The Worshipful Company of Broderers of Lochac

The Newsletter of the Embroidery Guild of the Kingdom of Lochac

From the Guildmistress

By Rowan

Greetings all

May Crown was a good event - we had lovely weather, a pleasant spot for the tourney, and both tourney field and hall were well dressed. You have probably all heard that the tourney was won by Sir Hugh the Little and Baroness Theresa Cummins. I have sent them the usual message asking what presentation piece they would like from the Company.

The May Crown comp was well subscribed, with four entries. All arrived with an entry form and documentation - well done all. Mathilde and I judged them and were well pleased with the entries and we've sent detailed feedback sheets back to each entrant.

The winner was Contarina, with an excellent dragon badge, wrought in laid gold over a padded base. Her documentation was excellent, as were her use of sources and goldwork technique - her doubled threads couched down following the elements of the dragon form and highlighting the twisted tail, muscles and wings! I've sent a pic to Jane for the website (Contarina, you might have a better one...)

Jane's badge was also very effective and should make a very fine display for Mordenvale, once you get the others back! Many people came and admired the fine display, along with the entries for the Kingdom comps. We also had a few people come and ask about embroidery, so your work has already inspired others.

I had hoped to do some grading, but ran out of time at the tourney and did not see the people who had asked at the feast, so my sincere apologies for that.

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Heraldic Goldwork Dragon by Contarina la Bianca

We also announced the winner of the previous year's championship - Constance de Coligny. We had more trouble than usual finding a clear winner, as the winners of the competitions were well spread over the company, so we considered many other factors. (Constance, Mathilde will be in touch with you to talk about a prize.)

Thinking ahead to Midwinter, the competition is Wool - on or with. Mathilde and I will both be at Midwinter and look forward to seeing a great display there too. I'm also hoping that the pieces for Alfar and Gudrun (and Aedward and Yolande too) will be ready for presentation at the event (Yes, that is a hint...)

In service to the Company and the Crown,

Rowan

Competitions AS XLI (2007)

12th Night Coronation – Beading **-** *January, 2007*

May Crown – Heraldic Embroidery **-** *May, 2007*

Midwinter Coronation – Wool (on or with) **-** *July, 2007*

November Crown – Slips (including LOG Pouch Design **-** *November, 2007*

Competitions AS XLII (2008)

12th Night Coronation – Bookbindings and Book Accessories **-** *January, 2008*

May Crown – Elizabethan Polychrome, *May 2008*

Midwinter Coronation - Extremities - embroidery on hands and feet, *July 2008*

November Crown - Applique or intarsia, *November, 2008*

Goldwork Book Covers

By Rowan Perigrynne

Embroidered book covers or bookbindings were common in the Tudor and Elizabethan times and many examples exist from this period. According to Synge (p41), these were mostly small in size and formal in design. Red velvet was the most common ground, with metal threads and sometimes seed pearls, although other combinations, such as silk and silver gilt threads on silk (Bridgeman & Drury, p42) and applied slips on velvet, are also known.

This book cover has been designed to cover my copy of an illuminated set of gospels, received as a gift some years ago. The design is based on a bible cover made for Queen Elizabeth I and bound in 1583 (Fig 1). The original example was a permanent part of the book, added in during the binding process, as was the practice at the time (Digby p96). Since my book is already bound, I have designed the piece as a slip-cover, to mimic this binding process.

I have used the basic design of interlaced scrolling stems and flowers, as can be seen in the original, but simplified it to fit my much smaller volume. This pattern of interlaced stems with enclosed botanical motifs is a typical of Elizabethan embroidery, both for bookbindings and in general, and some similar interlaced patterns can be seen in Figs 2 and 3.

In place of the original Tudor roses and eglantines, I have used a variety of motifs - rose, strawberry, acorn, and pomegranate. These motifs, and their variety within the one design, were common in contemporary embroideries and gave me the chance to try out a number of goldwork techniques and textures. Figs 2 - 4 show examples of these motifs and their application during the Elizabethan period. The central cinquefoil is not common in Elizabethan embroidery, but it is the main charge of my device, as the rose was the badge of Elizabeth.

The base fabric is of red silk velvet, mounted on calico. The embroidery is worked in jap gold, gold thread, braided and twisted gold cord, smooth and pearled purl, with couching threads in Guterman

Figure 1 – *Queen Elizabeth's Bible (The Douce Bible), Bodlian Library, Oxford. Gold cord, silver check pearl and silk on crimson velvet. (Beck, p 141).*
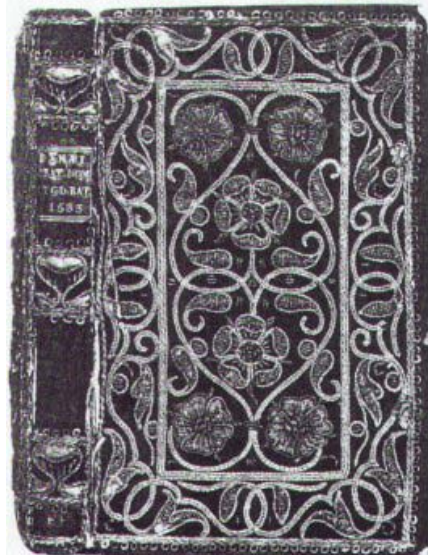

