

Selected Embroidery Bibliography

Updates will be posted to the Grimfells' web page, <http://www.grimfells.net>
I have used the longest title I could find – often from the title pages and not the book covers – in order to give as much information as possible.

H = history

T = technique

P = pattern or design

E = example (both good and bad examples!)

Abegg, Margaret. Apropos Patterns for Embroidery, Lace and Woven Textiles. Bern, Switzerland: Schriften Der Abegg-Stiftung, 1998. (reprint of 1978 edition)

- HP Lavishly illustrated book on the history of pattern books, with numerous patterns reprinted, along with extant pieces and painted images of items made using the patterns. The patterns are clear enough to graph or stitch from. A real treasure.

Ambuter, Carolyn. The Open Canvas. New York: Workman Publishing, 1982.

- T Six openwork techniques explored in depth. A “thimbleful” of history for each technique and then extensive stitch diagrams. No period pieces, but excellent instructions.

Arnold, Janet. Patterns of Fashion; The Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women, c. 1560-1620. New York: Drama Books, 1985.

- E A technical costume manual with close-up photos of extant pieces and paintings that clearly show embroidery details. B&W. No technique. Bibliography is costume related. Very late period.

_____. Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd. Leeds, Great Britain: W.S. Maney & Son, Ltd, 1988

- H The ultimate late period drool book! Not only are there close-ups of Elizabeth's clothing, but the inventories have close-ups of many other pieces of embroidery. Has a chapter on sources and symbolism of embroidery and another discusses embroiderers and their equipment.

Bath, Virginia Churchill. Embroidery Masterworks; Classic Patterns and Techniques for Contemporary Application. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1972.

- P 37 designs based on works in the Art Institute of Chicago. Eleven projects relate to the SCA period (though two are Peruvian). An essay of several pages and b & w photographs accompany each project. There are color

pictures of four items. 30 page section of materials and techniques and extensive bibliography. This book shows items you can see in an American museum! (contact the museum before a visit – not all items are on public view)

Brooks, Mary M. English Embroideries of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries in the Collection of the Ashmolean Museum. London: Jonathan Horne Publications, 2004.

E I bought this book after looking at the title page. Somehow the 16th century got lost; this book only covers 17th c works. Look before buying if you have the chance!

Campbell-Harding, Valerie, Jane Lemon and Kit Pyman. Goldwork. Kent, Great Britain: Search Press, 1995.

H Good history, though no period illustrations, and interesting history of metal threads, but it is difficult to discern techniques in this book written for the modern embroiderer.

Cavallo, Adolph. Needlework. Smithsonian Illustrated Library of Antiques Series. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1979.

H Written for collectors of needlework as art, this volume has a chapter on technique (discussion, not diagrams) and western embroidery. Several b & w illustrations of about 13 period works, many of which are in American museums. Glossary, technical notes on pieces and bibliography.

Clabburn, Pamela. Samplers, 2nd edition. A Shire Book. Buckinghamshire, Great Britain: Shire Publications Ltd, 2002.

H Cute little book about the history of English samplers. Short bibliography and a list of places to visit in England (some give URLs). Interesting discussion of Bostocke sampler and pattern books. Only a few pages relate to period needlecraft.

Clarke, Dorothy. Exploring Elizabethan Embroidery. Auckland, New Zealand: Georgeson Publishing Limited. 1997

TP The first of a series of books from down under that started a resurgence of interest in the Elizabethan style. Good stitch diagrams. The patterns are designed for the modern stitcher, but some patterns could work for SCA use (Touch not the cat!) and the examples by the author's students provide great inspiration. There are several other equally attractive books in the series.

The Conservation of Tapestries and Embroideries: Proceedings of Meetings at the Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique, Brussels, Belgium, September 21-24, 1987. Marina del Rey, CA: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1989.

