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Treasured Bags

Places to Keep Things

VERONICA PATTERSON

"For their hands tell a story, and the works of their hands tell a story—each thread connecting us to those who came before. And the story endures."

—*PieceWork* March/April 1993, cover



I HAVE A SET OF SMALL BAGS THAT I TREASURE. I think of each of these bags by one of its several "given" names, names that reflect how that bag came to hold something intangible that I keep. Each is in its own way a *keep*, that most secure inner space in a medieval castle, and I am a keeper.

Hmong Bag

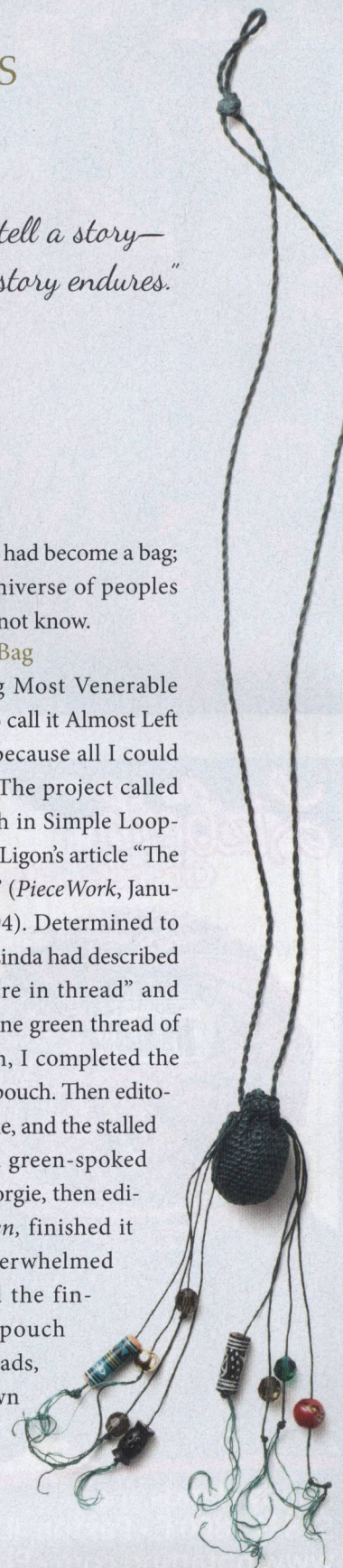
I name it Lens and Handwork of the World bag because it came to me from Linda Ligon, founder and now creative director of Interweave, as the stories that would go into the fledgling *PieceWork* magazine began to unfold. If the Hmong people, a hill-tribe people once in China, then in Laos, Thailand, and northern Vietnam, sought asylum in the United States, and if their exquisite stitching led them to work on Amish quilts in Pennsylvania, then I needed to examine the world more closely through this textile lens. (See "The Amish and the Hmong: Two Cultures and One Quilt" by Trish Faubion in *PieceWork*, November/December 1993.) How had these two cultures intersected, and how might the bold color blocks of one and the intricate reverse-appliqué designs of the other come together? What had once been the end of a traditional sash decorated with reverse appliqué and

the tiniest stitches had become a bag; inside it was a universe of peoples and textiles I did not know.

Simple Looping Bag

I call this bag Most Venerable Thread bag; I also call it Almost Left Unfinished bag because all I could do was begin it. The project called A Treasure Pouch in Simple Looping follows Linda Ligon's article "The Ubiquitous Loop" (*PieceWork*, January/February 1994). Determined to experience what Linda had described as "an airy gesture in thread" and supplied with a fine green thread of Irish waxed linen, I completed the small base of the pouch. Then editorial deadlines came, and the stalled project sat like a green-spoked sun until Jean Scorgie, then editor of *Handwoven*, finished it for me. I was overwhelmed when I received the finished necklace pouch with dangling beads, plump with brown rice and generosity. I still wear it with pleasure.

All bags from the collection of the author and all photographs by Joe Coca.



*If you look inside the bags that you treasure, do you, too,
find fragrant, often intangible treasures?*



Japanese Indigo-Dyed Bag

First named the Bag of Many Blues, it came from a close friend who lives in Illinois and worked for many years at the Chicago Children's Museum. Long ago, she helped me make my first batik fabric, a silk scarf; and she was the first to suggest that I work at Interweave. She sent this bag after the unexpected deaths of my husband's mother and my father within a few days of each other. She had brought it back from her travels in Japan. I keep her note of sympathy, which describes the bag's origin, inside it:

I bought it . . . in Kume, Japan. The Takada family has been indigo dyeing and ikat weaving for several

generations. I visited Mr. Takada's studio, filled with vats of dye sunken into an earthen floor. He dips each bunch of tied fiber about twenty times. He does the designing and dyeing, and his wife does the weaving. When we visited, the grandmother served us potato dumplings, tea, and sweets.

Indigo dyeing, which I came to know at Interweave, entrances me. Is it the transformative process or the striking shades of blue produced? Is it the ubiquity of indigo-dyed fabrics, from Japanese shibori and sashiko to blue jeans? Or is it the aura of ongoing generations and the world's cultures? This handsome bag is full of consolation and of *to be continued*.

Beaded Necklace Bag

With its black background and bright blossom, this is the Beadedness of the World bag, the Not-Quite-a-Rosary bag that I can finger as needed. Based on the Beaded Amulet Bag to Weave (*PieceWork*, January/February 1997), it was made for me by my friend Nancy Arndt, who ably and cheerfully midwived issues of this magazine six times a year before moving on to other tasks at Interweave. When I hold this bag to my ear, I think I can hear elk bugling in Rocky Mountain National Park, where we still go to hear them every fall, sometimes staying from dusk into nights as dark as the jet beads. This necklace bag is so full of hope, good wishes, and years of friendship, you'd think it would be heavier.

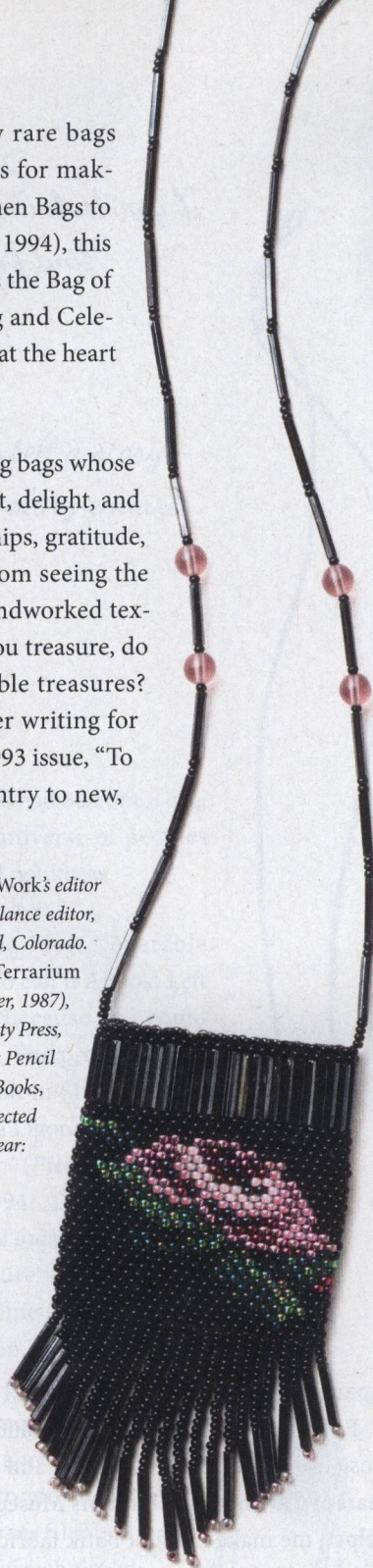
Chirimen Bag

Small and lighthearted, silk crepe chirimen bags are often shaped into birds and flowers. In nineteenth-century Japan, the daughters of samurai and merchants made such bags from kimono scraps. Inoue Shigeyoshi, founder of the Japan Toy Museum, helped

collect examples of the increasingly rare bags and reprinted patterns and directions for making them. Offered as one of the Chirimen Bags to Sew (*PieceWork*, November/December 1994), this Chinese lantern (ground cherry) bag is the Bag of Happy Whimsy and the Bag of Saving and Celebrating Handwork of the Past, an idea at the heart of *PieceWork* itself.

Though small, these are hardworking bags whose threads and stitches store, carry, protect, delight, and console. Inside are memories, friendships, gratitude, and astonishments that have come from seeing the world focused through the lens of handworked textiles. If you look inside the bags that you treasure, do you, too, find fragrant, often intangible treasures? "And what is a stitch for?" I remember writing for the cover of the September/October 1993 issue, "To hold. It binds past to present, old country to new, generation to generation." ♦

ABOUT THE AUTHOR. *Veronica Patterson*, *PieceWork's* editor from its inception in 1993 to 1997, is a writer, freelance editor, and teacher of creative writing who lives in Loveland, Colorado. Her poetry collections include *How to Make a Terrarium* (Cleveland: Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 1987), *Swan, What Shores?* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), *Thresh & Hold* (Rochester, New York: Big Pencil Press, 2009), and *& it had rained* (Cincinnati: CW Books, 2013). As she was writing this article, Veronica reflected that like poems, small bags are larger than they appear: they hold illuminating stories.



Charitably Chic

The Eighteenth-Century Alms Purse

KIMBERLY CHRISMAN-CAMPBELL



"Jeune Dame qui quête..." Hand-colored engraving on laid paper designed by Pierre-Thomas LeClerc, engraved by Nicolas Dupin. From *Gallerie des Modes et Costumes Français*. 27e Cahier de Costumes Français, 21e Suite d'Habillemens à la mode en 1779. cc.157. (France: Esnauts et Rapilly, 1779). 14 × 9½ inches (35.6 × 24.1 cm). The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts. (44.1434).

Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

AN UNLIKELY FASHION ARCHETYPE emerged in France between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. Several fashion plates of the era depict *la jeune dame qui quête* (the young lady who collects), a debutante chosen to collect alms for the poor at mass. The ceremony depicted in these images was not just any mass but the Sunday mass held in the Royal Chapel at Versailles in the presence of the king and queen. Virtually all of these fashion plates, regardless of date, show the *quêteuse* (alms collector) carrying a round, embellished drawstring purse of silk or velvet known as an alms purse or *bourse de quêteuse*.

The chance to collect alms was an important rite of passage for a young noblewoman, and surviving depictions and eyewitness accounts indicate that the honor generally went to the most beautiful and fashionable young women of the court. Louise Julie de La Tour d'Auvergne, Princesse de Montbazon (1679–1750), for example, was described as being "young and beautiful, and in every way well fitted to perform the part." Indeed, it was generally assumed that the more attractive the *quêteuse*, the more generous the congregation would be. A 1788 dictionary bluntly stated: "A *quêteuse*, who is pretty, collects a lot of money."

It was the queen or, if there was no queen, the dauphine, who appointed the *quêteuse*. The Duc de Saint-Simon (1675–1755) recalled one occasion when no one had remembered to designate a *quêteuse* and his wife filled in at the last minute: "Mme. de Saint-Simon being in full dress . . . the bag was thrown to her at the moment of the collection."

Her decorative purse was an important part of the *quêteuse*'s seductive arsenal. Unlike a collection plate or two-handled bag designed to be passed along the pew, the eighteenth-century alms purse was small and closed, necessitating an intimate, one-on-one transaction that heightened the pressure to

The chance to collect alms was an important rite of passage for a young noblewoman, and surviving depictions and eyewitness accounts indicate that the honor generally went to the most beautiful and fashionable young women of the court.

contribute. (At the time, collection plates were reserved for parish churches, where they were handed around by ushers; in the grand Parisian churches and convents, as at court, high-ranking noblewomen collected the alms in purses.) The alms purse was similar in shape to the *bourse à jetons* (chips bag) used since the seventeenth century for gambling—another important court ritual—though its color scheme and embroidered motifs may have been more ecclesiastical in nature.

In the eighteenth century, the Château de Versailles was not just for courtiers. Tourists and other commoners flocked to the palace every Sunday to watch the royal family parade through the halls to the Royal Chapel. The long walk from the royal apartments to the chapel, through the famed Hall of Mirrors, afforded visitors the opportunity to ogle the colorful assembly of royals, guards, ministers, courtiers, and lackeys. To an observer, it was a magnificent spectacle, as Felix, Comte de France d'Hézacques (1774–1835), a page at court under Louis XVI (1754–1793), remembered:

It was at noon . . . that the king, leaving his apartment by a mirrored door, connecting the council room to the Hall of Mirrors, crossed all the public apartments and arrived at the tribune [the seating area in the chapel reserved for the royal family], preceded by pages, equerries, gentlemen, officers of the guards, and followed by the captain of the guards.

Every Sunday, the whole royal family gathered for mass. The princes went to the king's apartment, and the company emerged from there when the queen herself left her apartment by the Salon de la Paix, at the end of the Hall of Mirrors. This multitude of officers, of magnificently dressed ladies, progressed through the middle of a crowd of curious onlookers, in this long room, one of the most beautiful monuments of this kind in Europe, forming the most impressive sight.

But to a participant, the procession was an unnerving obstacle course. The ladies were required to wear court

dress, consisting of a heavily boned bodice, a vast hoop petticoat, and a long train. Hézacques noted: "It was not an easy thing to know how to manoeuver this quantity of fabric with dexterity, to evade the feet of bystanders and not to get tangled in it, above all when it was necessary to collect alms." Henriette-Lucy La Tour du Pin Gouvernet (1770–1853), a lady-in-waiting to Marie-Antoinette (1755–1793), further explained:

It was a great art to know how to walk in that vast apartment without snagging the long train of the gown of the lady who preceded you. It was not necessary to lift the feet one single time, but to slide them along the parquet, always highly polished, until you had crossed the Salon d'Hercule. After which you threw your train over a side of your hoop, and, after having been seen by your lackeys who waited with a large bag of red velvet trimmed with gold fringe, you dashed to the places as close as possible to the tribune where the king, queen and princesses who had joined them were. . . . Your lackeys deposited the bag in front of you; you took out your prayer book in which you read nothing, because by the time you were in place, and arranged the train of your gown and rummaged through that immense bag, the mass was already at the Gospel.

Mass in the Royal Chapel had all the pomp and pageantry of a theatrical performance. As at the theater, the audience was part of the show. "In the front seats of the galleries were ranged the ladies of the court, glowing with rouge, and gorgeously apparelled, to enjoy and form a part of the showy spectacle," recorded the English lawyer and memoirist Sir Samuel Romilly (1757–1818). The dubious privilege of collecting alms went to a young lady who had recently made her formal debut at court, a ceremony that usually took place shortly after her wedding. Hézacques recalled:

One watched that day approaching with a certain apprehension. Indeed, how embarrassing for a

The alms purse was similar in shape to the bourse à jetons (chips bag) used since the seventeenth century for gambling. . . .

young person who had scarcely left her mother, to see herself obliged to pass under the eyes of a large court while making, slowly, a multitude of curtsies which she had rehearsed, the previous evening, with a man charged with training her! . . . To her distress, to the anxiety of making a curtsy, of going to such a prince before such another, was added the awkwardness of court dress, of that enormous hoop and the long train. . . . But coquetry and ambition make them quickly forget the temporary discomfort and fatigue of this impressive ceremony.

Abigail Adams (1765–1813), daughter of John and Abigail Adams, attended mass at Versailles on Pentecost in 1785 and observed that “. . . the lady who goes round to collect the money in a small velvet purse . . . was more elegantly dressed than any other person. After the king had entered, she went round to the knights, and with a courtesey the most graceful, presented her little purse to each. I am sure no one could have refused putting a *louis* [gold coin] in.”

Whether she was chosen because of her elegant appearance or dressed elegantly because she was on display, the *jeune dame qui quête* became a fashion role model. She was first pictured in a fashion plate (sold by print dealers) titled *La belle quêteuse* by Robert and Nicolas Bonnart in the late seventeenth century. A page holds up the long train of her court dress. The caption reads (in rhyming couplets): “When one gives alms in a holy place, one should not give except to God / But when one sees a beautiful face, one always gives more.” By contrast, the caption to a fashion plate from the *Galérie des Modes et Costume Français* of 1779 is strictly informative, describing the *quêteuse*’s “court dress of Pékin [a taffeta-like fabric], trimmed with gauze interlaced with ribbons and garlands of flowers.”

During the French Revolution (1789–1799), the government closed the churches, but the tradition of fashionable philanthropy continued. An engraving of 1789 depicts a beautiful young lady collecting donations for the families of those “citizens” killed during the storming of the Bastille. Far from wearing a cumbersome court train, *La Queteuse Citoyenne* is dressed with stylish simplicity in a *caraco* (a type of short jacket) and

short petticoat in patriotic blue, white, and red. Her hair is loose and unpowdered; she holds a fan and a yellow *bourse de quêteuse*. The political and economic upheavals of the Revolution left many destitute, and *quêteuses* collecting for charity were a familiar sight on the streets of Paris. François-Pierre-Gonthier Maine de Biran (1766–1824) recorded in his journal that a duchess “knocked on my door for a collection for the poor. . . . I knew that this collection was going to take place, and I had predetermined six francs. . . . I thus put my *écu* in the *bourse de la quêteuse*.”

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) restored church ceremony with the Concordat of 1801, and a new generation of beautiful Frenchwomen took up the *bourse de quêteuse*. The English antiquarian John Spencer Stanhope (1787–1873) attended mass at Verdun Cathedral in the last years of Napoleon’s reign; he described the *quêteuse*, Marguerite de la Roche (dates unknown), as . . . a most lovely girl, dressed in black silk, a garland of snow-white *marguerites* on her head. . . . With a low courtesy, and with a smile which united the sweetest expression to the most perfect modesty, she presented her purse to each of us in turn. I was no longer at the happy age when the heart is carried away by every sweet glance; but I own that, for the moment, I was bewildered by the beautiful sight which the young girl presented, as, engaged in so holy a cause, and with her extraordinary loveliness framed by the picturesque surrounding of Gothic arches, she might well have been mistaken for the vision of an angel. All the money in my pocket was at once transferred to the little silk purse of the fair petitioner.

Stanhope’s companion that day, Captain Christopher Strachey (1778–1835), gave *la belle quêteuse* more than his money; he gave her his heart. He and Mlle. de la Roche would marry and raise nine children. ♦

ABOUT THE AUTHOR. Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell is a Los Angeles-based costume and textile historian; she is a former research scholar in Costume and Textiles at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and curatorial fellow at The Huntington Library. Her work has been published in *Ornament*, *Costume*, *Textile History*, *Dress*, *Huntington Frontiers*, and *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, as well as in *PieceWork*. She also contributes to *Slate.com* and *wornthrough.com*.



The Royal Chapel of Versailles Palace, Versailles, France.

Photograph by Tatiana Morozova ©Shutterstock.

FURTHER READING

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An Alms Purse *to* Embroider

BECKY QUINE



The simply stunning Alms Purse. Becky Quine worked delicate floral embroidery on silk fabric. This view shows two of the four panels on the purse.
Photograph by Joe Coca.

