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BULLETIN NO. 3B (EMBROIDERY)

Embroidered Aprons, Dirndl Skirt and Cushion

The sewing section (No. 3A) of this Bulletin gives full instructions for making two pretty aprons and a dirndl skirt. Here we suggest some ways of decorating them with simple embroidery stitches. We include Chain Stitch and two of its variations, viz: Detached Chain and Chequered Chain; also Back Stitch, Pekinese Stitch (a threaded Back Stitch) and Stem Stitch (see diagrams).

Choice of Thread

We stressed in our last Bulletin the importance of choosing a suitable thread in relation to the selected background material. So many things can alter the character of a stitch—thick thread or thin thread—working tightly or loosely—taking up small or large stitches. A good plan is to work a small part of the design with two or three different types of embroidery thread, so that you can see which gives the best effect and then the whole article can be worked in the same way.

Design

It is important to choose simple designs when decorating clothes, to avoid distracting the eye from the well-cut garment. Choose simple geometric shapes, such as circles or stars, flowers and leaves, or else nicely spaced bands of stitchery. Pay special attention to the proportion of the decoration in relation to the size of the garment. It must not look over-done or fussy; on the other hand, it should not look too small or insignificant amongst the full folds of a dress or skirt.

★ Our bulletin for the Spring term will show you Double Back Stitch, Hem Stitch and Blanket and Buttonhole Stitch applied to lingerie and household articles.

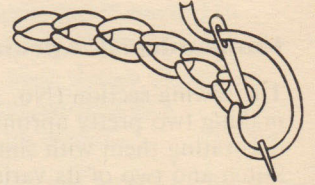
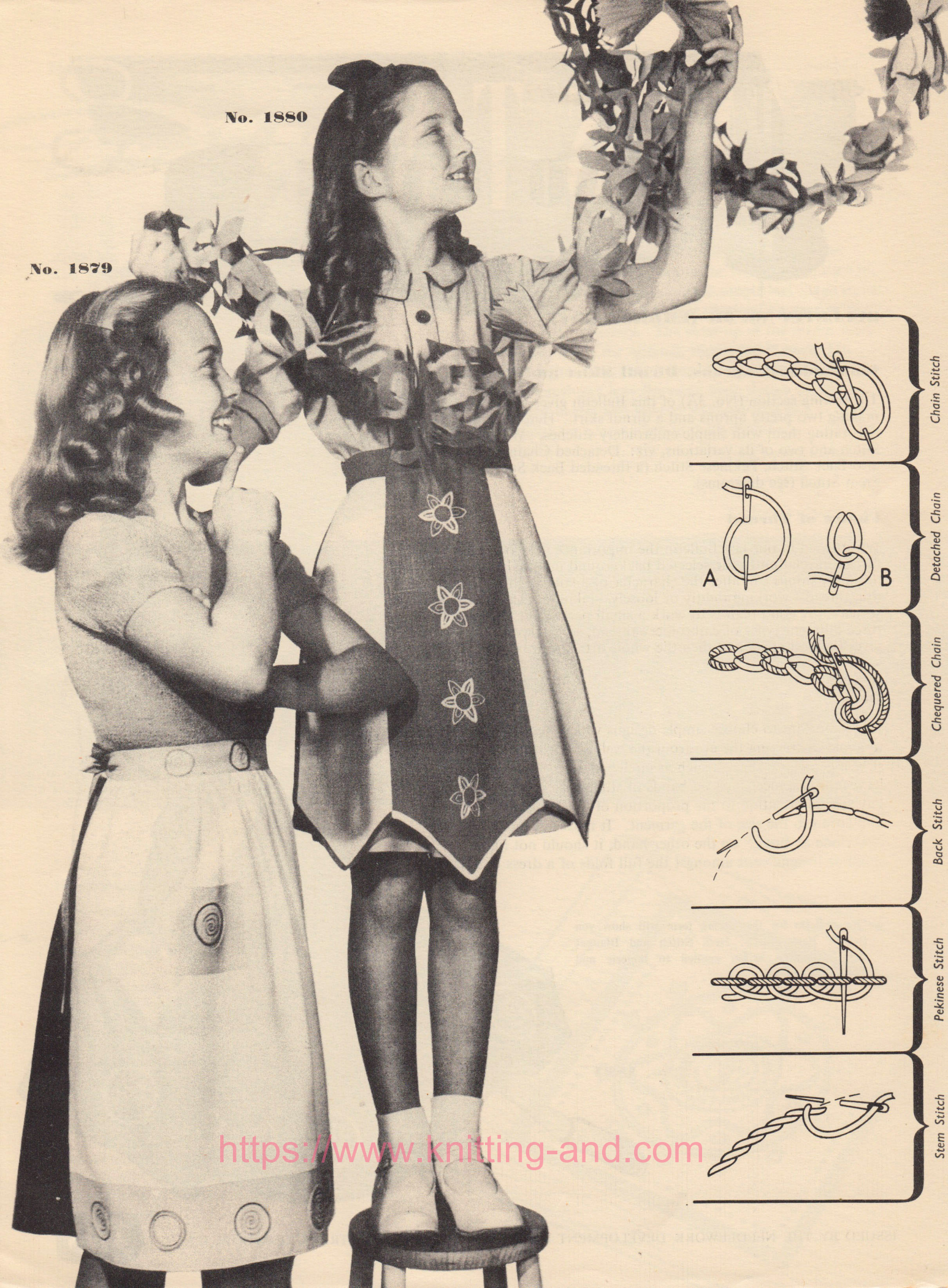
No. 1881

