



Blackwork Journey Blog

December 2017



*Happy Christmas
2017*



Create a simple Christmas Cross from Blackwork Journey to celebrate Christmas 2017



Christmas Cross

Design Area: 2.71 x 2.71 inches

Stitches: 38 x 38

Key:

Legend:

♥ [2] DMC-666 ANC-46 DLE- christmas red - br

Call Outs:

■ [2] DLE-E3821 Light Gold DMC Light Effects

Backstitch Lines:

— DMC-666 christmas red - br

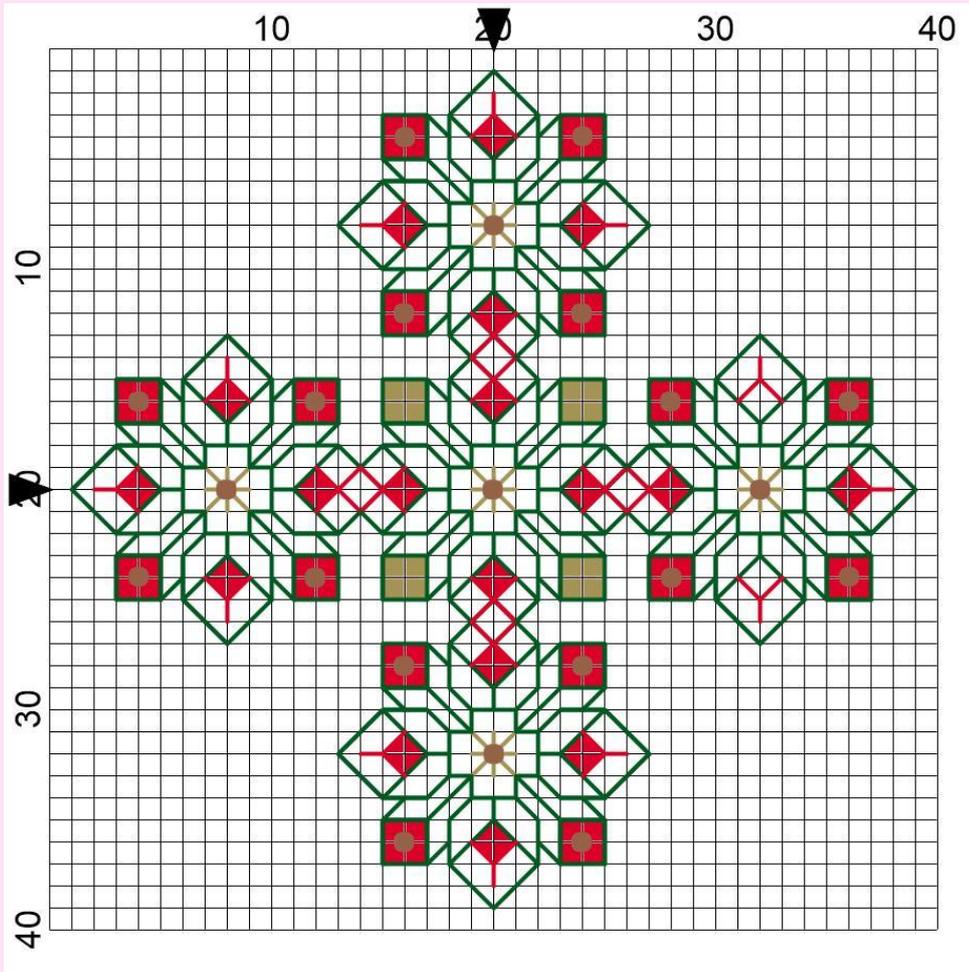
— DMC-699 christmas green

— DLE-E3821 Light Gold

Beads:

