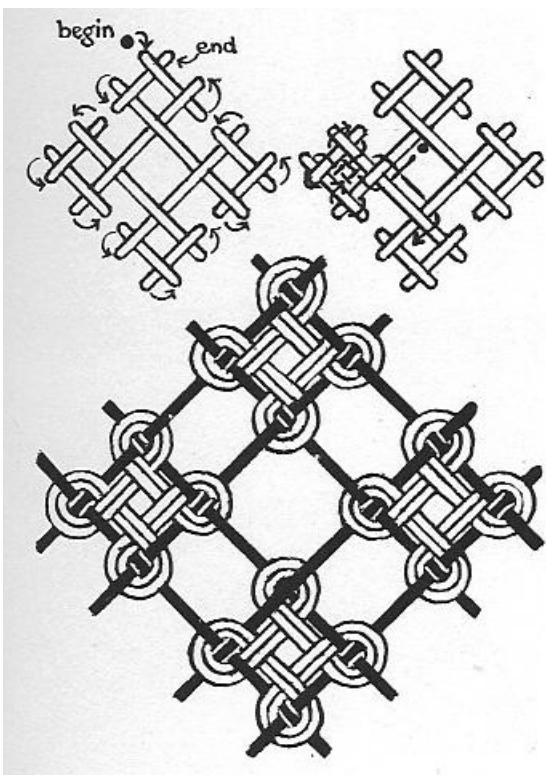


# Interlace :: Braids and More

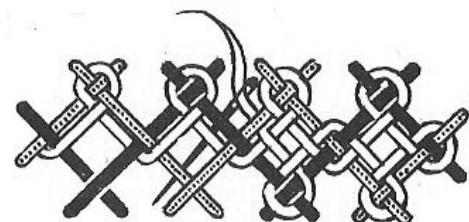
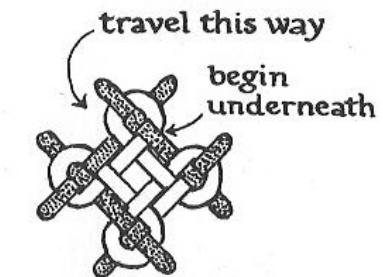
Fall Captaincy AS XL  
by Sabrina de la Bere



The Maltese Cross form of Interlace was used in the German white-work embroideries of the 14th C.; called Opus Teutonicum. It was revived in the 16th C and a variation is on the Bockstocke Sampler. With the revival, it was done in various threads including a mix of silk and metal threads.

The Tudors and Elizabethans loved interlace. Designs of this type appear in the model books, in architectural decoration, on clothing, in the layout of their gardens, floor tiles, and in mazes. Mazes appear in gardens in various forms, including done with trees, bushes and walkways.

There are 2 ways to do Braided Interlace. One is to lay threads on top of the fabric and weave other threads in and around them. The other is to couch down the threads or braids in the interlace pattern.



## Braided Interlace

The foundation threads are done first and actually pierce through the cloth. They are secured on the backside. They MUST be firm enough that they will not give way when the other threads are passed through them. The second and possibly third thread are on top of the fabric and only the ends are discretely passed to the back of the fabric and secured. The objective with this form is to have the look of a heavy braid. To achieve this, the size of the thread or braid in relationship to the space used is very important.

The diagram above comes from Barbara Snook's *Embroidery Stitches*, published by Batsford: London 1963 - page. 57. To the right are several more interlace designs from page 28. The design below comes from page 65 of *Sampers and Stitches: 2nd Edition Revised*, by Mrs. Archibald Christie, Batsford: London, 1929. The key to doing these designs correctly is planning. You plan the route your base threads will take. Then you plan the route that your surface threads will take.

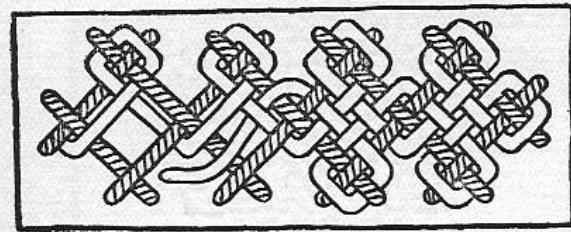
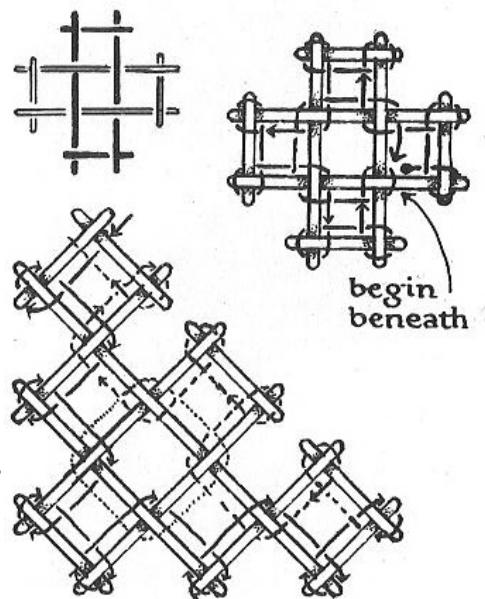


FIG. 95. INTERLACING STITCH.

