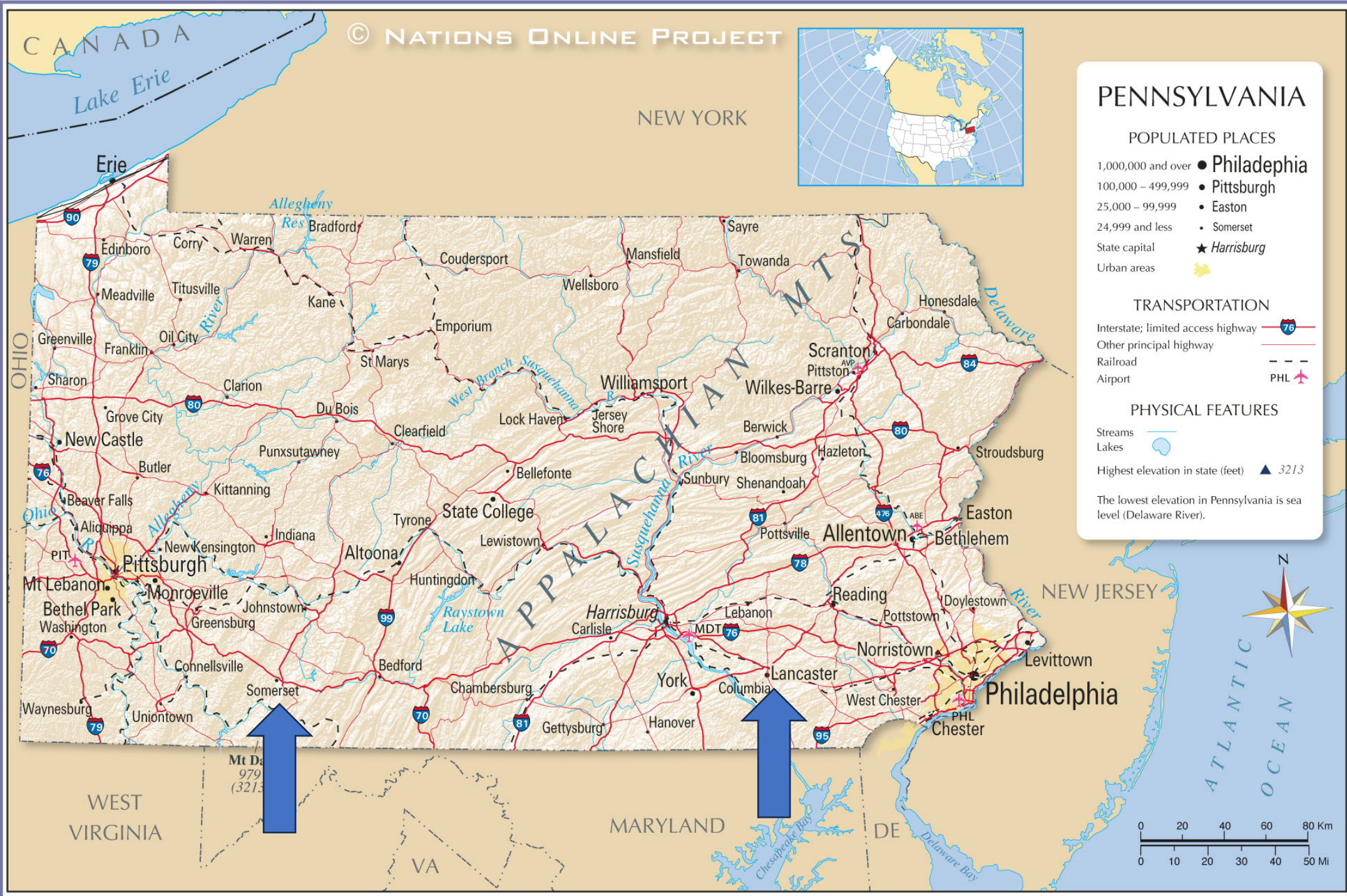




HYMNODY IN EARLY AMERICAN SAMPLERS
BY SHELLEY ROGERS

A PRESENTATION FOR SEMLA ANNUAL MEETING, OCT. 14, 2023, EMORY UNIVERSITY



Lancaster is 80 miles west of Philadelphia. Somerset is 175 miles west of Lancaster.

Map courtesy of Nations Online Project.



Abraham G. Landis Family - c. 1894

Back Row (L-R): Edmund, Peter, Abraham, Emma (Mrs. Norman Miller), Catherine (Mrs. Irvin Lambert), Ellen (Mrs. Homer Schrock), Alice (Mrs. Annanias Stull), Rebecca (Mrs. Jackson Glessner), Daniel, Susan (Mrs. Harvey Schrock).

Front Row (L-R): Abraham G. Landis, Harriet T. (Speicher) Landis, Robert, Sarah "Sadie" (Mrs. Charles Kister), Mary (Mrs. Charles Whipperman).

Abraham G. is my great-great grandfather. His son Abraham is my great-grandfather, one of 13 children.

Alice Park 1832 Reproduction Sampler

Borrowing words from a popular hymn penned by William Cowper circa 1771, this sampler displays a young stitcher's careful practice of cross stitch and tent stitch.



6.64" x 8.78"

Design by Deborah Fasano of
Historic Handworks

Skill Level: Intermediate
Stitch Count: 93H x 123W
Design Size: 5¹/₈" x 7³/₄"

Materials

- 12" x 14" piece 32-count lambswool linen from Wichelt Imports Inc.
- One skein each Au Ver À Soie® Soie d'Alger silk floss
- Size 26 tapestry needle

Au Ver À Soie® Soie d'Alger

DMC® Alternative Listed in Parentheses*

- | | | | |
|---|------|--------|-------------------------------|
| ○ | 2911 | (407) | desert sand, dk. |
| × | 1845 | (500) | blue green, vy. dk. |
| ■ | 2626 | (918) | red copper, dk. (tent stitch) |
| * | 2626 | (918) | red copper, dk. copper |
| △ | 4612 | (921) | mahogany, lt. |
| H | 2634 | (3776) | teal green, dk. |
| + | 5024 | (3847) | teal green, med. |
| S | 5023 | (3848) | teal green, med. |

