GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Satin Stitch. The satin stitch, which is worked with #.5 thread, is the basic foundation of Hardanger embroidery. It can form many different motifs, but its basic function is in the satin stitch block. Each block consists of five stitches and each of those stitches covers four threads of fabric. Beginning with the first block (1a), notice that the needle will usually be working at an angle, but the stitch must always run straight with the threads of the fabric. On the fifth stitch of the first block, pivot in the corner hole (1b) and bring the needle up four threads away. Then return to the corner hole (1c) and once again complete the satin stitches. The second type of corner (1d) shows the needle coming up in the same hole before beginning block 3. Repeat from 1a until the desired number of satin stitch blocks has been completed. Remember to check the work for any split threads or missed holes, that the stitches run straight with the threads of the fabric and that two stitches meet in every corner hole.

2. Cutting. Before doing any cutwork, check the satin stitches again to be certain there are no mistakes. Corresponding blocks on opposite sides of the pattern should be worked around the same four threads. Four threads of fabric will be cut across the ends of the satin stitches as shown (2a); never cut parallel to a satin stitch. Always keeping the satin stitches to the right of the scissors (if you are right handed), insert the tip of the scissors into the end hole and bring it out at the corner hole. Check to be sure you have picked up four threads of fabric. Carefully snip as close to the satin stitch as possible without cutting the #5 thread. Continue around the pattern until all appropriate areas have been cut (2a). Then draw out all loose threads (2b). The blocks on opposite sides of a pattern must correspond since the four threads cut on one side must be the same four cut on the opposite side in order to be drawn out. With some motifs (2c), only the four corner threads will be cut, leaving some threads to be wrapped.

3. Weaving. After completing the cutting, there will be a network of threads left, all in groups of four. These will be wrapped or woven into bars with pearl cotton #8. Secure the end of the thread into the satin stitches on the back of the fabric and bring the needle to the right side of the fabric through the middle of the four threads. Bring the needle around the threads on one side and then back to the middle (3a). Repeat on the opposite side (3b). Continue weaving in a figure-eight pattern until the entire bar is filled. It is extremely important that the weaving be very tight and even; therefore, pull each stitch firmly before continuing. When one bar is complete, cross over to the next bar by bringing the needle from the far side of the completed bar up into the center of the next bar (3c). This will leave a small crossover thread on the back of the work.

4. Webs. These lacy fillers go quickly and add much to any piece of Hardanger embroidery. Weave 3½ bars. To insert a web, bring the needle up through the center of the adjacent woven bar (4a). Bring needle under the first side of the web and then up through the center of the next woven bar (4b). Proceed to the third bar and repeat 4b. Pass needle under the third side of web and pull needle through to create the twist. Complete the web by bringing the needle over first side of the web and up through the center of the unfinished bar (4c). Finish by weaving the last half bar.