Eighteenth-century ecclesiastical vestments were the inspiration for this project, although I had to modify the motifs so that they would work on this smaller-scale object. I chose to use flowers because they often have religious symbolism. While I tried for authenticity in my choice of materials and stitches, cost and availability dictated certain substitutions, for example, stranded cotton floss instead of silk threads and stranded metallic thread instead of smooth passing thread.

INSTRUCTIONS

Notes: It is important to iron the silk fabric to remove any creases; wetting the fabric will help. As silk, however, can stain easily, it is best to soak the entire piece of fabric and iron it dry. To iron it, place the fabric between two pieces of tissue paper or clean fabric (a pillowcase is ideal) to protect the silk from the heat of the iron. It is important that the silk is completely dry before continuing. The

MATERIALS

Indian Silk Dupion, 100% silk fabric, 22 × 19½ inches (55.9 × 49.5 cm)/fat quarter, 1 fat quarter each of #HA 5A Dove Grey and #CB 17 Red; www.thesilkroute.co.uk

Anchor Stranded Floss, 100% cotton 6-strand thread, 8 meters (8.7 yd)/skein, 1 skein each of #11 Salmon, #13 Dark Salmon, #20 Burgundy, #98 Medium Violet, #100 Medium Dark Violet, #101 Dark Violet, #239 Spring Green, #245 Grass Green, #300 Pale Citrus, #301 Light Citrus, #302 Medium Citrus, #304 Dark Citrus, #976 Light Sea Blue, #978 Medium Sea Blue, and #979 Dark Sea Blue; www.westminsterfibers.com

Anchor Metallic Floss, 65% viscose/35% metallic polyester 12-strand thread, 8 meters (8.7 yd)/skein, 1 skein of #300 Gold Lamé; www.sewandso.co.uk

Gütermann Sew-All Thread, 100% polyester thread, 100 meters (109.4 yd)/spool, 1 spool to match Dupion fabric

100% linen fabric, 22 × 19½ inches (55.9 × 49.5 cm), 1 piece, Ivory

Mill Hill Petite Glass Beads, 15/0 (2 mm), 8 grams/packet, 1 packet of #42011 Victorian Gold; www.millhillbeads.com

Trimits Essentials sequins, 5mm cup, Gold, 1 packet; www.sewandso.co.uk

John James Needles, embroidery size 12 and tapestry size 12; www.colonialneedle.com

Embroidery frame or hoop 8 inches (20.3 cm) in diameter

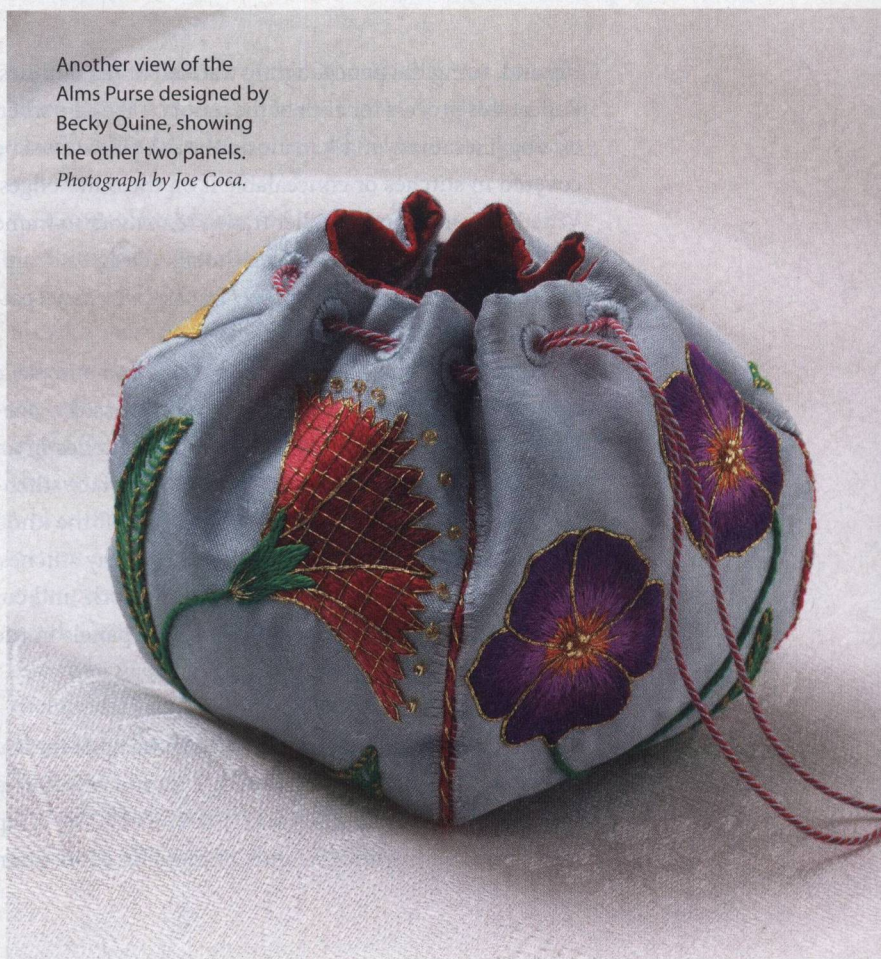
Stiletto

Pencil, hard brown lead

Beeswax/thread conditioner, optional

Finished size: Each panel, 4 × 2½ inches (10.2 × 6.3 cm)

Another view of the Alms Purse designed by Becky Quine, showing the other two panels.
Photograph by Joe Coca.



panels of this project may be worked together on a roller frame or individually in a hoop frame. Decide whether to stitch the four designs on the single fabric piece for the roller frame or on individual fabric pieces (9 × 11 inches [22.9 × 27.9 cm]) for the hoop. Wrap the hoop's rings with cotton tape to prevent the wood from snagging the silk. Transfer the designs onto the fabric, centering each design on the individual fabric pieces or allowing at least 3 inches (7.6 cm) between the designs on the large fabric piece. When working with stranded floss, use short lengths that are a maximum of 13 inches (33.0 cm); when working with the metallic thread, use even shorter lengths that are a maximum of 8 inches (20.3 cm). Attach beads and sequins using a strand of cotton or the metallic thread, which may be waxed or passed through thread conditioner. Refer to the photographs of each completed panel and the "Stitches Used" sidebar.

Purse

Each motif pattern includes a ¼-inch (3-mm) seam allowance. Place the patterns on a light box or in a sunny window and tape down. Tape the Dove Grey silk fabric on

top and, using the pencil, lightly trace all of the outlines. Repeat this process for each of the motifs. Take care when tracing lines: Every mark made on the silk fabric must be covered in stitches or concealable if on the outer edges. Whether using hoop or roller frame, remember to frame up the linen fabric first and then the silk (design side up) to a slack frame before tightening. Transfer all 4 panel patterns to the Red lining fabric; set aside.

To begin stitching, knot thread at one end and place in needle. From the front of the work, pass the needle through the fabrics and make 2 tiny stitches in an area that eventually will be covered with surface stitching and close to the start of stitching. Cut off the knot. End thread in the same way by working 2 tiny stitches, bring the needle back to the front of the work, and cut the thread. Work all elements of the four panels in the orders listed below.

Carnation

Leaves: Place a short straight stitch at the tip of the leaf and work detached fly stitch with 1 strand of #239; at the vein, change to fly stitch with 1 strand of #239. Whip the central vein with 2 strands of metallic #300. Stem

stitch leaf outlines with 2 strands of #245. Whip stem stitch outlines with 3 strands of metallic #300. Work the 2nd leaf in the same way.

Flower stem: Stem stitch main stem with 3 strands of #245.

Flower: Laid work (satin stitch variation) for outermost petals with 1 strand of #11; laid work for next 2 internal petals with 1 strand of #13; laid work for central petal with 1 strand of #20. Trellis stitch for all petals with 1 strand of metallic #300; work outermost petals 1st, 2 internal panels 2nd, central petal last. Couch the sides of each petal, using 3 strands of metallic #300 for the couching threads and 1 strand of metallic #300 to secure. Plunge the loose ends of the couching threads to the back of the fabric, using the "lasso" method (see Couching in "Stitches Used" sidebar). Add straight stitches along the zigzag petal tips with 1 strand of metallic #300. Split stitch around the base of the flower with 1 strand of #239. Long-and-short stitches at flower base with 1 strand of #239, gradually working into #245. Add several highlight stitches, using metallic #300 at base, making each stitch a different length. Attach beads at the tip of the petals.



The Carnation panel on the Alms Purse.
Photograph courtesy of the designer.



The Violet panel on the Alms Purse.
Photograph courtesy of the designer.

Violet

Leaf: Work same as Carnation leaf.

Flower stems: Stem stitch with 3 strands of #245, leaving a small gap where the 2 lines intersect on the 1st stem stitched.

Flowers: Split stitch on the outer edges of the 2 side petals, then 1 row of long-and-short stitches with 1 strand of #101. Work subsequent rows of long-and-short stitches, 1 row each with 1 strand of #100, #99, and #304 (in this order). Split stitch on the outer edge and left-hand edge of the top left petal, then rows of long-and-short stitches as above. Split stitch on the edges of the top right petal and bottom petals then rows of long-and-short as above. Add 3 stitches at the base of each petal with 1 strand of metallic #300. The 2 outer stitches should be slightly shorter than the central stitch, making these stitches slightly longer than the bottom row of #304. Work the 2nd flower in the same way. Add beads at the center of each flower, starting in the middle working out, using 1 strand of #304. The beads should cover the edges of the stitching. Couch the outer edges of the 2 side petals 1st, the outer and left-hand edges of the top left petal 2nd, and the top-right petal and bottom petal

last, using 3 strands of metallic #300 as the couching threads and 1 strand of metallic #300 to secure. Plunge couching threads. Work the 2nd flower in the same way.

Anemone

Leaves: Work same as Carnation leaves.

Stem: Work same as Carnation stem.

Flower: Laid work for middle-top and bottom petals with 1 strand of #979; laid work for top left and right petals with 1 strand of #978; laid work for bottom 2 petals with 1 strand of #976. Trellis stitch across all petals as for Carnation with 1 strand of metallic #300. Couch the outer edges of the middle top and bottom petals where the petals do not overlap, working same as Carnation couching. Couch the edges of the top-left and right petals, including where they overlap with the top petal. Couch the entire petal shapes of the bottom-left and right petals. Attach a sequin secured with a bead in the middle and surround with more beads so that they cover the edges of the stitching.

Primula

Leaf: Work same as Carnation leaf.

Stems: Work same as Violet stems.



The Anemone panel on the Alms Purse.
Photograph courtesy of the designer.



The Primula panel on the Alms Purse.
Photograph courtesy of the designer.

Flower: Split stitch on the outer edge of each flower shape with 1 strand of #302. One row of long-and-short stitches around the entire flower with 1 strand of #302; 2 further rows of long-and-short stitches, 1 row with 1 strand of #301 and then #300. Add a single stitch at the base of and between each petal with 1 strand of metallic #300; make the stitches within the petal shapes longer and those between the petals shorter. Cut off the lower 3 sides of 10 sequins along the sequin's creases. This will allow a final full, uncut sequin to nestle on top of the cut sequins. Place 5 cut sequins in the center of each flower with the uncut edges outermost against the stitching. Stitch each sequin down, using 3 stitches over the cut sections with 1 strand of metallic #300. Place an uncut sequin over the center of the sequin cluster and stitch down, using 5 stitches with 1 strand of metallic #300 and taking the needle down through the holes in the sequins underneath.

Purse Construction

Note: Do not use pins during construction; they will leave marks in the silk.

When all embroidery is complete, remove the embroidery from the frame or hoop and cut around the outer pattern lines on the silk fabric. Carefully cut away the linen only to the seam-allowance line; take care not to cut the silk. The silk will fold nicely to the back around the remaining linen.

Place an embroidered piece and the lining piece wrong sides together. Fold along the seam allowance lines and stitch together, using a tight ladder stitch with the stitches about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) apart.

Miter the corners by folding the fabric across the point of the corner and then folding in the two sides. The fabric should meet so that the edges form a line at 45 degrees; finger press.

For the eyelets, work split stitch around the outer edge of the eyelet. Press the tip of the stiletto to the fabric at the center of the eyelet and slowly apply pressure until the stiletto passes through the fabrics, leaving a small hole. Bind the hole with whipstitches, bringing the needle up through the hole and down through the fabric at the outer edge of the split stitches. If the hole gets smaller, widen the hole again with the stiletto.

Work buttonhole stitch along the sides of each panel with 1 strand of the polyester thread. Do not work this stitch across the top of each panel. Keep the stitches shallow and close together. Repeat this for all panels.

Place 2 panels together lining to lining. Using 4 strands of #13 and a blunt needle, whip the buttonhole stitches by passing the needle under the bars of the buttonhole stitches and catching the bars on both panels. Pull the thread firmly; this makes the joining seam. The thread length should be continuous for the entire length of each panel side.

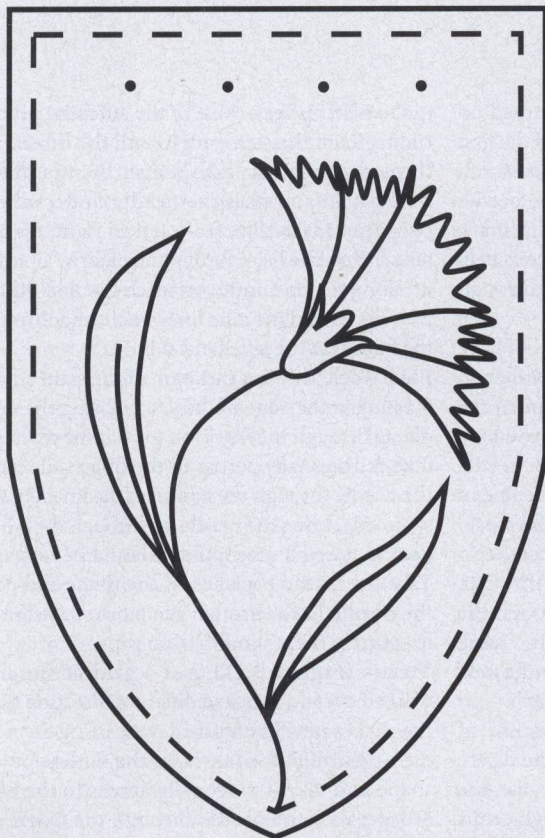
When the side seam is finished, cast on 2 threads of metallic #300 and go over the seam in the same manner, again by whipping every other bar to produce an evenly spaced accent detail. Leave all threads long at the base of the purse to form a tassel. When all four sides are joined, tie the tassel threads with a knot close to the base and trim the threads to desired length. Join panels in the following sequence: Carnation, Violet, Anemone, and Primula. Make 2 sets of cord by twisting 1 strand each of 20-inch (50.8-cm) lengths of Gray thread and Red floss. Trim cords to 8 to 10 inches (20.3 to 25.4 cm); tightly knot each end. Lace cords through the eyelets to gather the purse top.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. *Becky Quine's first exposure to needlecraft was learning cross-stitch at an early age. She dabbled in paper crafting, then added knitting and crochet to her repertoire. Discovering the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court Palace in Surrey, England, she tried a few day classes, starting with Goldwork, enrolled in the Certificate program, and is now a student in the Future Tutors program. She'll spend the next two-and-a-half years learning different stitching techniques before being unleashed on the stitching world.*

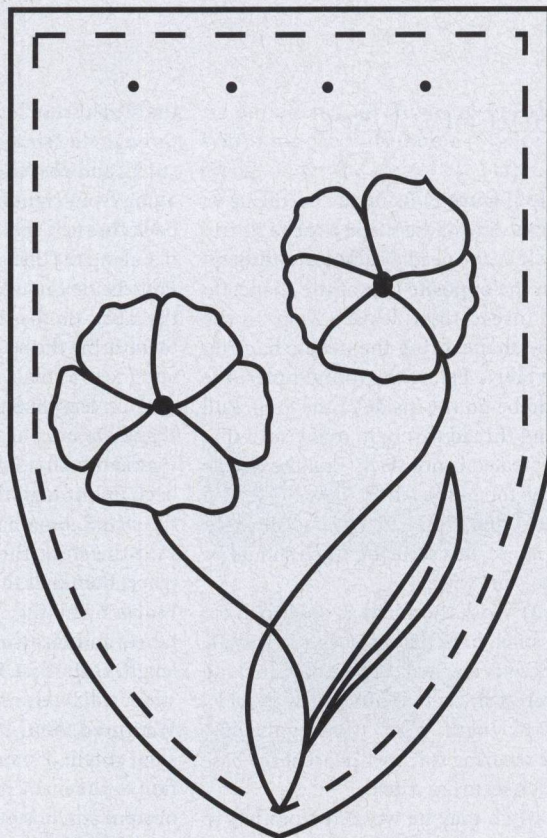
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Carnation

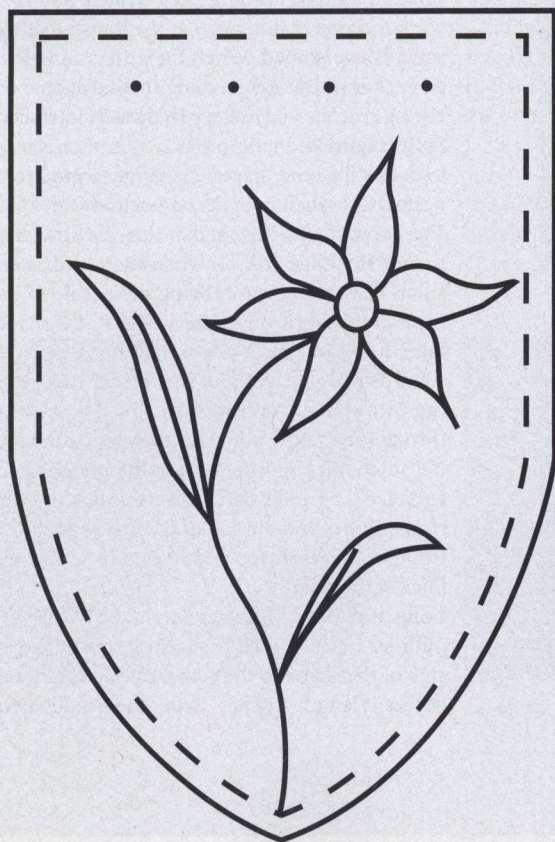


Violet

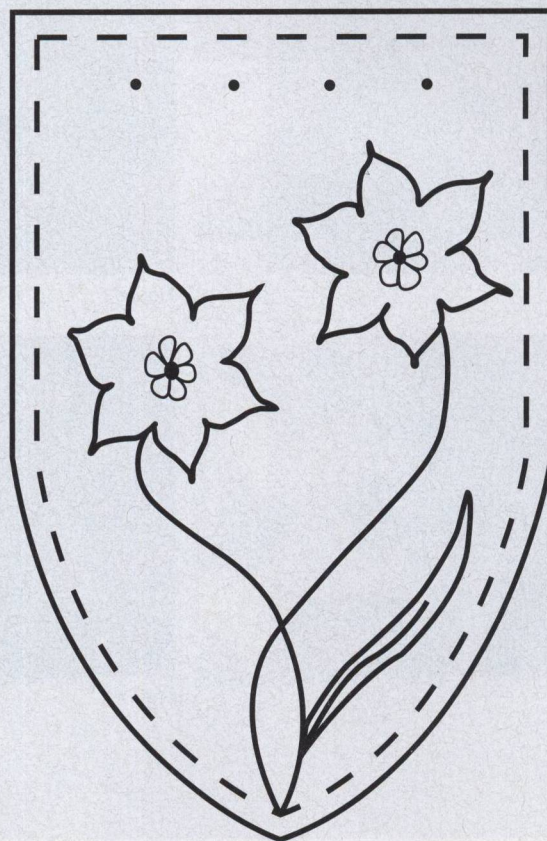


*Patterns may be photocopied for personal use.
All illustrations courtesy of the designer.*

Anemone



Primula



Stitches Used

Detached Fly (Figure 1) Bring the needle up in the fabric on the line of the shape close to the tip of the shape. Take the needle back down through the fabric on the opposite line of the shape; do not pull the thread tight; leave a loop. In the middle of the shape, bring the needle back up through the fabric below the initial holes; the needle should be on the inside of the loop. Pull the remaining thread through; make sure that the V shape created is not slack. Pull the needle through to the top of the fabric. Take the thread over the base of the V and pass the needle back through the fabric; this securing stitch should be quite small to start with.

