



FRONTISPIECE

THE TEMPTATION AND FALL.

DETAIL OF EMBROIDERED VALANCE, THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE (PAGE 9).
LATE XVI CENTURY. COLLECTION OF GEORGE R. HANN.

PATTERN SOURCES OF SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS IN TUDOR AND STUART EMBROIDERIES

By NANCY GRAVES CABOT

FOR ONE with leisure, who is interested in embroidered pictures, and who likewise takes pleasure in the graphic arts, I can recommend the search for the sources of design of Scriptural subjects in English needlework of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is a pursuit of singular delight, involving an intimate knowledge of lovely old embroideries and an extensive study of early prints and book illustrations, with the occasional gratification of being able to fit the two arts together like pieces of a glorified picture puzzle.

It has long been recognized that many designers of early pictorial embroideries resorted to engravings for their patterns. Prolific artists for more than a century, in the rapid expansion of the art of book illustration and print making, had produced an abundant supply of tales in pictures, on mythological, classical and Scriptural themes, with spirited action and clear cut lines, well suited for translation into another craft. Here was a wider choice of animated scenes for embroideries than was offered in English and Continental pattern books; a resourceful and easy way to build a variety of designs for both the amateur and the professional, and for the latter, concerned with emolument, a means to faster production as well.

Sometimes in these translations the whole scene of a wood-cut or copper engraving was traced quite faithfully, and transferred to the fabric to be embroidered. At other times figures only were culled from the print, and adapted in different arrangements for the design; the naked clothed, garments fashionably altered according to contemporary style, presumably to suit the worker's individual taste. Despite rearrangements, conversion into stitches of silk and wool, and disguise of dress, the character of the figures is seldom so changed that they cannot be identified when the source of their pattern is found.

To trace the actual print from which a particular embroidered scene was derived is a matter of persistent and diligent search. One seldom

finds a contemporary print used as a model for an early needlework pattern, save where the design has been taken from a contemporary reprint of the subject. For Bible stories, so favored by the industrious needlewomen of Tudor and Stuart times, the amount of illustrative material to be explored is especially vast. The whole field of Old and New Testament illustration, chiefly of Germany, France and the Low Countries, from the end of the fifteenth century through the sixteenth and into the seventeenth, lies before one; Bibles, whole or in part, epitomes and paraphrases of the same in prose or poetry, separate sets of engravings of Scriptural subjects, and single pictures, in any one of which the pattern sought may lurk. Yet one need have no misgiving that the time consumed in systematic search for the needle in a haystack of such proportions is wasted, be the design never so elusive, for the material over which one pores represents the golden age of wood-cut and copper engraving, and the burgeoning of book illustration. Indeed, one is frequently tempted to abandon the special object of search for a wider study of the graphic arts.

Before undertaking the quest for the pattern source of a Scriptural subject in embroidery, it is helpful to refresh the memory with the original narrative as explicitly and vividly set forth in the Bible, being attentive to the dramatic details that will assure recognition of the scene in either needlework or illustration. It adds much to the enjoyment to observe with what fidelity the early artists followed the stage instructions of Holy Writ, all properties depicted, each actor in his proper role. It is well likewise to gain a preliminary knowledge of the best work in sixteenth century Bible illustration, the period that has yielded the greatest number of prints identifiable with designs of early English needlework. One should study the wonderful *Historiarum Veteris Testamenti Icones* of Hans Holbein, and the first four cuts in his *Dance of Death*, both published first in Lyons in 1538, Raphael's frescoes of the Old Testament in the Loggie of the Vatican, the prints of Albrecht Durer, Heinrich Aldegrever, and Hans Sebald Beham, the *Quadrins Historiques de la Bible*, published in Lyons in 1553 by Jean de Tournes, with woodcuts by Bernard Salomon, the *Biblische Figuren* of Virgil Solis, Frankfurt, 1560, Jost Amman's illustrations in Josephus Flavius' *Antiquitates Judaicae*, Frankfurt, 1580, and the *Thesaurus Sacrarum* of Gerard de Jode, Antwerp, 1585. These have particular mention because they have proved most fruitful, but other works have interest also, and should not be overlooked, such as the *Neue künstliche Figuren Biblischer Historien*

of Tobias Stimmer, Basle, 1576, the *Biblia Sacra* illustrated by the de Brys, and the *Liber Genesis* of Crispin van de Passe, at the turn of the century. The list of possibilities is endless. If acquaintance with these Scriptural prints of the sixteenth century excites a curiosity to know something of Biblical illustration in the fifteenth, as an introduction to earlier work, there are Quentell's *Cologne Bible* of 1478-9, Schedel's *Weltchronik* (the Nuremburg Chronicle), 1493, with wood-cuts by Michael Wolgemuth and Wilhem Pleydenwurff; the *Malermi Bible*, Venice, 1490, the *Lubeck Bible* 1494, and the lovely French *Books of Hours* of Pigouchet, Verard and Kerver.

Beside the pleasure of the hunt, it is a sport in itself to try to recognize the influence of early artists on later illustrators, and to attempt to identify the latter's wholesale borrowings. Frequently an artist has incorporated figures from another's design into his own composition, an unscrupulous practice which makes for confusion, when one is trying to follow a pattern trail to its source.

Among the household furnishings adorned by, sixteenth and seventeenth century English ladies with the immortal dramas of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, were bed valances, felicitous in length for the unfolding of a tale, caskets, with many sides for a sequence of events, book-bindings, mirror frames, cushions and pictorial panels, framed for a wall. Many of these, especially the valances, cushions and panels, were wrought chiefly in tent-stitch or *petit-point* with silk, wool and metal threads on canvas, probably to approximate a woven technique, giving the illusion of a tapestry in miniature. Others were carried out in a variety of stitches on a satin ground, or in "stump-work," that elaborate and fantastic "tour de force" of the Stuart embroideress, happily short-lived.¹

From the many pictorial embroideries that have survived the household hazards of nearly three centuries, a marked preference is evident for certain Old Testament subjects, specifically the stories of Adam and Eve, Abraham, particularly his banishment of Hagar, the Sacrifice of Isaac, Rebekah at the Well, Joseph and his many adventures, David and Bathsheba, the Judgment of Solomon, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, Esther and King Ahasuerus; and from the Apocrypha the stories

¹ This term, in the opinion of John L. Nevinson of the Victoria and Albert Museum, is a misnomer. He states in his *Catalogue of English Domestic Embroidery of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1938), that the expression was not known when the work was done, and that a better term would be "raised workes" which occurs in a late sixteenth century pattern book.—Ed.

of Susannah and the Elders, and Tobias and the Great Fish. The story of the Prodigal Son is a popular subject drawn from the New Testament. However, there are few dramatic episodes in the Bible, appropriate or not, that have not been depicted in embroidery, even the miserable sore-infested Lazarus before the rich man's table.