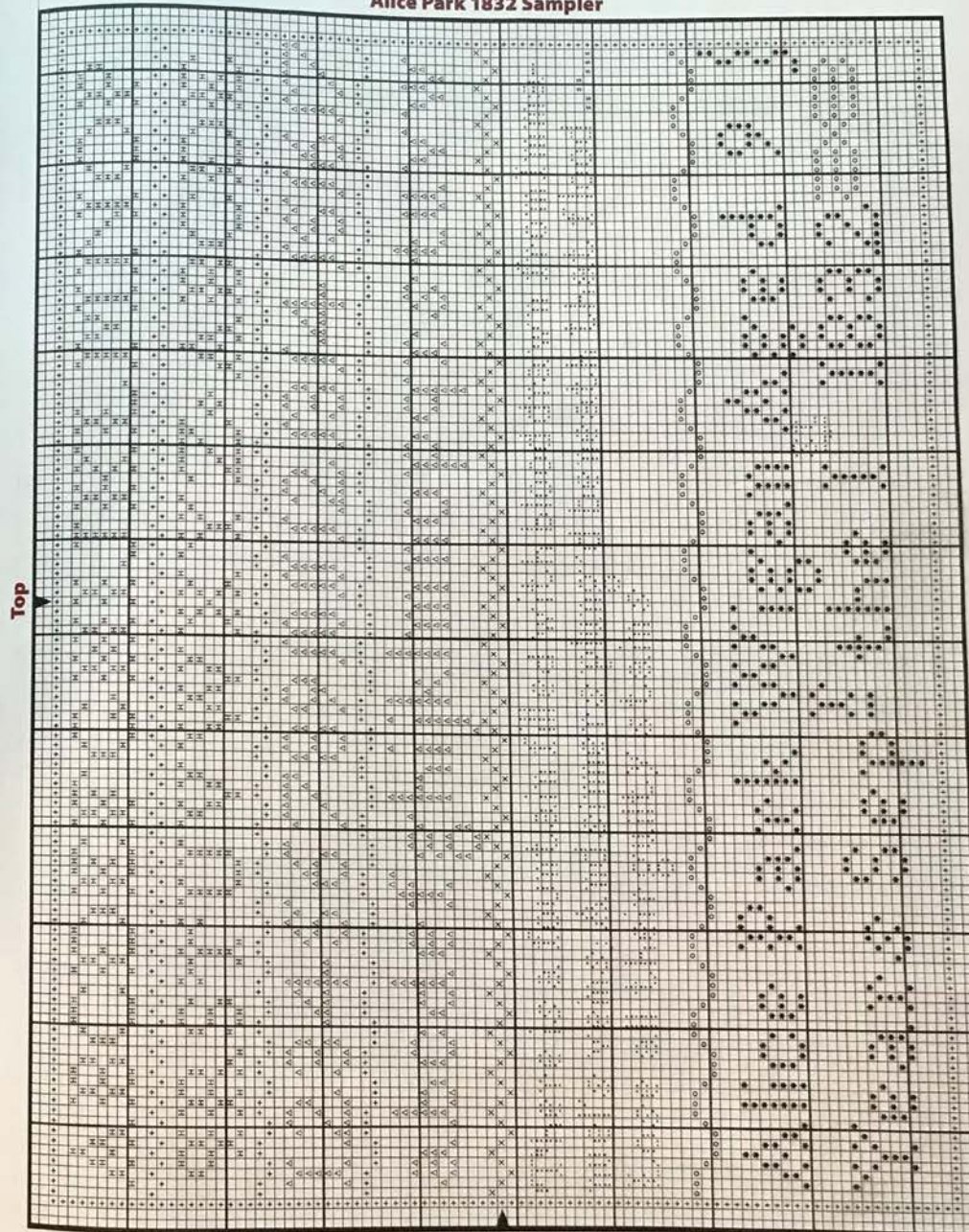
*DMC® alternatives are not one-to-one equivalents to the floss suggested by the designer. To achieve results pictured, use the floss listed in the first column.

Instructions

Cross stitch over two threads using two strands of floss.

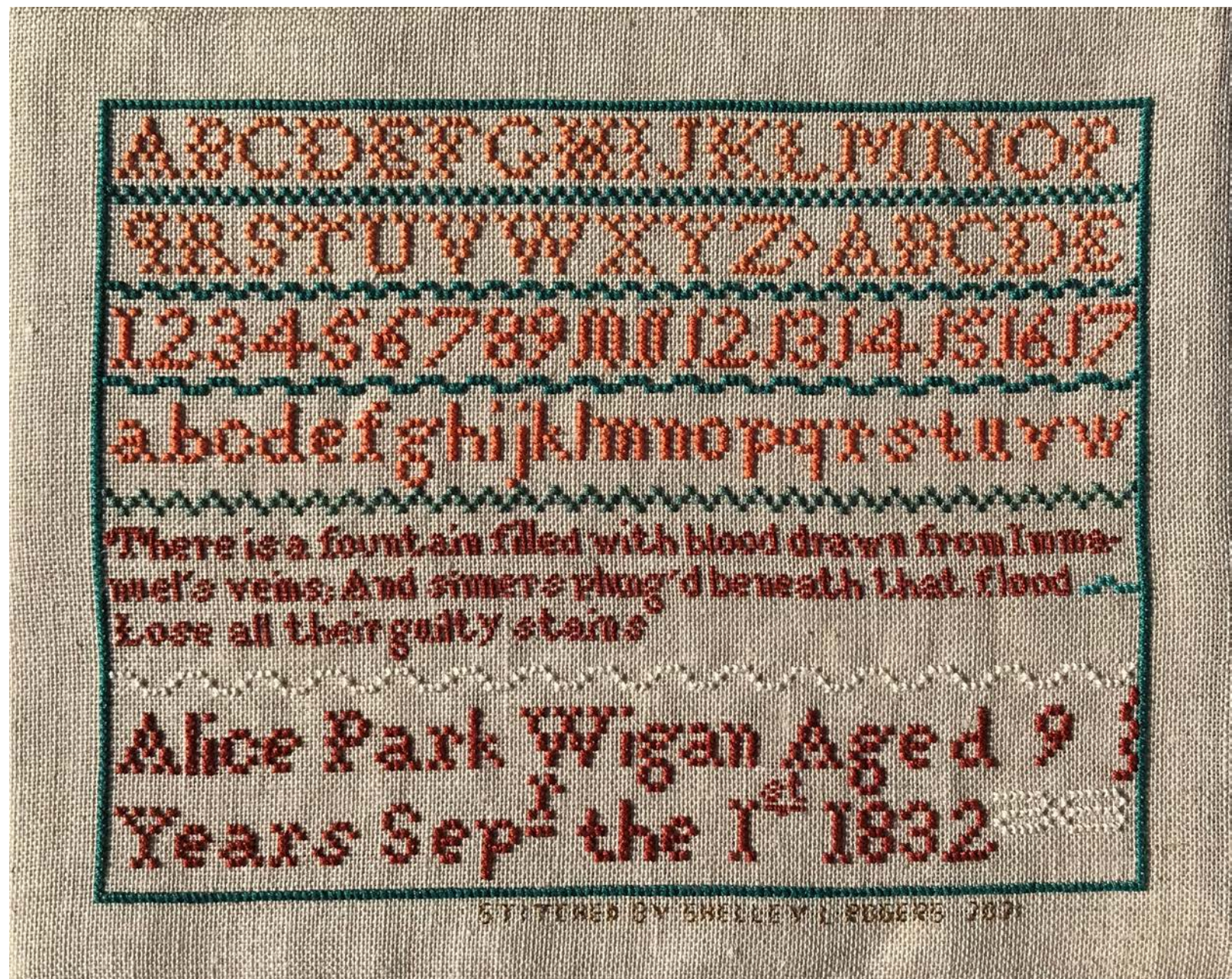
Where small symbols appear, work tent stitch over one thread using two strands of floss. ☺