Fly (Figure 2) Work the stitch as described for detached fly stitch until the securing stitch at the bottom of the V is reached. Rather than making it a small discrete stitch, make the stitch about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch (2 mm) in length. When working the next fly stitch, the securing stitch will start at the base of the previous securing stitch.

Whip This stitch may be worked from left to right or right to left; the following is working

the stitch from left to right. Pull the thread up through the fabric, take it over the top of the first stitch, and pass the needle under the next stitch along from right to left; do not take the needle back through the fabric. Continue in this manner along the line until the final stitch is reached. Pass the thread over the final stitch and through the fabric on the right-hand side.

Stem Bring the needle up at the base of the shape and make a small straight stitch about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) in length along the marked outline of the shape. Do not pull the thread taught; leave a loop that can be held to one side. Bring the needle back up through the fabric following the line of the shape about half way along the initial stitch. Pull the slack through, leaving the needle in place, then pull the needle and thread through. Finish by taking the needle down through the fabric and ensuring that the stitch is the same length as the first. The starting point for the next stitch will be the end of the previous stitch.

Whipped Stem Work over an existing line of stem stitch; it should lay in the opposite direction to the main stitch (in this instance, the line of stem stitch is worked from left to right, thus the whipping is worked from right to left). Bring

the needle up very close to the stitching on the right side of the stem stitch. Pull the thread up through the fabric, take it over the top of the first stitch, and pass the needle under where two stitches overlap, from left to right; do not take the needle back through the fabric. Continue along the line until you reach the final stitch, pass the thread over the final stitch, and through the fabric on the left-hand side.

Laid Work This is a variation of the satin stitch. Starting at the edge of the shape, bring the needle up through the fabric on the outline of shape, take it diagonally across to the other side, pass the needle through the fabric on the line. On the same side, bring the needle up through the fabric next to the first stitch; there should be no gaps. Take the thread back across the shape and pass the needle back through the fabric next to the first stitch; there should be no gaps.

Trellis (Figure 3) This is a grid of squares worked over an area in a different direction than the stitches it will be worked over. Bring the needle up through the fabric on the outline of the shape and take it diagonally across to the other side; pass the needle through the fabric on the line. Come up in the fabric on the same side about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) away from the first stitch, take the thread to the other side of the shape, and pass the needle down through the fabric. Work across the shape until the area is filled, and then work in same manner across the top so that the squares are formed. When the grid is complete, go back over the area making small diagonal securing stitches where the two threads intersect.

Split (Figure 4) In this project, split stitch is used to define the outer edges of a shape to produce a neater edge when used in conjunction with long-and-short stitch. The smaller the split stitch the firmer the edge will be when long-and-short stitch is worked over it. Bring the needle to the front of the fabric on the very edge of the shape, take the needle back down, making a stitch as small as possible, without the thread disappearing into the fabric. Bring the needle back up through the fabric about halfway along the initial stitch, making sure to split the initial stitch, and take the needle back down through the fabric a little beyond the end of the first stitch. Continue in this manner, taking care to follow the lines of the shape.

Long and Short (Figures 5a and 5b) Work the outlines in split stitch first. Work from the outside of the shape to the center and in a series of different length stitches. Bring the needle up in



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

the shape on the inside of the split stitch, take the needle over the edge of the split stitch, and pass the needle through the fabric, making sure that the needle runs straight down the side of the split stitch. Bring the needle up through the fabric, close to the initial stitch, making the second stitch longer or shorter than the first. Take the needle over the split stitch and pass the needle down through the fabric, angling the needle slightly towards the first stitch. Be careful not to stitch through the split stitch on the outer edges. Continue varying the length of the stitch until the outer edge is covered completely; there should be no gaps and none of the split stitch should show. The direction of the stitch should echo the shape. To stitch the second row, bring the needle up through the fabric within the first row of stitches and take the needle back through the fabric beyond the end of the first row of stitches (always working toward the center point of the shape). Always bring the needle up within the row of stitches; do not take the needle down through the stitches. Continue adding rows of stitches until the shape is complete.

Couching Lay the threads to be couched onto the fabric, following the line of the shape. Starting in the middle of the line, bring the needle up on the outside of the shape and make a small securing stitch over the top of the couched threads. The securing stitch should not be too tight; pass the needle straight down through the fabric, do not angle the needle under the couched threads. Bring the needle up through the fabric about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch (2 mm) away from the initial stitch and make another stitch. Continue, following the lines of the shape until the line has been covered. Cast off the thread used to secure the couched threads. The couched thread should have some loose ends that will need

to be plunged. Use the lasso method (see Figure 6) to plunge the threads. Cut a short piece of thread and thread the cut ends through the eye of the needle, leaving a loop. At the very tip of the drawn line, pass the needle through the fabric, leaving the loop on top. Pass the tips of the couched thread through the loop and pull down through the fabric. To secure the couched threads on the underside, weave them through the threads on the back.

Attaching Beads and Sequins Using a strand of cotton or the metallic thread (this can be waxed or passed through a thread conditioner), bring the needle up where the bead will sit, pass the bead over the needle, and pass the needle down through the fabric a little away from the initial stitch. To secure a sequin, pass the sequin over the needle, take the thread over the outer edge of the sequin, and pass the needle through the fabric. You will need a minimum of three securing stitches worked from the middle out, with the stitches worked over the edge of the sequins at equal intervals.

Ladder (see Figure 7) Bring the needle up through the folded line in the blue silk and take the needle and thread across to the red silk, pass the needle into the fold and back out again about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm). Make the stitch at a slight angle so the thread will disappear. Pull the thread so that the stitches are tight without pleating the fabric.

Buttonhole With the embroidery facing, bring the needle up through the fabric quite close to the edge, take it over the edge, and back into the fabric. Take the needle to the back to the fabric and up through the fabric a little way from the first stitch. Leave a loop and pass the needle through it. Take the needle back over the edge and up through the fabric, taking the needle

through the loop that this formed.

Whipping the Buttonhole (Figure 8) Pass the needle under the bars of the buttonhole stitch, catching the bars on both panels. Pull the thread firmly so that the panels pull together. This makes the joining seam.

—B. Q.



Figure 6

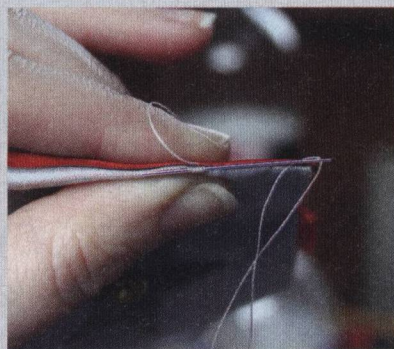


Figure 7



Figure 5a



Figure 5b



Figure 8



Wood shavings, a "striker," and a piece of flint surround Nancy Bush's Tinder Pouch inspired by traditional Swedish pouches used to carry items for building fires while traveling. The striker was made by Elmer Roush of Brasstown, North Carolina; flint courtesy of Joe Bush. Photograph by Joe Coca.

A Tinder Pouch to Knit

NANCY BUSH

MATERIALS

Mora Yarn, 100% Swedish wool yarn, fingering weight, 328 yards (300.0 m)/100 gram (3.5 oz) skein, 1 skein of Light Sheep's Gray; www.woolywest.com
 Elemental Affects Shetland Fingering, 100% Shetland wool yarn, fingering weight, 20 yards (18.3 m)/mini skein, small amounts of #002 Forest Moss, #025 Old Gold, and #040 Watermelon for embroidery; www.woolywest.com
 Needles, 10 inches (25.4 cm), size 2 (2.75 mm) or size needed to obtain gauge
 Stitch markers
 Tapestry needle

Finished size: About 5 inches (13 cm) wide and 3 inches (8 cm) tall
 Gauge: 14 sts and 15 rows = 2 inches (5.1 cm) in twined St st

See below and page 62 for Abbreviations and Techniques

When I was a student in Sweden in the 1970s, I learned the technique of *tvåändsstickning* (two-end or twined knitting). I have loved using this old Swedish style of knitting for mittens, gloves, and socks. In 1985, a book was published in Sweden dedicated to this special technique: *Tvåändsstickat* by Birgitta Dandaneell and Ulla Danielsson (Falun, Sweden: Dalarnas Museum and LTs Förlag; a translation by Robin Ore Hanson in English was published by Interweave in 1989 titled *Twined Knitting*). Both of these editions contained one image that continues to captivate me. It is of two small tinder pouches, worked in *tvåändsstickning* and simply embroidered. I have always wanted to make a pouch similar to these and happily that day has come!

Called *eldpung* in Swedish, fire or tinder pouches were used to carry a steel or striker, a bit of flint, and

some material such as wood shavings or dried moss with which to start a fire. Fires were built at noon during the summer pasture season and having the means to start a fire was necessary. A tinder pouch was used while traveling or working away from home and would have been carried in a pocket, to be handy when needed. The pouches were usually made of leather, so these knitted pouches were special.

INSTRUCTIONS

Notes: Before beginning, see Technical Notes on page 22. All stitches are twined, alternating the two yarns throughout this project.

Pouch

Using the long-tail thumb method, CO 44 sts with 2 strands of yarn over index finger and 1 strand of yarn over thumb. Sl knot does not count in st count.

Row 1 (WS): K (twine every stitch on every row).

When you reach the end, remove the sl knot and undo it.

Row 2 (RS): K.

Row 3: K.

Work in Twined St st until piece measures 6 inches (15.2 cm), ending with a WS row.

Shape top,

Dec Row (RS): K3, pm, sl 1, k1, psso, k to last 5 sts, k2tog, pm, k3—42 sts rem.

Next Row (WS): K3, sl m, p to m, sl m, k3.

Dec Row (RS): K3, sl m, sl 1, k1, psso, k to 2 sts before m, k2tog, sl m, k3—2 sts dec'd.

Rep last 2 rows 16 more times—8 sts rem. Work 1 WS row in patt.

Shape point,

Dec Row (RS): K3, sl m, sl 1, k1, psso, sl m, k3—7 sts rem.

Next Row (WS): Remove ms on this row; k3, p1, k3.

Dec Row: K2, sl 2 as if to k2tog, k1, p2sso, k2—5 sts rem.

Next Row: K2, p1, k2.

Dec Row: K1, sl 2 as if to k2tog, k1, p2sso, k1—3 sts rem.

Next Row: P3.

Dec Row: K3tog—1 st rem.

Break both working yarns, leaving 15-inch (38.1-cm) tails. Thread the tails through the rem st and tighten to fasten off.



Three eldpung, or tinder pouches, two knitted and one made from leather, shown here with flint pieces and steel for striking. The leather pouch has a built-in steel striker. Makers unknown. Dates unknown. Donated to the Gagnefs Minnesstuga Foundation, Gagnefs, Sweden, collections between 1908 and 1931. www.gagnefsminnesstugaeng.wordpress.com. Photograph by Kenneth Frisk and courtesy of Gagnefs Minnesstuga.

Finishing

Cut two lengths of embroidery yarn, each a different color, 30 inches (76.2 cm) long. Thread each of these ends through the point where the knitting ended and adjust so that each end is an equal length. You will have six ends

Nancy Bush's Tinder Pouch unrolled showing the underside of the flap and the embroidered embellishment. Photograph by Joe Coca.



of yarn, two of each color. Work a six-strand braid using these six ends until tie is desired length. Secure the braid with an overhand knot and trim the ends. Seam the sides of the pouch.

Embroidery

Decorate your pouch in designs of your choice. I was inspired by archaic embroidery patterns from Estonia using simple stars and circles, placed at random on the pouch and crossed stitches along the edges of the top. I filled in the knit row between the two purl bump rows at the opening of the pouch with chain stitches and worked chain stitches up the inside edge of the crossed stitches on the top. I then wove a third color through the chain stitches for added decoration. Weave in ends.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. *Nancy Bush, a member of PieceWork's editorial advisory panel and a frequent PieceWork contributor, writes books on knitting and teaches knitting workshops in the United States and abroad. She lives in Salt Lake City, Utah, and owns the Woolly West, an online source for knitters. Visit www.woollywest.com.*

Technical Notes

Two-End Knitting

Two-end knitting is usually worked circular on double-pointed (or circular) needles, as all the items made with this technique were suited to circular knitting. It is, however, also possible to work the technique back and forth on straight needles, as is the case with this project.

The yarn used in older garments and which is preferred for this technique is a Z-ply wool, made up of two single threads, tightly plied. Most commercial yarns are S-ply, meaning that the single is spun counterclockwise and the two singles are plied clockwise. For a Z-ply, the single is spun clockwise and the two singles are plied counterclockwise. In working this technique, the two yarns, as you twine them, tend to loosen or tighten, depending on how they are spun. If you use a loosely plied Z-ply, the plies will become looser as you work; a tightly plied Z-ply will slightly unply as you work but still be stable as a yarn. If using tightly plied S-ply, each yarn will twist so tightly as you work, that working will become very difficult, whereas a loosely plied S-ply will tighten up slightly as you work but not enough to be difficult. The best way to tell if your yarn is a Z- or an S-ply is to lay a strand flat and see the angle of the ply. It will follow the central line of a Z or an S.

The yarn for this technique should be from one ball, rolled into a center-pull ball (you can achieve this with a ball winder or roll it

by hand), so one end comes from the outside and the other from the center. Pull out several feet (0.9 m) of yarn from both ends and attach them to the ball in one of the following ways: Pin the two ends securely to the ball with a large safety pin or put a double-pointed needle through the top of the ball of yarn and wrap both ends in a figure 8 around the points, securing the yarn to the ball.

As you work, the two yarns will twist; to untwist them, suspend the ball, allowing it to spin to untwist the yarns. When the lengths of yarn are used, undo the safety pin or pull out the needle, let out more yarn, and rewind the figure 8 to secure the yarn.

Long-Tail Thumb Cast-On:

This version of the long-tail thumb cast-on requires three ends. Make one end by measuring about 40 inches (1 m) of yarn and hold this piece together with each end from the ball of yarn. Make a slipknot with these ends, about 6 inches (15 cm) from the ends. Place the slipknot on the right-hand needle. Place the short end (End #1) over the thumb of your left hand and hold the two strands connected to the ball (Ends #2 and #3) in your right hand. Work long-tail thumb cast-on, alternating the two yarns in the right hand as you work: Loop End #1 clockwise around the thumb and insert the right-hand needle point into this loop. Knit with the yarn furthest away on the right-hand needle, bringing it over the other yarn. Drop the new

stitch off and tighten. *Loop End #1 clockwise around the thumb and insert the right-hand needle point into it. Knit with the yarn furthest away on the right-hand needle, bringing it over the other (just used) yarn. Drop the new stitch off and tighten. Repeat from * until all stitches are cast on.

Twined Stockinette Stitch

Knit and purl stitches are both worked with two ends of yarn which alternate. The working yarns are carried in the right hand at all times. To knit, insert the right-hand needle into the stitch on the left-hand needle, lift the working yarn farthest from the right-hand point over the other working yarn and knit with it. Knit into the next stitch, bringing the waiting working yarn over the yarn you just used. Continue in this manner, always alternating the two yarns, bringing the yarn you will use next over the yarn you just used. To purl, bring both yarns to the front of the work between the two needles, insert the right-hand needle into the stitch on the left-hand needle, bring the working yarn farthest from the right-hand point under the other working yarn and purl with it. Purl into the next stitch, bringing the waiting working yarn under the yarn you just used. Continue in this manner, always alternating the two yarns, bringing the yarn you will use next under the yarn you just used. To decrease: Work all decreases in twined pattern using the appropriate yarn.

Nordic Waist Purses

Practical *and* Beautiful

MARY B. KELLY

THEY ARE KNOWN AS *KJOLSAK* IN SWEDISH, *loslomme* in Norwegian, *vyotasku* in Finnish, and *pose* in the Sámi language. The tradition for colorful hand-embroidered women's waist purses extends throughout Scandinavia, the Baltic, and the Arctic northern lands of the Sámi. As the author Anna-Maya Nylen observes, "The custom of tying loose bags or pockets around the waist or the belt is a practical and useful solution to the problem of where to carry small personal items."

I first learned of Nordic waist purses in 1977 while studying weaving and other textile skills in Stockholm. In the Nordiska Museum's displays of Swedish women's folk dress, the purses were worn in full view and trimmed with great care and luxury. Many were of dark blue or black wadmal, a heavily felted wool fabric, decorated with red and green appliquéd shapes, and outlined with pewter thread. Designs, dating from medieval times, included trees, crosses, hearts, and vases of



ABOVE: Embroidered purse with hearts, flowers, and ribbons, likely from Sunnmøre, Norway. Mid-nineteenth century. Collection of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa. (LC1699).

Photograph by Lauranne Gilbertson and courtesy of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum.



LEFT: South Sámi bag with Tree of Life design, hangs from a zigzagged belt and has amulets hanging from it.

Photograph by and courtesy of Helga Bergland.



LEFT: East Sámi bag with equal-armed cross design.

Photograph by and courtesy of Helga Bergland.

RIGHT: A waist purse with floral embroidery from Dale Floda, Sweden. Circa 1800.

Photograph by and courtesy of Helga Bergland.



flowers. Occasionally, some embroiderers included a date and initials.

Some purses were edged with leather, had a leather backing, or were made entirely of leather with wadmal appliqués, colored leather buttons, ribbons, and scraps of fabric and lace. In Norway, it's believed that waist purses evolved from the soft leather bags worn on the belts of both men and women in the Viking period (A.D. 700–900). Similarly, the Sámi also used small leather purses embroidered with silver or pewter thread.

Excavations of early burials throughout Scandinavia have discovered small metal, ceramic, or horn objects just below or next to the waist of women's remains. These may have hung from a belt or may have been contained in a textile or leather bag that had decomposed along with the rest of the clothing. A woman found in a Viking cart burial at Fyrkat, Denmark, is accompanied by jewelry, charms, an amulet, and a leather pouch that may have hung from her waist.