It is fascinating to imagine the interest and pleasure that illustrated Bible stories brought to women in English households, where religious fervor burned, and few could read. As the development of printing made such books accessible in price, and small volumes, easy to handle, came into vogue, their popularity soared. The many successive editions of illustrated paraphrases of the Old Testament with explanatory verses beneath each print, published throughout the sixteenth century, indicate how eagerly they were bought. Whether the quatrains were in German, French or Italian, the obstacle of language dissolved before the universal idiom of the picture-book. As prints from the same blocks and plates continued in use well into the seventeenth century, it is not surprising to find a design of the early sixteenth century in the hands of a seventeenth century designer of needlework.

Undoubtedly deft fingers plied their needles with greater zeal when the work in hand combined the edification of sacred story with the drama of man's frailty, and the lady of a great house had little need to spur her compassionate gentlewomen to the completion of a long valance with little Isaac, "the wood of the burnt-offering laid upon him," and the heavy hearted Abraham, "the fire in his hand, and a knife," plodding up the mountain in Moriah to God's appointed place.

When figures and scenes have been traced from engravings for embroidery patterns it is not easy to distinguish between the amateur and professional hand. This is especially true of the simpler pictures not confined within a border, where a few figures dominate the scene, and motifs of flora and fauna are scattered in the empty places in more or less accidental order to complete the composition. The trained hand is more easily recognizable in designs that must compose within a bordered space, or when the intricate elements of an elaborate background behind a progression of tableaux, as in a bed valance, have been disposed with authority, and an experience that achieves harmony. Many of the simpler designs were undoubtedly drawn at home by enterprising needleworkers of artistic ability, impatient with their isolation on their large estates. There must also have been shops in London or other large towns where the designs of professional draughtsmen could be bought prepared and

ready for working, as they are today. Such shops may have sent salesmen to the great mansions with their special stock of patterns, to take orders and give the ladies a choice in the arrangement of motifs.

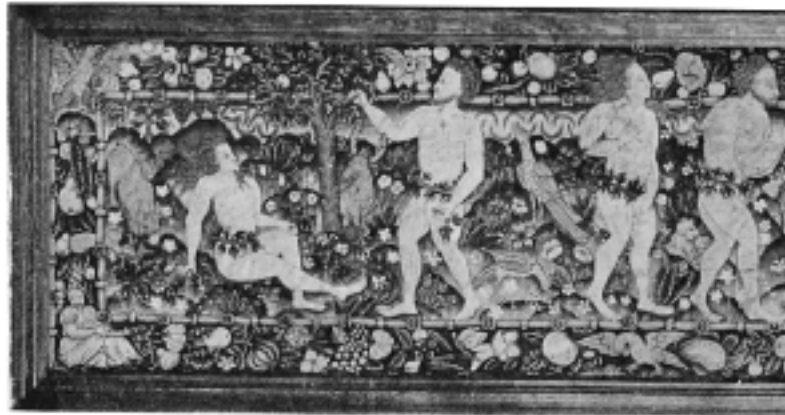
In the Household Books of Lord William Howard, of Naworth Castle,¹ are recorded from 1612 on, the daily expenditures for his vast domain on the Scottish border, and likewise in great detail the smaller outlays for members of the household. There are many entries of materials with which to embroider; "silkes and crewells bought at Michaelmas for my Lady," "an ounce of Venice gould, an ounce of silver for Mrs. Mary," "to Jo Pildrem for colered crewells," but no record of the purchase of the embroidery pattern for which the silk, wool and metal threads were bought. Surely other Household Books will one day come to light with mention of specific dealers in prepared needlework patterns.

Among the many remarkable embroideries in the collection of Viscount Leverhulme, sold at the Anderson Galleries in New York in 1926, were three ornamental bed valances (Figs. 1, 2, 3), formerly in the collection of the Earl of Kinnoull, of Balhousie Castle in Perthshire, Scotland. While they show the style of late sixteenth century needlework that carried over into early Stuart times, they vary somewhat from the usual Elizabethan bed valance in the freer and more naturalistic treatment of fruits and foliage, and the abstention from the incongruity of Bible characters clad in the magnificence of contemporary court dress. Six scenes portray the story of Adam and Eve, from the creation of woman to the weary days at hard labor outside the Garden of Eden. The figures are boldly drawn and the drama moves swiftly to its tragic climax. The composition is original in its encroachments on the borders, skillful in its unconventionality. An informal and lively effect has been achieved by the use of more varied and looser stitches than the precise *petit-point* of much Elizabethan work. They are wrought with silk, wool and metal threads on a linen ground, in blues, grays, buffs and greens. Tent-stitch has been used for the nude figures only; the landscape is worked in variable chain-stitch, and the sumptuous Renaissance borders with a bold Gobelin.² The motifs generally are outlined with a flowing stem-stitch. The capacious garments of the Lord have been singled out for appliqué of crimson and white silk with a woven design in metal thread.

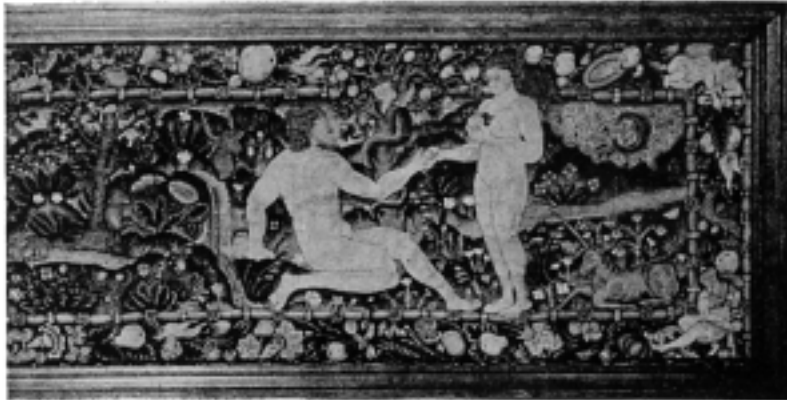
Despite the differences in their vigorous free-hand adaptation, deriva-

¹ Published by the Surtees Society, London, 1877, Vol. LXVIII.

