Thistle, rose, daffodil, shamrock and a fuchsia



Five motifs using Bedfordshire lace techniques

by Jean Leader

Introduction

Original foreword 2006

Four of these motifs use single flowers or leaves, in the case of the shamrock, from the bookmarks in *Thistles, roses, daffodils and shamrocks*. The fifth one with a fuchsia flower is new. The first one, the thistle, was worked in about 1994 and the last, the daffodil, in 2003 but for various reasons it has taken me a while to get them together in a book.

Although these motifs are smaller than the bookmarks they are still not easy patterns. It really would be best to have a good knowledge of the techniques of Bedfordshire lace before attempting them. However, in the instructions I have tried to provide for the relative beginner to Bedfordshire lace. If you are experienced or have already worked the bookmarks, you can skip the first few pages. Inevitably some of the instructions from *Thistles, roses, daffodils and shamrocks* have been repeated but they are in a more compact form.

For each motif you will probably need about 60 pairs of bobbins and possibly more — it is difficult to give an exact number because pairs have to be added and removed while working. I used Madeira Tanne 50 but any similar thread such as DMC Broder Machine 50 or Brok 100/3 would be suitable. DMC Coton Perlé 12 was used as gimp.

I have shown in diagrams how I worked parts of the pattern but I am sure there are alternative ways of working. Use your initiative and work differently if you think it will look better. I worked with the right side of the lace uppermost and the instructions are written for working that way. If you want to work with the right side of the lace against the pricking you will have to make allowances for this.

Before you start I suggest that you spend some time studying the pricking and the picture. Decide where pairs need to be added, which way plaits are going etc. Draw yourself a sketch with arrows if necessary — it could well save you trouble later.

I hope you enjoy making these motifs and that perhaps they will inspire you to design some of your own.

Remarks on the electronic edition, 2025

When this book finally went out of print it was more convenient to replace it with an electronic version. Among the advantages of this is that any errors can easily be amended. The text has undergone only very minor changes, but most diagrams have been redrawn.

Printing Prickings from the electronic edition

The Kindle device or app in which you will be reading this electronic book does not allow pages to be printed. This may be a reasonable measure to prevent piracy, but it poses a problem for lacemakers who need to make a physical copy of a pricking in order to work a pattern. The solution to this problem adopted here is the provision of an external links to web pages containing printable versions of each of the prickings. Just click or tap on the pricking and your web browser will open at the appropriate page from which you can print it. Each web page specifies the dimension of the pricking, so that you can adjust the print size if necessary. Should you encounter any problems, however, you may contact me at thistlemotifs@jeanleader.net or through my website at www.jeanleader.net.

General Instructions

These are applicable to all the motifs. I have not described how to work square and leaf-shaped tallies — you really need to practice them in a simpler piece before starting any of these motifs. If you are familiar with Bedfordshire lace then you will already know most of the techniques described below but I have included them for easy reference.
In some diagrams 1 line = 1 thread, in others 1 line = 1 pair.

False picot

Hang two pairs inside each other rainbow style, twist each pair three times and work a cloth stitch and twist.



Left-hand picot



Right-hand picot



Double picot

When picots are opposite each other on a plait, work the one which seems higher first, then work a half stitch with the plait pairs, followed by the second picot.



Windmill crossing

This is used where two plaits or tallies cross. Treat pairs as single threads and work a 'cloth stitch' with a pin at the centre.

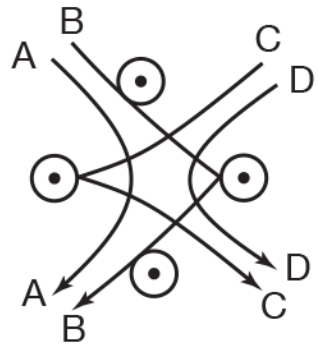


Blossom crossing

I used this method where pair B makes three of the picots:

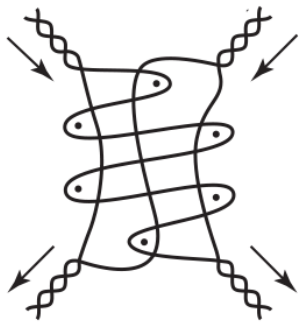
Marked: 

Worked:

