



Blackwork Journey Blog

January 2019

Happy New Year

TINY TREASURES[®]
Rectangle - Part 4



Welcome to 2019 Another year, another challenge!

Once Christmas is over I look forward to the New Year, often with mixed feelings. Sadness for yet another year over and anticipation for whatever 2019 holds. I know it will involve several journeys overseas to explore new countries and a visit our family in the States and also be another chapter in the Blackwork Journey story.

At the end of every year, I look back over past events carefully and decide what I am going to change in the coming twelve months. I have quite a heavy teaching schedule for 2019 and look forward to meeting new embroiderers through my classes and especially through my Blackwork Journey website and Facebook groups.

In 2018, Blackwork Journey was ten years old and has developed more than my wildest expectations could have ever imagined. The projects and designs were well received and the membership continues to grow. I feel we are part of a worldwide community sharing the same interests and aspirations. I have enjoyed creating new designs for the site, books and magazines and for the many day schools.

As readers you have challenged and encouraged, supported and commented, making my job both interesting and satisfying. The photographs you have sent in over the past year have been really inspiring, whether they are from those new to embroidery or from very experienced members.

The input from groups worldwide who are working my designs has been really special and I am very happy to work directly with groups at any time.

Thank you for all you added to my life in 2018 and let's see what we can achieve in the coming year!

What's on in 2019?

National Museum of Scotland Embroidered Stories Scottish Samplers from 26 October 2018 to 21 April 2019

I recently visited Edinburgh and took the time to attend an exhibition of embroidered samplers at the National Museum of Scotland. Whilst I was not allowed to take photographs, there is a video link which I have included so that you too can share this exhibition.

Get an insight into the lives of children in the 18th and 19th centuries through this unique collection of Scottish samplers on loan from the American collector Leslie B. Durst.

Made by girls and occasionally boys, usually as part of their education, samplers are small pieces of needlework containing information about a person's education, family, religion and interests. This collection of 70 samplers is a touching personal record of children's lives, made by hand in their formative years and recording the things most dear to them.



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Scottish samplers are unique in that they often include the initials of extended family members and details of the place where the person lived. This has allowed collector Leslie Durst to identify the makers through genealogical research, often revealing surprising personal histories.

Through the stories, they tell and the research behind them, this collection of sampler charts changes in morality, education and the industrialisation of Scottish society, while also providing a fascinating insight into women's history.

Generously on loan from the Leslie B. Durst Collection.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/national-museum-of-scotland/whats-on/embroidered-stories-scottish-samplers/>



This alphabet sampler has been left unfinished. It is one of a collection of samplers created by the Swan and Ballingal families © Leslie B. Durst Collection