Alice Park 1832 Sampler

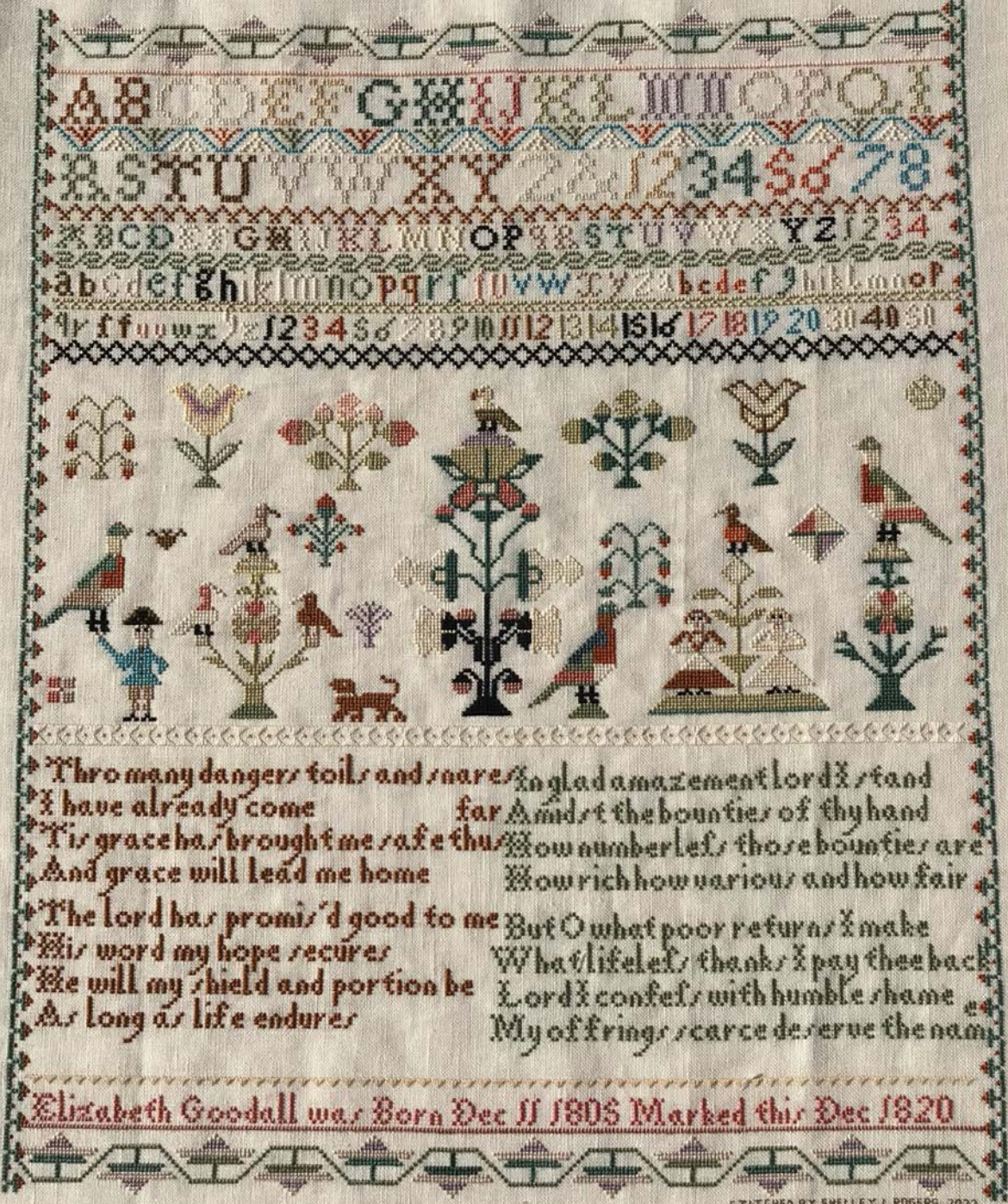


There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins
And sinners plung'd beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains

Alice Park lived in Wigan, which is a
town in Greater Manchester (England).



Irish sampler
1820



British sampler
1826



British sampler
1836



British sampler
1850

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O
P Q R S T U V W X Y Z abcdefgh



yet nought have we whereof to boast
As wiser than the rest
He is not wise who knows the most
but he who lives the best

sarah Jaggard. 28th june 1850 walsham
STITCHED BY SHELLEY L ROBERTS 2072

HOSANNA to king David's son
Who reigns on a superior throne
We bless the prince of heav'nly birth
Who brings salvation down on earth

Let ev'ry nation ev'ry age
In this delightful work engage
Old men and babes in Sion sing
The glories of their newborn king