Figure 2 – *Oriatonis Dominicae Explicatio, 1583, British Museum. Gold cord, pearl and gold kid on red velvet. (Digby, pl 42)*

Figure 3 – *Cushion cover (detail), c1600, V&A Museum T.21–1923. (King & Levy, pl 36)*

silk twist. I started with pearl beads, but after contemplating the amount of work I'd invested, I have since replaced these with real seed pearls. Gold filled spangles add yet more glitter. The main charges are worked over a padding of appliquéd felt in gold or red, as appropriate to the design. Most of the work is laid gold, couched in patterns, with the border worked in braid stitch. The work has been done in a slate frame.

My aim was to try out a range of metal threads and techniques and to create something that was useful in the process. I am very pleased with the results and with the things I learned, including:

How to dress a frame for gold work – the hours of preparation time turn out to be completely worthwhile.

The value of felt padding when working on a velvet ground, to prevent the pile showing through the threads.

Figure 4 – Woman's jacket (detail), early 17thc, V&A Museum 919–1873. (King & Levy, pl 52)

Several new stitches – the braid stitch is very effective, although it is a slow process

The different qualities of the different gold threads (avoid coarse jap for fine shapes!).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Most embroidery books contain very limited detail on, or examples of, metal thread techniques, but the following proved useful:

Beck, Thomasina 1995 *The Embroiderer's Flowers*, David & Charles, UK

> Wonderful source for the use of flowers in embroidery, including Elizabeth's book cover.

Digby, George W 1963 *Elizabethan Embroidery* Faber and Faber, London

> Includes two plates of embroidered bookbindings, plus a discussion on their use in Elizabethan England.

Bridgeman, Harriet & Drury, Elizabeth 1978 *Needlework: an illustrated history*, Paddington Press, New York

King, Donald & Levy, Santina 1993 *Victoria & Albert Museum's Textile Collection: Embroidery from 1200 - 1750*, V&A, London

Lemon, Jane 1987 *Metal Thread Embroidery*, Batsford, London

> Wonderful detail on materials and techniques, and some fabulous photos.

Synge, Lanto 1982 *Antique Needlework*, Blandford Press, Dorset

Wark, Edna 1989 *Metal Thread Embroidery*, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst NSW

> This excellent book included very detailed instructions on dressing a frame.

Local Group Contacts

Being a list of possible contacts for all baronies and shires in Lochac. If there is no contact listed for your area, feel free to nominate yourself! Please contact the Guild Master to nominate.

- ❖ Agaricus
- ❖ Aneala
- ❖ Arrowsreach
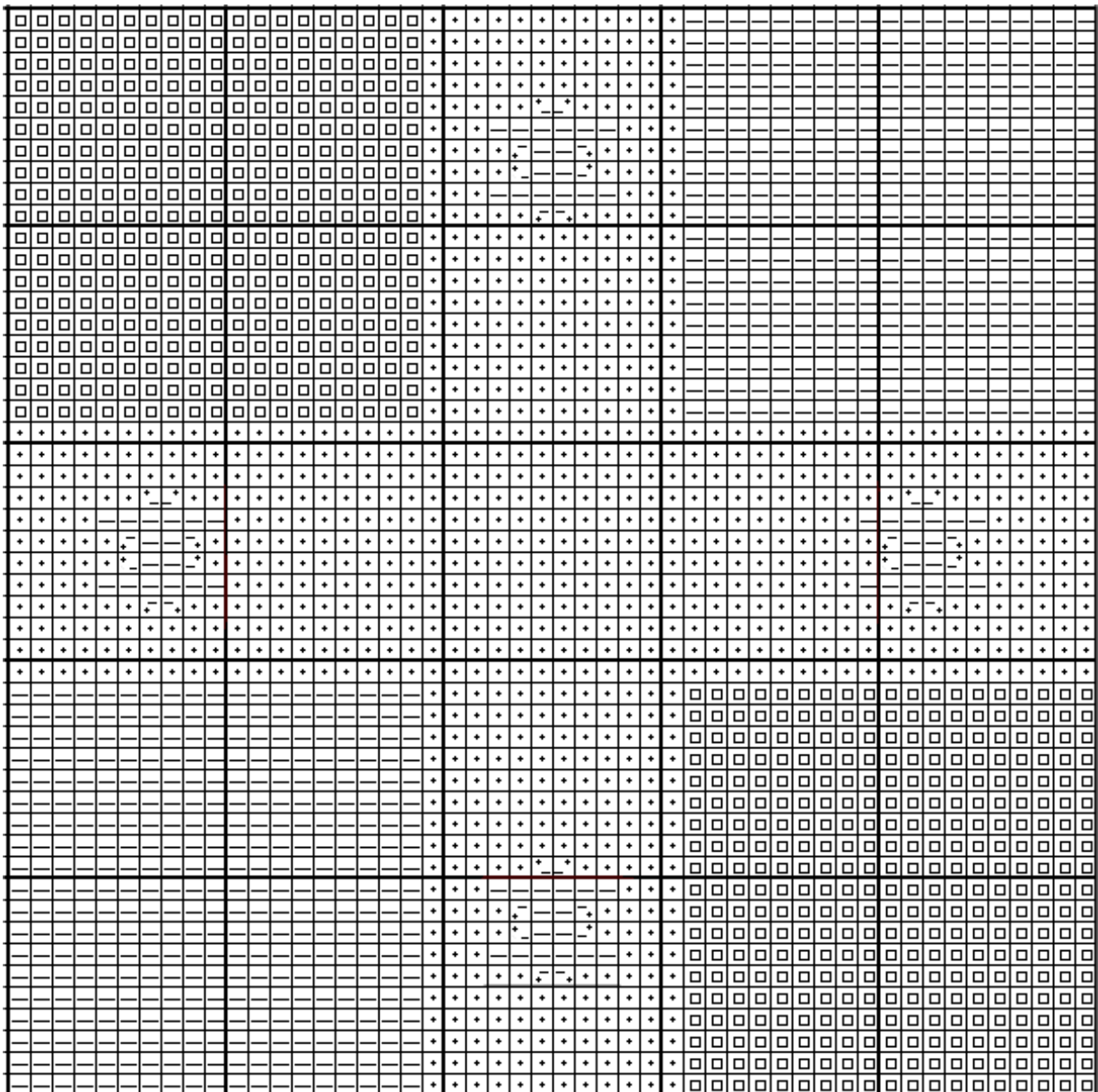- ❖ Bacchus Wood
- ❖ Bordescros
- ❖ Colles Ardorum

