; did the colonists recognize the actors and their parts? Why were they pleased to hang their beds with this rather antiquated theatrical scene? The choice of subjects for "copperplate furnitures" is an interesting field of enquiry.



## NOTES

1. *Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin*. Vol. XX, no. 95, 1925 (May), pp. 160.161. illus. cover (set of bed-hangings, blue, called Jouy); *Antiques*, Vol. 26, no. 6, 1934 (Dec.), p. 230 illus. (with two extra figures of old men, called Jouy); Victoria and Albert Museum, *Brief guide to the western painted, dyed and printed textiles*, 1938, p. 29, pl. VII (blue, called Jouy); *Metropolitan Museum Bulletin*, N.S. Vol. X, 1951 (Dec.), p. 133, illus. (called French). There is also an example in the Du Pont Museum, Winterthur.
2. Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue of a loan exhibition of English chintz*, 1960, no. 161; *English printed textiles*, 1960, pl. 11.
3. British Museum, *Catalogue of engraved British portraits*, Vol. 11, p. 284, no. 149. MMA Print Room example, 17.3.3306.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. L, p. 451, no. 6 MMA Print Room example, 17.3.756-1220.
5. "Henry Woodward as the Fine Gentleman," Bow figurine. Example in the Untermyer Collection, New York (Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Catalogue*, pl. 77).

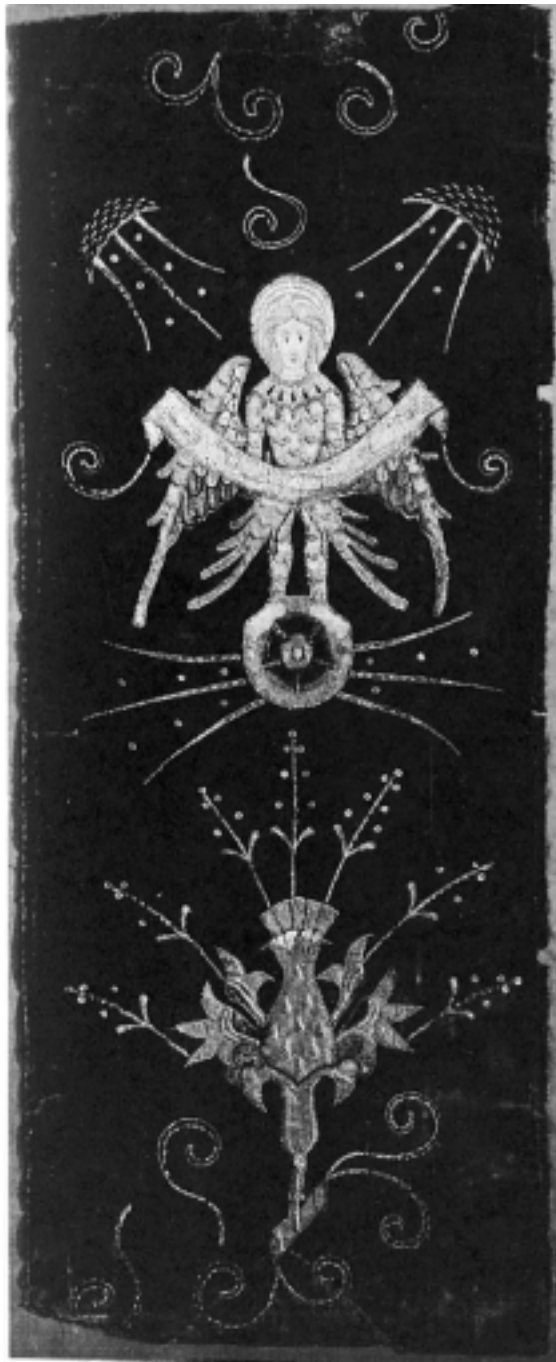


PLATE 1 — Fragment of a Panel, Appliqué Embroidery on velvet, part of a vestment or altar hanging. English, circa 1500. (M.F.A. 51.1726).

PLATE 1a — Detail: magnified 21 X, showing wax on edge of cut linen.

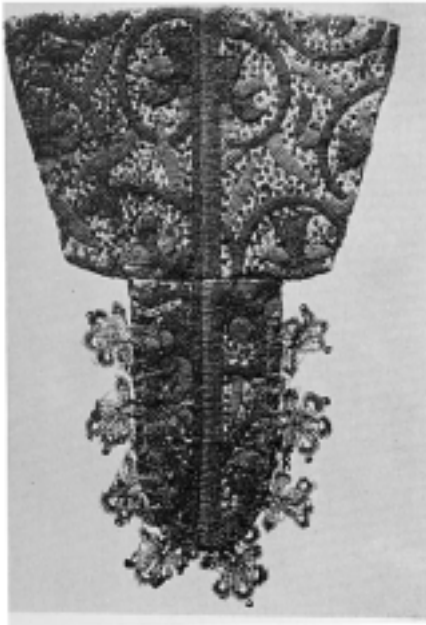


PLATE 2— A Woman's Embroidered Doublet. English, circa 1578. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.243a).

PLATE 2a — A Stomacher to match Doublet. English, circa 1578. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.243b).

PLATE 2b — A Woman's Embroidered Coif and Forehead Cloth. English, circa 1578. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.244 a & b).