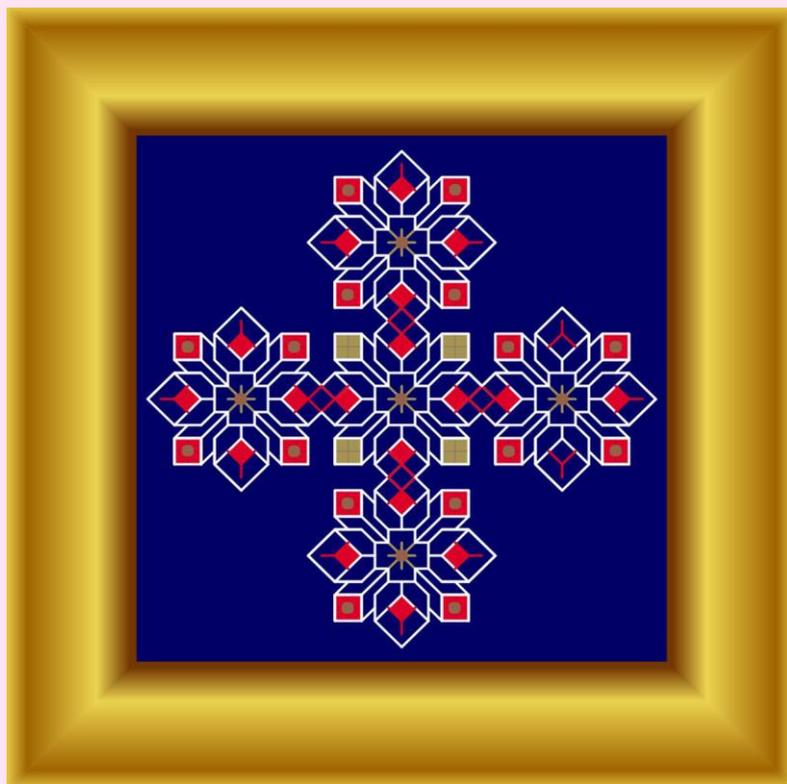
○ MHG-557 Mill Hill Glass Beads-Gold

Create a simple Christmas Cross from Blackwork Journey to celebrate Christmas 2017

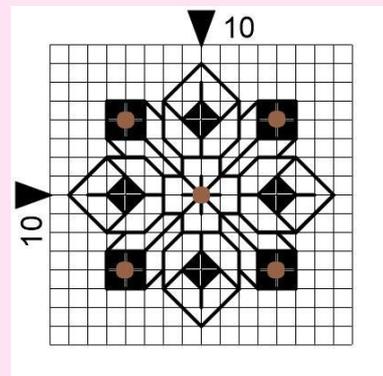


Material: Zweigart 28 count evenweave or 14 count Aida 5 x 5 inches

Threads:
DMC stranded cotton - one skein of each colour
Gold beads - optional
Tapestry needle No 24
Small ring or frame



Change the fabric to create a different effect. Increase the size of the design by adding additional motifs.



Design area: 1 x 1 inch
Stitches 14 x 14

Blackwork Journey Blog, December 2017

Another year has whizzed by and we are looking towards the festive season, the advent of winter and the close of yet another busy year in the life of Blackwork Journey and our family.

As regular readers will know, my family lives in England and the USA so a visit to San Francisco will be an annual event. To be able to combine a visit to family with meeting members of different Embroiderers Guilds, visiting new museums and embroidery shops is a delight which only a fellow needlewoman will understand.