² Gobelin stitch resembles *petit-point*, except that it crosses two threads instead of one, of the canvas. It can also be worked in a vertical position.—Ed.



FIGS. 1, 2, 3
THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE. EMBROIDERED VALANCES, LATE XVI CENTURY.
THE FIRST AND THIRD VALANCES, COLLECTION OF GEORGE R. HANN.
CENTER VALANCE, COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.



FIGURES 1 AND 3, COLLECTION OF GEORGE R. HANN.
FIGURE 2, THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

tion of the figures from the charming little wood-cuts of Bernard Salomon (Figs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), is obvious. These are illustrations to the *Quadrins historiques de la Bible*, with verses by Claude Paradin, published by Jean de Tournes, in Lyons, in 1553, a small octavo volume, that enjoyed a wonderful popularity, to judge from its many subsequent editions, and its immediate translation into Spanish and English the same year, into German and Italian in 1554, Flemish and Latin by 1558. The same wood-cuts continue to adorn the many Bibles printed by the de Tournes in Lyons until 1585, and in Geneva in the seventeenth century, when religious persecution forced Jean de Tournes II from his native city. Bernard Salomon, of Lyons, usually called "*le petit Bernard*" (ca. 1508-1561), was for fourteen years the most notable artist employed by the de Tournes establishment to decorate their lovely books. It is claimed also that he was a designer of furniture coverings, and cartoons for tapestries, though no examples of these are known.¹

The wood-cuts illustrated are taken from the English version of this *Quadrins de la Bible*, entitled: *The true and lyuely historyke purtreasures of the VVoll Bible*, at Lyons, by Jean de Tournes, MDLIII." The clumsy translation of Paradin's quatrains is by one Pierre Derendel, a man of French origin brought up in England, who undertook the work in gratitude "to the countre wherein I had ben nourished and brought up," and in propitiatory concern lest England feel slighted that the *Quadrins* were "being lickewise putte in sixe other languages." The dedication reads "To the right worshipfull and most worthie Master Pikeling, embassadour to the Kinge of Englande, Peter derendel, peace an felicitie," "Master Pikeling" being Sir William Pickering, ambassador from Edward VI to the court of France, from 1550 to 1553.

In using the figures from Bernard Salomon's prints for those in the Adam and Eve valances, the designer copied attitudes and gestures only, retaining nothing of the Fontainebleau grace, which gave distinction to "*le petit Bernard's*" style. The background seems to be the designer's own, the various animals taken from elsewhere. Practical additions to the composition are the well placed tree for Eve to grip in the agony of creation, and the carafe and goblet beside the toilworn Adam outside the Garden, masterpieces of sixteenth century craftsmanship. Elements in the borders suggest the swags, festoons and balanced figures of six-

¹A sixteenth century tapestry, No. 363 in the catalogue of the Leverhulme Sale, depicting the return of Joseph's brethren to their father, was clearly designed from Bernard Salomon's composition of the subject in the *Quadrins de la Bible*.

G E N E S I S II.



*As he aie sleep on Adam god did cast,
Then fram his sid a ribbe of his plucking:
Ther with lightlie Eue his wif formed chaff,
And befor him laied her at his waking.*

FIG. 4

CREATION OF EVE.

THE TRUE AND LYUELY HYSTORYKE PURTREATURES OF THE VVOLL BIBLE.

LYONS, JEAN DE TOURNES, MDLIII.

WOOD-CUTS BY BERNARD SALOMON (C. 1508-1561).

HOFFER COLLECTION, HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

GENESIS III.



*To Eve is come the serpent malicious
Full quicke, and so right busie about here,
Soon worcked, that (of their good enuious)*
The frute forbide thei eate both together.

FIG. 5
THE TEMPTATION AND FALL.

GENESIS III.



*This frute anon their both eies cleare opened:
Wherfore a shame so to shew their nature,
A figgers leaues plucking nigh them ioined
To their bodies, making so couerture.*

2

FIG. 6

GATHERING FIG LEAVES TO MAKE THEMSELVES APRONS.

GENESIS III.



*God then knowing suche crastie deception,
Adam called roughlie and sore chidding:
His curse them gaue and his malediction,
For despising of his holie bidding.*

FIG. 7
GOD'S DISPLEASURE.

GENESIS. III.



*God eche of them with a garment of skinne
Clothed, driueth out the faire place of pleasure:
Then of the frye the waikipetch Cherubin:
Wherfore with death pursued are anon sure.*

B 2

FIG. 8
THE EXPULSION.

GENESIS III.



*With much dropping and sweat of his visage,
Eateth Adam his bread new and moderne:
Eve in sorrow and care of her menage,
Geueth out great cries bringing fourth of childerne.*

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

FIG. 9
OUTSIDE THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

teenth century French title-pages, which in itself would be a lengthy but fascinating quest.

The scene of Tobias with the Great Fish (Fig. 10), from a *petit-point* panel in the fine collection of Sir Frederick Richmond, of Westoning Manor, Bedfordshire, is another pictorial embroidery derived from an illustration by "le petit Bernard" (Fig. 11), in which the designer has more closely followed the original composition, imitating the Angel's elongated style, and including the rocky landscape background. The wood-cut reproduction is from the *Biblia Sacra* of Jean de Tournes, Lyons, 1558.