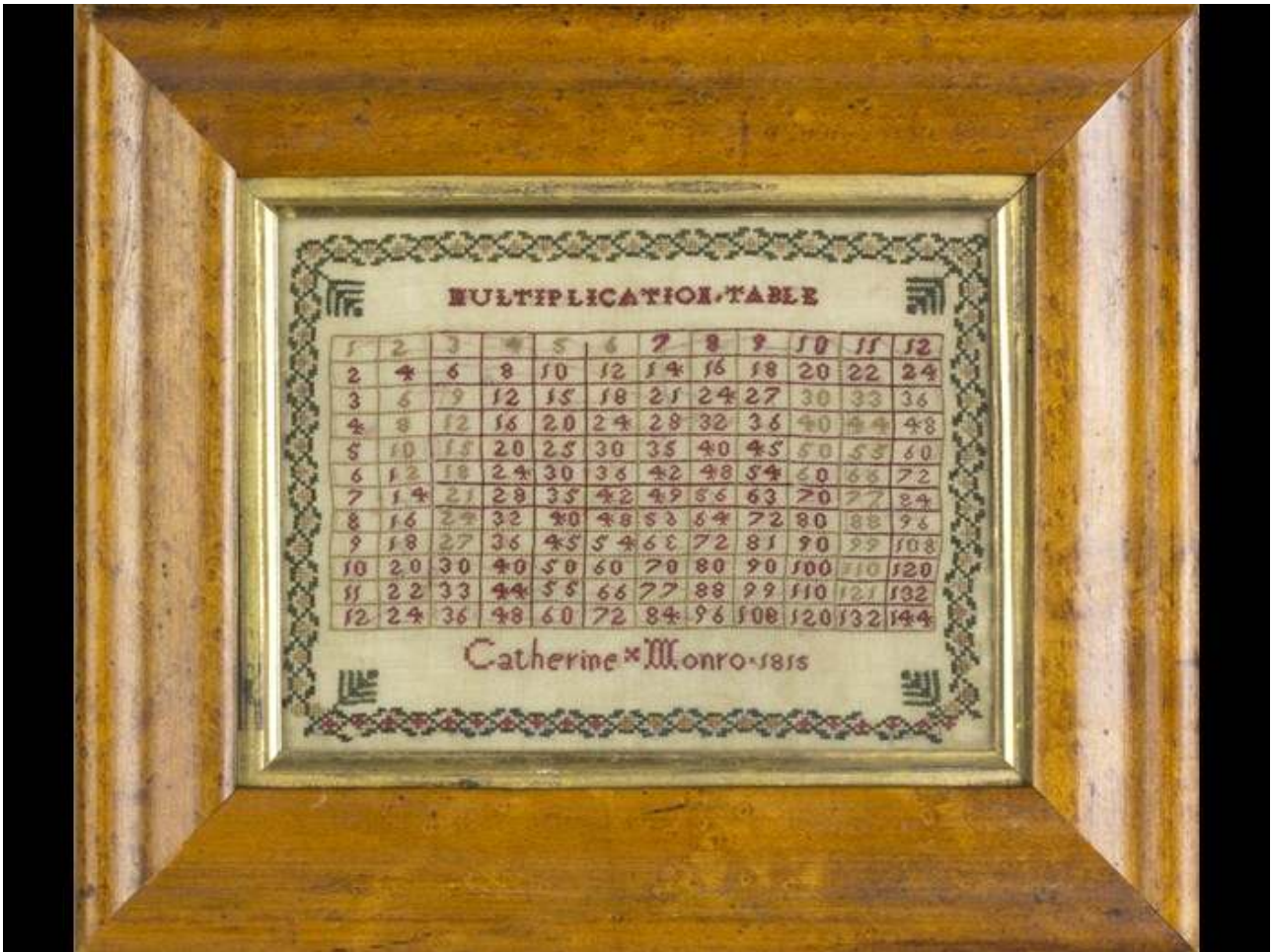
Maern Kedglie, from Inveresk, represented the neighbouring town of Musselburgh in her sampler, using the town's coat of arms of three anchors and three mussels. Leslie B. Durst Collection ©



These are just three of the samplers, but there are many more to look at online including a video article on:

[Scottish Samplers with Leslie B Durst](https://youtu.be/1KrOsTBBg7Y)

<https://youtu.be/1KrOsTBBg7Y>



The Tables sampler really appealed to me. I am sure that by the time Catherine had finished her sampler she would have learnt her tables.

Catherine Monro's multiplication sampler reflects the type of schooling she received. © Leslie B. Durst Collection



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There is also another Sampler Exhibition on in the UK at the moment at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge UK.