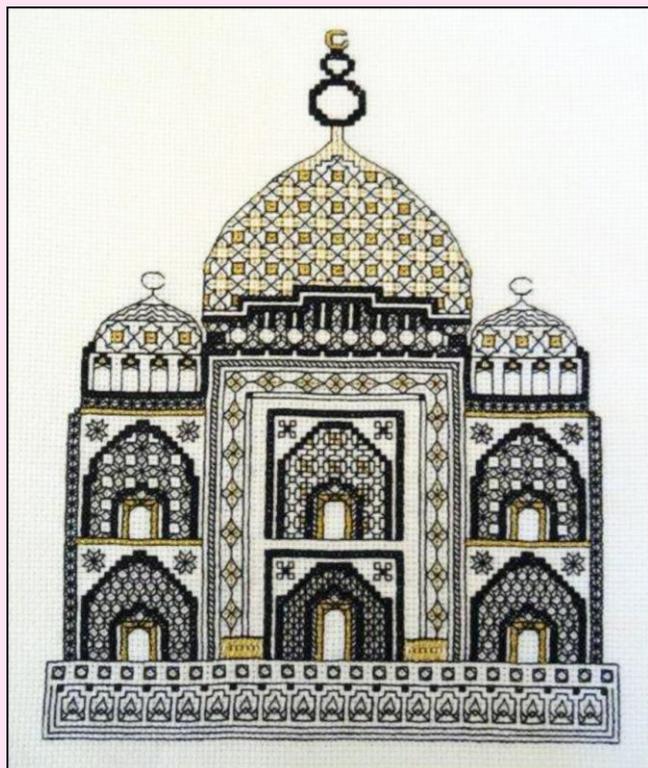
I have given talks and day schools across the UK and have a pretty full diary for 2018 and into 2019. Thank you to all the people who have attended the day schools and talks and for the enthusiasm they have shown. It is encouraging and inspiring to meet and work with so many members and I look forward to visiting more in 2018, including the Nairobi Embroiderers' Guild in Kenya and groups in America. A visit to Abu Dhabi and my favourite building the Sheik Zayid Grand Mosque is also on the calendar.

This building changed the direction of my designing and thinking about embroidery and was perhaps, one of the most defining moments of my work as a designer. The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi has been ranked as the world's second favourite landmark and I was fortunate enough to visit on the day that it opened in 2007.



The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi

<https://www.abudhabi.ae>



I have been visited at home by readers from Canada and the US and touched base with groups and members in almost every country worldwide. Google Translate has worked overtime this year and once I have worked out which language the e-mails are written in I can reply to most messages.

We have visited Malta, Poland and the USA this year and combined holiday with research into embroidery. Not only is this very enjoyable, but it gives me ideas for future designs for Blackwork Journey.

Cheryl has just completed CH0047 Delhi Mosque!

When I originally started Blackwork Journey in 2008, I never envisaged it developing into a worldwide enterprise or reaching so many people. The Facebook groups have been especially useful as they provide readers with a platform to display their Blackwork Journey embroideries and ask questions and receive information about new ideas, designs and points of interest relating to the different techniques that I use in my designs.