In view of the translation of the *Quadrins de la Bible* into other languages, it is interesting to note that the same print of Tobias and the Fish was used for an embroidered illustration in a Spanish book of the seventeenth century, now in the Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. It is worked on parchment in flat stitches with colored untwisted silks. Again, of Swiss or German origin, is a *Tapis brodé*,¹ dated 1606, in the Museum at Zurich¹ with a border of Old Testament scenes in oval frames, crude but unmistakable copies of prints from the book of Genesis in the *Quadrins de la Bible*, and an Italian seventeenth century embroidered border in the collection of Mrs. David Gubbay,² has an Adam and Eve adapted from the same source. The great popularity and wide dispersion of these illustrations is certainly manifest in their repeated use as a source for embroidery design.

A charming embroidered book-binding of about 1635-1645, in the Pierpont Morgan Library (Fig. 12), is unusual and fortunate in having the name of the embroideress inscribed on the original fly leaf of the 1599 Bible within:

"Anne Cornwaleys Wrought me
now shee is called Anne Legh."

To all appearances the design is Anne's as well; a naïve statement of Adam and Eve by the Tree of Knowledge, the fowl of the air, the beasts of the earth, and the fish in the sea, at least one fish, a crustacean, and a mermaid. It is worked chiefly with colored silks on a white satin ground. The worker was ambitious in her stitchery, not even fazed by stump-work, as witness the swollen proportions of her terrifying serpent. What she lacked in skill, she made up in a lavish use of metal thread, couched

¹L. de Farcy: *La Broderie du XIe siècle jusqu'à nos jours*. Paris, 1890, Vol. II, p. 240.

²Symonds and Preece: *Needlework Through the Ages*. London, 1928, Plate LXI, No. 2.



FIG. 10

TOBIAS AND THE GREAT FISH. DETAIL OF TUDOR PETIT-POINT PANEL.
COLLECTION OF SIR FREDERICK RICHMOND, BART.



sufficerent eis, quousque pervenirent in
 B Rages civitatem Medorum. Tunc interro-
 gavit Tobias angelum, & dixit ei, Obsecro
 te Azaria frater, ut dicas mihi, quod
 remedium habebat ista quæ de pulvere fer-
 rare iussisti? Et respondens angelus dixit
 ei, Cordis eius particula super carbonem
 ponas, fumus eius extinguet omne ge-
 nus demoniorum, siue à viro, siue à mu-
 liere, ita ut vitæ non accedat ad eos. Et
 fel valet ad vngendos oculos in quibus
 fuerit albugo, & sanabuntur. Et dixit ei
 Tobias, Vbi via ut maneamus? Respon-
 dens ei, angelus, ait, Est hic Raguel no-
 mine, vir propinquus de tribu tua, &
 hic habet filiam nomine Sarâ, sed neque ma-
 sculâ, neque feminâ villans habet aliam
 C præter eam. Tibi debent omnia substantia
 eius, & oportet eam te accipere con-
 iugem. Pote ergo eam à patre eius, & da-
 bit tibi eam in uxorem. Tunc respondi To-
 bias, & dixit, Audio quia tradita est se-
 pte vitis, & mortui sunt: sed & hoc au-
 didi, quia demoniû occidit illos. Timeo
 ergo ne forte & mihi hæc eveniant: &
 cum sum unicus partibus meis, depo-
 nam senectutem illorum cum iustitia ad
 inferos. Tunc angelus Raphael dixit ei,
 Audi me, & ostendam tibi qui sum qui-
 bus prævalere potest demoniû. In nan-

que qui coniugium ita suscipere, ut
 Deû à se, & à sua mente excludat, &
 sine libidine ita vacet, sicut equus & mu-
 lus, quibus non est intellectus: habet po-
 tentiam demoniorum super eos. Tu autem
 cum accipere eam, ingressus cubiculû,
 per tres dies continens esto ab ea, & ni-
 hil aliud, nisi orationibus vacabis cum
 ea. Ipsa autem nocte, incesso in coem pe-
 scis, fugabunt demoniû. Secunda enim
 nocte, in copulatione sanctorum particu-
 larum admiseris. Tertia autem nocte
 benedictionem consequens, ut filij ex-
 teris procreentur insoules. Transacta
 autem tertia nocte, accipies virginem cum
 timore Dei, amorem filiorum magis, quam
 libidine ductas, ut in semine Abrahæ
 benedictionem in filijs consequaris.

CAPIT VII.

Ingressi sunt autem ad Raguel, A
 & suscepit eos Raguel cum ga-
 udio immenso. Tobias Raguel,
 dixit Annæ uxori suæ, Quam similem est
 iuuenis iste consobinito meo? Et cum hæc
 dixisset, ait, Unde estis iuvenes frater no-
 strum? At illi dixerunt, Ex tribu Nephtalim
 sumus, ex captivitate Niniur. Dixitque illi
 Raguel, Nostis Tobias fratrem meum? Qui
 dixerunt, Nostimus. Cumque multa bona
 loqueretur de eo, dixit angelus ad Rague-
 lem,

FIG. II

TOBIAS AND THE GREAT FISH.

WOOD-CUT BY BERNARD SALOMON (C. 1508-1561).

BIBLIA SACRA, JEAN DE Tournes, LYONS, 1558.

HOFER COLLECTION, HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



FIG. 12
EMBROIDERED BOOKBINDING (c. 1635-1645).
WORKED BY ANNE CORNWALEYS LEGH.
THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY.

silver strips called "lizarding," and silver wire. The result is rich and worthy of its reverent purpose. Perhaps she turned to the books in her father's library for illustrations to indulge her fancy for a pattern, and found there a Breeches Bible,¹ published by Robert Barker in London in 1602, with the frontispiece full of ideas (Fig. 13), from which she seems to have adapted her Adam and Eve and a few animals. The embroidery of the other half of the cover represents the New Testament, Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene in the Garden, with a border of the symbols of the Passion.

An equally interesting embroidery with amateur flavor that again suggests the home book-shelf and a title-page is the arcaded panel with Biblical scenes, of the mid-seventeenth century, formerly in the collection of Miss Grace Clarke, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England (Fig. 14). This also is worked in polychrome silks on a white satin ground, the arcades rendered substantial with metal thread. In the embroidery, and in the title-page to *du Bartas, His Divine Weekes* (Fig. 15), conjunction of the same subjects is shown, on the left the Temptation, adapted by the engraver, R. Elstracke, in his turn from Albrecht Durer, on the right the Sacrifice of Isaac, from an unidentified source. The title-page appears to have been the model for the embroidery, having the self-same combination of subjects, derivation and architectural rendering.