- ❖ Darton - *Marienna Jensdottir*
- ❖ Dismal Fogs
- ❖ Ildhafn - *Constance de Coligny*
- ❖ Innilgard
- ❖ Krae Glas
- ❖ Mordenvale - *Jane Stockton*
- ❖ Politarchopolis - *Rowan Perigrynne*
- ❖ River Haven
- ❖ Rowany - *Keridwen the Mouse*
- ❖ Saint Florian de la Riviere
- ❖ Southron Gaard
- ❖ Stormhold
- ❖ Torlyon
- ❖ Ynys Fawr

Populace Badge Patterns

☐ Blue   – White   + Red

From the Chronicler

By Jane Stockton

Below, I'm going to list some questions. If you take the time to answer the questions, we will have the basis of an article for the newsletter. If you want to write the whole piece yourself, that's great, but if you would like some help, that is fine too, as I'd love to help!

- ❖ What project are you working on?
- ❖ What is it for? (something to finish the perfect outfit,?competition entry? just something to learn a new technique?)
- ❖ What materials are you using? Why?
- ❖ How long have you been working on it and how long do you estimate you have to go to completion?
- ❖ Have you had any problems?
- ❖ Have you had any victories?
- ❖ Would you do anything differently next time?
- ❖ Are you enjoying working on the project?

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Guild Contacts

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Subscription Information

The Worshipful Company of Broderers newsletter is published four times a year to coincide with the four main Kingdom events in the Lochac calendar:

- ❖ • May Crown Tourney
- ❖ • Midwinter Investiture (July)
- ❖ • November Crown Tourney
- ❖ • 12th Night Investiture (January)

This newsletter is provided free of charge and issues of the newsletter can either be collected at the four events listed above, posted to those who are unable to attend, or sent via email. In order to keep the cost to the Patron at a minimum, a minimal donation of $2.00 (or four 50c stamps) to cover the cost of postage would be appreciated, but isn't mandatory.

Electronic copies of the newsletter sent via email are sent as pdf (Adobe Acrobat) files.

Please address any address corrections or changes, email subscription changes or general subscription queries to the Chronicler.

To receive the newsletter please send the following details to the Chronicler (contact details above):

Mundane Name:
SCA Name:
Address:
State:
Postcode:
Email address:

I would like to receive the newsletter by:
email   /   post

Worshipful Company of Broiderers
Competition Entry Form

Please complete and submit with your entry.

EVENT: (circle)   12th Night   May Crown   Midwinter

EVENT: (circle)   12th Night   May Crown   Midwinter
November Crown

LOCATION & DATE:

NAME OF COMPETITION:

NAME/DESCRIPTION OF ENTRY:

ARTISAN'S SCA NAME:

MUNDANE NAME:

CONTACT DETAILS: Phone:

Email or Address:

I GIVE PERMISSION for photos of my entry to be placed on the WCoB Website (please sign):

DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED: YES/NO

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ENTRY:

Entries will be judged on documentation, use of sources, technique, use of materials and presentation as they pertain to the period style of the piece.