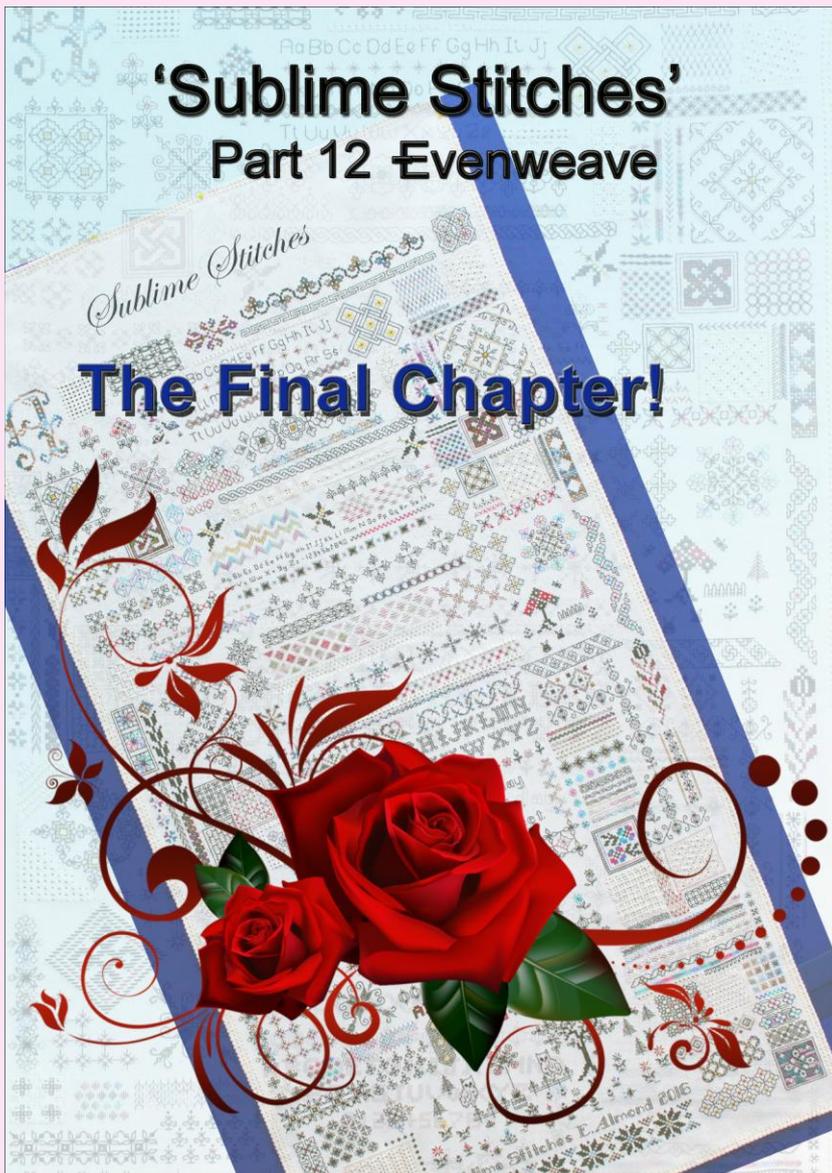
For readers new to embroidery and blackwork this is a useful forum and if I cannot answer a question often a member can! This is especially important where members cannot visit needlework groups because of location, illness etc. and in many areas embroidery groups do not exist, so the internet becomes an important source of information.

Needlework crosses countries, languages, boundaries, war zones and religions and is a uniting force for good, so long may it continue!

**'Sublime Stitches Part 12 Evenweave and Part 12 Aida, the final chapter
The end of another major project is already here and here are my thoughts on the progress of the past year!**

I designed the two samplers as a personal record of the motifs, alphabets and patterns that mean something special to me, things that I have enjoyed and wanted to research further, techniques I wanted to explore and ideas that I wanted to present to Blackwork Journey

This time last year I posted the 'Introduction' to the project and then waited to see how many readers would take up the challenge. I have been overwhelmed by the response and to see the many variations to the original design and the way they have been personalised has been fascinating.



Many embroidery stitches are used in the final parts of the design and including them in both the evenweave and Aida samplers has been a joy.

Part 12 Evenweave

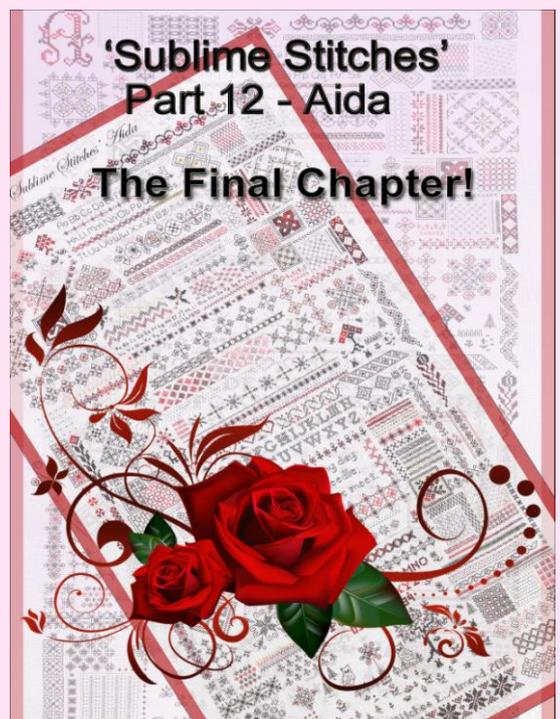
The word 'sampler' is derived from the Latin word '*exemplum*' (meaning a model, example or imitation) which is an embroidery that is stitched onto fabric allowing the needlewoman to practice her skills and learn new techniques and patterns.