It is likely that the works of this French poet, Guillaume de Salluste du Bartas (1544-1590), would have been found in English libraries at this period, in particular his poem on the creation of the world, called *Le Sepmaine*, first published in Paris in 1578, and immediately so well received that it ran through thirty editions in six years. A great favorite in England, where Joshua Sylvester translated it in 1598, its exalted tone excited enough popularity for its author to be known as the "divine du Bartas." Sylvester's translation, *du Bartas, His Divine Weekes and Workes*, was first published in London in 1605, by Humphray Lownes with a title-page by William Hole, on which Renold Elstracke (1571-1625), the English engraver, based his design for the later edition also printed by Lownes in 1621. Our reproduction is from a reprint of 1641, published by Robert Young.

The praiseworthy vogue of English needleworkers to honor the Lord

¹ So-called because of the translation in an Early Bible of Genesis. Chapter 3, Verse 7: "Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew they were naked, and they sewed figge leaves together, and made themselves breeches." (Ed.)



FIG. 13
FRONTISPIECE. BIBLE, ROBERT BARKER, LONDON, 1602.
THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY.



FIG. 14
EMBROIDERED PANEL WITH BIBLICAL SCENES, MID-17TH CENTURY.
THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND.



FIG. 15

TITLE-PAGE ENGRAVED BY R. ELSTRACKE.
 DU BARTAS, HIS DIVINE WEEKES AND WORKES, LONDON, 1641.
 THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

with the skill of their handiwork is shown in two other seventeenth century embroidered book-bindings, preserved in the British Museum (Figs. 16a, b and 17a, b). The earlier one covers a Bible of 1612, and is worked in tent-stitch on a fine canvas with bright colored silks, and metal thread. The background is largely of silver, and a gold cord outlines some of the forms. The designs are simple Old Testament scenes without borders, Esther finding favor in the sight of King Ahasuerus, and Jacob wrestling with the Angel. The second, the cover to the book of Psalms of 1643, is embroidered in a variety of flat stitches with polychrome silks on a white satin ground. Here two scenes of Jacob have been chosen for the pattern, his Dream of a Ladder ascending into Heaven, and again the Struggle with the Angel. Despite variations in these two pieces, due to two kinds of embroidery and drawing by different hands at different periods, the figures of Jacob and the Angel on both book-bindings, though one is in reverse, clearly have been adapted from a common model. What seems to have been the model for these and for the scene of Esther before King Ahasuerus as well (Fig. 16a), was found among the Old Testament illustrations by Jost Amman (1539-1591), in the Latin translation of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, by Josephus Flavius, printed by Sigismond Feyerabend, in Frankfort, 1580 (Figs. 18 and 19).

Though the Old Testament wood-cuts of Jost Amman appeared first in a German Bible, published in Frankfort, 1564, and in many successive editions there, they would in all probability have been more commonly available for an English designer in the *Antiquities of the Jews*, since the famous works of Josephus were usually to be found in English houses of the period, imparting an air of scholarship and virtue beside the family Bible and Prayer Book. Old Testament prints of many artists were used to illustrate the works of Josephus. In Lyons, in 1566, there were the wood-cuts of Pierre Woeriot, published by "les heritiers de Jaques Jonte," and in 1569 the same printers used the series from the *Quadrins de la Bible* of "le petit Bernard." There were German editions with prints by Christopher van Sichem, and the brothers Tobias and Hans Christoph Stimmer, Dutch editions with illustrations after Matthew Merian, and copper engravings by Francois Chauvéau in the French translation by Arnauld d'Andilly (1667). None of these should be overlooked in the search for the sources of design.

The hand of Jost Amman is more apparent in the needlework picture of Jacob's Dream (Figs. 20 and 21), than in the simpler version on the