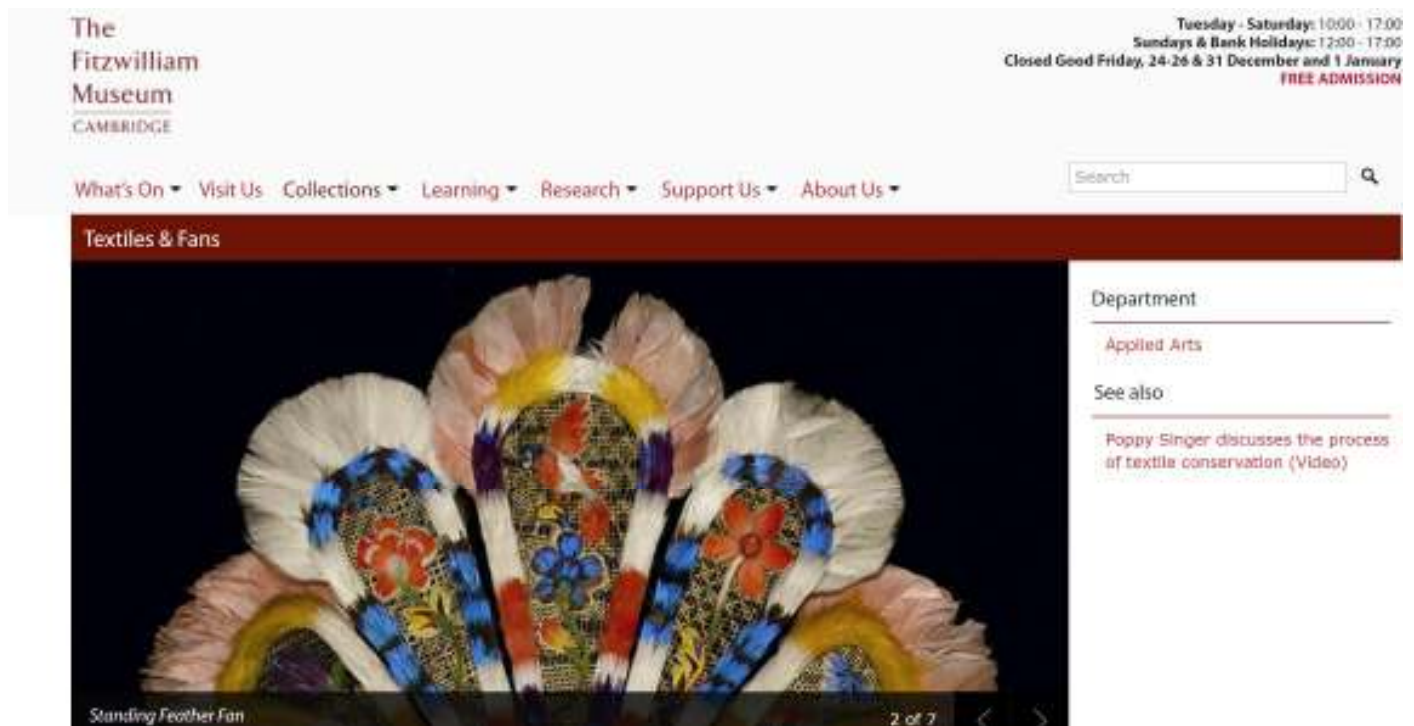
Sampled Lives: Samplers from The Fitzwilliam Museum

From: 06/05/2017 to 13/01/2019

Showcasing over 100 samplers from the Museum's excellent but often unseen collection, this display highlights the importance of samplers as documentary evidence of past lives.

These beautifully embroidered and stitched samplers illuminate the lives of girls and women, from mid-17th century English Quakers to early 20th century school pupils, encompassing their education, employment, religion, family, social status and needlework skills. The display also highlights the individuality of each sampler, which in some cases is the only surviving document to record the existence of an ordinary young woman.

<https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/collections/textiles>



The screenshot shows the website for The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The header includes the museum's name and logo on the left, and opening hours (Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00 - 17:00; Sundays & Bank Holidays: 12:00 - 17:00) and a note about being closed on Good Friday, 24-26 & 31 December and 1 January, with free admission. A navigation menu includes 'What's On', 'Visit Us', 'Collections', 'Learning', 'Research', 'Support Us', and 'About Us'. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area is titled 'Textiles & Fans' and features a large image of a 'Standing Feather Fan' with intricate embroidery. Below the image is a caption 'Standing Feather Fan' and a page indicator '2 of 7'. To the right of the image is a sidebar with 'Department: Applied Arts' and a 'See also' section with a link to a video: 'Poppy Singer discusses the process of textile conservation (Video)'.

Many museums have collections of samplers and textiles which can be explored online often with associated videos which are worth exploring.

Poppy Singer's video on textile conservation is a good example.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wi0vSJLyzjQ>

Take time out to explore your own museums and ask about the items they have in storage. I have found that it is often possible to arrange study days for individuals or groups to examine textile collections.

New Publications and Charts for 2019!