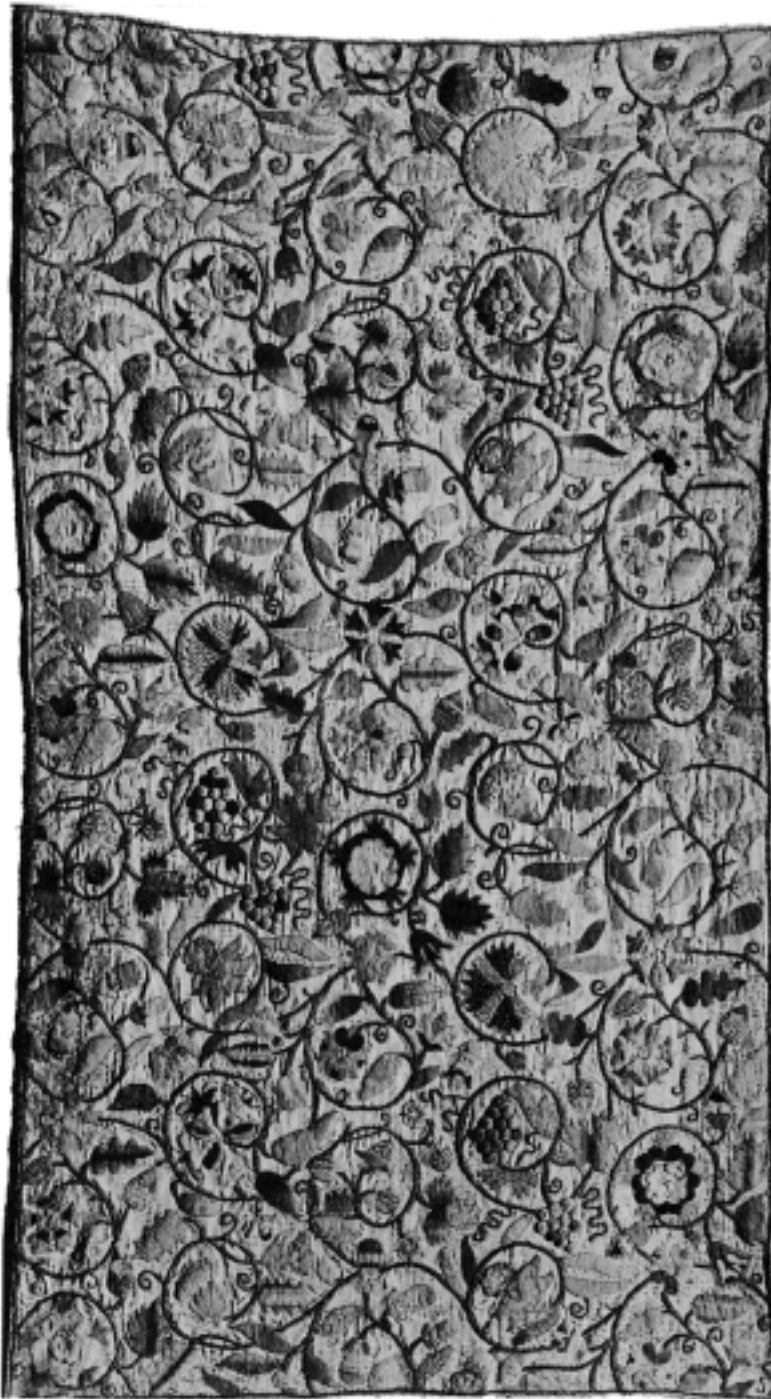


PLATE 3 — Embroidered Pillow Cover. English, late 16th or early 17th century. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.254).

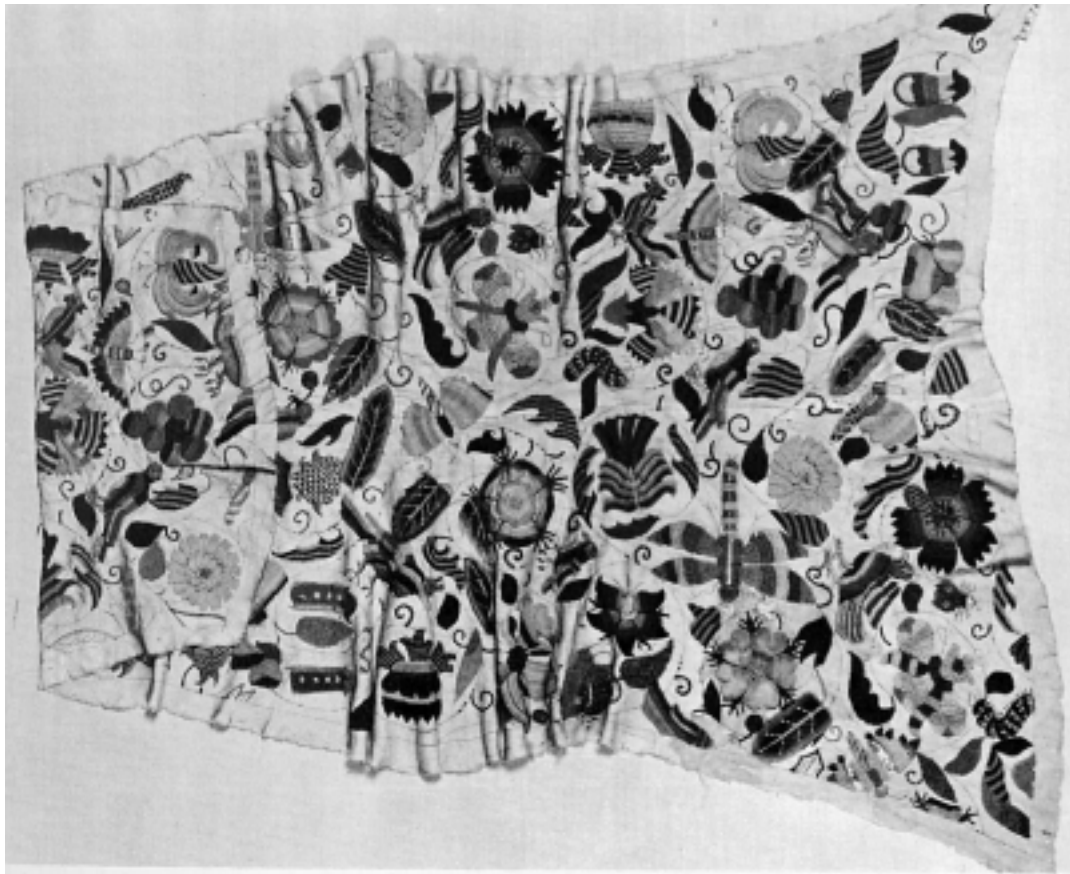


PLATE 4 — Embroidered Sleeve, unfinished. English, late 16th or early 17th century.  
(M.F.A. 38.766).

