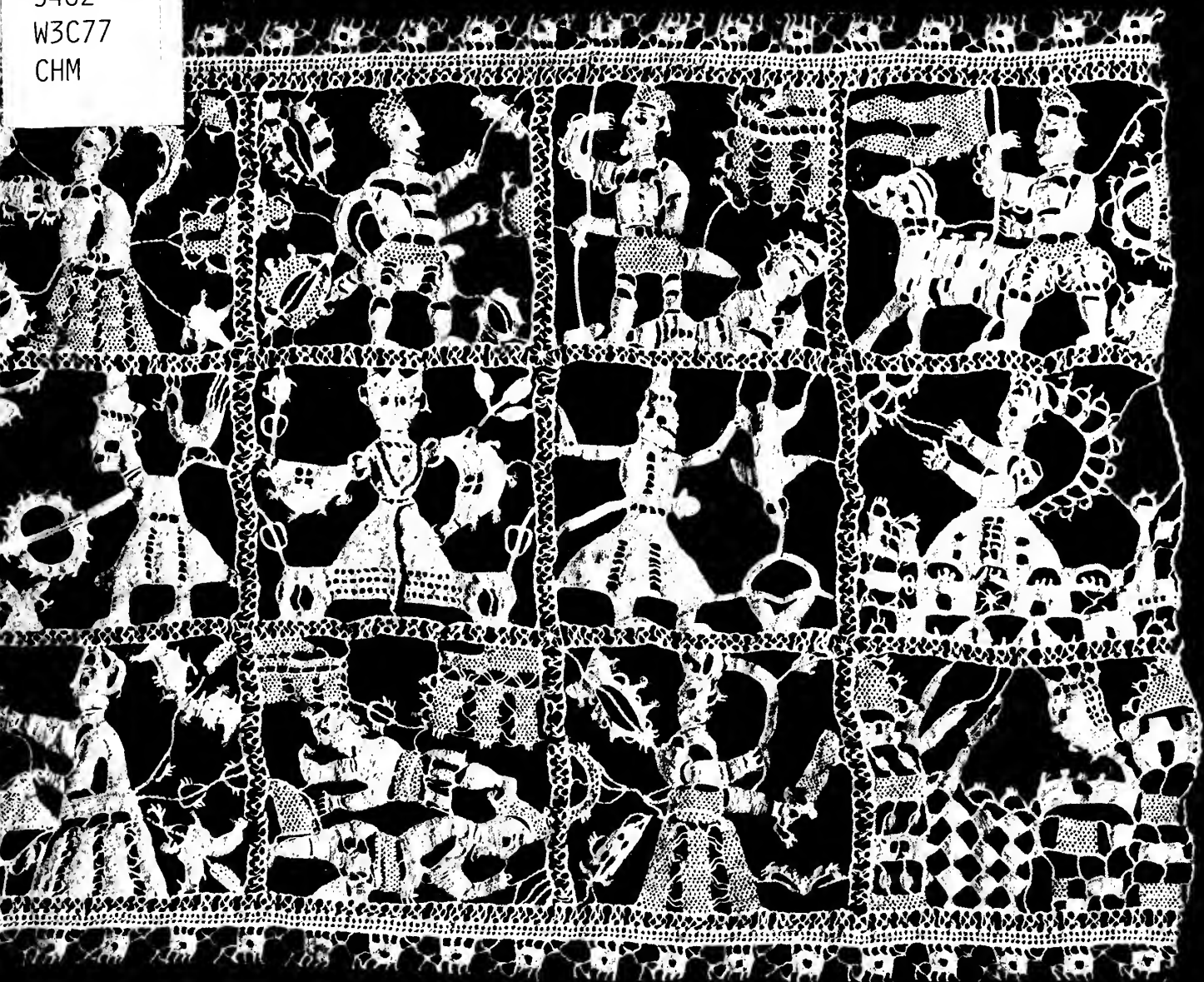


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LACE

in the Collection of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum



The Smithsonian Institution's
National Museum of Design



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Cover:

Border of withdrawn element work with scenes from the Biblical story of Judith and Holofernes Portugal, about 1600, Linen, Height: 7 in.

Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-23a

Inside front cover:

Man's bobbin-made collar

Northern Europe, 2nd half 17th century

Linen and metal-wrapped silk

Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-91

Inside back cover:

Bobbin-made hanging

Designed by Luba Krejci (born 1925)

Czechoslovakia, 1964, Linen, Diameter: 39½ in.

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Herbert Paskow, 1982-9-1

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Foreword

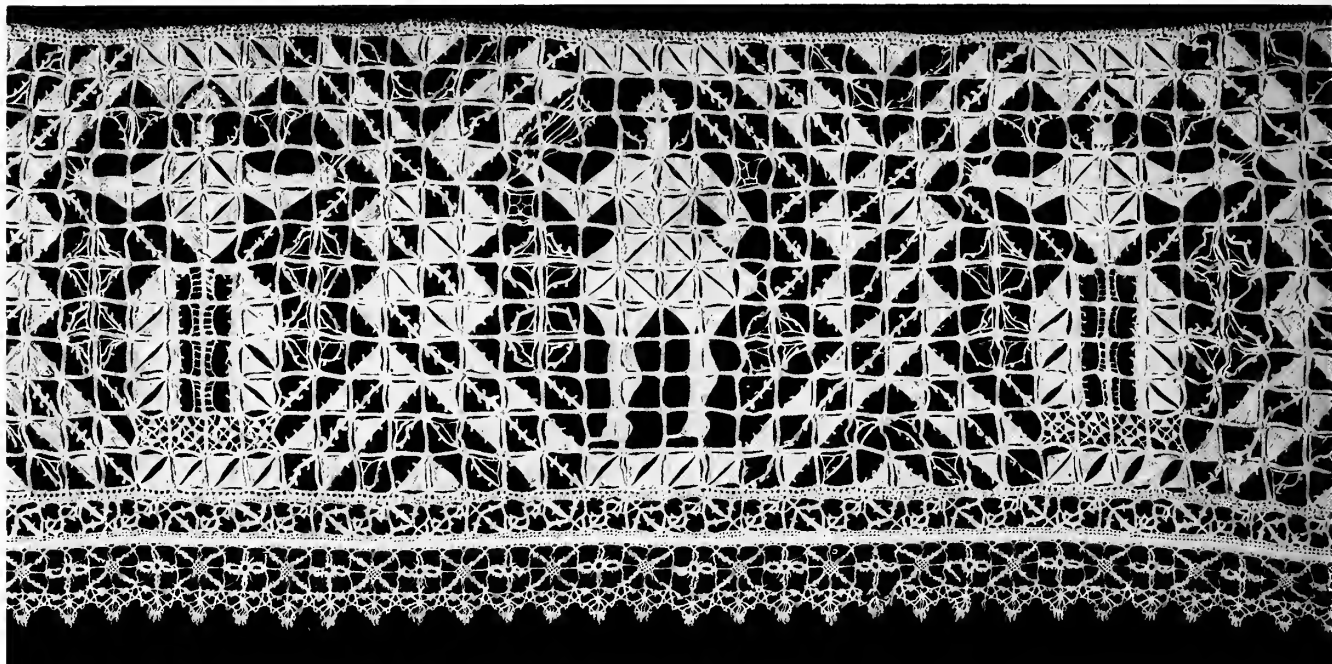
The Cooper-Hewitt Museum is fortunate in having an exquisite and rare collection of early needle- and bobbin-made laces representing a rich variety of patterns and techniques. Traditionally made of linen, this seemingly fragile fabric is both relatively sturdy and breathtakingly sensual, a quality which, regrettably, cannot be conveyed through a publication.

Prior to machine production, lace was available only to the powerful and rich. Fortunes were paid for it, and in certain places its use was strictly regulated. Although the process of making lace inexpensively by machine extended both its audience and its use, machine-made lace, too, finally lost its popularity as fashions and life-styles changed. Happily, there has been a revival of interest in lace, and it is once again being enjoyed and appreciated by more than a limited, wealthy public.