- H Proceedings of a conservation symposium, it includes stunning photographs of the Order of the Golden Fleece vestments (lots of goldwork), a 12th c embroidered liturgical sandal and a few other religious altar pieces. Discusses how some early restoration can mask original stitches.

Cotesworth, Elizabeth. "Stitches in Time: Establishing a History of Anglo-Saxon Embroidery," Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Vol.I (2005): 1-27.

- H Current status of research in Anglo-Saxon embroidery. Scholarly.

D'Averio, Ianthe [Kim Brody Salazer]. The New Carolingian Modelbook; Counted Embroidery Patterns from Before 1600. Albuquerque, NM: The Outlaw Press, 1995.

- HP Hundreds of graphed period patterns – divided into block unit and straight stitch patterns. The book includes an essay of the historical context of the patterns, stitch diagrams, a wonderful annotated bibliography, a list of period pattern books and indexes to the patterns by name, date and country of origin. OOP. Get a copy of it if you can find it, but more importantly, hope that the author can reprint so she can get paid for her work (rumor has it that the publisher went kaput).

Digby, George Wingfield. Elizabethan Embroidery. New York: Thomas Yoseloff Publishers, 1963.

- H Still the classic work on the subject. I own a photocopy, so all 80 illustrations are black and white. (There are, however, only 4 color plates in the original.) The book has sections on general history, design sources, embroidery for dress and embroidery for furniture, as well as a bibliography.

Don, Sarah. Traditional Embroidered Animals. Devon, Great Britain: David & Charles, 1990.

- HTP An eclectic history of embroidery as seen through the use of stitched animals. Chapters on Bayeux Tapestry, ecclesiastical embroidery, 16th c canvas work, blackwork, heraldic work, samplers and pattern books. Has period pieces, stitch diagrams, good bibliography and design ideas.

Ellis, Marianne. Embroideries and Samplers from Islamic Egypt. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2001.

- H Early counted work! Lots of pattern darning and counted samplers – with photos so clear you can chart the patterns. Works from the 9th to the 16th centuries.

Epstein, Kathleen. A New Modelbook for Spanish Stitch. Austin: Curious Works Press, 1993.

- HTP History of the stitch, succinct stitch technique and many undated patterns. The patterns are probably 17th c, but would not look out of place in the SCA (though not documentable for competition).

Epstein, Kathleen A. (ed.) Old Italian Patterns for Linen Embroidery collected and analyzed by Frieda Lipperheide. Austin, TX: Curious Works Press, 1996.

- TP All the pictorial material from collector Lipperheide's 1883 work. Examination of Moorish influences, with stitch diagrams and 85 plates, many of which are period (and almost all look close enough to "pass")

Evans, Helen C. Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261-1557). New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004.

- H Extensive history of the period and artworks. Issued in conjunction with a museum exhibit. Pgs 294-333 cover liturgical textiles, with almost 50 color photos. Essay written by Warren Woodfin, whose PhD dissertation was on the subject. A feast for the eyes – and very cheap if you priced it by the pound!

Fairfield, Helen. Counted Thread Embroidery. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987.

- T A good introductory book for technique, it covers cross stitch, Assisi work, blackwork, drawn thread work and cutwork. Has a few period designs.

Finseth, Claudia Riiff. Scandinavian Folk Patterns for Counted Thread Embroidery. Seattle: Pacific Search Press, 1987

- H Has a few pages of period history of embroidery. Good bibliography. All the patterns are modern, but there are a few B&W illus of period pieces.

Foris, Maria and Andreas. Charted Folk Designs for Cross-Stitch Embroidery. trans and intro by Heinz Edgar Kiewe. New York: Dover Publications, 1975.

- P Most of the designs are not credited as to source, but a few are noted as being from 16th c Venetian pattern books. Most patterns "look" period.

Freeman, Margaret B. The St. Martin Embroideries, A fifteenth-century Series illustrating the life and legend of St. Martin of Tours. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1968.