Beside the Oslofjord in Norway, the Oseberg Viking queen in her ninth-century burial ship was found completely intact due to the dampness of the clay soil with which the ship had been covered. In the bedroom of the

ship, looms, textiles including metal and silk embroideries and a remarkable tapestry, leather goods, food-stuffs, and woodcarvings were preserved. The bodies of two women had been placed on the carved beds; one had keys and a leather pouch hanging from her belt. Pictured on the tapestry are female deities associated with the Norse goddess Freya wearing decorated belts, the Tree of Life, and the equal-armed cross—symbols of the pathways to the “other world.”

In many areas of Scandinavia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, folk dress was still worn by rich farmers and their families and staff. The waist purse was a prominent feature for its beauty and practicality as well as being a symbol of national identity. The farmwife, whose duties included managing the storage areas, probably kept keys to storage chests in her purse, along with sewing tools, small knives, coins, possibly also healing herbs and precious spices, and a silver spoon to use when dining at a neighboring farm.

By the early twentieth century, nearly everyone had adopted urban clothing, with folk dress reserved for ceremonial occasions such as christenings and weddings. Purses now were worn simply as an element of

RIGHT: Front of a man's leather purse showing the date 1795 engraved on the clasp. Collection of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum. (1998.080.0269).

Photograph by Alison Dwyer and courtesy of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum.



the costume, to match or complement the embroideries on the bodice, hat, or mittens. Their ornamented surfaces provide a record of the motifs, techniques, and past beliefs handed down from their wise foremothers to present generations in the Nordic areas in which they are known. ❖

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR. Weaver, artist, lecturer, and professor of art emerita Mary B. Kelly has researched pre-Christian motifs on embroidery and weaving for thirty years. She has published articles in scholarly journals and textile publications in the United States and abroad and is the author of the trilogy *Goddess Embroideries of Eastern Europe* (Winona: Minnesota: Northland Press of Winona, 1996), *Goddess Embroideries of the Balkan Lands and Greek Islands*, and *Goddess Embroideries of the Northlands* (Hilton Head, South Carolina: StudioBooks, 1999 and 2007, respectively), as well as *Goddess. Women. Cloth: A Worldwide Tradition of Making and Using Ritual Textiles* (Hilton Head, South Carolina: StudioBooks, 2012). She thanks Helga F. Bergland, Laurann Gilbertson, and Linda Gross for their help with this article.



ABOVE: *Bunad* (Norwegian national costume) in Ørsta-style embroidery, Sunnmøre, Norway. Made in 1952 in Norway for Hilda Unhjem Aus, who wore it while living in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and New York, New York. Wool and linen. Collection of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa. (2004.036.001).

Photograph by Alison Dwyer and courtesy of Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum.

Addie Heron's Purse to Bead-Crochet

KAREN C. K. BALLARD



Step out in style with this gorgeous bead-crocheted purse. Karen C. K. Ballard used Silver-lined Blue beads on Black crochet thread and attached the completed purse to an antique-style frame.

Photograph by Joe Coca.

MATERIALS

South Maid Crochet Thread, 100% cotton thread, size 10, 350 yards (320.0 m)/ball, 1 ball of #12 Black; www.coatsandclark.com
TOHO Beads, glass seed beads, size 11/0 round, #1954-010 Silver-lined Blue, 40 grams (1.4 oz); www.tohobeads.net
Purse frame, 5 inches (12.7 cm), silver-plated with sewing holes, #LS25; www.lacis.com
Chain with clasps for attachment to purse frame, 16 inches (40.6 cm), to match purse frame, #EC43; www.lacis.com
Crochet hook, steel, size 6 (1.8 mm) or size needed to obtain gauge
Tapestry needles, 2
Gum Arabic

Finished size: 7 × 8 inches (17.8 × 20.3 cm), excluding frame and fringe
Gauge: 12 sc = 1 inch (2.5 cm), 10 rows = 1 inch (2.5 cm)

See below and page 62 for Abbreviations and Techniques

The chart for this project is available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations

SPECIAL STITCHES

Single Crochet Increase (sc-inc): 2 sc in back lp of next st.
Single Crochet Decrease (sc-dec): (insert hook in back lp of next st, pull up lp) twice; yo, pull lp through all 3 lps on hook.
Beaded Single Crochet (bsc): insert hook in back lp of next st, draw up lp, pull up bead, yo (just beyond bead), and draw lp through both lps on hook.
Beaded Single Crochet Increase (bsc inc): sc in back lp of next st followed by 1 bsc in the same st.

INSTRUCTIONS

Notes: If a differently shaped or size of purse frame is used, adjustments may be necessary to the purse body. Pre-string beads onto thread. As you string the beads, discard any that appear misshapen, larger, or smaller than the norm. As in most bead-crochet, the beads on this purse are worked on the side away from the crocheter (outside). Stitches are made by pulling the thread through the beads, pulling up a single bead for beaded stitches, and without pulling up a bead for the plain unbeaded stitches. Crochet work naturally places stitches at a diagonal from the previous row's stitch. In order to make designs line-up (as much as possible), crochet into the back loop of the previous round, resulting in a ribbed pattern on the side facing the crocheter (inside of purse). Follow the chart for bead placement. The front and back of the purse are identical and worked in one piece, without joining, through Row 49, then split for front and back for the purse frame. *All increases and decreases are worked on the far left and far right edges of both the front and back.* For example, when beginning a single increase round, an increase is done on the front right and left edges, continue around to back, and work increase on the back left edge (immediately after the front right increase), and on the back right edge. Work a plain single crochet (with no bead) where the pattern grids are empty and add a bead where an open circle is indicated on the grid. Closed circles indicate a beaded single crochet increase. When you run out of beads on the thread, cut the thread. String more beads, knot the thread together, continue crocheting, hiding the knot and thread ends on the inside. If desired, when the purse is completed and attached to the frame, make a lining to match the size of the purse body and, with finished side on the inside, sew onto the inside of the frame.

Purse

Spread a small dab of gum Arabic onto 1½ inches (3.8 cm) of the end of thread, twisting the thread clockwise to tighten and narrow it. Let dry for about 30 seconds and snip uneven end of thread off, if necessary. String about 2 grams (.07 oz) of beads onto the thread, using the stiffened end as a needle. Pull the thread gently through the beads and ch 66.

I adapted the pattern for the Crocheted Beaded Silk Chatelaine Bag with Silver Top from Addie E. Heron's *Fancy Work for Pleasure and Profit* (1894; reprint, Chicago: Thompson & Thomas, 1905). The original was made with black silk "purse twist," cut-steel beads, and an ornate silver purse frame meant to hang on a belt. I used 100% mercerized cotton thread, lighter-weight silver-lined glass beads, and a modern but antique-style silver-plated frame for this adaptation.

Rnd 1: Beg chart: work 65 plain unbeaded sc into foundation ch, rotate, and work 65 plain unbeaded sc on other side of foundation ch, do not join—130 sc; closed purse-bottom should be 5 inches (12.7 cm) long.

Rnds 2–49: Sc around, follow chart for placement of beads, incs, and decs. *Note:* Work two sets of increases at each edge of front and back for Rnds 3 and 4.

Separate front and back for fitting to purse frame.

Rows 50–64 are worked in rows; cut the thread at the end of each row. Work front 1st, with inside facing, skipping requisite number of sts at beg of each row. Rep for back.

Finishing

Weave in all loose threads on the inside. Work two rows of unbeaded single crochet evenly around the top and sides where they will attach to the frame with two single crochet decreases at each point where Round 49

meets Row 50. Sew the purse body to the frame.

Fringe

Make 40 fringe pieces. For each piece, string 70 beads, cut thread about 3 inches (8 cm) from end of beads on each side. Secure one end of the thread and twist the other end clockwise about 4 times between finger and thumb. Tie the threads tightly at the top to help the fringe twist evenly. Thread each end of the two threads into a tapestry needle and pull through the bottom of the purse, one stitch apart. Turn purse inside out, remove needles, and knot threads together. Repeat for each fringe piece, spacing them evenly along the bottom of the purse. Weave in all loose threads on the inside.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Karen C. K. Ballard is an award-winning crochet designer and a textile historian specializing in textile production/embellishment and tools. She is certified by the Crochet Guild of America as a Master of Advanced Crochet Stitches and Techniques and writes about crochet collectibles for the Guild's Chain Link newsletter. Visit her website at www.threadwinder.info/.

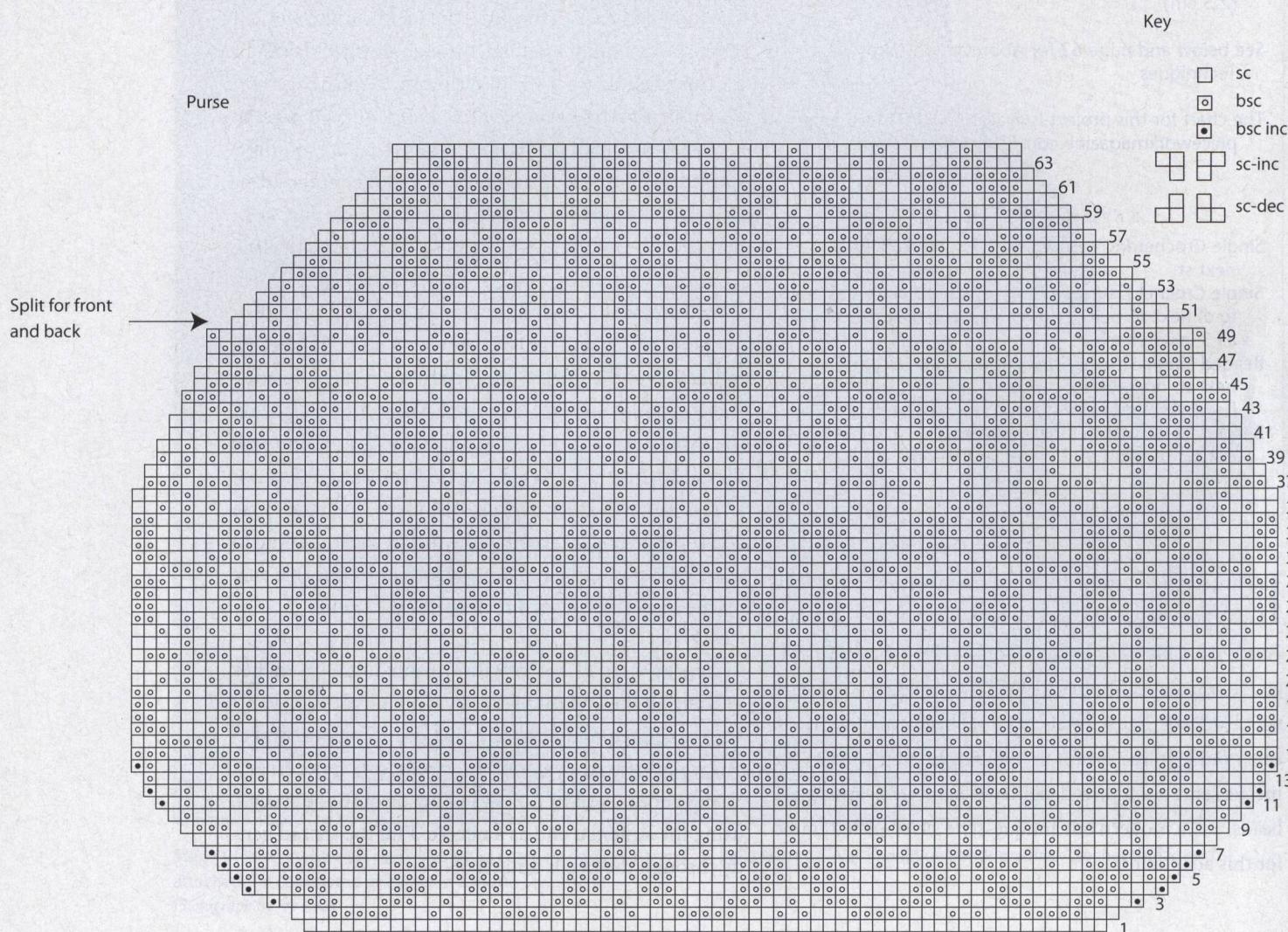


Chart may be photocopied for personal use.

The Iklé Fragment

Knitting or Not?

CHRIS LANING



The photograph of the Iklé fragment reproduced in *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book* (1938; reprint, Mineola, New York: Dover, 1972). Image courtesy of Dover Publications.

A SMALL FRAGMENT OF A MAROON-AND-GOLDEN SILK TEXTILE that may no longer exist was once a landmark in the history of knitting. This fragment, which comes from Islamic Egypt and certainly looks like knitting at first

glance, was a part of the textile collection started by the Swiss collector Leopold Iklé (1838–1922) and continued by his son Fritz (1877–1946).

In the 1850s, Leopold and his brother operated the family textile business (as Iklé Frères) in St. Gallen, Switzerland, first selling fine muslins and later, machine embroideries. Leopold started collecting historical pieces for design inspiration and later for the sheer joy of collecting. Much of his collection was eventually given to what is now the Textile Museum in St. Gallen, and other parts went to family members. A few items from this collection still turn up at auctions from time to time. Fritz Iklé donated his collection to the ethnological museum, Museum der Kulturen, in Basel, Switzerland, which contains pieces similar to the fragment found in Egypt.

As originally presented, the Iklé fragment was described as originating in the seventh to ninth century, and was proclaimed as the earliest known example of knitting. A photograph of the fragment is reproduced in *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book*, first published in 1938. Richard Rutt discusses the fragment in *A History of Hand Knitting* and provides a chart of the color pattern.

Like many of the examples of early knitting, the fragment is intriguing because of its complex and sophisticated—but incomplete—color pattern showing pairs of birds with long, curly crest feathers, standing facing each other but with heads turned away; in the center of the fragment, a vertical bar separates two partial figures.

Triangles, diamonds, and other geometric figures appear above and below the birds. The piece is only about 90 stitches wide and 70 rows high with irregular edges.

But is it knitting? Probably not. Several lines of evidence point to it being instead a splendid example of a very different craft, *nålbinding*.

In the mid-twentieth century, you probably would have never heard of *nålbinding* unless you were one of a very few researchers studying “folk” textile traditions in remote corners of Europe, where some of the self-sufficient ways of the previous century still survived. Even most textile historians did not know about *nålbinding* until Dorothy Burnham wrote what has become a classic paper, “Coptic Knitting: An Ancient Technique” (*Textile History* (3), 1972). This paper is a study of a group of fourth- or fifth-century Coptic socks from Egypt in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

At first glance, these socks appear to have been knitted, with a twist at the base of each stitch as in some forms of Eastern knitting. The structure of the fabric, however, is quite different, as you can tell if you follow a single thread through the fabric. Experimentation shows that a length of yarn threaded through a large flat darning needle or bodkin can reproduce the structure of the fabric exactly, as the yarn is formed into loops, and new loops are made through the existing loops with the needle.

Burnham's article put archaeologists and textile historians on notice that there was an entire range of fabric-forming techniques that they had never considered when evaluating textiles dating anywhere from the ancient world through the Middle Ages and even beyond. Burnham called this craft “single-needle knitting,” but, in addition to *nålbinding* (or *nålebinding* or *naalebinding*, all Scandinavian words meaning “needle binding”), it also has been called knotless netting, cross-knit looping, and looped needle netting, among other names.

Once recognized, examples of *nålbinding* began to show up in many contexts. Some pieces closely resemble knitting while others look completely different. Coptic

socks from other museums, a famous fragment with a design of leaf shapes from Dura-Europos (an ancient city on the Euphrates River), and several mittens found in bogs in northern Europe were recognized as nålbinding. The Coppergate sock found in the Viking layers of sediment in York is nålbinding. A twelfth-century pair of bishop's stockings found in Delémont, Switzerland—which also had long been thought to be an early example of knitting—were also recognized as nålbinding.

Nålbinding turns out to be a family of techniques with hundreds of stitch variations and combinations. As a new loop is made, it may be interwoven with from one to several loops from the preceding stitches and also from the previous row or round. Each time a thread is woven it may go under or over the other thread, and small changes in the interlacing can greatly affect the appearance of the pattern as a whole.

All nålbinding techniques have two characteristics in common: First, they are worked not with a continuous thread as in knitting but with cut lengths of yarn, one end of which is threaded through a large needle;

and second, in every stitch, the end of the yarn is pulled through the loop. In knitting, a *loop* of yarn is pulled through a loop except on the last stitch of a bind-off; only then is the end of the yarn pulled through the final loop. And whereas knitting stitches *may* be crossed, with one “leg” of a stitch crossing over another, nålbinding stitches *must* be crossed to keep the loops from pulling out. Moreover, several types of increases and decreases exist in nålbinding that are simply not possible in knitting. Their presence is a sure sign that a piece that may look like knitting is actually nålbinding.

Richard Rutt was one of the first writers to introduce nålbinding to a wider audience. His meticulous treatment of all the techniques that could be confused with knitting is very clear, especially his diagrams of types of increase and decrease that can be worked in the nålbinding stitch that most closely resembles knitting. In this way, he does sort out which examples of “early knitting” are actually nålbinding.

But what can we tell about the Iklé fragment from the surviving photograph? Just because it's dated two or more



LEFT: Print of Fritz Iklé. Private collection of the Fritz Iklé family.
Print © Fritz Iklé Family.

RIGHT: St. Gallen, Switzerland in 1893, home to Leopold Iklé's family textile business. In 1900, Iklé donated his textile collection to what is now the Textile Museum in St. Gallen.
Photograph by Eduard Spelterini and courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

centuries earlier than the earliest documented “true” knitting doesn’t mean that it must therefore be nålbinding. Most ancient textiles are dated by the style of their decorative motifs, assuming that the same designs were in fashion in knitting as in weaving or other contemporary art. It is true, however, that so far every piece earlier than about A.D. 1000 that has been carefully examined by someone who knows how to tell the difference has turned out to be nålbinding rather than knitting.

Since the only photograph is of the front side of the Iklé fragment, we can’t look for clues that are visible only from the back, such as frequent joins in the yarn. That the stitches are crossed isn’t decisive. There aren’t any increases or decreases, so we can’t use that clue either. The frayed edges and the top edge are not clear enough to yield useful information. It’s noteworthy, however, that the edges show no dropped stitches and very little raveling: Knitting runs easily when a stitch is dropped or loose, but nålbinding will hardly ravel or run at all. The consensus among textile historians is that the Iklé fragment is far more likely to be nålbinding than knitting.

And here’s one thing that I found intriguing. When knitting a color pattern like this from the top down, stitches in the new color will turn out looking like upside-down V shapes, with the single point of the V upward. When pieces from Islamic Egypt have color patterns that have a distinct up and down, they always

turn out to have been knitted from the top down in this way. But the stitches in the Iklé fragment are pointing in the opposite direction: They are V-shaped with the single point of the V downward. They could be a highly unusual piece knitted from the bottom up, but it’s much more likely they were made from the top down with a different technique—such as nålbinding, whose stitches appear upside-down when compared to knitting. Nålbinding seems to provide the best explanation for how this color pattern was created.