'Just Cross Stitch' February 2019 features another Blackwork Journey Design



PR0048 Extravaganza

Designed as a cushion, this pulled thread work design includes Smyrna cross bands and blackwork motifs.

This design can be found in 'Projects' on the Blackwork Journey website.

Another textured design is being designed to compliment this design.



It is possible to take extracts from this type of design and create a whole new series of embroideries as was demonstrated by Bernada's Lavender Bag. She saw the design on my Facebook group and has adapted it. Beautifully stitched and presented!

Two new samplers are also added to 'Charts' this month CH0383 Counterpoint Gold and CH0384 Counterpoint Colour.

These samplers developed from a workshop weekend where I took Margaret's ideas and created a sampler especially for her. The design can be worked as a traditional blackwork design in dark floss and metallic threads such as copper, pewter or gold or in a rich variety of colours.

CH0383 Counterpoint Gold



CH0384 Counterpoint Colour

The word counterpoint has two meanings:
1. A thing that forms a pleasing or notable contrast to something else and 2. Music: the technique of setting, writing, or playing a melody or melodies in conjunction with another, according to fixed rules.

Creating a sampler and getting the balance correct takes time and experience. The weight of the patterns have to work with each other in harmony and the chart should 'flow' from area to area. Heavy areas of

pattern should be spread across the design and not grouped together. The colours should blend with each other and the chart should be large enough to read easily.

The larger the design, the more consideration that has to be taken of the scale. Does it work as a whole? Is the pattern pleasing to the eye? 'Tiny Treasures' the large online project, expands this thinking and explores both evenweave and Aida fabric to create very different effects.



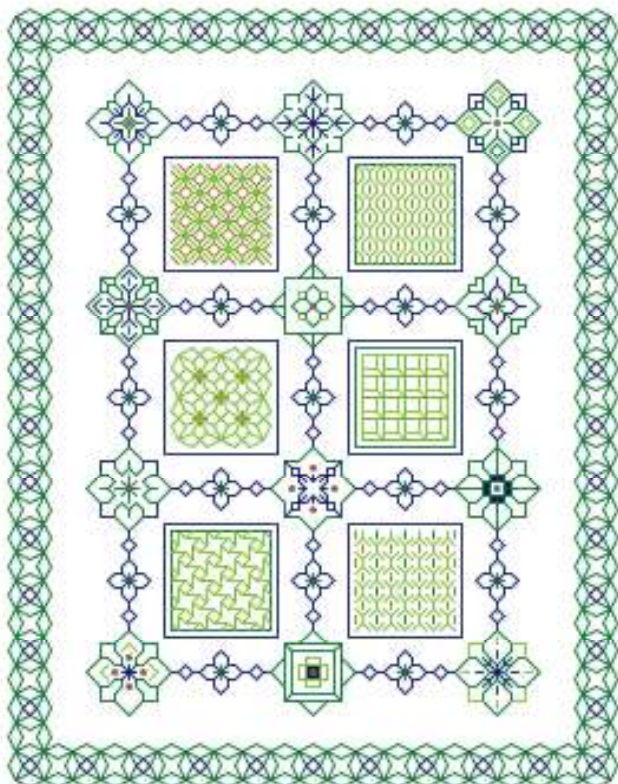
The next parts are online this month, but again a number of photographs have been posted of work in progress as well as photographs of 'Noel' which is an offshoot of the main design. These can be seen in the Facebook groups.

Elizabeth Strangeways decided to work two Mini Samplers which I think is an excellent idea for small gifts. They are beautifully stitched and framed.

TINY TREASURES[®] Square - Part 5



TINY TREASURES[®] Rectangle - Part 4



Square Part 5 and Rectangle Part 4 can be found in 'Freebies' this month along with my own Mini Sampler which I worked in shades of green and royal blue.