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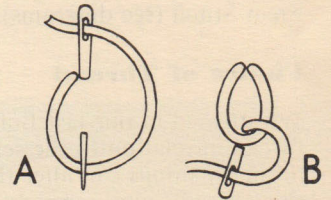


No. 1880

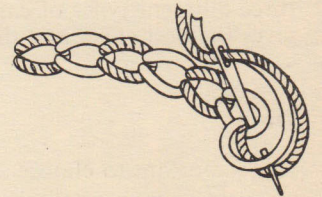
No. 1879



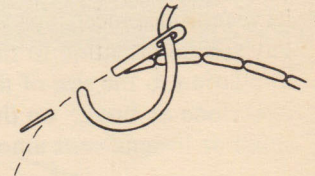
Chain Stitch



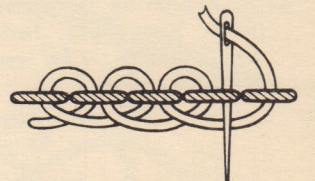
Detached Chain



Chequered Chain



Back Stitch



Pekinese Stitch



Stem Stitch

TWO APRONS THAT ARE

fun to make - pretty to wear

Apron No. 1879

has been decorated with simple rings of Chain, Chequered Chain, Stem, Running and Pekinese Stitches in different colours. Inside each ring is a spiral of Stem Stitch, and these spirals vary in colour within the different motifs. By carefully alternating the colours it is possible to obtain added interest and avoid monotony, while still keeping to the very simple design.

Preparing the work

The contrasting material used in this pattern need not be cut on the cross, as was necessary for the gingham trimmed apron in Sewing Bulletin 3A. Begin by marking the centre of the band with a tacking line vertically and horizontally (see diagram), and then place the first motif in the middle, at the intersection of the two basting lines. Draw your circles round a card template with either tailors' chalk or a small basting line. It will be found that a penny will give quite a useful sized circle. Measure out the distance between the circles accurately and, when these are completed, add the spiral shapes. This can be done free-hand with the point of the chalk, or else traced through with a small piece of carbon paper. Prepare the pocket and band in the same way.