If this fragment was worked in nålbinding, it cannot be an early piece of knitting. But while it has been dethroned as a knitting landmark, the Iklé fragment is still interesting, and poses questions that have yet to be answered. Are there other fragments of nålbinding with similar complex color patterns? Does the existence of nålbinding with color motifs explain why early knitting is similarly colorful? Any research that brings us closer to understanding how knitting began and why the earliest knitting that survives is so sophisticated in color and design would be of interest to many. ♦

FURTHER READING

- Rutt, Richard. *A History of Hand Knitting*. 1987. 2nd ed., Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 2003.
 Thomas, Mary. *Mary Thomas’s Knitting Book*. 1938. Reprint, Mineola, New York: Dover, 1972.

A Bag with Iklé Birds to Knit

CHRIS LANING

This bag is inspired by the pattern of birds and diamonds on the Iklé fragment described and shown in the preceding article. Since the original fragment likely was worked in nålbinding, the bag is not a reproduction, but it does have some echoes of knitting history: Knitted fragments worked in elaborate color patterns in both wool and cotton are known from eleventh-century Egypt, and a shape similar to this bag is known from sixteenth-century Europe. This bag is worked from the bottom up, but the color pattern stitches are oriented the same way as in the original version in nålbinding.

My aim in this pattern was to adapt the “birds and diamonds” pattern into something a bit easier to knit. Because the original pattern has some very long gaps between stitches of the same color, I confined my pattern to the top rows, with the images of the birds. The longest gap in that region is 9 stitches wide, and there are a few 8-stitch and 7-stitch gaps. These can be handled easily by twisting the two colors around each other at the midpoint, although with highly contrasting colors like these, I prefer to leave the carried threads loose and, if necessary, tack them down later on the inside with fine sewing

thread. I also made the pattern more symmetrical and reduced the repeat to 30 stitches (one pair of birds for each purse panel). I also restored the long, curly crest feathers of the bird next to the separating bar, which are missing on the original.

The original fragment was worked in fine silk colored maroon and golden yellow. For the sake of cost and convenience, this version uses size 3 pearl cotton in those colors. While not as shiny as silk, pearl cotton has a pleasantly shiny finish. The stitch gauge is comparable to that of wool fingering yarn and will be familiar to anyone who knits socks.

Good tension is always the key to smooth color-pattern knitting without ripples or gaps. It's a bit more challenging in a yarn like this with little or no stretch. The method I use is this: Before knitting a stitch in a new color, stretch the preceding stitches on the right-hand needle as far as they will comfortably go, then wrap the yarn in the new color for the next stitch and tighten only until it is barely snug on the needle. The thread leading up to the new stitch should be relaxed, not tight. If you make the color change too loose, it can be tightened later, but if it's too tight, you can't loosen it.

INSTRUCTIONS

Bag

With MC, CO 8 sts. Divide sts evenly on dpn and join in the rnd.

Rnd 1: *[K1, M1] twice, pm; rep from * to end—16 sts.

Rnd 2: K.

Rnd 3 (Inc Rnd): *K1, M1, k to 1 st before next m, M1, k1, sl m; rep from * to end—8 sts inc'd.

Rep Rnds 2 and 3 twelve more times—120 sts.

K 1 rnd.

Next Rnd: [Sl 1, k29] 4 times.

Next Rnd: K.

Rep last 2 rnds 4 more times.

Work Rows 1–39 of Bag Chart. Break MC. Cont in CC only.

Next Rnd: [Sl 1, k29] 4 times.

Next Rnd: K.

Rep last 2 rnds 14 more times.

Eyelet Rnd: *Yo, ssk; rep from * to end.

K 2 rnds. BO all sts.

Finishing

Weave in ends.

Strings

Cut 2 lengths of ¼-inch (6-mm) grosgrain ribbon or cord at least 18 inches (45.7 cm) long. Working from opposite sides of the bag, thread the ribbon drawstrings through the holes,

The elegant and intricate design for Chris Laning's purse is based on the Iklé fragment found in Egypt and dated to the seventh to ninth century A.D.
Photograph by Joe Coca.



MATERIALS

Halcyon 3/2 Pearl Cotton, 100% cotton yarn, 180 yards (164.6 m)/mini cone, 1 mini cone each of #121 Wine (MC) and #112 California Gold (CC); www.halcyonyarn.com

Needles, 1 set of double pointed (or circular), size 1½ (2.5 mm) or size needed to obtain gauge

Grosgrain ribbon or cord for strings, ¼ inch (6 mm), 1½ to 2 feet (0.5 to 0.6 m) long

Stitch markers, 4

Tapestry needle

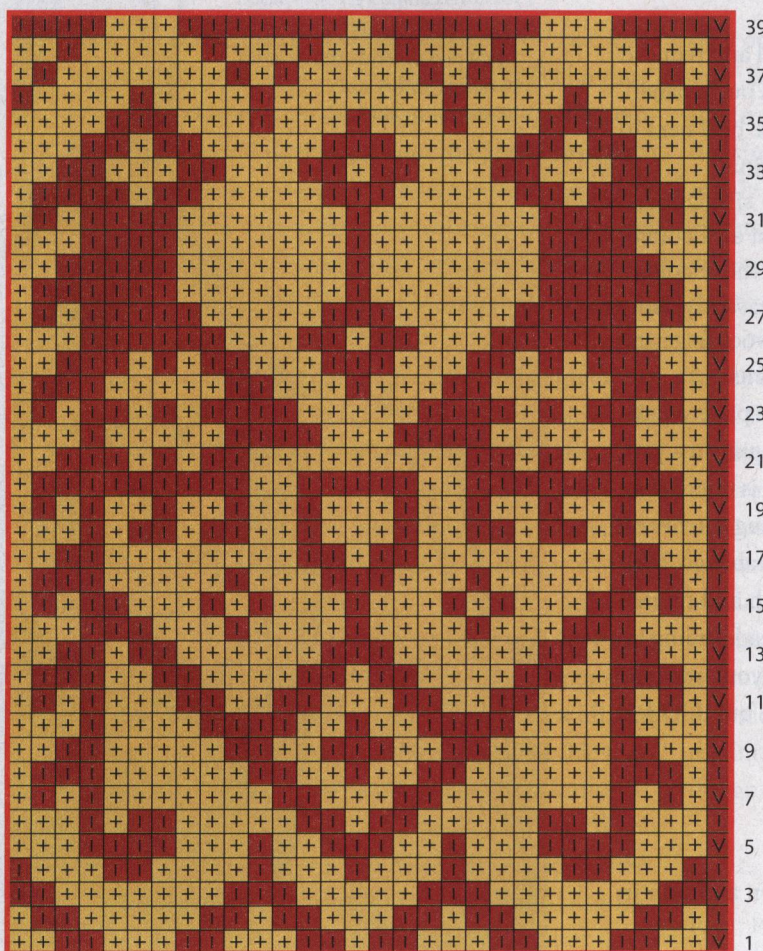
Finished size: 15 inches (38.1 cm) circumference and 9 inches (22.9 cm) tall

Gauge: 8 sts and 12 rows = 1 inch (2.5 cm) in St st

See page 62 for Abbreviations and Techniques

The chart for this project is available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations

Bag



30-st rep

Chart may be photocopied for personal use.

taking care not to twist the ribbon, and knot the ends of each in a simple overhand knot. Clip the ends at a slant to reduce raveling.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND DESIGNER. *Chris Laning has been knitting for more than fifty years. She is an independent scholar of medieval knitting and embroidery and is also a historical reenactor known as Dame Christian de Holacombe. As "claning" on Ravelry.com, she sells historical patterns and welcomes comments and questions.*

Key

with MC, k

with CC, k

sl 1

patt rep

A Pouch Based on the Iklé Fragment to Nålbind

KAREN SULLIVAN

MATERIALS

Halcyon 2/30 Gemstone Silk Yarn, 100% silk yarn, laceweight, 50 wraps/inch, 250 yards (228.6 m)/mini cone, 1 mini cone each of #103 Red (A) and #106 Gold (B); www.halcyonyarn.com

John James Needles, 2 tapestry, size 26; www.colonialneedle.com

Finished size: 4½ × 3 inches (11.4 × 7.6 cm), excluding fringe

The chart for this project is available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations

This project is based on the fragment (described and shown in the preceding article) from the collection of the Swiss textile historian Fritz Iklé (1877–1946). The fragment was too small to identify its original context; it could have been part of a small bag or a sock or the trim on something else. Wanting to make something practical, I chose to make a small bag that might have been used to hold coins or other small objects.

INSTRUCTIONS

Pouch

Note: Review the “Tarim/Coptic Stitch” sidebar before beginning.

Measure about 2 yards (2 m) of each color. Place a needle on each color. You will be using lengths of about 2 yards (2 m) throughout this project.

With Color A, make a starter chain of 112 stitches. Join to make a loop, being careful not to twist the starter chain. Using the Tarim/Coptic stitch, work 2 rounds. While working the 2nd round, check the stitch count. If necessary, increase or decrease stitches so that there are 112 stitches. In Round 3, begin to follow the chart. Read the chart from left to right, from the bottom up, working each row 2 times.

To add the 2nd color, with the 2nd needle and Color B, run the needle through several back loops to anchor the yarn. Coming up from behind Color A, work Color B into the next stitch. *Note:* When you change colors, the new color comes from behind the color you were using.

As you follow the pattern, you will have several long floaters. Catch the yarn on the back of previous stitches.

Karen Sullivan's exquisite pouch is worked in the ancient technique of nålbinding, using laceweight silk yarn.

Photograph by Joe Coca.



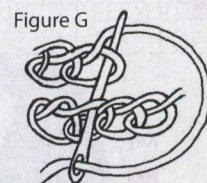
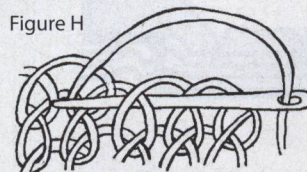
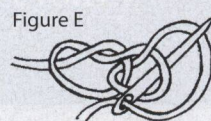
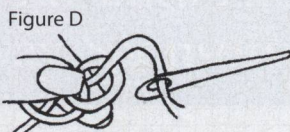
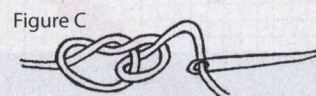
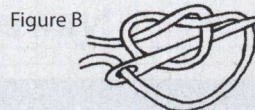
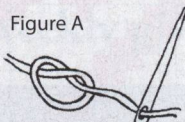
Tarim/Coptic Stitch

Step 1: Make an overhand knot (Figure A).

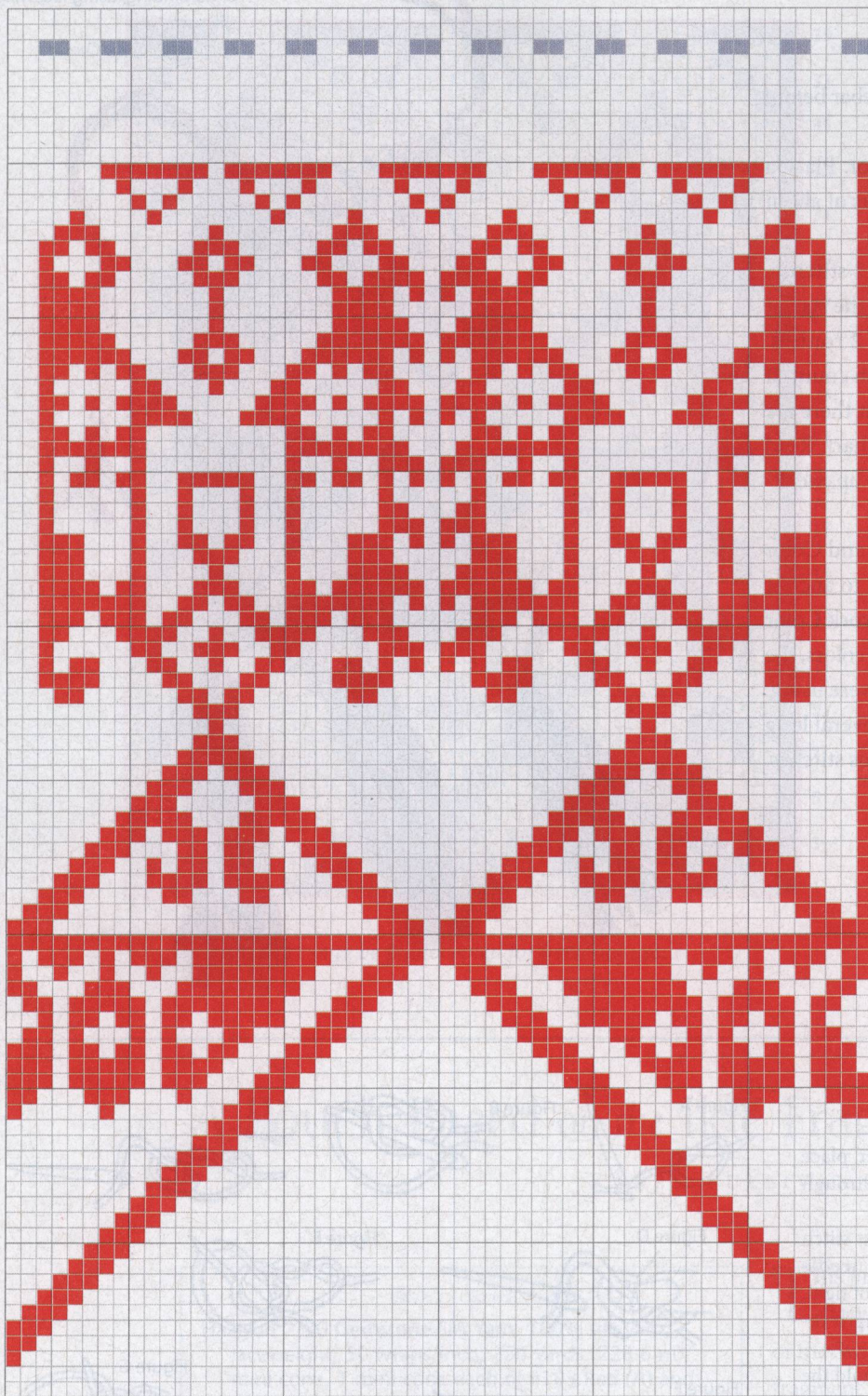
Step 2: Hold the knot between thumb and finger, place the needle through as shown (Figure B), pull through (Figure C). *Note:* This is a buttonhole stitch.

Step 3: To make a foundation chain, hold the last stitch between thumb and finger (Figure D), place needle through the stitch (Figure E), pull the starting knot tight. Step 4: Repeat Step 3 until the chain is the length required (Figure F).

Step 5: To start a tube from a foundation chain, hold the last stitch between thumb and finger, bring the beginning knot around to form a ring (be careful not to twist the chain or you will get a Möbius), place the needle through the first stitch (the one right after the knot) and then through the last stitch (Figure G), pull the yarn through. Step 6: Working from left to right, place the needle going from right to left under the X formed by the yarn crossing on the previous row (Figure H). Repeat in the next X to the right, until the length required is reached.



Pouch



56 stitches

Chart may be photocopied for personal use.

Key

 Color A

 Color B

 Chain stitch

Finishing

Place the tube so that one repeat of the pattern is showing and sew the bottom together. Make three 3-inch (7.6-cm) tassels, using twelve strands of each color folded in half; tie one on each corner and one in the middle of the bottom of the pouch. For each of the two 15-inch (38.1-cm) braided draw cords, cut three strands of both colors, pairing up one strand of each color, and then braid. Lace the first one, starting at the side of the bag through the holes formed by the chain-twos at the top of the pouch, go all the way around. With the other cord, start on the opposite side and lace through the same holes all the way around. Tie the ends together leaving a 2¼-inch (5.7-cm) fringe. The pouch closes when both cords are pulled at the same time.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Karen Sullivan is an artist with a bachelor's degree in accounting from South Western Oklahoma State University. She learned nálbinding by candlelight in 1996. For the past seventeen years, she has been teaching this ancient art to anyone who will sit down long enough to learn. Visit her website at www.alixtiberga.com.

Fancywork for Charity during the Civil-War Years

BEVERLY GORDON



Buildings of the Great Central Fair, in aid of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, Logan Square, Philadelphia, June 1864. The three-week fair raised over a million dollars for the United States Sanitary Commission. Drawn by James Queen, printed in oil colors by P. S. Duval & Son, 1864. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D. C. (LC-DIG-pga-04061). Photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress.

THE CHARITY FAIR was perhaps the most important social event in both North and South during the American Civil War (1861–1865). It was an entertainment that people could enjoy with abandon since it was raising money for “the cause.” “Ladies’ fairs” had been popular since about 1830 as a way to support benevolent and political causes such as abolition (church fairs were not yet common, and the term “bazaar” would not be used until later in the century). Whatever they were called, it was women who organized and staffed these fundraisers.

Wartime versions ranged from small local fairs to extravaganzas that included restaurants, staged performances, art and horticulture displays, “gypsy” fortune-telling booths, and more. By 1863, “fair mania”

had taken the public by storm, and men joined in, often taking on prominent public roles. Nevertheless—and despite laws prohibiting them from signing legal documents—it was women who did most of the work and were responsible for the huge success of the fairs. In the North, for example, a series of regional Sanitary Fairs that each lasted several weeks collectively earned about \$5,000,000—about \$80,000,000 in today’s dollars—to support the U.S. Sanitary Commission, an organization of volunteers created to assist Union soldiers. These fairs pioneered innovations in entertainment, display, and salesmanship. Other fairs supported orphans’ homes and hospitals.

Nearly any woman could contribute to a fair by supplying handwork to sale booths. The objects that were

considered appropriate were not the practical “plain work” (shirts, socks, and bedding) that was sent directly to the troops, but “elaborate nothings”—“fancywork” such as whimsical pincushions and other sewing accessories, pen wipers, and lamp mats. Made to “please the eye, gratify the senses and tickle the fancy,” fancywork was associated with good feeling and with abundance. The saleswomen at Civil War-era fairs typically were attractive young ladies (their elders ran things behind the scenes), who made the objects look especially appealing. Flirtatious “wheedling” of male shoppers by the young ladies was expected and added to the fun.