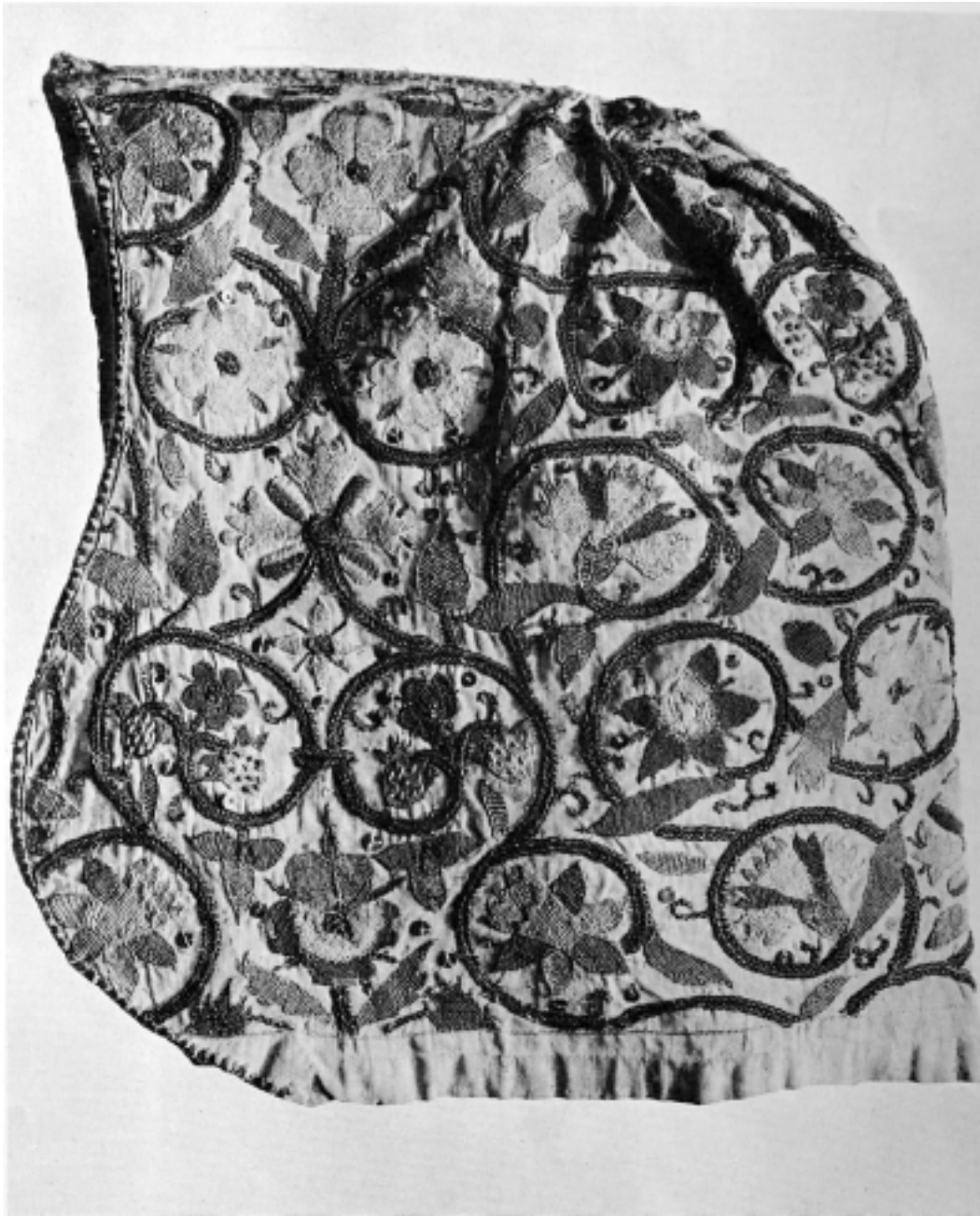


PLATE 6— A Woman's Embroidered Coif. English, late 16th or early 17th century.  
(The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.249).