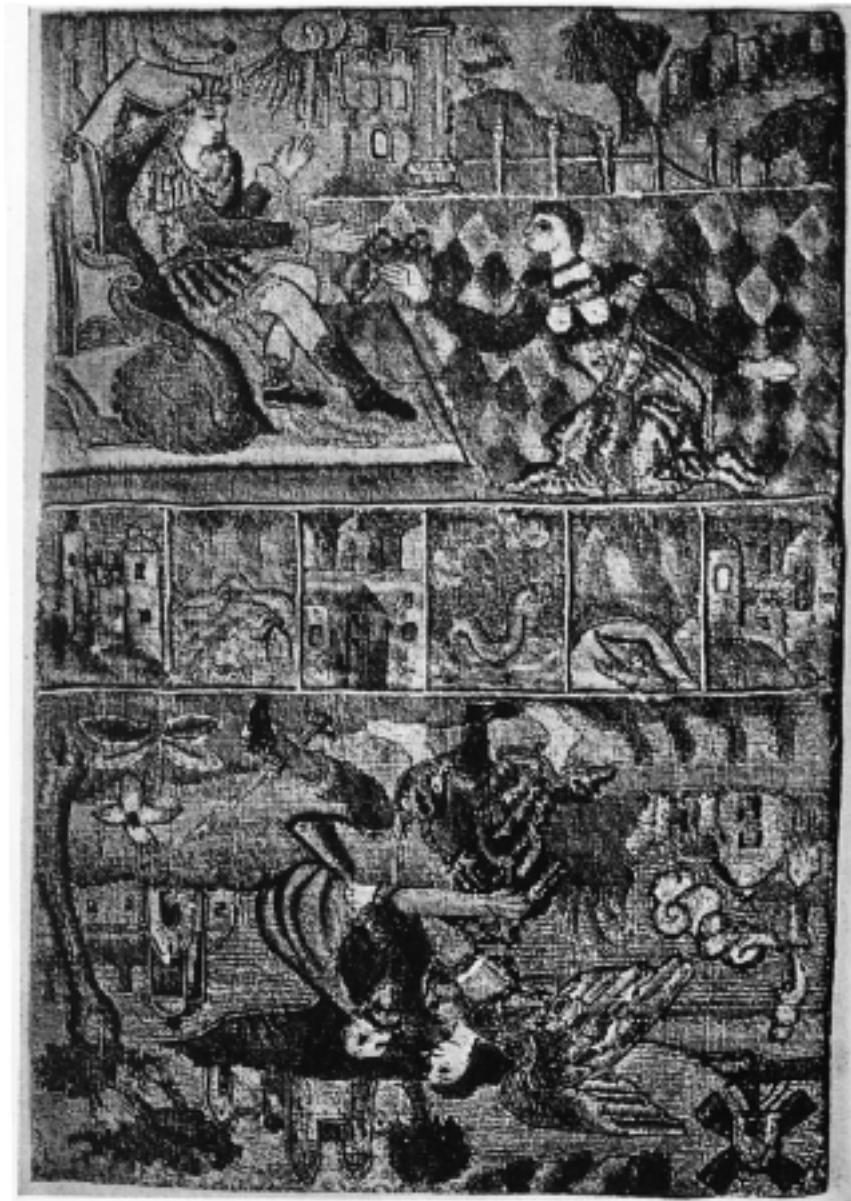


FIG. 16 (A AND B)

(A) ESTHER BEFORE AHASUERUS. (B) JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL.
EMBROIDERED BOOKBINDING. BIBLE, LONDON, 1612.
THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIG. 17 (A AND B)
(A) JACOB'S DREAM. (B) JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL.
EMBROIDERED BOOKBINDING. PSALMS, LONDON, 1643.
THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIG. 18

JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL. WOOD-CUT BY JOST AMMAN (1539-1591).
JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS, ANTIQUITATES JUDAICAE, FRANKFORT, 1580.
THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 19

ESTHER BEFORE KING AHASUERUS. WOOD-CUT BY JOST AMMAN.
JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS, ANTIQUITATES JUDAICAE, FRANKFORT, 1580.
THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 20

JACOB'S DREAM. WOOD-CUT BY JOST AMMAN.
JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS, ANTIQUITATES JUDAICAE, FRANKFORT, 1580.
THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 21

JACOB'S DREAM, NEEDLEPOINT PICTURE, XVII CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF FRANK PARTRIDGE AND SONS, LTD.

embroidered book of Psalms of 1643 (Fig. 17a). Various of the animals—the elephant, horse and lion—are easily identifiable in other woodcuts of the series. The embroidery is a small picture to include so much detail, measuring but sixteen inches by twelve. Another, almost its twin, except for a few minor motifs, is in the collection of Mrs. Myron Taylor of Locust Valley, Long Island.

One would hardly expect to find in the turbulence of Rubens, subjects from which a simple needlework might be derived, yet where are Scriptural themes more tellingly presented? In the panel depicting the Judgment of Solomon (Fig. 22), another Stuart embroidery formerly in the collection of Miss Grace Clarke, figures essential to the story have been adapted after Rubens (Fig. 23), presumably from the engraving by Boëtius Adam à Bolswert (1580-1634). The tense moment of agonizing suspense, when King Solomon said: "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other", has been successfully sustained in the new medium. There have been other Rubens scenes recognized in early English embroidery,¹ and other embroideries adapted from his Judgment of Solomon, emphasizing its popularity as a subject, for example, a picture in the collection of Judge Untermeyer, and a chair back in the collection of Mrs. W. Tudor Gardiner of Boston.

There are large numbers of English embroideries, usually ascribed to a generous middle of the seventeenth century, depicting Old Testament stories, preserved in collections here and in England, that are extraordinarily alike in style and character, though worked in various techniques. The same subject is often repeated, the same units of design recur again and again, in varying arrangements, usually in pictures, or tops of cushions framed as such, and also on caskets and mirror frames. The same border, a lovely thing, of the same sprigs, alternating with the same small creatures, frequently encloses the scene. Such marked similarity of pattern of many embroideries worked within a comparatively short period of time indicates that the designs for this particular group were bought from one and the same professional designer. Further evidence to this assumption may lie in the discovery in one publication of a surprising number of engravings from which these patterns were adapted, namely, the *Thesaurus Sacrarum Historiarum Veteris Testamenti*, printed in Antwerp in 1585, in two volumes, oblong quarto, by Gerard de Jode

¹ *Antiques Magazine*, March, 1946, "Bible Pictures in English Needlework," by Marion Bolles, Fig. 8, a and b.

(1521-1591),² Flemish engraver, publisher and print-seller. There is no text; it is a collection of large plates by various engravers after different artists that have been bound together with descriptive captions in Latin, to tell in pictures the stories of the Old Testament. The artist whose work has been favored most by engravers is Martin de Vos (1531-1603), the prolific Flemish painter. Many of the engravings that make up the volumes had previously been issued singly as well as in series, and were available to designers other than in the bound volumes of de Jode. Substantially the same collection of pictures was later engraved and issued by Claes Jansz Visscher, Dutch publisher and print-seller, in 1650, entitled, *Theatrum Biblicum Historiae Sacrae Veteris ac Novi Testamenti*.

Among the embroideries whose subjects can be traced to the prints in the *Thesaurus Sacrarum* is the very beautiful panel with an ornamental border framing scenes from the life of Abraham, in the collection of Judge Irwin Untermyer (Fig. 24). It is wrought most skillfully in tent-stitch on fine canvas with silk thread of lovely tones. Three critical moments in Abraham's life are pictured; his hospitality to the three Angels who foretell that Sarah will bear a son in her old age (the skeptical Sarah laughs in the doorway); his shamefaced casting off of Hagar and the little Ishmael at Sarah's behest, and his sacrifice of Isaac, mercifully averted on the downstroke by the Angel of the Lord. How Hagar and Ishmael fared in the wilderness, and the timely arrival of the busy Angel to direct them to a well, is shown in the distance. The characters move in the rural vicinity of a great castle. Another needlework version of Abraham's banishment of Hagar is shown in Fig. 25, a picture in the collection of Mrs. Myron Taylor. It is one of a great many of the same subject in which the figures are recognizably alike, set in varied landscape arrangements. In the *Thesaurus Sacrarum* the story of Abraham is told in six pictures, engraved by Gerard de Jode after Martin de Vos, ending with the meeting of his steward Eliezer and Rebekah at the well. Four of these prints are shown in Figs. 26, 27, 28, 29, for comparison with the embroideries and for the piece following as well. This is a remarkably fine picture, worked in tent-stitch with polychrome silks, portraying the fair Rebekah letting down her pitcher to the thirsty Eliezer (Fig. 30), also owned by Judge Untermyer. The refined figures of the tableau in the foreground are the ones identifiable with the engraving. The popularity of Martin de Vos' version of this subject is evident in many seventeenth century embroideries.