Before printed pattern books were produced, samplers were often used to record stitches and patterns for reference and enable new ideas to be added.

'Sublime Stitches' was created to provide a modern twist on the traditional sampler and whilst the purpose of the sampler changed over the years, it was mainly worked by women and girls on narrow bands of fabric 6 - 9 inches wide, which were then rolled up and stored.

As fabric was very expensive, these samplers were totally covered with neat rows of stitches. They were highly valued, often being mentioned in Wills and passed down through the generations.

I would like to think that one hundred years from now your pieces of embroidery will be valued as highly as the original pieces and passed down through your families to become heirlooms of the future.



Part 12 Aida

Why have so many different techniques and stitches been introduced into 'Sublime Stitches'?

Designing a sampler of this size and complexity with so many different techniques and stitches was a challenge and as part of this process I wanted to reintroduce traditional embroidery stitches into the sampler.

The roots of our stitching lie with these traditional stitches and many of them have become overlooked in our quest for new techniques and use of mixed media. I wanted to take a fresh look at how they can be used in a modern design as I truly believe that we need to know how to use the traditional stitches and apply them to our work today.

Double knot stitch, herringbone, fly stitch, Colonial and French knots and all the pulled thread work stitches to name but a few, add variety and interest. They are not difficult to master and they can make all the difference to your work and as my gift to my readers I have attached a list of the embroidery stitches to print off and keep at the end of this Blog.

I hope you will try them out and experiment with different fabrics and threads as they can make the difference between an 'ordinary' piece of needlework and something really special.

Finishing touches!

Adding a border to a design can make all the difference to the overall effect, especially if the piece is to become a wall hanging rather than a picture



I have designed a new floral borders, corners and frames chart to compliment the larger projects.

CH0356 New Borders and Corners.

These can be added to large projects or used to create frames for smaller designs. There are 10 different floral designs, variations and frames.

It is the companion piece to **FR0109 Borders and Corners** which can be found in 'Freebies' in Blackwork Journey.

I have been thinking about adding a border to the Aida version of EB0008 'New Stitches' for some time and a floral border from CH0356 New Borders and Corners will work well on both the evenweave and Aida patterns.

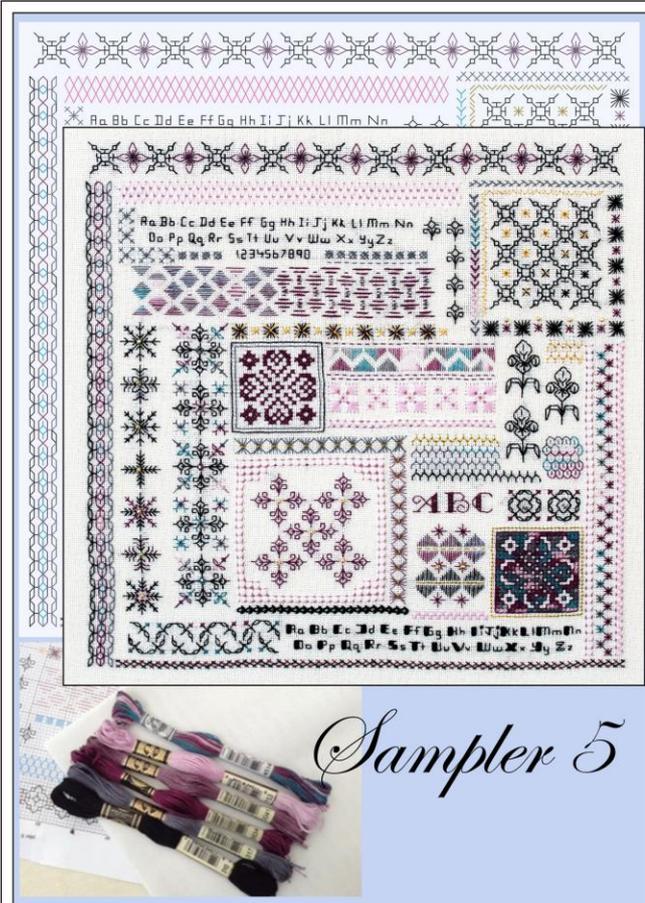
What are the smaller 'Sublime Stitches' samplers for?