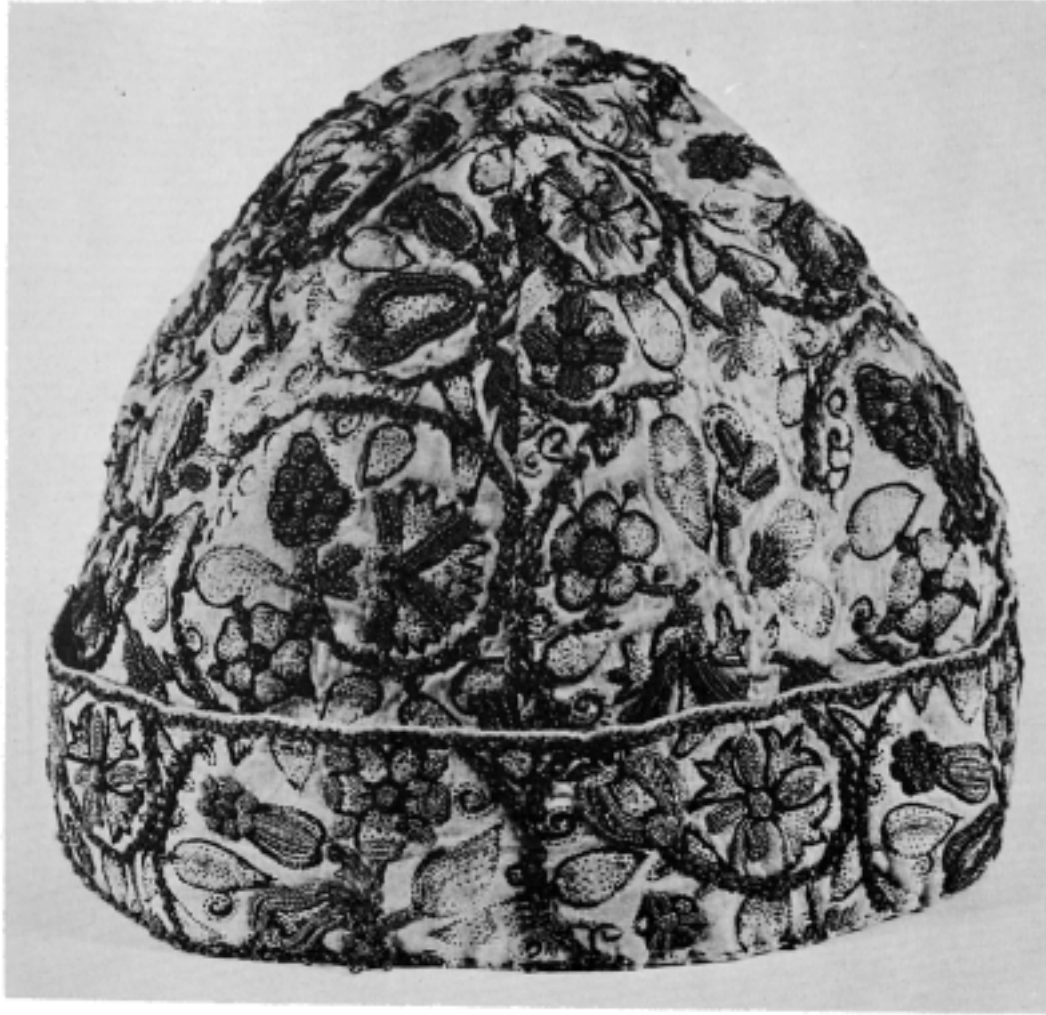


PLATE 7—A Man's Embroidered Cap. English, late 16th or early 17th century. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.251).



PLATE 8 — Portrait of Richard Tomlins, attributed to Marcus Gheerhaerts, the younger, dated 1628. Courtesy of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.



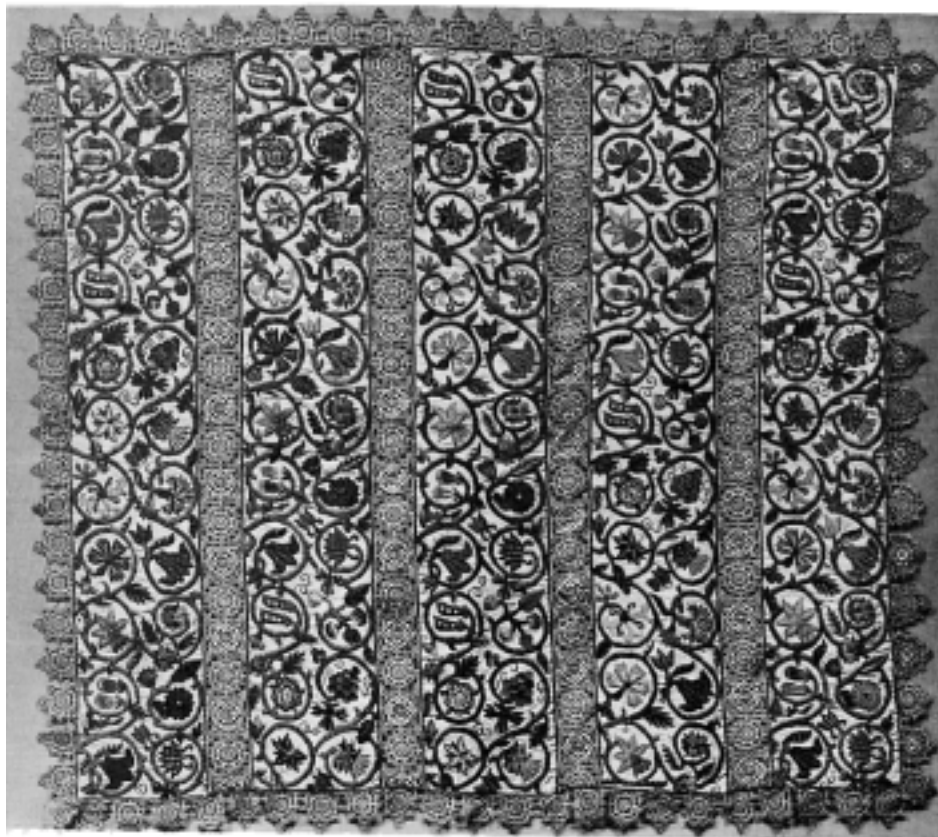


PLATE 9 — Embroidered Cover. English, probably late 16th century. (M.F.A. 38.1082)

PLATE 9a — Detail.



PLATE 10 — Embroidered Cushion Cover. English, first half of 17th century. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 47.228).

PLATE 10a — Detail.

PLATE 10b — Detail, magnified 14 X.



PLATE 11 — Embroidery Sampler. English, probably first half of 17th century. (M.F.A. 33.667).