² From a copy in the Spencer Collection, New York Public Library.



FIG. 22

THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON. NEEDLEPOINT PICTURE, XVII CENTURY.
THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND.



FIG. 23

THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

ILLUSTRATION OF ENGRAVING BY B. A. 'A BOLSWERT (1580-1634) AFTER RUBENS.

LA BIBLE DE PIERRE PAUL RUBENS, BY E. FETIS, BRUSSELS, 1877.

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 24

SCENES FROM THE STORY OF ABRAHAM. PETIT-POINT PANEL, MID-17TH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF JUDGE IRWIN UNTERMYER.



FIG. 25

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL BANISHED BY ABRAHAM.
NEEDLEPOINT PICTURE, MID-17TH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF MRS. MYRON C. TAYLOR.



FIG. 26

ABRAHAM AND THE THREE ANGELS.

ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591) AFTER MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 27

ABRAHAM BANISHES HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591) AFTER MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 20

THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591) AFTER MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 29

ELIEZER AND REBEKAH AT THE WELL.

ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591) AFTER MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 30
ELIEZER AND REBEKAH AT THE WELL.
NEEDLEPOINT PICTURE, MID-17TH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF JUDGE IRWIN UNTERMYER.



FIG. 31
CALEB AND JOSHUA WITH THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL.
EMBROIDERED PANEL, MID-17TH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF SIR FREDERICK RICHMOND, BART.



FIG. 32

CALEB AND JOSHUA WITH THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL.

ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591) AFTER MARTIN DE VOS (1531-1603).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Figs. 31 and 32 are spirited scenes in both embroidery and engraving of the exultant spies, Caleb and Joshua, returning from the land of Canaan, bearing the grapes of Eshcol. The interesting panel is in Sir Frederick Richmond's collection, the print is another engraving by Gerard de Jode after Martin de Vos.

Few stories in Holy Scripture provided more lively entertainment for a skillful needle, as surviving embroideries testify, than that of King David and Bathsheba, running its eventful course of broken commandments and repentance. Many of these representations, wrought in tent-stitch and in stump-work, seem like the preceding examples to have been adapted from prints found in the *Thesaurus Sacrarum*. One, a handsome needlework picture in the collection of Mrs. Edsel B. Ford (Fig. 33), illustrates the beginning of the drama, David's first sight of Bathsheba washing herself in the garden. The designer has followed the engraving by de Jode (Fig. 34), quite closely, including architectural details of background and fountain, and has rendered the pleached bower with faithful trimness. It is a lovely setting for Bathsheba's fair charms, and David's admiration and urgent desires are immediately expressed by letter in the hand of his messenger. In Judge Untermeyer's fine embroidered panel (Fig. 35), further chapters in the story are illustrated by essential figures picked from other engravings of the series (Figs. 36, 37, 38). The bathing scene in this instance has been reduced to simpler terms of balcony, pool and one fruitful vine. In the left foreground Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba's husband, kneels before the perfidious David, who is wickedly contriving to remove him from his path. In the upper background on the right, forced to the forefront of the hottest battle by royal command, the betrayed Uriah is slain. Rebuke and repentance are in process in the right foreground, where Nathan, by subtle parable of the ewe lamb brings David to contrition and remorse.

The meeting of David and Abigail, Susannah and the Elders, Esther before Ahasuerus, are other themes found in embroideries that relate to prints in the *Thesaurus Sacrarum* of de Jode, but space does not permit, and it would be monotonous to illustrate with further examples, the many derivations recognized from this particular collection of engravings. Ostensibly, any seeker for the model of a Scriptural subject in Stuart embroidery should first look there, or in the similar collection by Claes Jansz Visscher.

The very ornamental Tudor valance depicting Belshazzar's impious feast (Fig. 39), owned by Sir Frederick Richmond, is shown with the



FIG. 33

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA. EMBROIDERED PICTURE, MID-17TH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF MRS. EDSSEL B. FORD.



FIG. 34

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA. ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

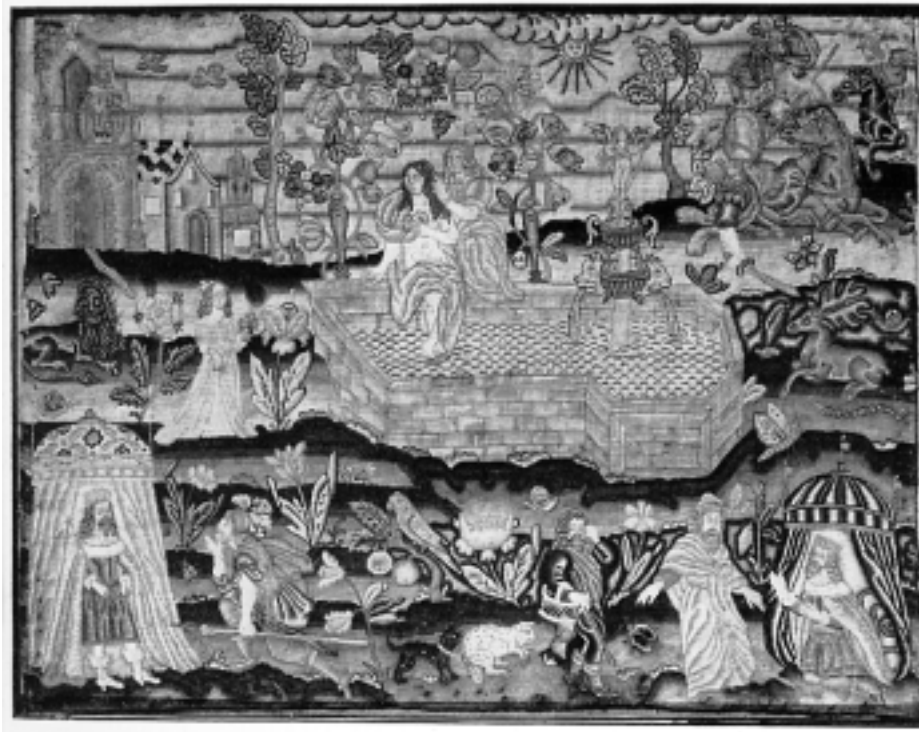


FIG. 35

THE STORY OF DAVID AND BATHSHEBA. PETIT-POINT PANEL, MID-17TH CENTURY.