As an offshoot of the project, I am producing eleven samplers for readers who want to create smaller embroideries based on the different parts of 'Sublime Stitches'.

Each sampler contains different embroidery stitches, techniques and colour schemes. Taking the motifs and patterns and building them up into complete samplers has been an interesting exercise in pattern building, balance and cohesion. I hope to present Sampler 11 in January to complete the series.



Samplers 1 - 4 are based on Parts 1 - 4



Sampler 5

CH0355 Sampler 5

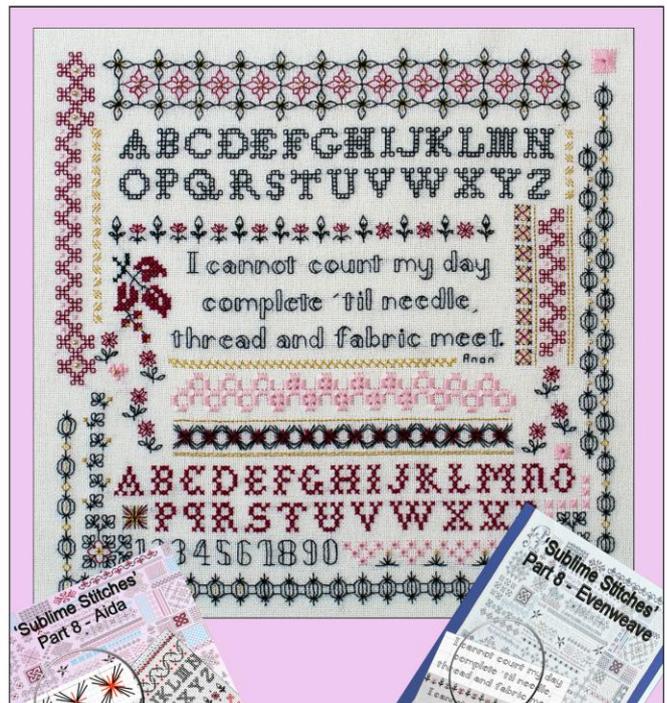


Sampler 6

CH0356 Sampler 6



CH0358 Sampler 7



CH0361 Sampler 8

Samplers 5 - 8 are based on the patterns from Parts 5 - 8



Mirka's Sampler designed for her parents

Many sections of the samplers can be used to create needlework accessories, box tops, smaller pictures, borders for table linen etc. They can also be personalised for special occasions. I have just amended Sampler 3 for Mirka in Malta who wanted to work the sampler as a gift for her parents wedding anniversary. I recharted the centre for her and she is going to stitch the design in the colours I have used.