The publication of this handbook on the Cooper-Hewitt's collection of lace marks a

happy occasion. It celebrates the formal opening of the Museum's Textile Study Center, the construction of which was made possible through an immensely generous gift from Thomas Mellon Evans and the kind support of the Milliken Foundation. In addition, it coincides with the exhibition *Lace*, sponsored by the New York State Council on the Arts, with thoughtful contributions from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Wellington Foundation, as well as gifts from Brunschwig & Fils, Inc.; Liberty Fabrics of New York, Inc.; Fieldcrest; the American Fabrics Company; Lady Lynne Lingerie, Inc.; Klauber Brothers, Inc.; and Alice Baldwin Beer, Curator Emeritus of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, who recently died at the age of 94 and to whom this publication is lovingly dedicated. We are deeply grateful to these patrons, as well as to the many discriminating collectors whose gifts have enabled the Museum to build an extraordinary collection of lace.

Lisa Taylor
Director



1. Border of withdrawn element work with attached bobbin-made edging
Italy, mid- to late 16th century, Linen, Height: 7½ in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-35

The word *lace* is derived from the Latin *laqueus*: a noose, snare, or trap, a meaning that it retained in English into the seventeenth century. From the fourteenth century, *lace* has meant a cord, string, thread, or tie; specifically, a cord used to draw together opposite edges by being passed in and out through eyelets or holes and then pulled tight. Laces were used in this way to attach sleeves to tunics and to secure bodices. Closer to our own time, corsets were laced, and we still lace our shoes. By the sixteenth century, lace also referred to ornamental braid, usually of gold and silver. Edward Hall in the *Union of Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (1548) describes “. . . flatte golde of Damaske with small lace myxed between of the same golde, and other laces of the same goying traverse wyse, that the ground little appeared.” This use continued into the nineteenth century, referring to the trimmings on uniforms.

Since as early as the sixteenth century, *lace* has also identified certain openly constructed fabrics. Today the word *lace* has a less restricted meaning and used alone does not identify a specific structure or type of fabric, but one that is light in weight, flexible, and patterned by a contrast in densities created by deliberately

placed holes, or open and closed spaces. Many techniques can be used to produce such a fabric. For example, looping, knitting, crocheting, and netting can be used to produce a tight or open structure, as can spräng, braiding, and macramé. Weaving techniques can deflect warps and wefts, or both, to vary density, and a number of techniques can be used to change the density of previously made fabrics. Net, mesh, or gauze can be embellished with a needle and thread to create dense areas. Holes can be cut into a woven fabric to create a pattern; warps, wefts, or both can be removed from a woven fabric to form the foundation for needlework; or warps and wefts of a woven fabric can be forced out of alignment by a needleworked thread.

But of all of the various kinds of laces, the two that are technically, historically, and artistically most interesting are those made with a needle and those made with bobbins. Both of these techniques evolved in Western Europe to a degree of fineness found nowhere else in the world. The principles from which needle- and bobbin-made laces evolved are simple—the skills required to produce such breathtakingly fine fabrics are nearly incomprehensible. The history of these laces spans five hundred years or more

and winds in and out of Western European changes in taste, technology, and politics. Laces can be identified according to decade and country or region of manufacture, but individual lace makers and designers are rarely known.

Needle-made lace is based on one of the oldest and most universal techniques: looping. Only a single element, or yarn, is required, one end of which is threaded through a needle, the other end of which is attached to the structure. Simple looping is built up from a series of loops worked one row into another, using the same movements as in buttonhole stitch in embroidery or half hitch in knotting.