Sarah May's Christmas ~ December ~ 1815



STITCHED BY SHELLEY L. ROGERS 2022

Unknown
nationality
sampler
1815

American sampler
1786



Original American
sampler ca. 1792
Owned by The Met

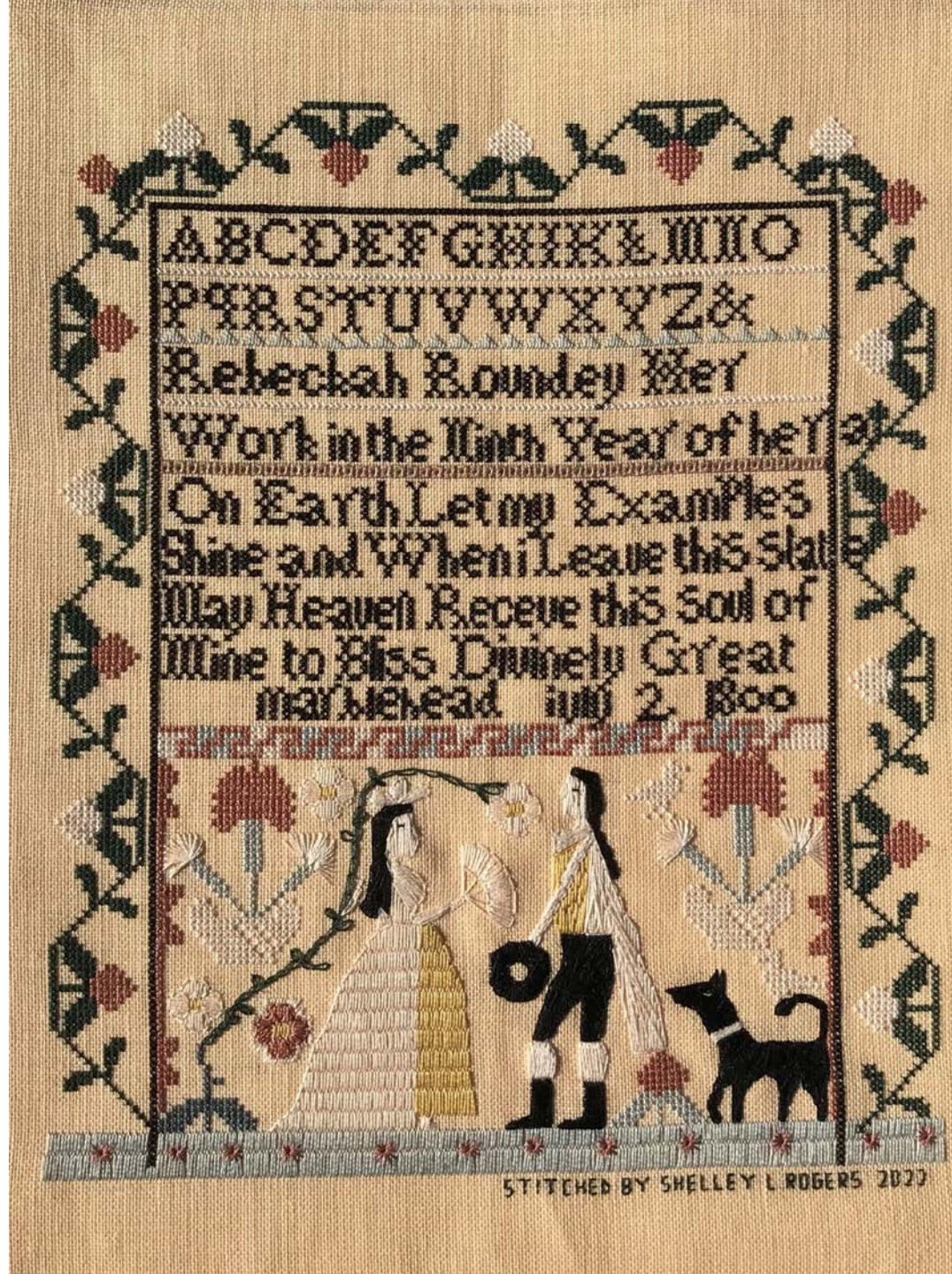


American sampler
1795



STITCHED BY SHELLEY L. ROGERS 2022

American sampler
1800



American sampler
1819





TRUTH

O Truth, whom millions
Proudly slight,

O Truth, my treasure
and delight,

Accept this tribute for
thy name,

And this poor heart from
Which it came.