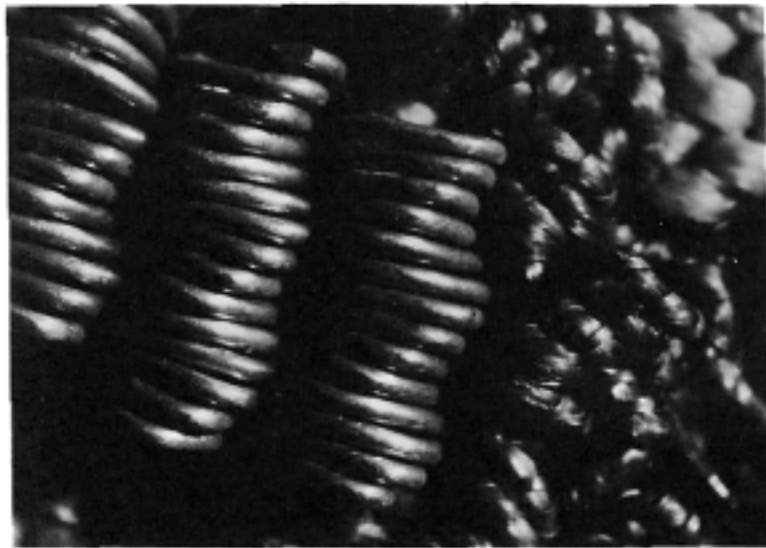


PLATE 12—Embroidered Picture or Cushion Cover. English, 17th century. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.420).

PLATE 12a—Detail: magnified 14 X.

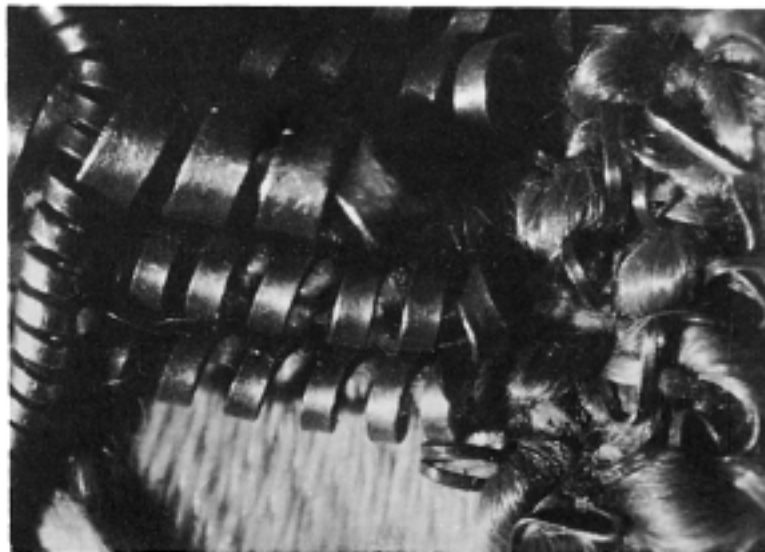
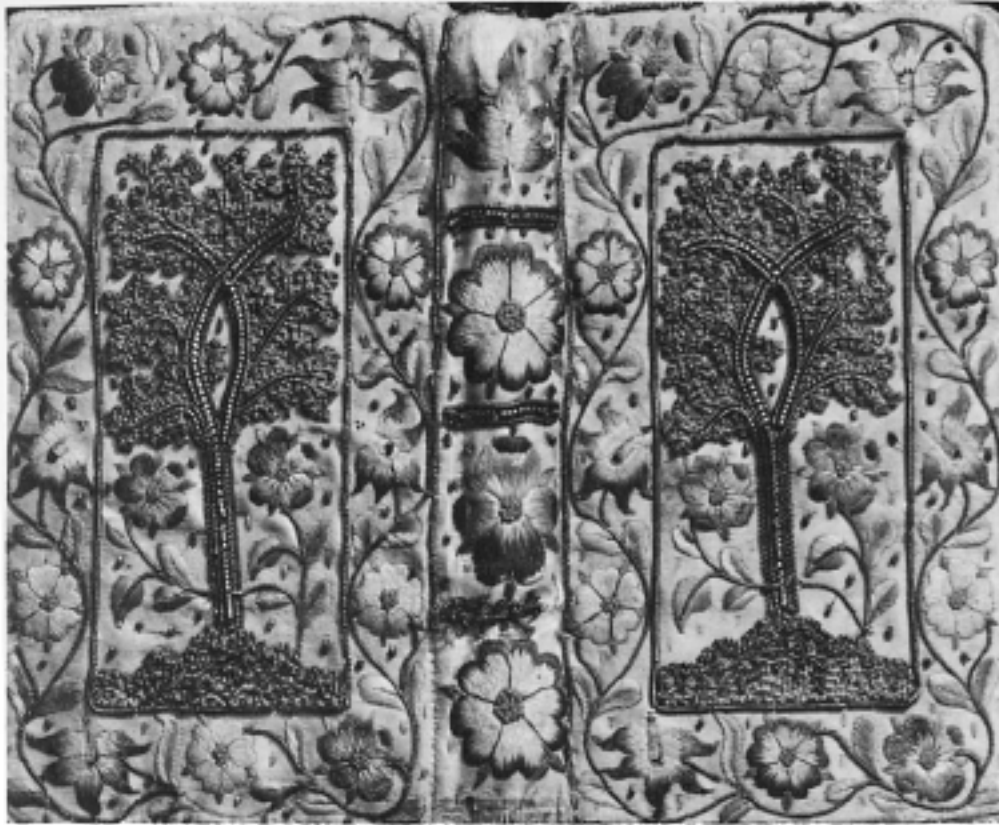


PLATE 13 — Embroidered Case, probably for Needles. English, 17th century. (M.F.A. 34.213).

PLATE 13a — Detail: magnified 14 X.