Future ideas for Blackwork Journey 2018

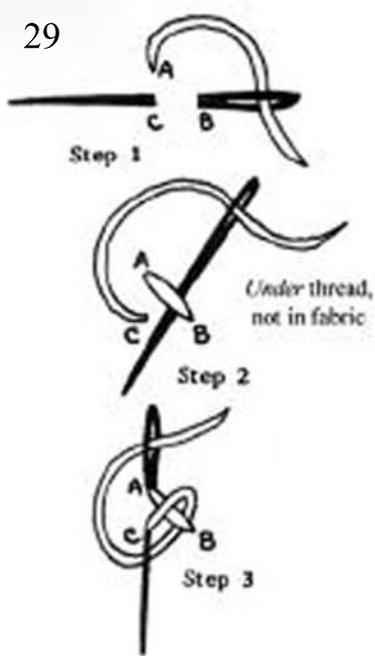
Next year, I not only be teaching abroad and meeting readers from overseas here in the UK, but I will be producing some more magazine and book designs and of course, keeping the Facebook groups and website running. I will also be exploring more kogin designs, creating another challenging project and satisfying the 'Shoeholic' in your life, so it will be another busy year. My 'to do' list seems to get longer every day!

Blackwork Journey is 10 years old in November 2018 and I want to celebrate that with you in a special way, so please keep visiting Blackwork Journey and exploring the site.

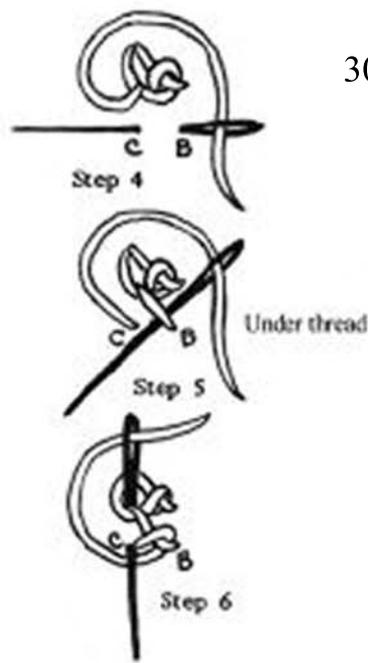
Until then, have a Peaceful and Happy Christmas and a joyful 2018!

Liz

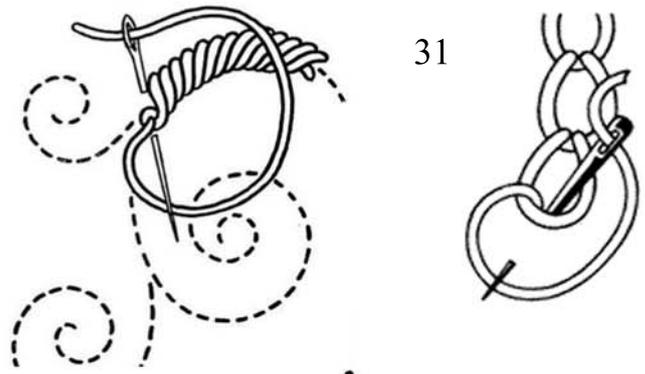
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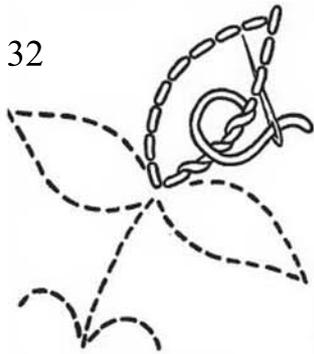
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31



32



33



These stitches can be used in all forms of embroidery including whitework and Mountmellick.

1.	Back stitch	18.	Split stitch
2.	Basket stitch	19.	Stem stitch
3.	Braid stitch	20.	Fly stitch
4.	Bullion stitch	21.	French knot
5.	Bullion flowers/leaves	22.	Leaf stitch
6.	Buttonhole	23.	Snail trail
7.	Buttonhole wheels	24.	Wheatear stitch
8.	Cable chain	25.	Trailing stitch
9.	Cable stitch	26.	Satin stitch
10.	Colonial knot	27.	Padded satin stitch
11.	Coral stitch	28.	Knotted buttonhole
12.	Couching	29.	Mountmellick stitch
13.	Double feather	30.	Whipped satin stitch
14.	Detached chain	31.	Chain stitch
15.	Double knot stitch	32.	Whipped back stitch
16.	Feather stitch	33.	Whipped stem stitch
17.	Feather stitch		