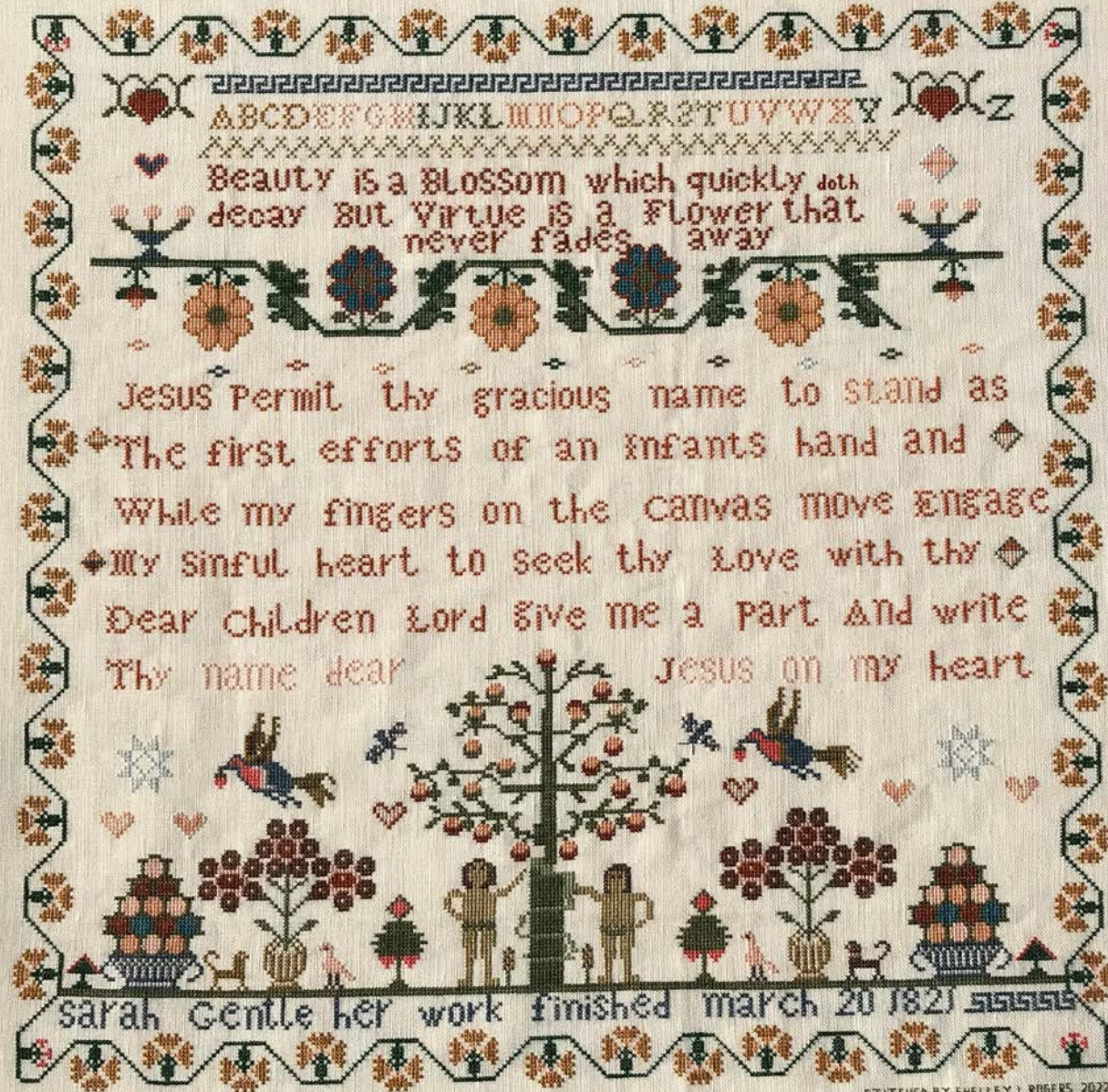


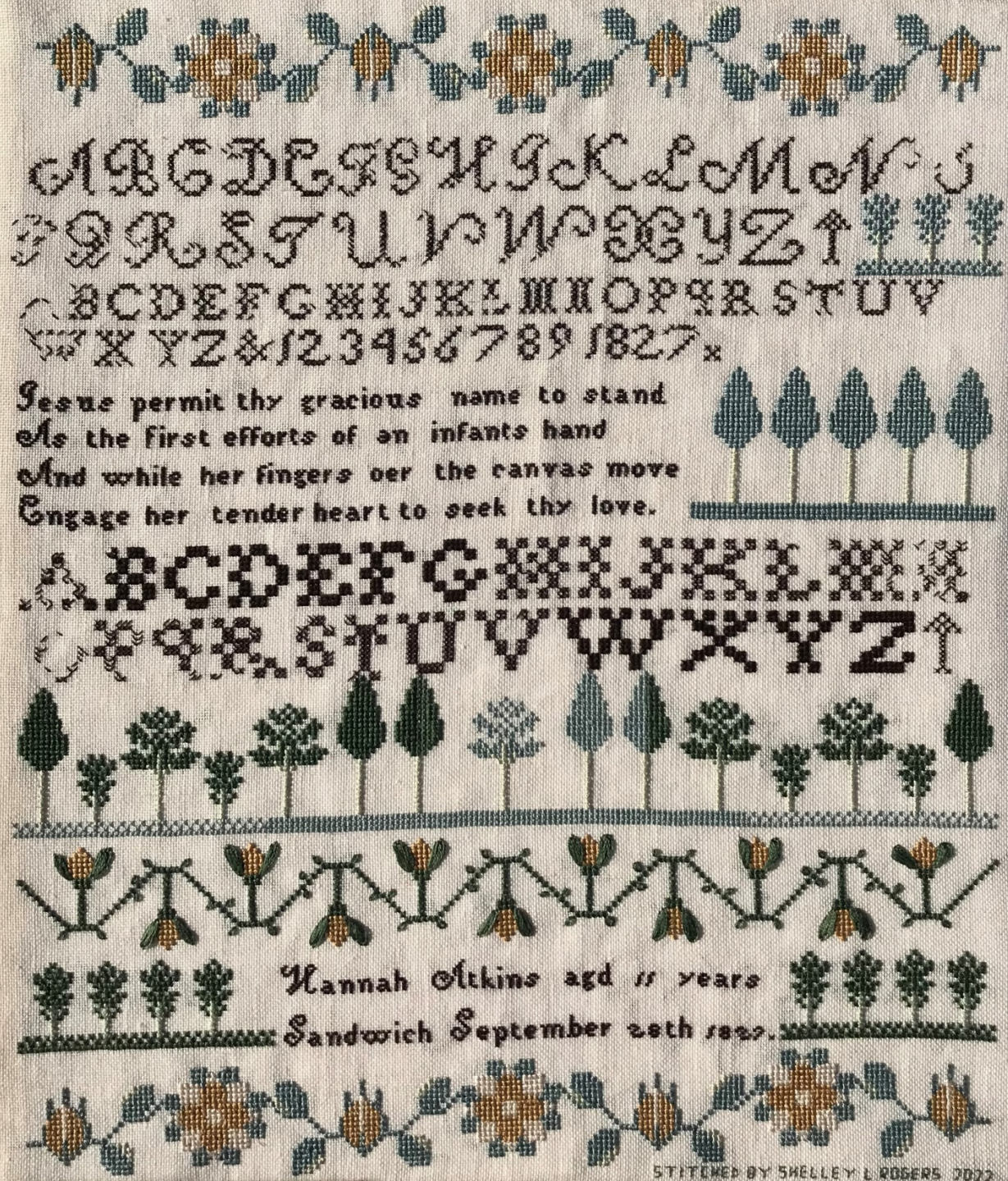
Rosena Disery, aged 15 years.
New York African Free
school. April 1820.



American sampler
1820

American sampler
1821





American sampler
1827

American sampler
1830



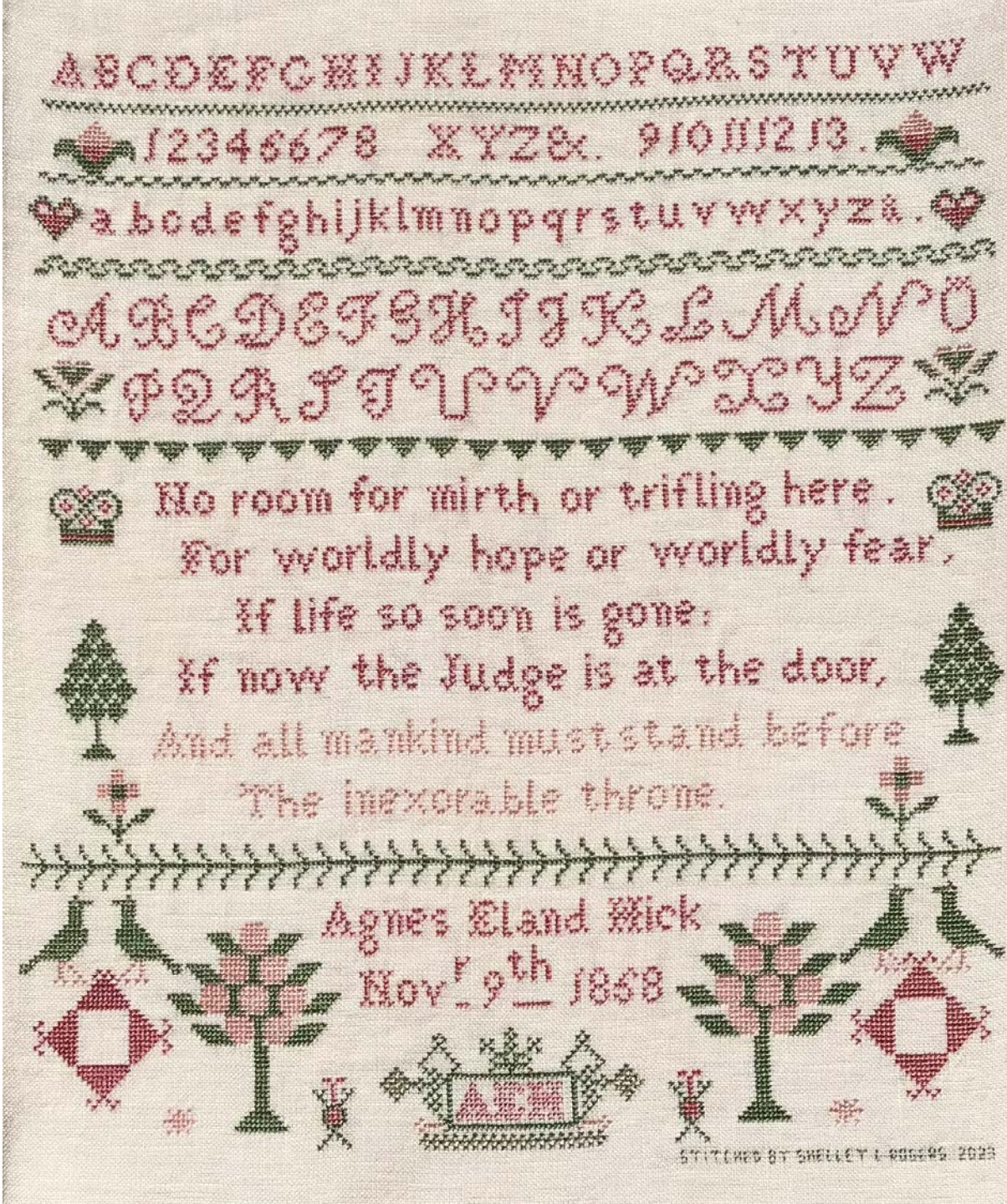
STITCHED BY SHELLEY I. ROGERS 2020

American sampler
1835



American (?) sampler
ca. 1850





American
sampler 1858

The original
sampler was found
in an attic trunk in
Milledgeville, Ga.