COLLECTION OF JUDGE IRWIN UNTERMYER.

(CENTER) BATHSHEBA BATHING. (LOWER LEFT) KING DAVID AND URIAH, THE HITTITE.
(UPPER RIGHT) URIAH IS SLAIN IN BATTLE. (LOWER RIGHT) NATHAN REBUKES DAVID.



FIG. 36

KING DAVID AND URIAH, THE HITTITE. ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 37

URIAH IS SLAIN. ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 38

NATHAN REBUKES DAVID. ENGRAVING BY GERARD DE JODE (1521-1591).
THESAURUS SACRARUM HISTORIAE VETERIS TESTAMENTI. G. DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585.
FROM A COPY IN THE SPENCER COLLECTION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.



FIG. 39
THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR. TUDOR VALANCE.
COLLECTION OF SIR FREDERICK RICHMOND, BART.



FIG. 40

THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

BYBEL PRINTEN, AMSTERDAM, 1650.

ENGRAVING BY MATTHEW MERIAN (1593-1650).
FROM A COPY IN THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

accompanying engravings to demonstrate one of the problems that besets the searcher for a design source. A print from the Dutch *Bybel Printen*, Amsterdam, 1650, with illustrations by Matthew Merian (1593-1650) (Fig. 40), in spite of variations, at first seemed enough like the embroidery for its consideration as a possible model. The later discovery, however, of Fig. 41 in a Restoration Bible of 1660, from an engraving by Johannis Muller (1570-1625), was so much closer that Matthew Merian's print had to be discarded. Merian, being twenty-three years younger than Muller, may have borrowed from the latter for his composition of the feast. On the other hand they may both have drawn from another source not yet identified. Such uncertainty spurs one to further efforts in the search for priority, and emphasizes that the end of the trail should never be claimed without crossed fingers.



FIG. 41
THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.
ENGRAVING BY JOHANNIS MULLER (1570-1625).
THE HOLY BIBLE, JOHN FIELD, CAMBRIDGE, 1660.
HOFER COLLECTION, HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

EMBROIDERIES OF SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS IDENTIFIED
WITH ENGRAVINGS IN THE *THESAURUS SACRARUM*, OF
GERARD DE JODE, ANTWERP, 1585

ABRAHAM AND THREE ANGELS

Picture, Collection of Judge Untermyer (includes ABRAHAM AND HAGAR, and the SACRIFICE OF ISAAC).

Picture, Collection of Mrs. Myron C. Taylor (includes ELIEZER AND REBEKAH).

Picture, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue of English Domestic Embroidery*, 1938, Pl. XXIX (includes the SACRIFICE OF ISAAC).

SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

Elizabeth Calthorpe's sampler, 1656, *Samplers*, Leigh Ashton, London, 1926, frontispiece.

Picture, Collection of Judge Untermyer.

Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 54, "Stuart Embroideries at Chequers," E. Gibson, p. 85.

Valance, Anderson Galleries, No. 90, *Catalogue Le Fortier Sale*, Nov. 1937.

ABRAHAM AND HAGAR

Panel for looking-glass, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue*, 1938, Plate XXXV (b).

Picture, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue*, 1938, Plate XXX (a).

Picture, Collection of Judge Untermyer.

Picture, Collection of Mrs. Myron C. Taylor.

Picture, Collection of Mrs. Lathrop C. Harper.

Picture, Collection of Ginsberg and Levy.

Picture, *Samplers and Tapestry Embroideries*, Huish, London, 1900, Plate XL.

Picture, *English Secular Embroidery*, M. A. Jourdain, London, 1910, p. 134.

Picture, *English Embroidery*, A. E. Kendrick, London, 1904, Plate LI.

Picture, *Domestic Needlework*, Seligman and Hughes, London, n.d. Plate 76 (b).

Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 68, March, 1924, p. XX.

Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 78, May, 1927, p. XX.

Picture, *Catalogue, A Collection of Old English Needlework*, Frank Partidge & Sons, Ltd. London, 1934, No. 25.

ELIEZER AND REBEKAH

- Picture, Collection of Judge Untermeyer.
- Picture, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N. Y.
- Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 81, May, 1928, p. LXIII.
- Mirror frame, Collection of Frank Partridge & Sons, Ltd., New York.
- Cabinet top, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue*, 1938, Plate XXXVIII.

BALAAAM AND HIS ASS

- Picture, Collection of Mrs. Myron C. Taylor.

DAVID AND ABIGAIL

- Picture, Collection of Judge Untermeyer.

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

- Picture, Collection of Judge Untermeyer.
- Picture, Collection of Mrs. Edsel B. Ford.
- Pictures, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection (2).
- Picture, *Domestic Needlework*, Seligman and Hughes, London, n.d. Plate 76 (A).
- Picture, Parke-Bernet Catalogue, Mrs. Luke V. Lockwood Sale, Nov., 1942, No. 57.
- Picture, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Catalogue*, 1938, Plate XXX (b).
- Picture, Victoria and Albert Museum, *Picture Book of English Embroideries*, Part II, Stuart, No. 11.

ESTHER AND KING AHASUERUS

- Picture, Collection of Judge Untermeyer.
- Picture, Collection of Mrs. Myron C. Taylor.
- Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 76, December, 1926, p. XLIX.
- Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 80, April, 1928, "British Antique Dealers' Assoc. Exhibition," No. XIV (dated 1654).
- Picture, *Antiques Magazine*, "A Sequence of Early Needlework," Celia Woodward, Fig. 8, Vol. IX, Apr., 1926.

SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS

- Picture, Collection of Judge Untermeyer.
- Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. 87, May, 1931, p. XIII.
- Picture, *Connoisseur*, Vol. I, Nov., 1901, "A Collection of Needlework Pictures," Mrs. Head, No. X.