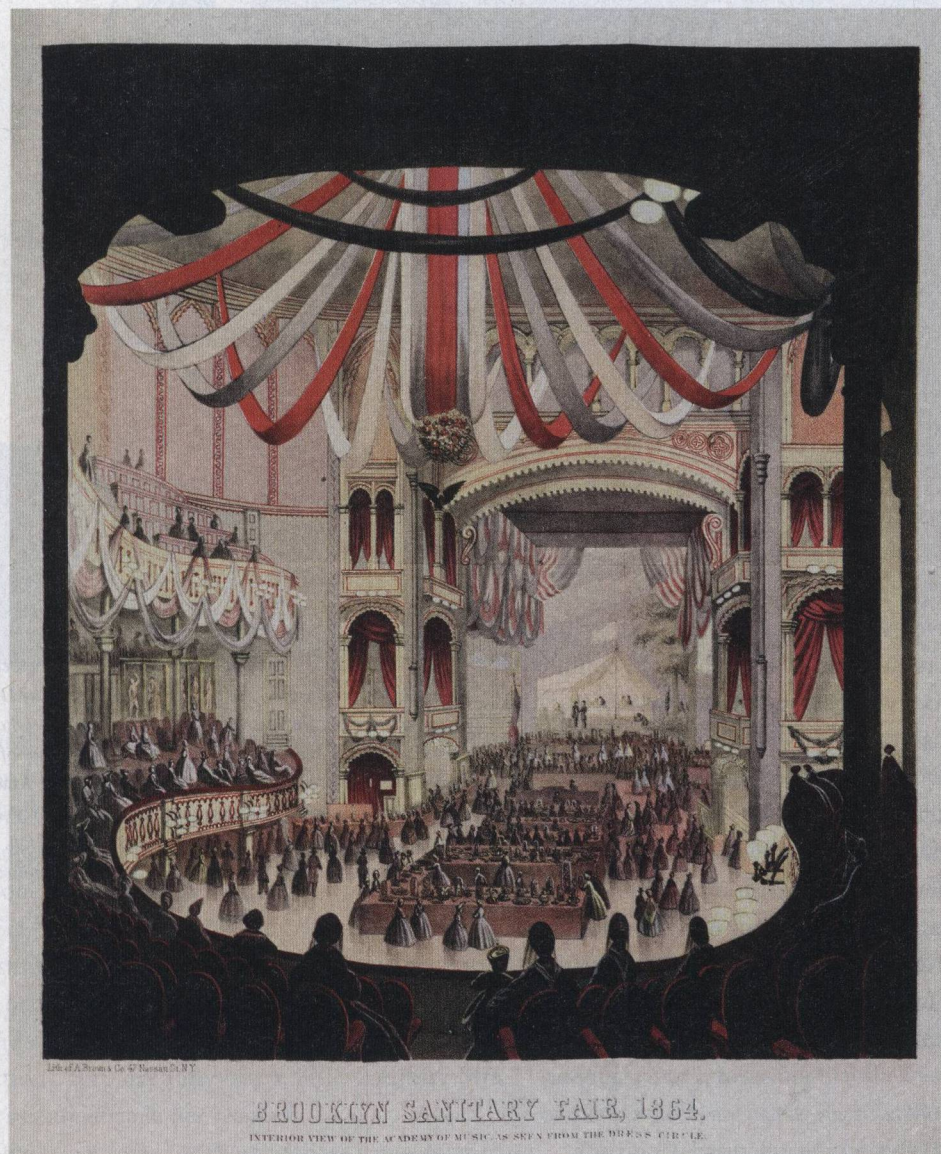
The charity purse featured in the project that follows is a perfect example of fancywork. It is lightweight and pretty enough to be worn as part of a festive outfit.

Women’s magazines of the time would have deemed it a suitable gift to give a friend or family member: it took effort to make, showing that one cared, but it was not extravagant. Women liked making this kind of object, the more so if it was for a good cause, and its low cost and familiarity only added to its appeal.

The technique of crochet had been introduced in Europe in the nineteenth century. Crocheted lace was brought to Ireland during the Great Famine of the 1840s with the thought that women might learn to make and sell this less expensive lace as a way of earning money to help their families survive. And crochet then accompanied the two million Irish who immigrated to America between 1845 and 1859.

American women’s magazines began publishing patterns for crocheted flowerpot holders, birdcage covers,

Brooklyn Sanitary Fair, 1864.
Interior view of the Academy of Music, as seen from the dress circle. Lithograph by A. Brown & Co. 1864. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D. C. (LC-DIG-ds-00599).
Photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress.



Children's Soldier's Fair.
Engraving by Davis.
Originally published in
The Tribute Book by
Frank Goodrich,
(New York: Derby and
Miller, 1865).
Photograph courtesy of
the author.



CHILDREN'S SOLDIERS' FAIR.

baskets, tablecloths, antimacassars, caps, and purses in the 1850s. Many patterns first appeared in *Peterson's Magazine* as "novelties of the month" by Mrs. Jane Weaver. (Weaver also offered patterns for sewing, knitting, and embroidery projects. Her designs commonly were reproduced without credit in fancywork manuals or other magazines such as *Godey's Lady's Book*.)

Purses were versatile, useful, salable, and appropriate for either gender: In 1854, *Peterson's* suggested a "gentleman's long ["miser's"] purse" as a "suitable present to a brother, father, or husband on his birthday." During the war, purses served the "furor of benevolence" that swept the nation, supported a cause, offered pleasure to maker and purchaser alike, and could be treasured as a sentimental keepsake. ❖

FURTHER READING

Gordon, Beverly. *Bazaars and Fair Ladies: A History of the American Fundraising Fair*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR. Beverly Gordon has long been fascinated by Victorian fancywork. She recently retired from the Design Studies department of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she taught classes relating to textiles and design. She is the author of many books, including *Bazaars and Fair Ladies: A History of the American Fundraising Fair* (see Further Reading) and *Textiles: The Whole Story: Uses, Meanings, Significance* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011). She is also a practicing artist, working with assemblage and collage media. Visit www.beverlygordon.info.

A Charity Purse to Crochet

BART ELWELL



Near the end of her three paragraphs of instructions for a Charity Purse included in the January 1862 *Peterson's Magazine*, the designer, Mrs. Jane Weaver, casually suggests that the ornament on the purse "is very easily done by referring to the design as well as description." (See "Charity Purse" sidebar.) Thank goodness for the illustration! Whereas "the little star," "gold and green leaves," and a "rose" all are terms that I can visualize in my mind's eye, executing these motifs solely from the instructions perplexed my brain. Still, I admire Mrs. Weaver's confidence in her readers.

Hoping to get some insight into those vague instructions, I paged through a tattered volume of *Peterson's* from

1874 in my collection. To my surprise, I found a plethora of projects attributed to Mrs. Jane Weaver. (If she had been publishing projects since the appearance of the purse pattern in 1862, she must have contributed enough designs to fill a file cabinet.) Worked in various techniques of crochet, knitting, sewing, and embroidery, the designs from 1874 include everything from infant bibs and doll clothes to cigar cases and antimacassars, from bonnet boxes and beaded napkin rings to designs for a dressing table and bedside rugs. And it turns out that the instructions for many of these projects are just as vague as those for the purse.

The title "Charity Purse" suggests that it was intended to be sold at a charity bazaar (see the preceding article,

Although named a "Charity Purse," Bart Elwell's spectacular crocheted purse will become a favorite treasure bag. It's shown here with the page from the January 1862 issue of *Peterson's Magazine* showing the instructions and illustration he used to re-create the purse. Photograph by Joe Coca.

MATERIALS

Handy Hands Lizbeth, 100% cotton thread, size 20, 210 yards (192.0 m)/25 gram (0.8 oz) ball, 2 balls of #691 Mocha Brown Medium; www.hhtatting.com
 Crochet hook, steel, size 7 (1.5 mm)
 Fabric, lightweight woven cotton, ¼ yard (0.2 m), for lining; www.theclothmerchants.com
 Pellon interfacing, lightweight or medium weight, ¼ yard (0.2 m), for interlining; www.theclothmerchants.com
 Magnetic snap or hook closure
 Chain, fine or medium weight, for handle, 24 inches (61.0 cm); available at jewelry supply stores

Finished size: About 6 × 5 inches (15 × 13 cm)
 Gauge: 26 sts and 21 rows = 2 inches (5.1 cm)

See below and page 62 for Abbreviations and Techniques

Special Stitches and Abbreviations

Spike double crochet (sdc): Yo, working over ch-3 sp, insert hook in st 2 rows below, yo and pull up lp, [yo, draw through 2 lps] twice. See Figure 1.

Cast on sc: Insert hook in base of last st worked, yo and pull up lp, ch 1, yo, draw through 2 lps on hook (sc inc made). *Note:* When casting on more than one single crochet, additional stitches are worked in the chain-one at the base of the previous cast-on single crochet.

Spike double crochet decrease (sdc dec): [Yo, working over ch-3 sp, insert hook in next st 2 rows below, yo and pull up lp, yo, draw through 2 lps] twice, yo, draw through 3 lps on hook.

Rep A: [3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 3].

Pineapple st: *Hdc in next sc, [yo, working around hdc, insert hook into sp at right of st just worked, yo, draw up a lp] twice, yo, draw through 5 lps on hook, ch 1, sk next sc, rep from * for st patt.

“Fancywork for Charity during the Civil-War Years”), and with no measurements provided, one can only guess at its finished dimensions. The instructions’ directive to work “nine rows of sc,” suggests a finished size that is significantly smaller than my adaptation. I have taken the liberty of making it in one solid color, chose to use a chain instead of the “strings” that were suggested in the original pattern, a hidden snap closure under the flap, and finished the edges with a stitch reminiscent of beading. For the body of the purse, I used an interlocking block stitch of double crochets. My aim was to make the purse practical for today while retaining a vintage quality.

INSTRUCTIONS

Note: Crochet three pieces—flower motif, front purse panel, and back purse panel with flap.

Purse

Flower motif,

Ch 8, sl st to form ring.

Rnd 1: Ch 3, 2 dc in ring, ch 4, [3 dc in ring, ch 4] 8 times, sl st in top of 1st ch-3—9 ch-4 sps.

Rnd 2: Sl st in next 2 dc, sl st in ch-4 sp, ch 4, 4 tr in same ch-4 sp, ch 4, 5 tr in same ch-4 sp, [5 tr, ch 4, 5 tr] in next ch-4 sp 8 times, sl st in top of ch-4.

Rnd 3: Ch 1, [(6 tr, ch 5, 6 tr) in next ch-4 sp, sc in sp between next 2 sets of tr] 9 times, sl st in next st, fasten off.

Rnd 4: Attach thread in center of ch-5 sp of Rnd 3, ch 1, [ch 10, sl st in center of next ch-5 sp] 9 times, sl st in beg ch-1—100 sts.

Rnd 5: Ch 5 (counts as dc, ch 2), *sk 1 st, dc in next st, ch 2, rep from * around and sl st in 3rd ch of ch-5, sl st in next ch st—50 dc.

Rnd 6: Ch 5, *dc in center of next ch-2 sp, ch 2, rep from * around and sl st in 3rd ch of ch-5, fasten off.

Front panel,

Note: The turning chain (tch) of each row is counted as a stitch. Unless otherwise directed, skip first stitch at beginning of each row and work into turning chain as the last stitch at the end of a row.

Ch 23.

Row 1: Sc in 3rd ch from hook, sc in next 2 ch, [ch 3, sk 3 ch, dc in next 3 ch] 2 times, ch 3, sk 3 ch, sc in next 3 ch, cast on 3 sc, turn—16 sts.

Row 2: Ch 2, sk 1st sc (throughout), sc in next 2 sts, [ch 3, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp] 3 times, ch 3, sc in last st (tch), cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 3: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 4 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 4: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 4 times, sc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 5: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 4 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 6: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 5 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 7: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 6 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 8: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 6 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 9: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 6 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 10: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 7 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 11: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 8 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 12: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 8 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 13: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 14: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 9 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 15: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 10 times, sc in last st, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 16: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 10 times, dc in last 3 sts, cast on 3 sc, turn.

Row 17: Ch 2, sc in next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 10 times, sk 3 sts, dc in next 2 sts, 2 dc in last st, turn.

Row 18: Ch 4, [rep A] 11 times, sl st in last st, turn.

Row 19: Ch 3, dc in same st as tch, 2 sdc over ch-3 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 10 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, dc in last st, turn.

Row 20: Ch 4, [rep A] 11 times, sl st in last st, turn.

Row 21: Ch 3, dc in same st as tch, [rep A] 11 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, 2 dc in last st, turn.

Row 22: Ch 3, dc in same st as tch and in next dc, ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, sk 3 sts, dc in next dc, 2 dc in last st, turn.

Row 23: Ch 3, [rep A] 12 times, sl st in last st, turn.

Row 24: Ch 3, 2 sdc over ch-3 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, 2 sdc over next ch-3 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Rows 25–33: Ch 3, rep Rows 23–24, then rep Row 23 once more.

Row 34: Ch 3, work sdc dec using the next 2 sts, ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, work sdc dec using next 2 sts, dc in last st, turn.

Row 35: Ch 2, [rep A] 11 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 2, sl st in last st, turn.

Row 36: Ch 3, sdc in next st, ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, work sdc over next ch-2 sp, dc in last st, turn.

Rows 37 and 38: Rep Rows 35 and 36.

Row 39: Ch 3, [rep A] 12 times, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 40: Sdc in next st, ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, work sdc over next ch-3 sp, sl st in top ch of tch of the prev row, turn.

Row 41: Ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in last st, turn.

Row 42: Ch 4, [rep A] 11 times, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 43: [Rep A] 11 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, turn.

Row 44: Ch 3, [rep A] 11 times, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 45: Ch 3, 2 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 10 times, 2 sdc over next ch 3 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Rows 46–48: Rep Rows 44–45, then rep Row 44 once more.

Row 49: Ch 3, sdc over ch-3 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 10 times, sdc over next ch-3 sp, dc in tch, turn.



Row 50: Ch 2, hdc in next st, [3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in next 3 sts] 10 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in next st and in tch. Ch 2, sc evenly around the curved edge of front panel. Fasten off.

Back panel,

Work as for front panel through Row 49.

Shape flap,

Row 1: Ch 2, [rep A] 10 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 2, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 2: Ch 3, sdc over ch-2 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 10 times, sdc over ch-2 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Rows 3 and 4: Rep Rows 1 and 2.

Row 5: Ch 2, sc in next st, [rep A] 10 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, sc in next st, sc in tch, turn.

Row 6: Ch 1, sl st in next 4 sts, [rep A] 10 times, turn.

Row 7: [Rep A] 9 times, sk 2 sts, sl st in next st, turn.

Row 8: Ch 3, [rep A] 9 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, dc in last st, turn.

Row 9: Ch 4, [rep A] 8 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 4, sl st in last st, turn.

Row 10: Ch 3, dc in same st as tch, [rep A] 9 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, 2 dc in tch, turn.

Row 11: Ch 5, [rep A] 8 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 5, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 12: Ch 3, 4 sdc over ch-5 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, 4 sdc over ch-5 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Row 13: Rep Row 11.

Row 14: Ch 3, work sdc dec using next 2 sts of ch-5 sp, sdc in each of next 2 sts of ch-5 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, sdc in each of next 2 sts of ch-5 sp, work sdc dec using next 2 sts of ch-5 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Row 15: Ch 4, [rep A] 8 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 4, sl st in tch, turn.

Bart Elwell's
Charity Purse
with the flap
open, showing
the cotton lining
and the closure.
Photograph by
Joe Coca.

Charity Purse

Following are the instructions for Mrs. Jane Weaver's Charity Purse exactly as they appeared in the January 1862 issue of *Peterson's Magazine*:

The Charity Purse is made of Sc. and Dc. crochet; it is commenced in the middle of the little star in the center. The gold and green leaves are made separately and added afterward; they are held together at the base by a row of Sc. stitches in black, and at the top by rows Dc. of blue and gold alternately, after having made nine rows of Sc. crochet underneath the rose; it is from this you retake the other rows of Sc. crochet until the tenth row of the design, where the upper side stops.

This purse has two sides: the upper containing the rose and terminating in the tenth row, and the under, which, being made in Sc. crochet, the same size as the upper, is continued so as to turn over and form a clasp. This is very easily done by referring to the design as well as description. To finish it, line it with silk, taking care to hide the seams by putting a fancy cord over them, of which also the strings are made.

The purse is fastened by the cord looped over a gold button.

Row 16: Ch 3, work sdc dec using next 2 sts of ch-4 sp, sdc in next st of ch-4 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, sdc over next ch-4 sp, work sdc dec using next 2 sts of ch-4 sp, dc in tch, turn.

Row 17: Ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, ch 3, sl st in tch, turn.

Row 18: Ch 2, 2 sdc over ch-3 sp, ch 3, [rep A] 8 times, 2 sdc in next ch-3 sp, hdc in tch, turn.

Row 19: Ch 1, sc in next st, hdc in next st, [rep A] 8 times, 3 sdc, in next ch-3 sp, hdc in next st, sc in next st, turn.

Row 20: Ch 1, sc in next 2 sts, hdc in next 2 sts, [rep A] 7 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in next 2 sts, sc in next 2 sts, sl st in next st, turn.

Row 21: Ch 1, sc in next 5 sts, hdc in next 2 sts, [3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in next 3 sts] 6 times, 3 sdc over next ch-3 sp, hdc in next 2 sts, sc in next 5 sts, sl st in next st, fasten off.

Attach thread to side of curved flap at notch, ch 2 and sc evenly around curved edge of flap, fasten off.

Attach thread to point of notch, ch 2 and sc evenly around curved edge of back purse, fasten off.

Finishing

Block each piece, smoothing the edges and matching size/shape of the front and back purse panels to each other. Center the flower motif $\frac{5}{8}$ inch (1.6 cm)

Figure 1—Spike Double Crochet

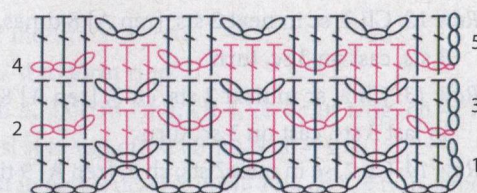


Illustration from *The Harmony Guides Basic Crochet Stitches: 250 Stitches to Crochet* (U.S. ed., Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 2008).

up from the bottom of the front panel and hand-set it with matching thread. Join thread at beginning of back panel flap at notch, work around flap edge with pineapple stitch to opposite notch and fasten off. With wrong sides together, match the top edge of front panel to the notches of the back panel. Attach thread to the first single crochet along the rounded edge of the front and back panels securing them together. Work pineapple stitch to join front and back panels taking care to ensure that panels stay aligned with each other. It may be necessary to skip an extra stitch on one panel or the other occasionally to keep them true. Upon reaching the next notch, fasten off.

Lining,

Trace the front and back purse panels to use as a pattern for the lining, adding $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6 mm) seam allowance around the flap. The pouch part of the pattern does not have a seam allowance. Cut two back panels of lightweight fabric and one back panel of interfacing. Place right side of two fabric panels together, then place interfacing panel on top, sew around flap edge only, using $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6 mm) seam. Turn flap edge right side out, leaving pouch edges unsewn; interfacing should be between fabric panels. Cut one front panel of lining fabric with the fold along the straight edge and one interfacing not on the fold. Place front interfacing panel on wrong side of front fabric panel. With fabric side of front panel piece together with back panel piece, sew pouch edges together with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6 mm) seam that tapers at the opening of the purse. This seam should be trimmed to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) and will not be turned. This creates a clean finish inside the purse. Position and set desired closure and sew the lining into the purse. Attach chain handle to purse by whipstitching the end links of the chain inside the lining edges.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Bart Elwell is a self-taught crocheter who has always been fascinated with the technical challenges of needlework. He is a member of the International Organization of Lace, Inc. (IOLI, formerly International Old Lacers, Inc.). Designing and teaching classes on lacemaking techniques have proven to be his favorite part of the needle arts.