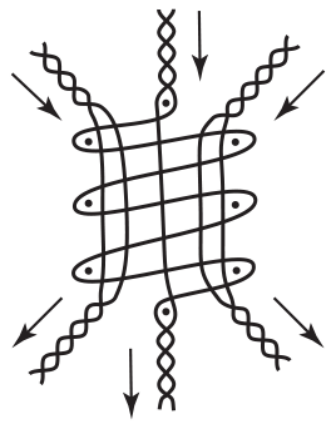


Half-stitch buds

All stitches are half stitch

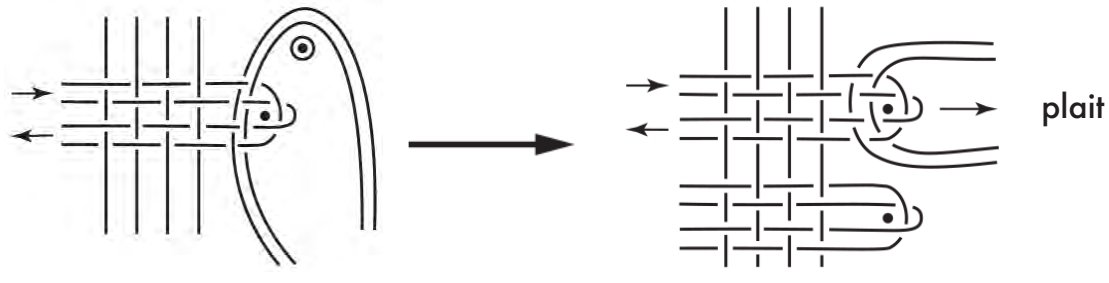


or

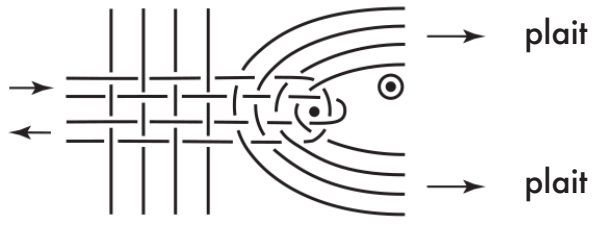


Adding pairs for plaits

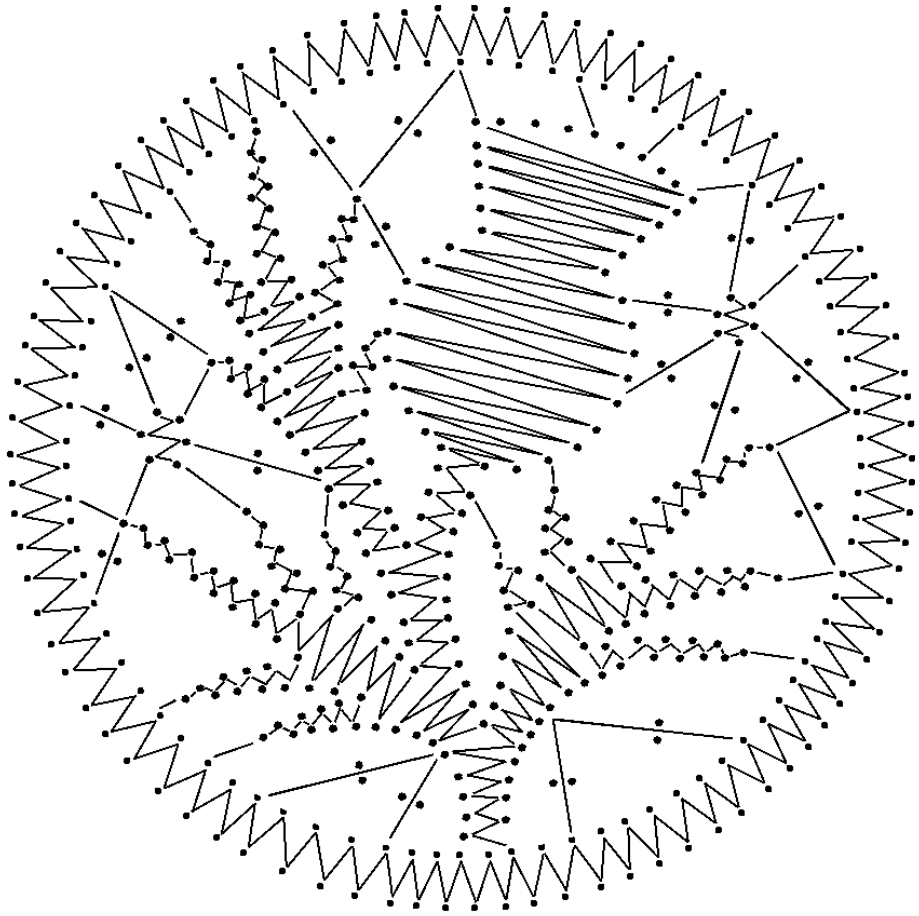
Hang two pairs on a support pin and take the weaver through only the first of the resulting pairs:



Adding four pairs for two plaits is similar:



Thistle





The daffodil is more fiddly to work than either the thistle or rose. The main part is worked in cloth stitch, with the trumpet in half stitch. As well as needing to add extra pairs you will need two gimp pairs and four single gimps.