It takes time, but the result can be subtle or not depending on the threads that you choose.

Enjoy!



## Couched Interlace

For Couched Interlace, the objective is to lay the braid or cord along the path and then to couch it down in the least obvious manner. For braids you may choose to either lay the couching cord along the line of the braid so that it sits into the braid or you can slightly unravel the braid and go through the braid. Either way you need to transfer the design to the fabric first.

There are a number of ways to transfer a design to the fabric - tracing, using dressmakers carbon paper or pen, pricking and pouncing, or basting the design onto the fabric. Any which way you choose, be sure that the transferred design will be completely hidden or removed so as to not detract from the pattern.

## Patterns

Most of the model books have patterns for interlace. Some are designed to be done on a grid in other forms of needlework. Some are like the ones on this page which can easily be adapted to the Couched Interlace. A few can be adapted to the Braided Interlace.

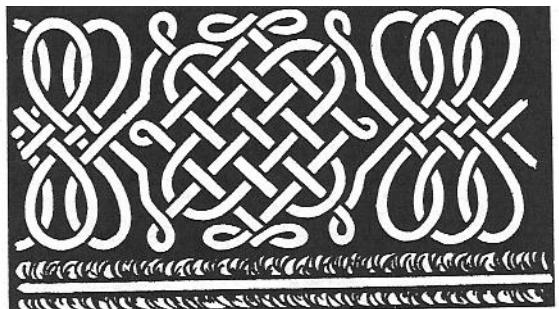
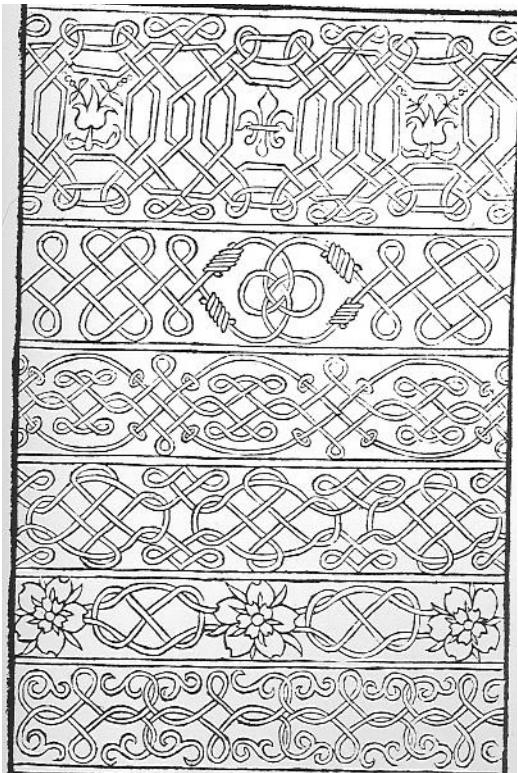
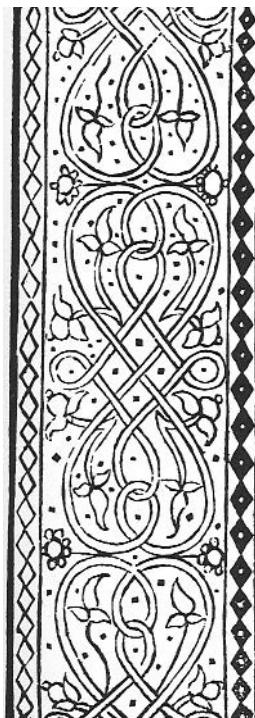