Gawthorpe Textiles Collection

THE GAWTHORPE TEXTILES COLLECTION is comprised of historic and contemporary lace, quilts, costume, samplers, and embroidery from all over the world. The collection was amassed by Miss Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth (1886–1967), the last member of the Shuttleworth family to live at Gawthorpe Hall, an Elizabethan country house in Padiham, Lancashire, England. She was renowned for her expert knowledge and skills in needlework and for her dedicated work with local communities; she turned her ancestral home into a Craft House in order to keep alive the textile skills and techniques she feared were being lost.

In 2012, using Miss Rachel's vision of a Craft House, the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection team redisplayed the five textiles galleries at Gawthorpe Hall. With investment from Arts Council England, this was an opportunity to revisit the textiles that Miss Rachel amassed in her lifetime and tell the story of the collection through her own words; the galleries are peppered with wonderful quotes drawn from our archive of Miss Rachel's letters.

The team also worked with internationally renowned design and interpretation firm, Metaphor.eu, to re-create Miss Rachel's desk. Strewn with letters, labels, textile samples, scrapbooks, lace bobbins, threads, magazines,



Gawthorpe Hall, shown here in an 1884 watercolor painting by Nathaniel Everett Green (1823–1899), is home to the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, the realized dream of Miss Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth of creating a Craft House in order to foster and carry on the traditions of textile skills and techniques. Photograph courtesy of the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, Padiham, Lancashire, England.



Handknitted purse from Istanbul. Maker unknown. Made in two panels lined first with canvas then navy blue silk; the two handles are loops of twisted navy and cream cord; the two panels are connected with bands of sewn black and cream stripes at the bottom and are fagoted and bound at the sides. Circa 1860–1930. From the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection (11033).
Photograph courtesy of the Gawthorpe Textile Collections, Padiham, Lancashire, England.

books, photographs, and objects owned and used by Miss Rachel, the desk installation provides visitors a glimpse into the life of a fascinating collector, teacher, and textile practitioner.

The last gallery is devoted to celebrating and nurturing contemporary textile practitioners. It is our way of realizing Miss Rachel's ambition—that Gawthorpe continues to be a place of learning and inspiration where skills are shared and textiles are made. For more information visit www.gawthorpetextiles.org.uk. ❖

—Jennie Pitceathly

Director, Gawthorpe Textiles Collection



The desk installation at Gawthorpe Hall re-creates Miss Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth's desk, featuring letters, textile samples, lace bobbins, magazines, and objects that she owned and used.
Photograph courtesy of the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, Padiham, Lancashire, England.

FURTHER READING

Derbyshire, Dianne. "Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth's Working Collection of Lace and Needlework." *PieceWork*, May/June 2009.

A Turkish Purse to Knit

SARAH SHIPPEN

This pattern is adapted from a nineteenth-century Turkish purse now in the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection (see the preceding article). The original piece has an all-over geometric pattern and was knitted at nearly 20 stitches per inch (8 stitches per cm)! Clever details such as the stitched-on edging embellish and provide shaping for the knitted piece. On my version, I limited the design and finished the purse with twisted cording. This small purse is just the right size to hold your wallet, cell phone, or a concert program; working the pattern in a thicker yarn on larger needles will result in a larger purse.

The motif used in both the original and my adaptation is the burdock, a flowering plant in the daisy family. The flowers produce round seedpods that have woody hooks (burrs). The little pattern on the purse is an abstract representation of the seed with its hooks. Anatolian folk belief is that the burdock symbol will provide protection from evil.

Sarah Shippen re-created a smaller version of the purse in the Gawthorpe Textiles Collection. Her creation is a perfect example of a treasured bag for your treasures.

Photograph by Joe Coca.



MATERIALS

Rauma Prydvevgarn, 100% Norwegian wool yarn, 1 ply, laceweight, 656 yards (599.8 m)/100 gram (3.5 oz) skein, 1 skein each of #636 Black (MC) and #601 White (CC); www.arnhild.com

Susan Bates Double Point Sock Set Needles, set of 5 double point, 7 inches (17.8 cm), size 000 (1.5 mm); www.coatsandclark.com

Point protectors, for cast-on

Ring markers, small

T-pins, for blocking

Tapestry needle

Finished size: 8¾ inches (22.2 cm) long and 6¾ inches (17.1 cm) wide, excluding strap, after blocking

Gauge: 22 sts and 27 rows = 2 inches (5.1 cm) in charted St st; gauge is not critical for this project

See below and page 62 for Abbreviations and Techniques

The chart for this project is available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations

SPECIAL TECHNIQUE

Picot Cast-On

Note: This technique uses two double-pointed needles.

Step 1: Leaving a 6-inch (15.2-cm) tail, use the knitted method to CO 5 sts. Place sts on left needle kwise.

Step 2: K2, BO 1 st, k1, BO 1 st, sl rem st kwise from right needle to left needle.

Step 3: Use the knitted method to CO 4 sts onto left needle.

Step 4: Rep Steps 2 and 3.

INSTRUCTIONS

Purse

Place point protectors on 2 of the dpn. Use MC and the Picot method to CO 75 sts. Do not join.

Next Row: *K1f&b; rep from * to end—150 sts.

Distribute sts evenly on 4 dpn, pm, and join in the rnd.

Set-Up Rnd: With CC, k1, pm, k73, pm, k2, pm, k73, pm, k1.

Work Rnds 1–111 of Purse Chart.

Note: Beginning on Round 5, knit the two edge stitches between markers with main color and contrasting color held together. This will create a stiffened edge for the sides of the purse and be covered by the edge cords.

Transfer stitches so front and back of the purse are both on 2 dpn. Doubled edge stitches should be at each end. Turn work inside out so WS is facing. Use MC and CC held tog and three-needle method to BO all sts. Sew Picot CO edges tog. Weave in ends.

Finishing

Soak the purse in tepid water with a couple of drops of dish soap for an hour; gently roll in a towel to remove excess water. Block on towel with t-pins to prevent top edge from curling. Block to rectangle shape, making sure to “square up” corners and sides. Allow to dry overnight.

Cording

Twisted cords are used for the side edging and straps.

Notes: Yarn measurements below are twice the finished cord lengths to allow for cording to twist back on itself. Leave bundles with uncut ends to make a convenient loop for anchoring the end while twisting.

Edge cords (make 2),

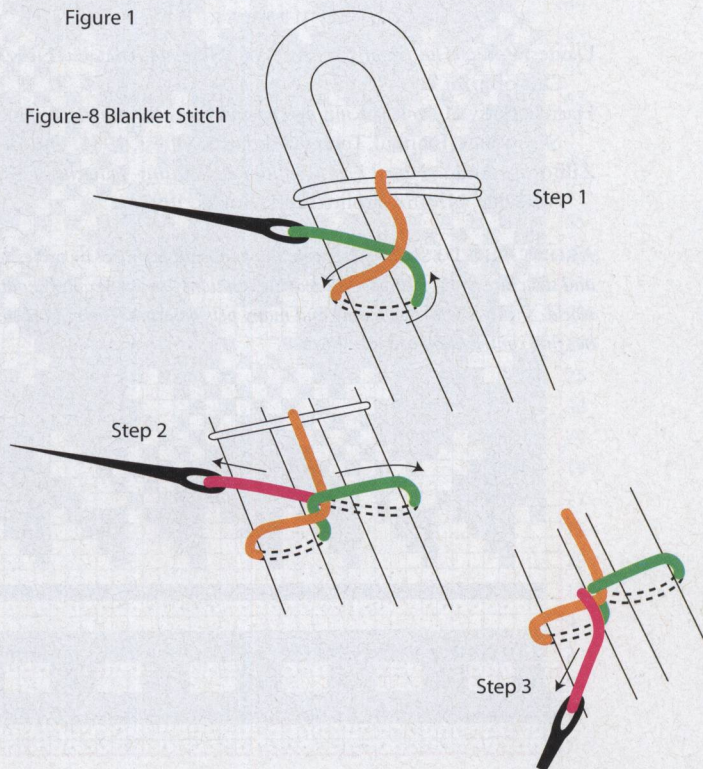
Cut 12 strands of MC, 48 inches (121.9 cm) long. Twist tightly tog and allow to twist back on itself. Secure twist with loose, overhand knots on both ends. These knots may need to be retied later when fitting to sides of purse.

Straps (make 2)

Cut 12 strands of MC and 2 strands CC, 60 inches (152.4 cm) long. Twist tightly tog. Secure twist by tightly wrapping ends for about ¼ inch (6 mm) with MC. Secure tails with tapestry needle through wrap to avoid bulky knots inside the purse.

Figure 1

Figure-8 Blanket Stitch



Finish the Sides

Place the purse on a flat surface. Fold the main-color edge cords in half with the loop end at the top of the purse; knotted ends will extend beyond the bottom edge of the purse. Thread the tapestry needle with a 72-inch (182.9-cm) length of contrasting color yarn; with it doubled and leaving a 6-inch (15.2-cm) tail, bring the needle through the knitting from inside the purse just level with the bottom row of contrasting-color garter stitch. Coming up through the knitting just beside the two edge stitches, loop over both cords and go back down through the knitting on the other side of the edge stitches to secure loop. Repeat, but do not pull tight. Adjust cording to create a ½-inch (1.3-cm) loop. Tighten loop stitches to secure cording. Start figure-eight stitching (see Figure 1) by bringing needle up between the two cords and over the doubled loop. Work a blanket stitch evenly along the edge with each stitch ¼ to ⅜ inches (6 to 9 mm) apart. Make certain cording remains directly over two edge stitches and periodically pull on cords to keep edging straight. Finish last stitch just above bottom of purse. Retie overhand knots, if necessary, so they line up with bottom of purse. Thread the tapestry needle with contrasting-color yarn and secure bottom of the cords with another doubled loop. Trim knots with a ½-inch (1.3-cm) tassel.

Straps

Using the tapestry needle, sew 18-inch (45.7-cm) handles 2 inches (5.1 cm) from the sides of the purse and secure inside the purse about 2 inches (5 cm) from the top. Spread out ends of cording and stitch through to inside of the purse, piercing yarns but avoiding any distortion to knitting.

FURTHER READING

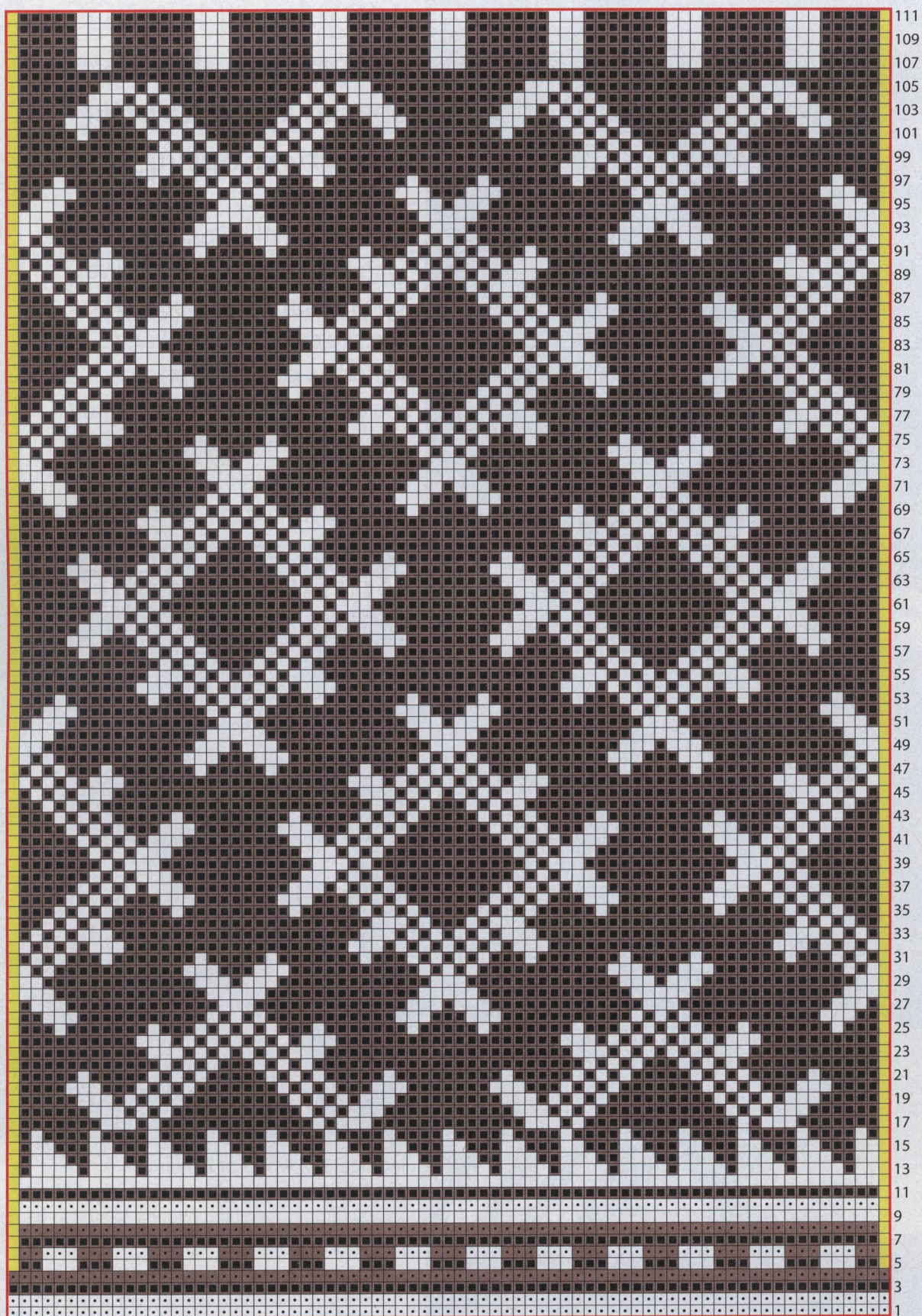
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- Harrell, Betsy. *Anatolian Knitting Designs: Sivas Stocking Patterns Collected in an Istanbul Shantytown*. Istanbul, Turkey: Redhouse Press, 1981. Out of print.
- Zilboorg, Anna. *Fancy Feet: Traditional Knitting Patterns of Turkey*. 1994. Reprint, Asheville, North Carolina: Lark Books, 1997.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Sarah Shippen is an architect by profession and finds the design and structure of our knitted and weaving creations as complex and beautiful as those in the built world. She lives with her family and many pets on a small farm in eastern Washington. This is her first contribution to PieceWork.

Key

-  with MC, k
-  with CC, k
-  with MC, p
-  with CC, p
-  with MC and CC held tog, k
-  patt rep

Purse



75-st rep

Chart may be photocopied for personal use.

Sacred Winged Messenger

A Pacific Northwest Coast

First Nations–Style Button Bag *to Make*

SANDI WISEHEART

The aboriginal peoples in Canada call themselves People of the First Nations. There are hundreds and hundreds of culturally different nations, inhabiting lands from the Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) off the coast of British Columbia to the east coast of Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritimes, and to the remote lands of the Inuit and tribes of the far north. The artwork of First Nations artists is unique, and much of it is breathtaking.



Tsimshian totem carver Casper Mather in Metlakatla, Alaska. Date unknown. Donald Burrus Photograph Collection (1917-1975) of the Alaska State Library Historical Collections. (P466-02-089-2). Photograph © Alaska State Library, Juneau, Alaska.

This button bag is both personal and traditional. It is rooted in the traditions of my own First Nations relatives, the peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast (PNWC) of Canada: the Haida, the Tlingit, the Tsimshian, the Salish, and so many others. Circumstances have erased details of my personal history, including which PNWC nation I belong to. As a fiber and bead artist, I choose to honor my ancestors by incorporating their unusual art forms into my own work and telling the stories I have to tell to those who wish to hear. For

me, as for many First Nations artists, art is story, and story is art.

In First Nations tradition, certain art forms and certain traditional stories and songs “belong” to a particular family or nation. These stories are considered family treasures, and it is the height of rudeness to tell a story that is not yours and that has not been formally gifted to you. The traditions that I know were passed down to me orally from elders or other people whom I respect. If I unwittingly have told a story that actually belongs to



Tlingit dancer in ceremonial headdress and button shirt with frog emblem, holding dancing staff and standing in front of a log wall with hanging button blanket. Wrangell, Alaska. 1896-1913. Winter and Pond Collection (1893-1913) of the Alaska State Library Historical Collections. (P87-0205).

Photograph © Alaska State Library, Juneau, Alaska.

you and to your family's nation, I apologize; I meant no offense. If you contact me, perhaps we can find a way to honor your family's story for all the generations.

At my wedding, the best man and best woman wrapped my spouse and me in a traditional button blanket, just as would have been done in a traditional Haida or PNWC ceremony. After looking at that blanket for years, I've always wanted to make one of my own design. I was thrilled when *PieceWork* asked me to make a sacred bag from my own heritage, and I chose to base it on the button blanket. I was also nervous, wanting to do justice to this vibrant art form that is now being taken on by the next generation. This bag highlights three art forms, each honoring a different tradition: appliqué, formline, and button designs.

It is said that peoples of the PNWC kept warm in the "old days" by wrapping themselves in the wool

trade blankets sold to them by trappers and traders. These blankets were plain—solid navy blue, solid red, perhaps with a white stripe or two— but their wearers quickly devised ways to decorate them. The nearby Chilkat Nation already had a tradition of weaving huge capes with stylized faces woven into them; they used vertical looms and wove with mountain goat hair, cedar bark, and perhaps even the fur of now-extinct small white dogs that produced soft but strong fiber. Neighboring nations, including the Haida and the Tlingit, using the Chilkat designs as inspiration, started sewing on bits of cloth (often scraps from other trade blankets), layered and embellished appliqué style; in doing so, they developed a unique art form known as formline design.

You may have seen examples of formline on totem poles and carvings in Seattle and Vancouver. It is a highly disciplined drawing/carving/painting technique in which the "formline" is the heavy black outlining done to contain the forms within. Designs are created with variants of two basic shapes: ovoids and a U-shaped motif with flared ends. The ovoids, which represent the feminine, have a slightly flattened bottom, straight sides, and a curved top; the U shapes represent the masculine. Using both guarantees balance in the story. Together with other elements, the designs are combined to produce representations of animal ancestors familiar to the PNWC peoples: Bear, Wolf, Turtle, Frog (whose Native name means "Crab of the Forest"), Eagle, Raven, Dogfish, and so on. Anyone familiar with the underlying meaning of these story-telling shapes can "read" the story of a totem pole, for example, and understand the message that the artist was trying to convey.

Hummingbird, the animal represented on the project bag, is often referred to as a messenger sent directly from the Creator. If you see a hummingbird, it is a holy event, to be acknowledged with a prayer along the lines of, "I'm listening, Creator God."

The design shown on the back of the bag represents one of the Seven Grandfathers who teach the way to live. This one is Sabe (called "Bigfoot" by the European settlers). He is known as The Eye of the Forest (see the giant eye on the back of the bag) and encourages us to strive for honesty in all that we do.