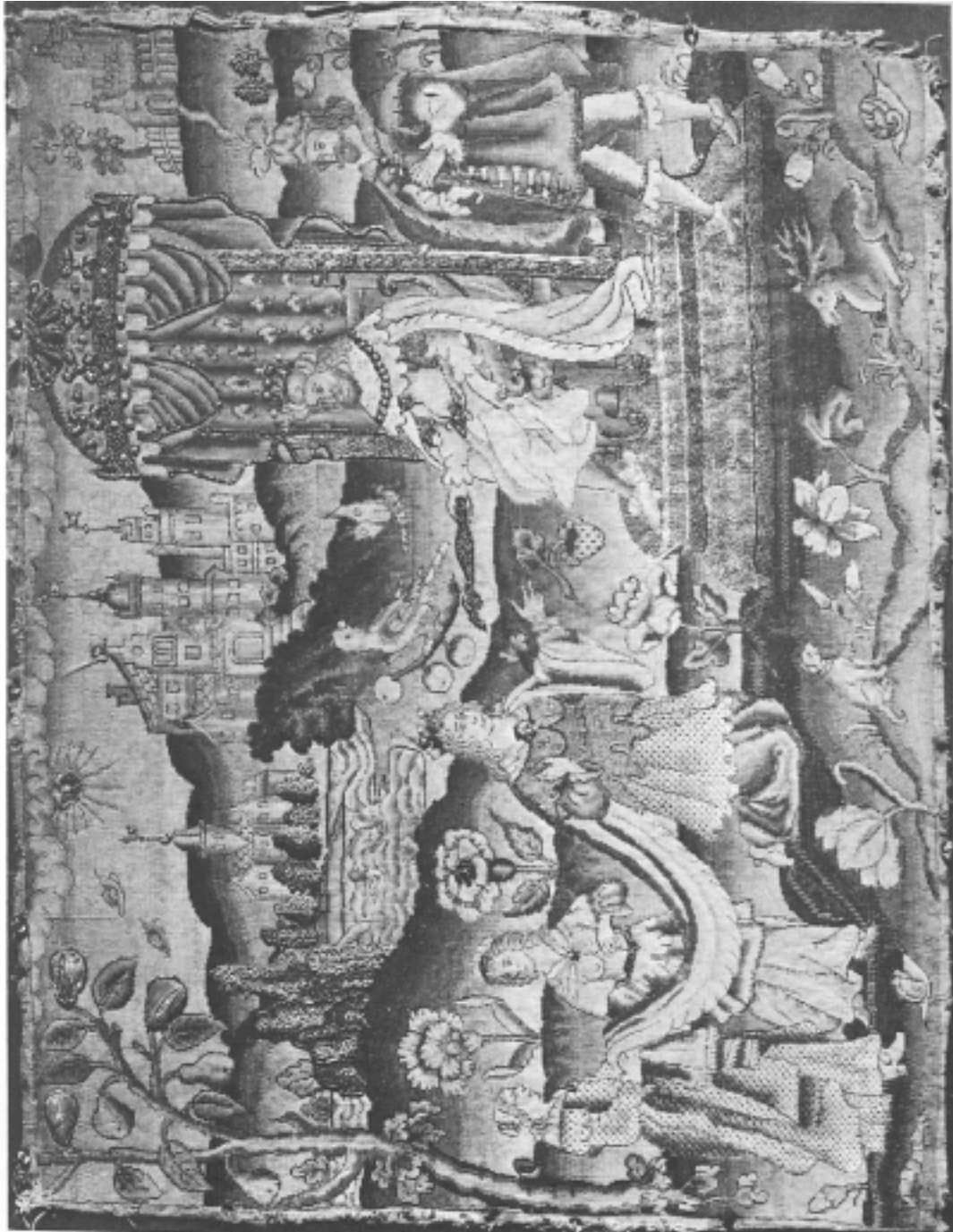


PLATE 14—Embroidered Picture, Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus. English, 17th century. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, M.F.A. 43.319).



PLATE 15 — Lace and Embroidery Sampler. English, dated 1656. (M.F.A. 35.2000).

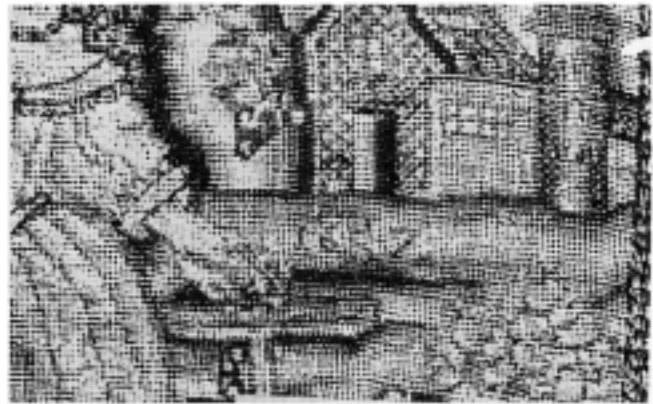


PLATE 16 — Needlepoint Cabinet. English, dated 1657. (The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection,, M.F.A.. 43.524).

PLATE 16a — End of Cabinet.

PLATE 16b — Detail, showing date.





PLATE 17 — Embroidered Cabinet, detail of end panel, Isaac meets Rebekah. English, 17th century. (M.F.A. 59.1033).