- H History of a set of embroidered pieces, set in a historical context. Lots of b & w illus and 2 color plates. Bibliography. No stitch diagrams, but 3 pgs on techniques and a long discussion of style – excellent documentation!

Geddes, Elizabeth and Moyra McNeill. Blackwork Embroidery. New York: Dover Publications, 1976.

- HE Historical survey with good b & w illus in first 47 pages. Abridged bibliography. Stop reading here – the rest of the book has horrible modern designs.

Goldberg, Rhoda Ochser. The New Dictionary of Counted Thread Embroidery Stitches. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1998.

- T Brief history of various techniques, but primarily useful for the large, clear stitch diagrams.

Gostelow, Mary. Blackwork. New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 1976.

- HT Terrific history, including chapters on blackwork seen in paintings and photos of extant period garments. Also has information on technique. Not heavy on fill patterns, but one of my favorite books to pick up and read. Has 140 b&w illustrations and 1 pg bibliography.

Gudjonsson, Elsa E. Traditional Icelandic Embroidery. Distributed by University of Iceland Press, 2003, 2nd edition. (First edition, 1985)

- HTP The classic – the only book I know of on the topic. There are two bibliographies – the original and a new one added to the 2003 edition – however almost every work cited is in Icelandic. Lots of color illustrations showing great stitch detail. A few stitch diagrams.

Hammett, Barbara, Elizabethan Cross Stitch. London: A David & Charles Book, 2004.

- E A modern book of cross stitch that captures some of the feel of Elizabethan designs while using totally wrong techniques. Some of the random designs could be used for pin cushions or other little works, but not competition entries. The bibliography isn't bad – you could use it to find books with pictures of actual Elizabethan embroidery.

Humphrey, Carol. Samplers, A Fitzwilliam Museum Handbook. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

- H Bibliography and history. Only the first two samplers, a Mamluk pattern-darning sampler and a white work sampler incorporating goldwork, can be dated to period. The photographs are clear and both samplers are accompanied by a full page essay.

Ipsley, Gerald of and Robert of Coldcastle. [Gerald Hubbell and Robert Kalthoff] Celtic Embroidery. Kansas City, KS: by the authors, 2001

- HP This book and its companion (Celtic Design, Pattern & Color) explore the world of celtic embroidery. A history of the various celtic peoples, their artwork, clothing designs, color theory and available colors in the celtic world are discussed. There are hundreds of designs in the 2 volumes. Since no extant pieces exist, the use of embroidery is speculative, but this is at least well-reasoned speculation. If you can, take the classes the authors teach in conjunction with the books.

Johnstone, Pauline. Byzantine Tradition in Church Embroidery. London: Alec Tiranti, 1967.

- H 81 of the 120 b & w illus are period. 4 pg bibliography. Chapters on Byzantine background, vestments, technique – very extensive. A classic on the topic. Rare and expensive.

Kiewe, Heinz Edgar. Charted Peasant Designs from Saxon Transylvania. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963.

- P Lots of patterns, many have loose documentation to period. This was my first book of period patterns and it is still available today. I am more suspicious of the documentation now than I was 20 years ago, but I still find the patterns compelling.

Krody, Sumru Belger. Flowers of Silk and Gold, Four Centuries of Ottoman Embroidery. Washington, DC: The Textile Museum, 2000.

- H History of Ottoman Empire and embroidery. Vaguely touches on period embroidery, but really covers 17, 18 and 19th c pieces. Lavishly illustrated, but no SCA period embroidery is pictured. Good bibliography.

Lemon, Jane. Metal Thread Embroidery. London: B.T. Batsford, 2002.

- T Lavishly illustrated, though only a couple of period pieces. Most goldwork techniques have remained unchanged from the Middle Ages. This is more of a dictionary than a technique book. Eleven pg section of places to visit and notable collections. Notes on surviving pieces, bibliography and

suppliers of materials. Not the first book to own on the subject, but a worthy supplemental volume.