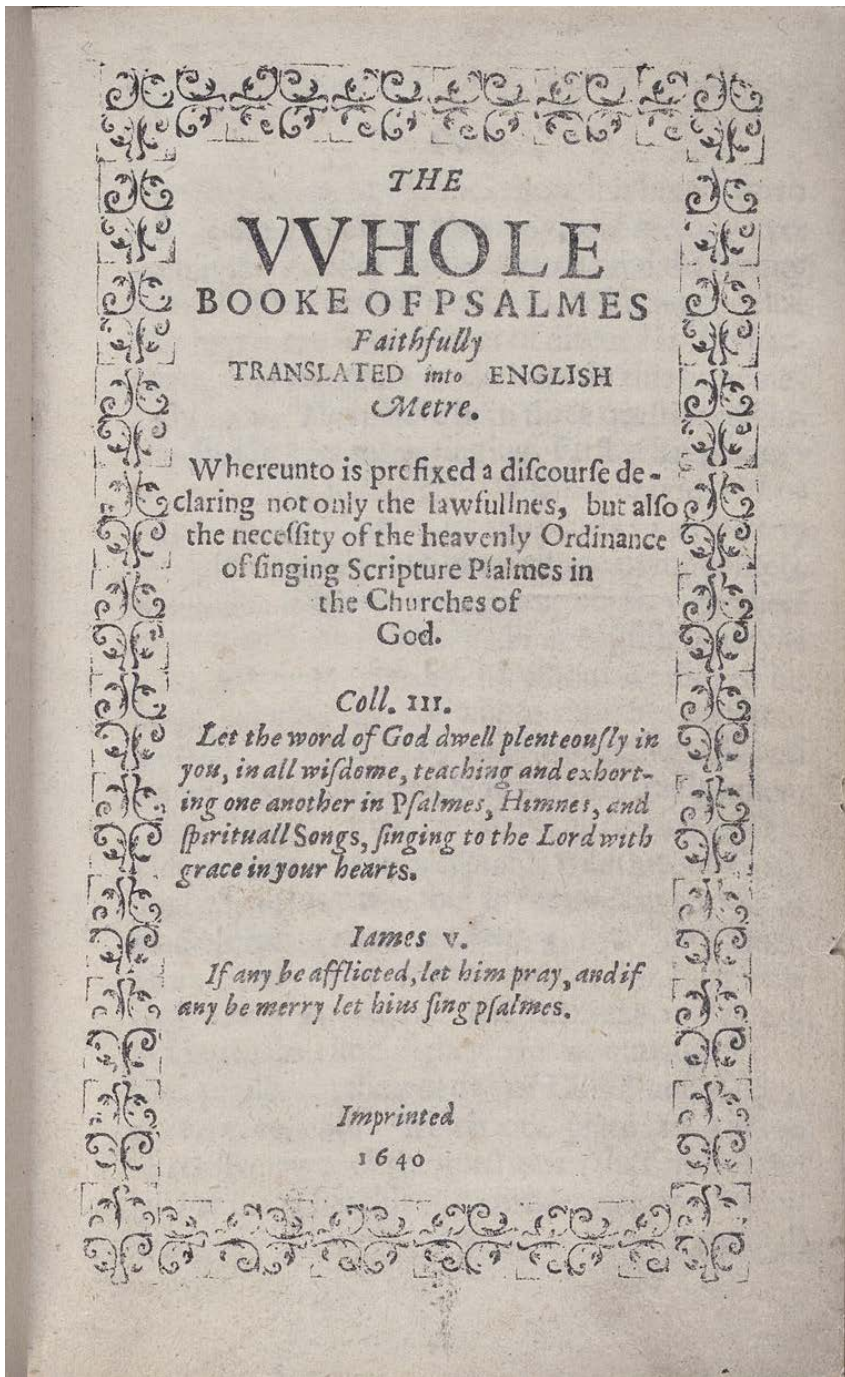
AMERICAN SAMPLERS



ETHEL STANWOOD BOLTON
and
EVA JOHNSTON COE

- Bolton and Coe studied 2500 American samplers.
- 175 of those samplers contained hymn verses.
- Those with hymn verses were stitched from 1715 to 1830.
- The hymn verses were from 100 different hymns.
- 7% of the known American samplers a hundred years ago contained hymnody.
- Today, over 5000 samplers have been documented, with the work continued by the NSCDA and 176 collaborations.

The Bay Psalm Book
1640



Title page: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Interior page: STC 2738, Houghton Library, Harvard University

PSALME lxxxvii lxxxvii.
that there ^{him selfe} borne was. Selah
7 Both those that fingers are
as also *there shall bee,*
those that on instruments doe play:
all my springs are in thee.
Psalme 88
A song or psalme for the sons of Korah, to
the chief musician upō Mahalath Leannoth,
Maschil of Heman the
Ezrahite.
LORD God of my salvation,
before thee day & night cryde I.
2 Before thee o let my pray'r come:
incline thine eare unto my cry.
3 Because my soule is troubled so:
and my life draws nigh to the grave.
4 Counted with them to 'th pit that go:
I'me as a man that no strength have.
5 Free among those men that be dead,
like slaine which in the grave are shut;
by thee noe more remembered:
and by thy hand off are they cut.
6 Thou hast mee layd i'th pit most low
in darknesses, within deep caves.
7 Hard on mee lyes thy wrath, & thou
dost mee afflict with all thy waves. Selah:
8 Men that of mine acquaintance bee
thou hast put far away mee fro:
unto them loathsome thou madst mee,
I am shut up nor forth can go.
9 Because of mine affliction,