The Embroidery

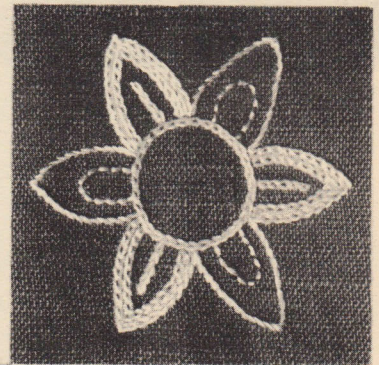
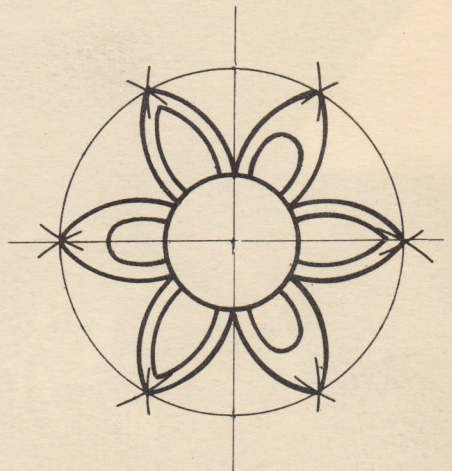
You can see from the close-up the position of the stitches in two of the motifs. When embroidering the rings it is important not to pull the stitches too tightly or they will not lie flat and the material will pucker. Remember the apron will often be laundered, so be sure to fasten off all your threads firmly. Then place the work on a soft, yielding surface (to prevent the embroidery being flattened) and press with a damp cloth on the wrong side. Make the apron up as described in the sewing section (Bulletin No. 3A).

Apron No. 1880

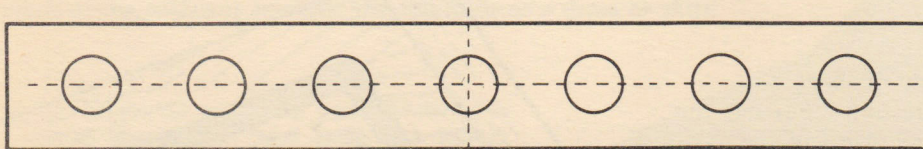
This little two-coloured apron is decorated with four flowers placed down the centre panel and worked in white thread using Chain, Stem and Back Stitch. Note the interesting use of contrast bias binding which in itself is an attractive trimming.

The work is prepared with a centre basting thread as in the case of Apron No. 1879.

A template for the flower can be made with a pair of compasses. A circle of the desired size is drawn and the petals are made by taking the same radius and marking half circles with the point of the compass on the outside ring. A small circle is added for the middle of the flower (see diagram).



Close up of motif from the panel of Apron No 1880. The diagram above shows how to draw it.



Close up of 2 motifs from Apron No. 1879. The diagram above it shows how to place the circles.

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How to make the

Dirndl Shirt and Cushion

No. 1882



The main motif is slightly more intricate, but the design can be clearly seen in the close-up photograph, and is based on a circle with a simple leaf shape inside. We show you here the effect obtained by varying the size of the stitchery. The close-up of the dirndl skirt shows plainly the original, simple motif worked in fine cotton thread on a dress linen, while the cushion shows how the same basic design should be altered in size and lay-out when worked as a cushion on coarse linen in thick thread.

Stretching Embroidery

If the embroidery has become pulled out of shape or badly puckered, it is necessary to stretch it. For this you need a drawing board, a damp cloth and plenty of steel drawing pins.

Place the damp cloth (which should be slightly larger than the work to be stretched) on to the board, and then lay the embroidery on it, face upwards. Pin the top edge firmly to the board with drawing pins, then stretch the embroidery and pin it at the bottom edge, making sure that the grain of the cloth runs absolutely vertically. Now pin it all round, making sure again that the grain of the material is pulled quite straight and that all the puckers are removed.

Remove pins when the work is dry and it will be found to be quite flat, and ready to make up as required.