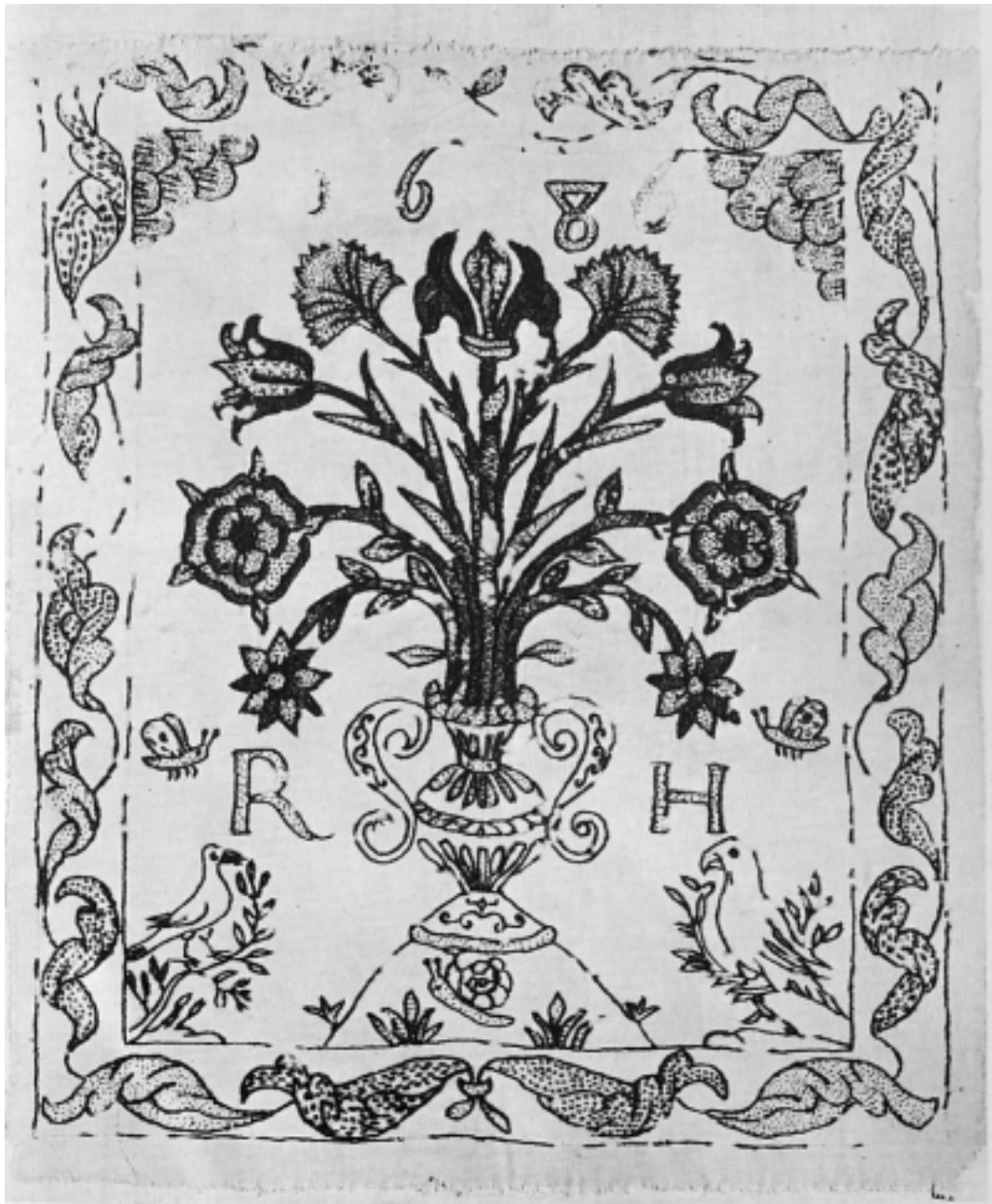


PLATE 18 — Panel, Crewel Work on Fustian. English, dated 1686. (M.F.A. 34.2).



PLATE 19 — Printed cotton, scenes from *Lethe*. English, c. 1775. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 50.59. Gift of Mrs. Lydia Bond Powel, 1950.

## CLUB NOTES

The Needle and Bobbin is happy to announce that an index has been prepared for Volumes 27 through 44 (1943-1960) of its *Bulletin*, the work of Mrs. Marcia Harty and Mrs. Eugenia Tolmachoff. With the previous index covering the years 1916 to 1942, a working tool has thus been provided that will enable full use to be made of an outstanding publication in its field. Copies of the new index are being distributed free of charge to all members of the Club and to all subscribers to the *Bulletin*. They can also be purchased for \$3 a copy. As previously announced, back numbers of the *Bulletin* are also available, except for some early issues (including all from the years 1916 to 1920) at \$3 a copy for the years 1921 to 1958 and \$5 a copy for the years 1959, 1960 and 1961. Copies of the 1916-1942 index can also be purchased for \$3 each. A complete set of all available issues with the two indexes can be supplied for \$100. Please write to the Club President, Mrs. Norris W. Harkness, 580 Park Avenue, New York 21, New York.

\* \* \* \*

Club members enjoyed an unusual number of varied and well attended meetings and outings in 1961. As always, the success of these events was thanks, in great part, to the unfailing generosity of the hostesses, without whose contributions the Club would lose its remarkable combination of intellectual stimulation and social geniality. For the first meeting of the year, the hostesses were Mrs. Wells Browning, Mrs. Charles Blyth Martin and Mrs. Theodore Fiske Savage, who invited members and their guests to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where, through the courtesy of the Director and Trustees, they were conducted through the special exhibition, "The Arts of Denmark," by Mrs. Inger Tanier on the afternoon of January 3rd. The beauty of the exhibition and its installation made a great impression, and Mrs. Tanier's skill in selecting the most interesting textiles among the mass of fine objects of all kinds, as well as her enlightening comments and her good-humored imperturbability in the uncomfortably crowded galleries, were much admired. Tea in the Museum Board Room crowned the event.

Mrs. Robert McC. Marsh and Mrs. Eliot Lee Ward played the same rôle of hostesses on February 15th at the New York Academy of Sciences, where members and guests were asked to hear Dr. Junius B. Bird, Curator of Archaeology at the American Museum of Natural History, speak on "The development and planning of Peruvian textile design." Dr. Bird, a Club member of long standing, was, as always, a fascinating speaker, and the Club felt truly privileged to hear first-hand about the work of one of the outstanding scholars in this field. The tea that followed was also much enjoyed by all.