mine

Martin Luther (1483-1546)
as painted by Lucas Cranach
the Elder



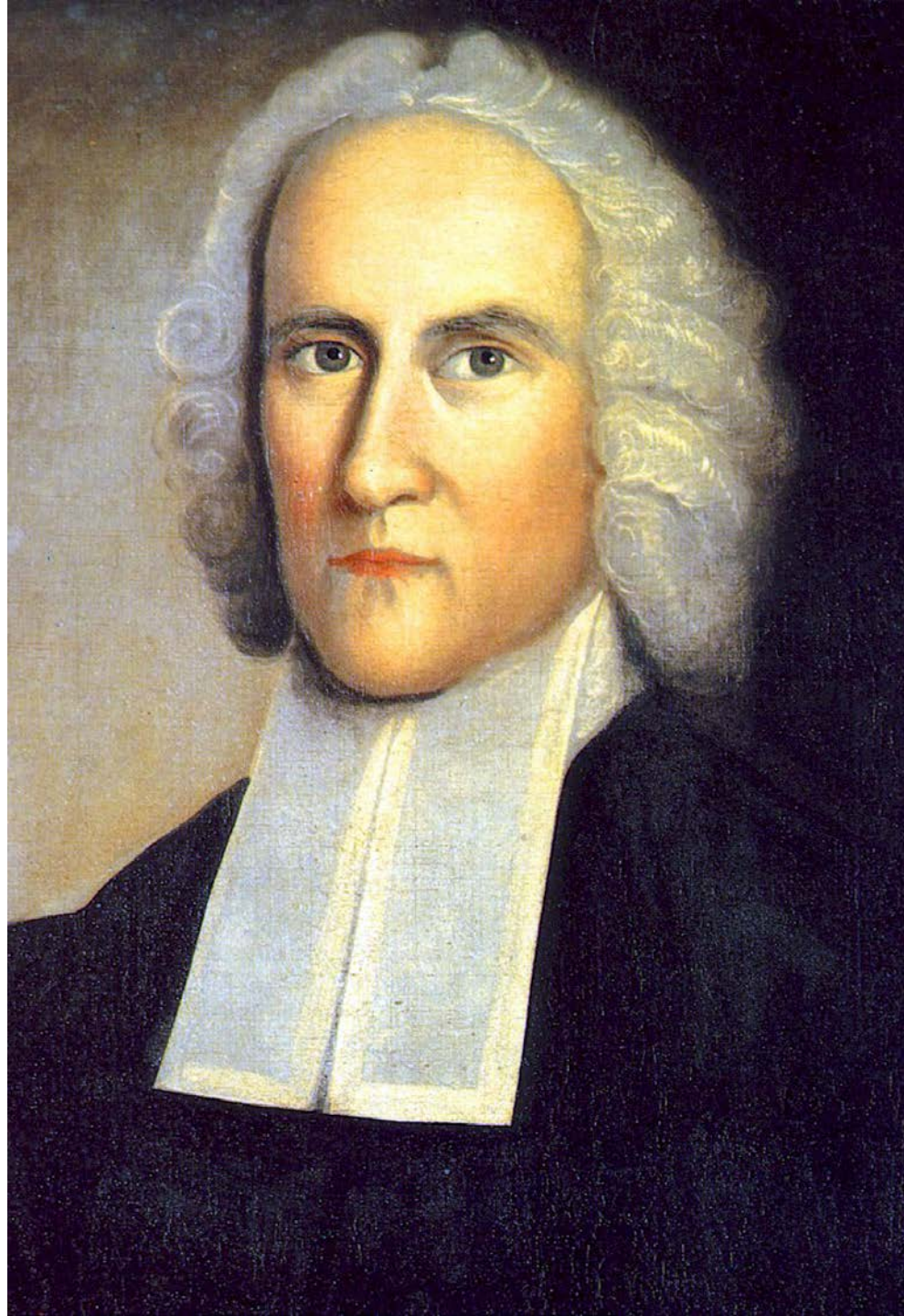
16th and 17th centuries

New England: Congregational

Middle colonies: Anglicans, Baptists, Congregational, Dutch Reformed, Lutherans, Quakers

Southern colonies: Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
as painted by Joseph Badger



George Whitefield
(1714-1770)



From an engraving by I. Taylor after a painting by N. Hone (Library of Congress), as published in *Encyclopædia Britannica*

Psalmody

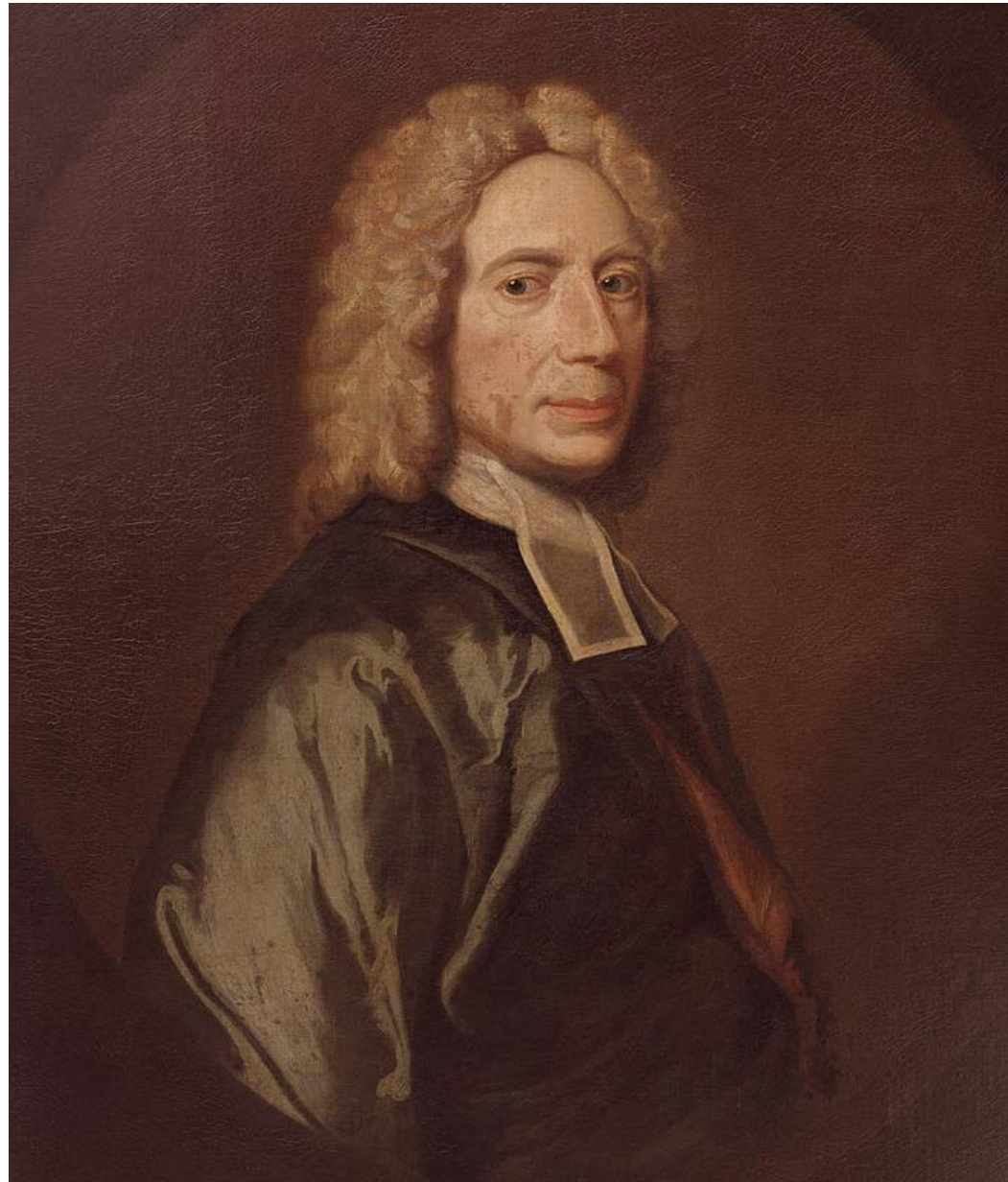
Emphasis on Psalms
(Old Testament), strict,
metrical phrasing, not
emotional



Hymnody

Emphasis on Gospels (New
Testament), appeal to
emotion & personal religious
experience; more accessible
paraphrasing

Isaac Watts (1674-1748),
as painted by an
unknown artist





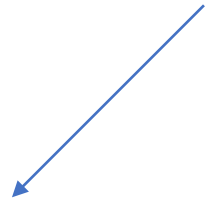
John Wesley (1703-1791)
as painted by George Romney



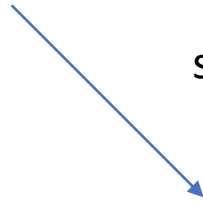
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
as painted by John Russell

Second Great Awakening, late 18th-early 19th centuries

Camp meetings in Kentucky generate a new type of song



Spirituals of oppressed Blacks



spread by Methodists

adopted by Dutch, German Baptists,
German Reformed, Lutherans, Mennonites

Hymnic meter: the number of syllables per verse

To God the Father, God the Son, = 8 syllables

And God the Spirit, Three in One, = 8 syllables

Be honour, praise and glory given, = 8 syllables

By all on earth, and all in heaven. = 8 syllables

Common meter: 8,6,8,6

Short meter: 6,6,8,6

Long meter: 8,8,8,8 as shown above

This is “Doxology” in *Divine Songs for Children* by Isaac Watts from 1715, which has been published in 179 hymnals. It appears in Mary Hail’s sampler of 1763.