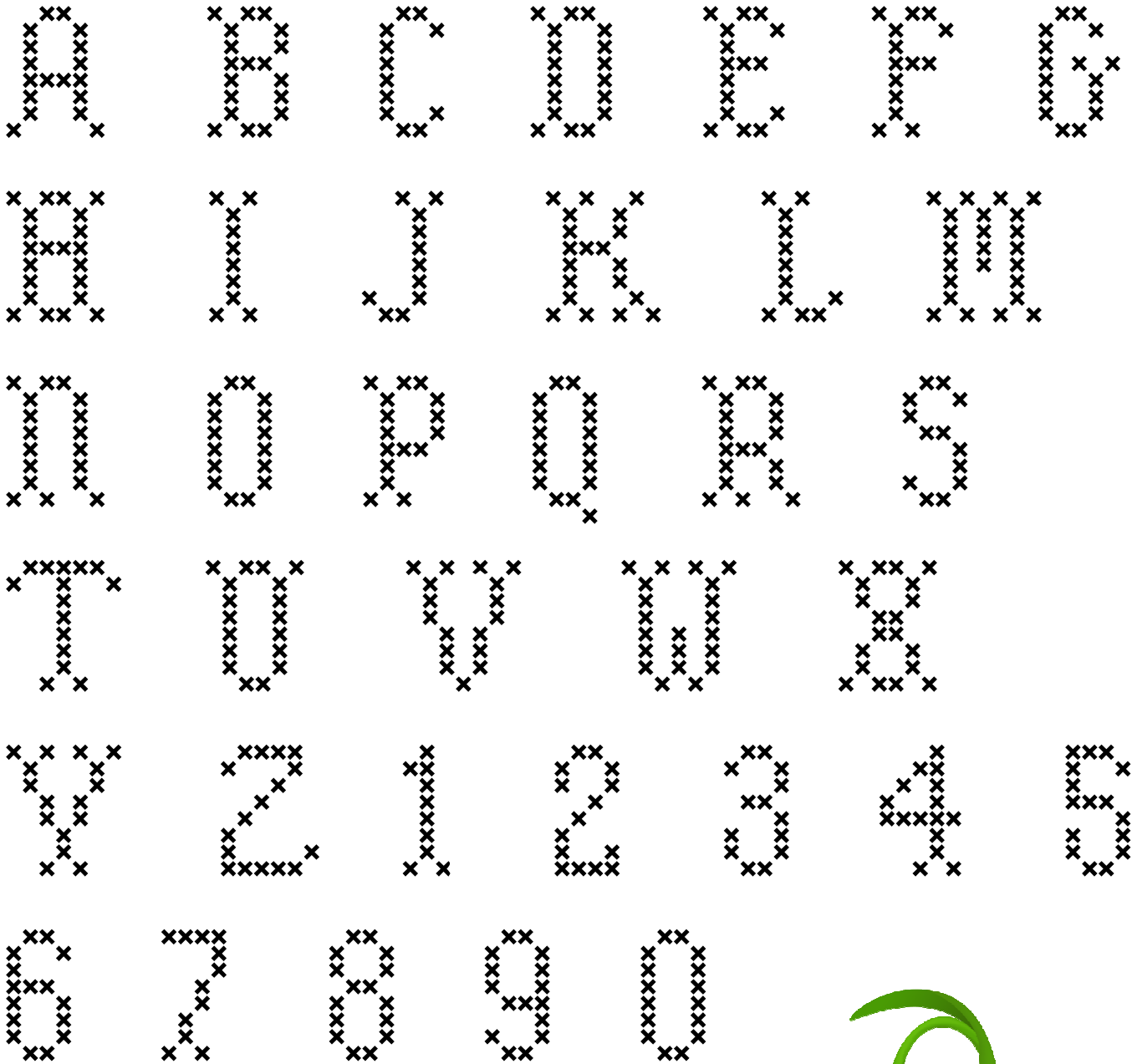
Alternative colours or variegated threads can be used and there is also a new border variation. If you look carefully at the flower motifs in CH0383 Counterpoint Gold and CH0384 Counterpoint Colour you can see some similarities. In fact, the more I study the design the more uses I can find for it.

A lavender and wheat pillow is the next idea I am considering and with the damp winter weather it could be a useful addition to ease aching joints!

Liz's Mini Sampler

Simple Cross Stitch Alphabet

If you just need a very simple alphabet to personalise your cards this one works well!



I hope 2019 is a peaceful year for all my readers and that they enjoy good health and beautiful stitching!

Liz