Decorating garments with small shiny objects is part of nearly every clothed culture. Among the PNWC, large, shallow, bowl-like abalone shells with their inner surface of iridescent blue/greens gorgeous enough to



Sandi Wiseheart's button bag is based on the button blanket traditions of the peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast. The front shows the hummingbird appliqué. Photograph by Joe Coca.

break your heart were the source of some of their most prized decorations. Sometime in the mid-1800s, traders began to offer the natives the mother-of-pearl buttons being sold by the thousands in Victorian England and throughout Canada. The source of these two-hole, white, pink, black, or gray buttons was the iridescent inner shell of several kinds of mollusk native to other shores, not the abalone shells found on the Pacific Coast. The tiniest and whitest of these are referred to as "Victorian underwear buttons": they were the only sort of fastener that a well-dressed young lady would wear close to her skin.

The PNWC peoples bought many, many of these buttons, as well as continuing to carve their own. They had discovered that a beautiful effect could be achieved by outlining a formline design on fabric with dozens of matching small white buttons, sewn on by hand. In the late 1800s, most of these button garments and blankets were being made using combinations of black, red, white, navy, and brown wool felt, with the most common combinations being black, red, and white.

To stay as traditional as possible, I wanted to use only real shell buttons on my bag (no acrylic!), choosing buttons of about the same size and color and with two holes

rather than four. Oh, yes: I needed hundreds of them. I put out a call to my online community, and within weeks, I had hundreds of vintage shell buttons from all over the world. True to the spirit of the piece, it seemed that each offering of buttons came with a story.

One woman had cut her buttons off lovely dresses that her mother had made before sending the clothing to the thrift store. At a craft group that I attend, another woman opened her button box, and we spent more than an hour going through the buttons, listening to her tell stories about them, the clothing they had graced, and the memories some of them brought back to her. Still another woman gave me two brass buttons from the uniform of a male relative who had fought for Canada in the Great War (World War I, 1914–1918); they're on the back of the bag, marking the handle placements. To honor all the donors and their families, I tried to use at least one button from each one's collection somewhere on the bag.

The women who shared their buttons with me also shared part of their hearts. I took those heart-stories, combined them with my own stories, chose nontraditional, contemporary colors to carry the story forward into the next generation, and created a bag full of messages and

stories, a bag to hold the sacred within us and to carry it high as our hopes and back again, full of the wisdom of our revered grandfathers and grandmothers.

INSTRUCTIONS

Bag

To prepare the felt, use a steam iron to “preshrink” each felt square before laying out the templates or cutting to ensure a consistently thick felted material. Use the iron’s wool setting and steam both sides of each felt square. Do not press down hard unless there are serious wrinkles. Allow to dry and cool thoroughly.

To create the pattern templates for the front panel, place a sheet of template plastic or tracing paper over the designs and using the permanent marker, trace every element of the designs separately on the cutting lines. There is no need to leave a seam allowance on any of these template pieces. With sharp scissors, cut out, and label each piece.

Place the template for each color on the appropriate felt square. Arrange the template pieces close together to use the least amount of felt. Put the felt cut-outs and the corresponding templates in small plastic bags or other container.

To appliqué the pieces to the background felt, use the pattern template as a guide. Lay out the largest felt pieces and lightly mark the placement for the hummingbird and flower on 1 square of White felt with the pencil. With 3 strands of floss in a color to match the felt appliqué piece, sew the piece to the background square, using short running stitches very close to the edge of the pattern piece. Stitch completely around each pattern piece and secure thread on wrong side. Repeat this process for all the remaining pieces.

To outline the appliqué pieces, thread the larger needle with 3 strands of #310 floss (the outline thread) and the smaller needle with a single strand of #310 floss (the couching thread). Place the outline thread as close to the edge of the felt pieces as possible. Using the couching thread, take small stitches at even intervals into the fabric over the outline thread.

To make the border for the front panel, cut 4 strips 1½ by 12 inches (3.8 × 30.5 cm) each from the square of Rhubarb felt. Lay the strips along the 4 outer edges of the White felt square with the outer edges of each aligned. Using 3 strands #718 floss and running stitches, sew the strips around the background square. The ends will overlap each other; one end is on top of an adjoining strip,

MATERIALS

Dimensions Wool Felt, 100% wool fabric, 12 × 12 inches (30.5 × 30.5 cm)/square: 4 squares of Midnight Blue #73354; 2 squares each of White #73436, Spruce #73351, Rose #73347 (Medium Pink), Rhubarb (Dark Pink) #73356; and 1 square of Aqua #73353; www.eksuccessbrands.com
Fabric, for lining, cotton or cotton blend, Light Blue or solid color to match bag colors, ½ yard (0.5m)
DMC Embroidery Floss, 100% cotton 6-strand thread, 8 meters (8.7 yd)/skein, 1 skein each of #718 Plum, #3685 Very Dark Mauve, #904 Very Dark Parrot Green, #3866 Ultra Very Light Mocha Brown, #597 Turquoise, and White; 2 skeins each of #310 Black and #3750 Navy Blue; www.dmc-usa.com
DMC Light Effects Floss, 100% polyester 6-strand thread, 8 meters (8.7 yd)/skein, 1 skein each of #E155 Amethyst, #E718 Pink Garnet, #E3747 Sky Blue, #E703 Light Green Emerald, and #E3849 Aquamarine; www.dmc-usa.com
Grosgrain ribbon, Navy Blue, 1½ inches (3.8 cm) wide, 1¼ yards (1.1 m)
John James Needles, embroidery, sizes 5 and 8; www.colonialneedle.com
Quilter's Template Plastic or tracing paper, 2 sheets
Permanent marker
Pencil
Cord, color to coordinate with bag, 6 inches (15.2 cm), for fastener loop
Buttons, mother-of-pearl, two-holed, ⅛ to 1¼ inches (0.3 to 3.2 cm) in diameter; 260–300 in the following sets: 1 set of 2 matching ⅜ inch (0.9 cm) in diameter for the front panel; 1 set of 75 matching ⅜ inch (0.9 cm) in diameter for the back; 1 set of 50 matching ⅜ inch (0.9 cm) in diameter for the handles; 4 heart-shaped ½ inch (1.3 cm) in diameter for front corner motifs; 2 ¼ inch (6 mm) or smaller in diameter for eye and flower center; an assortment of 60–75 larger in various shapes and sizes

Finished size: 12 × 12 × 4 inches (30.5 × 30.5 × 10.2 cm), excluding handles

and the second end is underneath the adjoining strip on the other side. Using 3 strands of #3750 floss and blanket stitches, sew along the inside edges of each strip. Do not stitch down the corners where the strips overlap. Using 3 strands of a floss color to match the motif and small running stitches, appliqué each corner motif to the corners of the borders.

To embroider the embellishments: Using 2 strands of #310 floss and stem stitches, work the 3 stamens on top of the flower, leaving the small triangular ends of each with a small open space in the center. Using 2 strands of #310 floss and straight stitches, work the 3 tiny open triangles in a horizontal line on the tail. Using 2 strands of #310 floss and stem stitches, work the line in the beak. Using 3 strands of Light Effects #E703 floss and satin

stitches, work the small center designs on the wings, body, tail, and topknot on head. Using a combination of 1 strand each of Light Effects #E718, #E155, and #E3849 floss and satin stitches, to fill in the centers of the stamens on the large flower.

Choose 52 matching $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (0.9-cm) diameter buttons for the borders of the front panel; 4 heart-shaped buttons for the corner motifs, and 1 large 1-inch (2.5-cm) flower button for the closure at the top. Use a second, smaller button as a shank underneath the flower button.

Starting at the lower left corner motif and using 2 strands of #718 floss, sew 1 heart-shaped button on top of the corner motif. Sew a line of buttons evenly along the center line of the pink strips, spacing the buttons about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (0.6 cm) apart and with the button holes aligned horizontally. Continue in this manner around the borders until arriving at the center of the top border. Firmly attach the double shank button by sewing the flower button on top of the smaller shank button and putting the needle through the corresponding holes on both buttons. Continue attaching smaller buttons around the pink strips and heart-shaped buttons at the corners. Next, choose several buttons of various shapes and sizes. Using 2 strands of White floss, sew them randomly on the white background, filling in large spaces.

Select a full square of Midnight Blue felt for the back and cut another Midnight Blue square into thirds to form the two side panels and the bottom of the bag. Lay various buttons on the back panel until pleased with the appearance. Using 2 strands of #3750 floss, begin sewing on the buttons, starting with the outer border and then filling in the “frame” with the rest.

Cut 4 strips $1\frac{1}{2}$ by 12 inches (3.8 by 30.5 cm) each from 1 Midnight Blue square for the handles. Using 2 strands of #3750 floss, sew buttons evenly spaced along the centerline of each handle, omitting the first and last inch of each strip. Arrange buttons in this order: 7 small round, 1 heart, 7 small round, 1 medium round, 1 large flower, 1 medium round, 7 small round, 1 heart, 7 small round. Cut the grosgrain ribbon into 2 equal lengths. Overlap the ends of 2 felt strips for 1 inch (2.5 cm) and using 3 strands of #3750 floss, sew around this overlap. Using 2 strands of #3750 floss, sew ribbon to one side of the handle. Repeat for second handle. Securely stitch the undecorated ends of one handle to the inside of the front panel, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (3.8 cm) from the outer edges. Repeat for the other handle on the back panel.



Sandi Wiseheart used about 300 buttons for her bag. The design shown on the back of the bag represents one of the Seven Grandfathers, known as The Eye of the Forest, who encourages us to strive for honesty in all that we do.

Photograph by Joe Coca.

Knot each end of the closure cord and securely sew these ends to the inside of the center of the back panel, adjusting the length so the cord can loop around the front flower closure button.

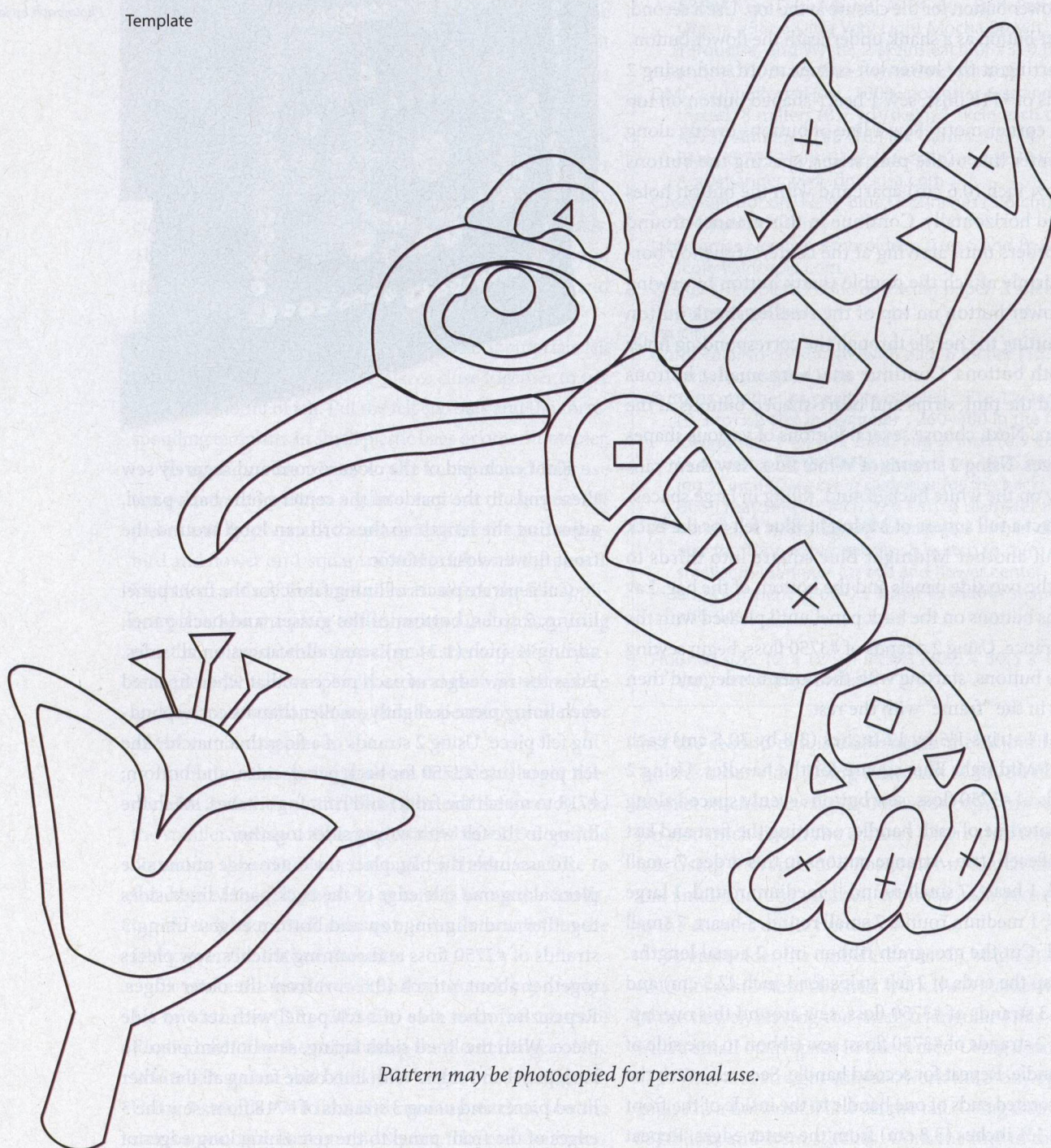
Cut separate pieces of lining fabric for the front panel lining, 2 sides, bottom of the gusset, and back panel, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (1.3-cm) seam allowances on all sides. Press the raw edges of each piece so that when finished each lining piece is slightly smaller than its corresponding felt piece. Using 2 strands of a floss that matches the felt piece (use #3750 for back panel, sides, and bottom; #718 to match the front) and running stitches, stitch the lining to the felt with wrong sides together.

To assemble the bag, place the outer edge of one side piece along one side edge of the back panel, lined sides together and aligning top and bottom edges. Using 3 strands of #2750 floss and running stitches, sew pieces together about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (0.6 cm) from the outer edges. Repeat for other side of back panel with second side piece. With the lined sides facing, sew bottom piece to back panel and sides. With lined side facing all the other lined pieces and using 3 strands of #718 floss, sew the 3 edges of the front panel to the remaining long edges of the 2 sides and bottom.

Finishing

Sew a tight blanket stitch along all the top edges, using 3 strands of #3750 floss. Blanket-stitch tightly over all remaining edges.

Template



Pattern may be photocopied for personal use.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. *Sandi Wiseheart, former founding editor of Knitting Daily and former managing editor of Interweave Knits, now lives near Toronto, Canada, and does custom fiber work and jewelry, which is really just another way of saying she plays with wool and beads most days, between article writing and technical editing. Her three cats provide her with suitable supervision throughout the day.*

ABBREVIATIONS

beg—begin(s); beginning
BO—bind off
CC—contrasting color
ch—chain
cir—circular
cn—cable needle
CO—cast on
cont—continue(s); continuing
dc—double crochet
dec(s) (‘d)—decrease(s); decreased;
decreasing
dpn—double-pointed needle(s)
foll—follow(s); following
hdc—half double crochet
inc(s) (‘d)—increase(s); increased;
increasing
k—knit
k1b—knit 1 in back of stitch
k1f&b—knit into the front and back of
the same stitch—1 stitch increased
k2b—knit 2 in back of next 2 stitches
kwise—knitwise; as if to knit
k2tog—knit 2 stitches together
k3tog—knit 3 stitches together
k5tog—knit 5 stitches together
lp(s)—loop(s)
m(s)—marker(s)
MC—main color
M1—make one (increase)
M1k—increase 1 by knitting into the
front and then the back of the same
stitch before slipping it off the left-
hand needle

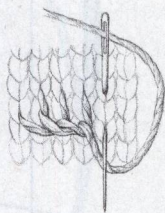
M1p—increase 1 by purling into the front
and then the back of the same stitch
before slipping it off the left-hand
needle
M1l—(make 1 left) lift the running thread
between the stitch just worked and the
next stitch from front to back, and knit
into the back of this thread
M1r—(make 1 right) lift the running
thread between the stitch just worked
and the next stitch from back to front,
and knit into the front of this thread
p—purl
p2tog—purl 2 stitches together
p3tog—purl 3 stitches together
p4tog—purl 4 stitches together
p5tog—purl 5 stitches together
p7tog—purl 7 stitches together
patt—pattern(s)
pm—place marker
prev—previous
psso—pass slipped stitch over
p2sso—pass 2 slipped stitches over
pwise—purlwise; as if to purl
rem—remain(s); remaining
rep(s)—repeat(s); repeating
rev St st—reverse stockinette stitch (p
right-side rows; k wrong-side rows)
rnd(s)—round(s)
RS—right side
sc—single crochet
sk—skip
sl—slip

sl st—slip(ped) stitch
sp(s)—space(s)
ssk—slip 1 knitwise, slip 1 knitwise, knit 2
slipped stitches together through back
loops (decrease)
sssk—slip 3 stitches one at a time as if to
knit, insert the point of the left needle
into front of slipped stitches, and knit
these 3 stitches together through their
back loops (decrease)
ssp—slip 1 knitwise, slip 1 knitwise, purl
2 slipped stitches together through
back loops (decrease)
st(s)—stitch(es)
St st—stockinette stitch
tbl—through back loop
tch—turning chain
tog—together
tr—treble crochet
ttr—triple treble crochet
WS—wrong side
wyb—with yarn in back
wyf—with yarn in front
yo—yarn over
yo twice—bring yarn forward, wrap it
counterclockwise around the right
needle, and bring it forward again to
make two wraps around the right needle
*—repeat starting point
()—alternate measurements and/or
instructions
[]—work bracketed instructions a
specified number of times

TECHNIQUES

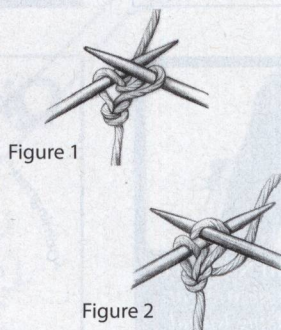
Blanket Stitch

Bring threaded needle out from back to front
at the center of a knitted stitch. *Insert needle
at center of next stitch to the right and two
rows up and out at the center of the stitch
two rows below. Repeat from *.



Knitted Cast-On

Place slipknot on left needle if there
are no established stitches. *With
right needle, knit into first stitch (or
slipknot) on left needle (Figure 1)
and place new stitch onto left needle
(Figure 2). Repeat from *, always
knitting into last stitch made.



Three-Needle Bind-Off

Also called binding two pieces together, this method seams two
pieces together (such as the front and back of a garment at the
shoulders) at the same time as the stitches are removed from
the needles.

With right sides of the two pieces facing each other and the
needles held parallel, insert a third needle knitwise into the first
stitch on each needle (Figure 1), wrap the yarn around the needle,
and knit the two stitches together (Figure 2). *Knit the next
stitch on each needle together, then slip the first stitch on the
third needle over the second stitch and off the needle (Figure
3). Repeat from *.