Poetic meter: the placement of accents in a verse

To God the Father, God the Son

And God the Spirit, Three in One

Be honour, praise and glory given

By all on earth, and all in heaven

A poetic foot is a basic repeated sequence of meter of two or more accented or unaccented syllables. In this poem, each foot has two syllables, and the accent is on the second syllable. This is called iambic meter. Each verse consists of four iambic feet, so the entire poem is iambic tetrameter.

Rhyme scheme: corresponding terminal sounds in verses

To God the Father, God the Son,

rhyme A

And God the Spirit, Three in One,

“One” rhymes with “Son,” so rhyme A

Be honour, praise and glory given,

rhyme B

By all on earth, and all in heaven.

“heaven” rhymes with “given,” so rhyme B

The rhyme scheme above is AABB, or rhyming couplets.

To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Be honour, praise and glory given,
By all on earth, and all in heaven.

Hymnic meter: LM=8888

Poetic meter: iambic tetrameter

Rhyme scheme: AABB (rhyming couplets)

Other poetic devices: alliteration: Glory given

antistrophe is the repetition of a phrase in reverse. In the first two verses, God's trinity is

identified singly, then "Three in One"

epizeuxes: "God the" is repeated within the 1st verse; "all" is repeated in the 4th verse

Phebe Hall sampler, 1812

Phebe's sampler may be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/5xyhz9hm> (see page 4 of the catalog).

Phebe was "eleaven" when she stitched her band sampler. At the bottom is the first stanza of "To thee, again, my gracious God," a hymn by Susanna Harrison (1752-1784). Upon the death of her father, Harrison worked as a domestic servant in Ipswich, England from the time she was 16 to support her large family. She continued until she became an invalid, probably from tuberculosis, at the age of 20. She returned to her mother's home and taught herself to write. Harrison wrote 142 hymns before she died at about age 32. Most of her hymns were published in *Songs in the Night* in 1780, and it proved to be popular. Eleven editions were printed in England and seven additional ones in America by 1847.

To thee, again, my gracious God by Susanna Harrison

which has appeared in 19 hymnals

To thee again my gracious God

I lift my heart and eyes

Thou art my only safe abode

Thou only just and wise.

Hymnic meter: CM=8686

Poetic meter: iambic tetrameter (1st and 3rd verses) and iambic trimeter (2nd and 4th verses)

Rhyme scheme: ABAB (cross rhyme) with false rhyme: God/abode

Other poetic devices: alliteration: gracious God

anaphora: repetition of “Thou” at the start of successive verses

chiasmus: “my heart and eyes” are parallel clauses to God being “just and wise” and create contrast

mesodiplosis: repetition of “only” in the middle of successive verses

metaphor: God is a safe abode

synecdoche: heart and eyes are components used to refer to the whole person

Elizabeth Powell sampler, 1819

As stitched by Elizabeth:

Beset with snares on ev'ry hand
In life's uncertain path I stand:
Father Divine' diffuse thy light:
To guide my doubtful footsteps right.

As written by Philip Doddridge:

Beset with snares on every hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand:
Saviour divine! Diffuse Thy light
To guide my doubtful footsteps right.



***Mary's Choice of the Better Part* by Philip Doddridge (1755)**

Text from John Rippon's *Selection of Hymns for Public Worship* (1787)

- 1 Beset with snares on every hand,
In Life's uncertain Path I stand:
Savior divine, diffuse thy Light
To guide my doubtful Footsteps right.
- 2 Engage this roving treacherous Heart
To fix on Mary's better Part;
To scorn the Trifles of a Day
For Joys, that none can take away.
- 4 If thou, my Jesus, still be nigh,
Cheerful I live, and joyful die:
Secure, when mortal Comforts flee,
To find ten Thousand Worlds in thee.

Five girls cited in *American Samplers*, plus Elizabeth Powell, stitched verses from stanzas 1, 2, and 4.

Hymnic meter: LM=8888

Poetic meter: iambic tetrameter

Rhyme scheme: AABB (rhyming couplets)

Other poetic devices: alliteration: beset/snares; divine diffuse; doubtful footsteps; comforts flee; to/ten;
thousand/Thee

anaphora: “To” begins successive verses

choriambus: “Father divine” or “Saviour divine” (/u u/)

hyperbole: “ten thousand worlds”

metaphors: standing on life’s uncertain path, with snares everywhere, is another way of saying that one experiences temptations to sin. Asking the Father to diffuse His light is another way of asking for God’s help to avoid temptations. “Mary’s better Part” is a reference to Jesus Christ.

parallelism: “Saviour divine”

personifications: “roving treacherous heart to fix on” and “to scorn”; “mortal comforts flee”

synecdoche: “heart” is a component of the whole person

tautology: “snares” and “trifles of a day” are different ways of referring to sin

Whose hymns appeared in early American samplers?

- verses from *The Universal Prayer*, by Alexander Pope, appeared in 25 different samplers
- 2 hymns: Joseph Addison, William Cowper as translator, John Fawcett, Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon, and Thomas Ken
- 3 hymns: Philip Doddridge, Anne Steele
- 5 hymns: Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady
- 9 hymns: Charles Wesley
- 51 hymns: Isaac Watts, particularly *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*, the best-selling children's book of all time, if measured by numbers of editions: over 600 editions; 7M copies sold

Some takeaways

- Poetic devices help to convey meaning.
- Rhyme, rhythms, repetitions helped to make hymn texts memorable and useful for instruction.
- Lessons emphasized faith in God, battling sin, embracing virtues, hope for everlasting life and salvation.
- Verses appropriate for young people: stressing obedience, honor to parents, and ethical behavior.
- A good hymn has qualities of lyric poetry, expresses religious truth, and is performed congregationally.
- Studying hymns gives us a greater understanding of a literary art form that continues today.
- Samplers are lessons in social and geographic history, not mere exercises in needle and thread.
- The schoolmistress acted as a folk artist in the creation of the most extraordinary sampler art in the history of the western world.
- Samplers, as functional diplomas, tell us about the cultural ethos of women's education in early America.

Conclusion

We learn about the cultural and religious values of an emergent nation by studying the people who influenced early American worship and women's education: great hymnists, and the framework in which this synergy occurred: hymnody. By studying both the framework of the literary art of hymnody and the framework of the pictorial art of needlework samplers, we explore an interdisciplinary art medium that has no equal.