Levey, Santina M. Elizabethan Treasures; The Hardwick Hall Textiles. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1999.

- H This was also published in Great Britain with a different cover! The history of Hardwick Hall and the textiles that have furnished it – most notably those of the 16th c when Bess of Hardwick was its mistress and Mary, Queen of Scots her prisoner. Lots of color photos and extensive bibliography. Great companion to Swain's history of Mary's needlework.

Ness, Pamela Miller. Assisi Embroidery. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979.

- TP Although there is no bibliography, the introduction gives a good history of this counted thread style. The book includes stitch diagrams and 42 patterns, some of which are appropriate to SCA use.

Newall, Kathryn. Needlework Patterns from Renaissance Germany. Boulder, CO: Costume and Dressmaker Press, 1999.

- P The author, known in the SCA as Baroness Kathryn Goodwyn, OL, has recharted designs from Johan Sibmacher's *Schon Neues Modelbuch* (1597). Charted in patternmaker software, to make them accessible to the needle worker of these current middle ages. The author knows her history!

Nourry, Claude and Pierre de Sainte. Patterns: Embroidery: Early 16th Century. Berkeley, CA: Lacis, 1999.

- P "An abridged facsimile of a 19th c facsimile of four early 16th c French pattern books." Some of the charted patterns could be used directly from the book; others could easily be re-charted. There are also patterns that could be adapted for free form embroidery. If you read French, you may be interested in the 19th c title page and introduction.

Parmal, Pamela A. Samplers from A to Z. Boston: MFA Publications, 2000.

- H Brief history of samplers, info on period practices found in first 2 pgs. Good bibliography. The rest of the book is a discussion of 26 elements of samples, one element per letter of the alphabet. Of particular interest are O (origins, which has a Mamluk fragment) and P (pattern books), as well as tangents found in I (Italian cutwork), E (embroidery) and B (Band sampler). Not dedicated to our period, but a fun little book.

Saunders, Sally. Royal School of Needlework Embroidery Techniques. London: B.T. Batsford, 1998; reprint, Washington, D.C.: Brasseys, 1998.

- T A book of technique, this book covers silk shading, crewel work, blackwork and goldwork. Each section has an introductory essay that includes discussion of period practices. Excellent photo illustrations. All techniques are shown in 5 designs, including an exercise for beginners. None of the designs are relevant to the SCA, but the section on goldwork is worth the price of the book.

Scheuer, Nikki. Designs for Holbein Embroidery. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.

- E Short history, 110 filling stitches illustrated, 21 embroidery stitches diagramed and 25 mostly horrendous designs. Not the worst book I ever bought, but one of the most useless. Don't buy a book you see recommended on an e-mail list unless you do a little research!! .

Schartzenberger, Johan. Patterns Book of Embroidery: 1534. (reprint of an 1882 facsimile) Berkeley, CA: Lacis, 2003.

- P Non-counted patterns from an early book of woodcuts. Some designs could be adapted for Assisi work, but isn't it great to find late period designs that aren't for counted work?

Setton, Kenneth. "900 Years Ago: The Norman Conquest," National Geographic 30 (August 1966): 206-251.

- H The entire "tapestry" is reproduced in the issue, including translation of the Latin. No technique – the article is a history of the conquest. There were 5 million copies published – look for this at yard sales and used book stores!

Siegler, Susan. Needlework Patterns from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1976.

- E None of the projects are based on period western embroideries, but the stitch gallery has 2 b & w illus (Under entries for Back Stitch and Split Stitch). The introduction has some rarely seen illustrations from period pattern books. Check out those museum project books – in the library, if possible!

Speirs, Gill and Sigrid Quemby. A Treasury of Embroidery Designs; Charts and Patterns from the Great Collections. London: Westbridge Books, 1985.

- P Adapted patterns from historical embroidered pieces. About half are period designs. The patterns are fragments of the original designs. Good historical essays and bibliography.