As mentioned in the previous issue of this *Bulletin*, the last meeting of 1960 was snowed out. The weather was kinder on March 7th, when the postponed meeting was held at the Colony Club, the hostesses being Mrs. F. Huntington Babcock and Mrs.

Alastair Martin. Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb, Chairman of the Board of the American Craftsmen's Council, spoke on "Stitchery Horizons 1960." Club members and their guests, who are accustomed to hearing much about every century and every country except our own, were most interested in meeting and listening to Mrs. Webb, who has done so much to help the creators of the masterpieces of today. They also appreciated the excellent tea provided by the hostesses.

The Annual Meeting was held at the New York Academy of Sciences on March 29th. After the usual short business session, members and guests heard Begum Selma Shaikh speak on embroidery and weaving in Pakistan. They also had the pleasure of admiring the sumptuous garments, brought by the Begum to illustrate her talk, and her colorful movies of Pakistani life. All agreed that this distant land could not have a better representative abroad than the charming speaker. A group of four hostesses, Mrs. A. Victor Barnes, Mrs. A. Benson Cannon, Mrs. Frank B. Rowell, and Mrs. Raymond T. von Palmenberg, were warmly thanked for this fascinating meeting and the delightful tea.

With the coming of Spring, Club members found it particularly agreeable to be invited by Mrs. Henry Flynt to her home "Stone Hedges" in Greenwich, Connecticut, on April 21st. It was a much-appreciated privilege to see this beautiful house with its superb furnishings under the guidance of its owners and to hear Mr. Flynt speak on the textiles at Deerfield, the historic town that owes its rehabilitation to him and Mrs. Flynt.

Equally appropriately, in the Fall, members were happy to receive an invitation to visit the Bartow Pell Mansion Museum, a Greek Revival house, in Pelham Bay Park, on October 17th. Mrs. Winifred Holton, President of the International Garden Club, together with Mrs. Earl Kress Williams, Mrs. John Williams Morgan, and Miss V. Isabelle Miller were hostesses for this wonderful occasion and provided a very welcome tea.

On October 25th, Miss Louis Gilder, Mrs. Norris W. Harkness, Mrs. John V. Irwin, and Mrs. J. Harper Skillin welcomed members and their guests at Asia House. Miss Pauline Simmons, formerly Associate Curator of Far Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum, gave a lecture entitled "A guided tour through Japan's historic collection of antique textiles." Her recent unique opportunity of studying at length these famous but inaccessible collections made her talk a rare glimpse into the world of profound scholarship. A tea was then also very much enjoyed by the large gathering.

The meeting on November 29th was at the Lotus Club, where Miss Clara Hoover, Mrs. Edwin A. G. Manton, Mrs. Robert C. Palmer, and Mrs. Orville A. Sardeson invited members and their guests to hear Mr. Robert Riley, Design Consultant of the Brooklyn Museum. His subject, "Our changing figures," gave little indication in advance of the amusing and instructive experience that awaited his

audience. With the assistance of costumes from the Brooklyn Museum, a slender professional model, and, occasionally, his own torso, Mr. Riley showed, with wit and learning, how our figures have changed from the 1920's until the present day. After this original and laughter-provoking presentation, the members enjoyed a delicious tea.

The final meeting of the year was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on December 14th, when Miss Marianne A. Huebner gave a talk called "The dramatic history of a famous textile collection." Instead of slides, Miss Huebner had brought a number of her embroideries and other textiles, which were greatly admired by members and their guests, and her lively and humorous account of the almost incredible vicissitudes they had undergone aroused admiration and enthusiastic applause. Mrs. Frank B. Rowell and Mrs. Edward A. Morrison, as hostesses, were warmly thanked for a fascinating experience and the tea in the Museum restaurant that ended the afternoon.

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## IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Robert Coleman Taylor, who died on October 3rd, 1961, had long been associated with the Needle and Bobbin Club. Her chief textile interest was modern embroidery and she was active in the Guild of the Needle and Bobbin Club in the 1920's. Her own embroidered picture, "Byrd flying over the North Pole," was voted the most interesting in a Guild exhibition of 1932 and was reproduced in the *Bulletin*. She was elected Treasurer of the Club in 1944 and second vice-president in 1945; she was a director in 1948 and an honorary director from 1949 to 1959. Her understanding and love of antiques was evident in the beautiful furnishings of her home, and her warm and gracious personality won her a host of friends. Many members will recall the sketch of the history of the Club since its organization that she gave at a meeting in 1942, and all of them will regret her loss.

Mr. Richard C. Greenleaf, a Charter Member of the Needle and Bobbin Club and the first editor of its *Bulletin*, died on December 31st, 1961. He edited the *Bulletin* from 1916 until 1923 and remained on the Publications Committee until 1930; the format and standards of this publication are thus largely of his making. He was one of the outstanding American collectors of antique textiles, chiefly laces and waistcoats. Some of his laces were published by Marian Hague in the *Bulletin* in 1932 and 1948; the author commented that the collection contained "only perfect specimens." Eleven pieces were included in the Club's great publication, *Antique Laces of the American Collectors*, by Frances Morris and Marian Hague, New York, 1922-1926. A few of his waistcoats were illustrated in the *Bulletin* in 1927. The Club had the pleasure of seeing his collections in 1923 and 1941. It is most gratifying to know that these superb works of art are to be preserved in the Cooper Union Museum, where they will give pleasure to so many, but the loss of the man who gathered them and preserved them for posterity is deeply felt by the Needle and Bobbin Club.

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1962

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