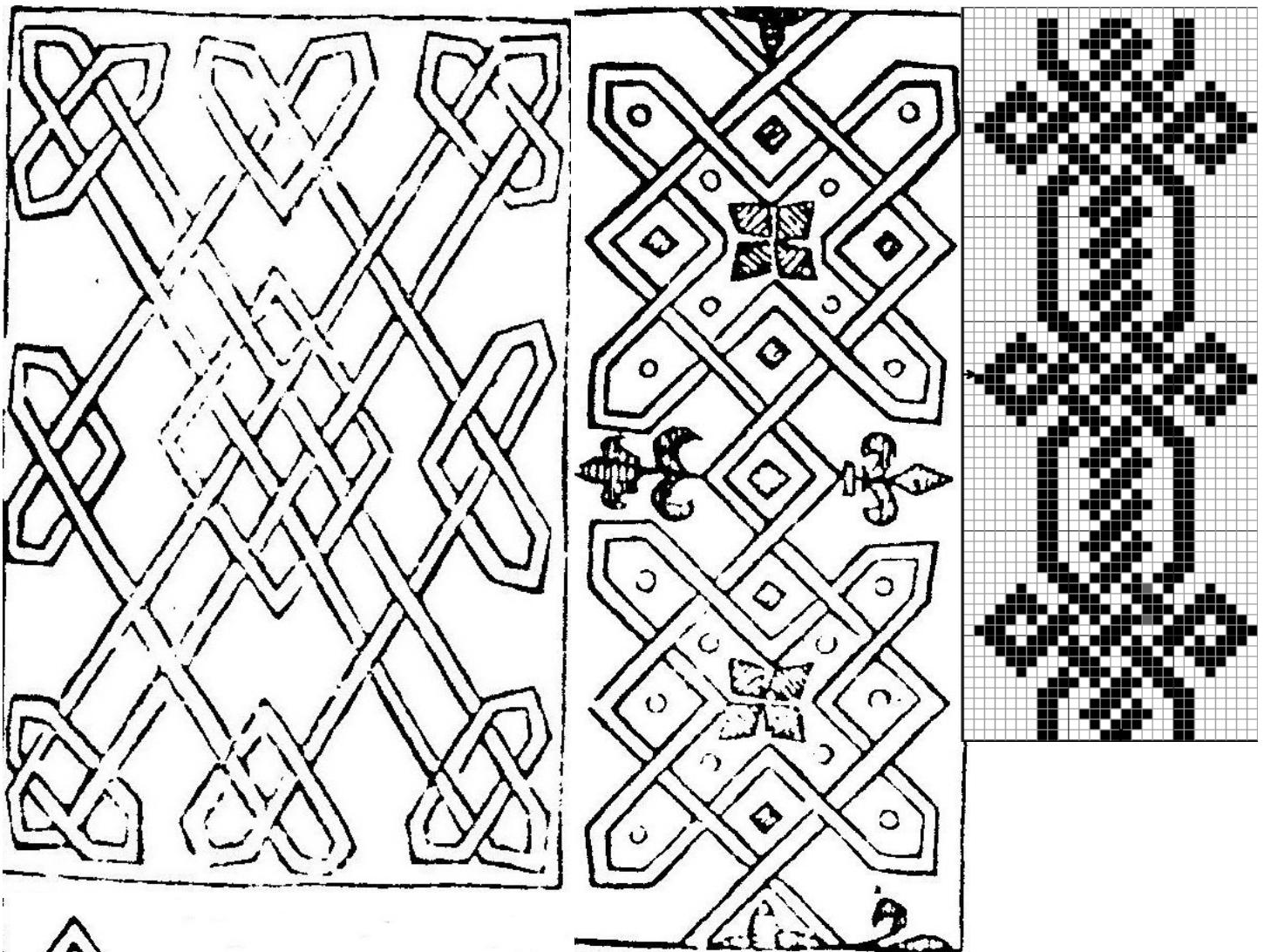
Fig. 267

Fig. 267 from *Tudor Costume and Fashion* by Herbert Norris. Published by Dover: Mineola, 1997. ISBN 0-486-29845-0. From a portrait of Henry VIII - drawn by Norris.



Pictures below from *Apropos Patterns* by Margaret Abegg, published by Schriften der Abegg: Bern, 1978, page 41. Portrait of Henry VIII, after Hans Holbein, German School 1497/8-1543, Windsor Castle. Middle - from Hoffman, New Modelbuch, Strassburg 1556. Right - from Egenolf, Modelbuch welscher Ober vn Niderlandischer Abait, Frankfurt, 1540.





3 patterns from Richard Schorleyker's *Scholehouse for the Needle* - London 1632  
<http://web.archive.org/web/20040206052811/>  
<http://infotrope.net/sca/texts/scholhouse/>  
 Upper Right from *Ostaus's True Perfection of Design*, Venice 1567 as charted by Susan Evans and published by Falconwood Press, 1989.  
 Lower Right Garden Knot - source unknown.