Spies, Nancy. Here Be Wyverns; Hundreds of Patterns graphed from Medieval Sources. Jarrettsville, MD: Arelate Studio, 2002.

- P Graphed patterns based on medieval art, not necessarily on period counted thread designs. For use in any art that can use a charted design. The source of the designs is given – many are from manuscript designs. Over 400 patterns. A fun book; I use it a lot.

Staniland, Kay. Medieval Craftsmen Embroiderers. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

- H History of embroidery in the SCA time period. Lots of photos, bibliography. A must buy! Readily available and not too expensive.

Stewart, Imogen and Sally Saunders. Classic Needlework; Create over Twenty Patterns from the Past. London: Studio Editions, 1992.

- P Ten of the patterns are charted from late period designs. Some of the designs can also be seen in Elizabethan Treasures (Levy), though not charted in that book. There are brief essays about each design.

Swain, Margaret. The Needlework of Mary Queen of Scots. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1973.

- H Story of Mary's life, the history of her times, the state of embroidery and textiles during her lifetime and a detailed examination of her needlework. Lavish with illustrations, including many that are clear enough to allow one to chart the designs. Stitch diagrams and generous bibliography. It has been reprinted, so it is not difficult to find. It is a good companion to Levy's Elizabethan Treasures.

Synge, Lanto. Art of Embroidery, History of Style and Technique. Woodbridge, England: Antique Collectors' club for the Royal School of Needlework, 2001.

- H Three chapters cover needlework from SCA period. Great photographs – very clear. Glossary and bibliography. Very comprehensive history of embroidery.

Thurman, Christa C. Mayer. Textiles in the Art Institute of Chicago. Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1992.

- H Several good photos of religious works and some very late English domestic embroidery. Very clear photo of a German Opus Teutonicum work (pulled thread work). Catalog in back of book gives technical

description of works. Also has a great picture of a Perugia towel – allowing you to see how the weaving pattern could be confused with embroidery.

Wainwright, Angela. Renaissance Cross Stitch Samplers. London: Cassell, 1995.

PE OK, I bought this for the full color picture of the Bostocke sampler. It also has a color picture of a book cover attributed to Elizabeth I and several early 17th c samplers. There is a brief history, but no bibliography. Several designs wouldn't be too terrible for SCA use, which is more than one can say for the author's companion volume on medieval cross stitch.

Wardle, Patricia. Guide to English Embroidery, Victoria and Albert Museum. London: HMSO, 1981.

H Long essay on history of English Embroidery and lots of B&W illus.

Warner, Pamela. Tudor Treasures to Embroider. Lewes, Great Britain: Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd., 2002.

E I got this book because she wrote a good comprehensive history of embroidery. Alas, this isn't it. The patterns for a few of the designs aren't terrible, but none of the author's designs feel authentic – especially when compared to the few period examples in the book.

Wilkins, Lesley. Traditional Blackwork Samplers. Tunbridge Wells, Kent, Great Britain: Search Press, 2004.

P The author has another title, Beginners Guide to Blackwork, which might be useful for new stitchers. The author has a brief history and lots of patterns, some of which are based on period designs and most of which would be very acceptable for recreational SCA stitching.

Wilson, Erica. Erica Wilson's Embroidery Book. New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1973.

T Still available in used book stores, as well as the individual sections on crewel and silk and gold threads, which have been published as stand-alone works. This was my first embroidery book. It is first and foremost a book of technique – and a good one. Several period examples are shown in photographs, though they are not dated, for the most part. A history precedes each chapter. No bibliography, use it for technique.

Zimmerman, Jane D. The Art of English Blackwork. Self-published, 1996.

HTP The author is a very respected teacher in the Embroidery Guild of America and hence the history and bibliography are geared to the EGA stitcher. A

good discussion of the term “Spanish stitch” and its fall into dis-use later in the 16th c. About 150 pages of fill stitch patterns as well as diagrams for other stitches.