The foundations to which looping is attached define the three early types of needle-made lace. The first is a foundation of woven fabric in which warps and wefts have been removed, or withdrawn, leaving a grid to which looping and other needlework can be attached. Patterns are confined within the grid of the foundation or superimposed upon it (figure 1 and Cover). In Italian pattern books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, work of this type is usually called *punto tagliato*. A second type of work, known as *reticella* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is constructed on a foundation of narrow flat braids or heavy cords or both, which cross each other at right angles. This, too, imposes a geometric base on the design, but usually one that is larger in scale than the withdrawn element type (figure 2). The third technique was referred to in Italy as *punto in aria* and, as its name implies, is less restricted in design than the other two. The support for *punto in aria* work is a cord, not a geometric grid. This allows for the construction, motif by motif, of curvilinear designs. While the lace is

being made, the foundation cord is held in place by couching it to a firm paper or similar material that has been marked with the outlines of the pattern. The paper backing is cut away when the lace is completed, leaving a free-standing fabric (figures 3-6). In all three types, *punto tagliato*, *reticella*, and *punto in aria*, looping fills in the blank spaces of the design. The foundations are incorporated into the designs, although they can never be disguised.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, details of the design were emphasized with knotted stitches, wrapped cords, or small loops. By mid-seventeenth century, buttonhole stitches were padded to form surprisingly high relief shapes on the edges of motifs (figures 12 and 13). This type of lace was a speciality of Venice and was copied by the French in the second half of the century. Late in the seventeenth century, when bold relief was no longer in fashion, lighter and more flexible laces became popular. Usually the entire surface of these delicate fabrics was deftly worked with tiny loops, rosettes, and little bars. Prior to 1700, surfaces became even less textured, and the foundation cord was expressively used for the delineation of human figures, animals, birds, and flowers. The only other significant development in technique was the introduction, at about the same time, of a variation of looping which incorporates a twist in each row and makes it possible to create small-scale patterns with a minimum build-up of yarn. For a brief period in the early eighteenth century the laces made using this technique were astonishingly light in weight and exquisitely designed.

The term *bobbin-made* refers to laces made with a set of many elements, or yarns, each at-

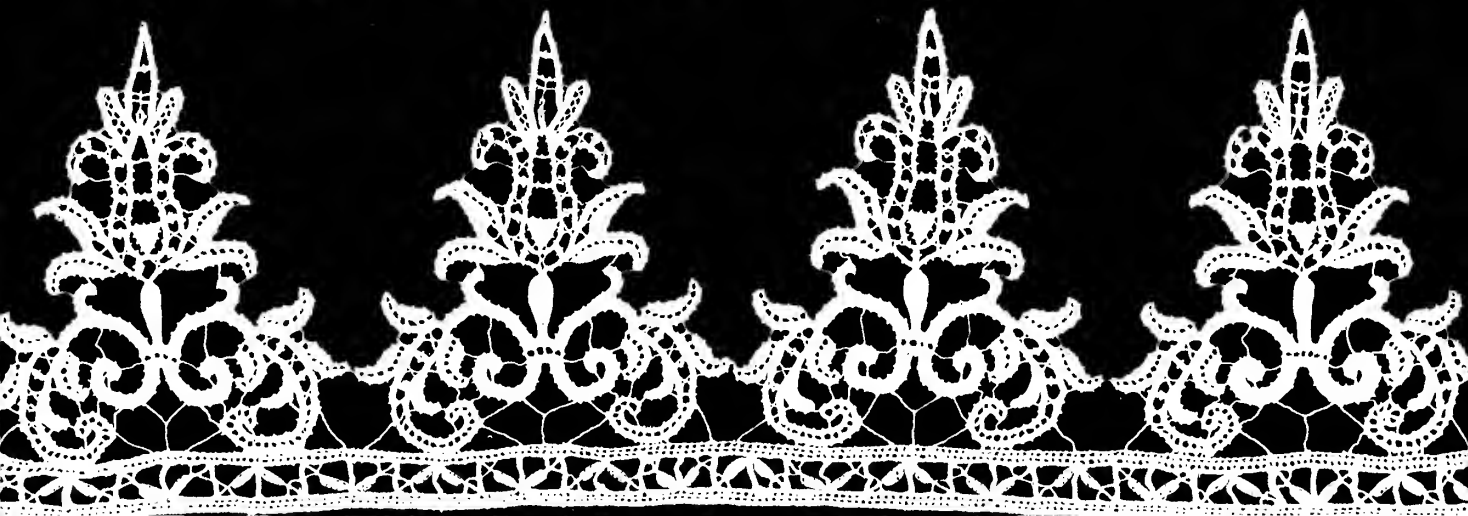
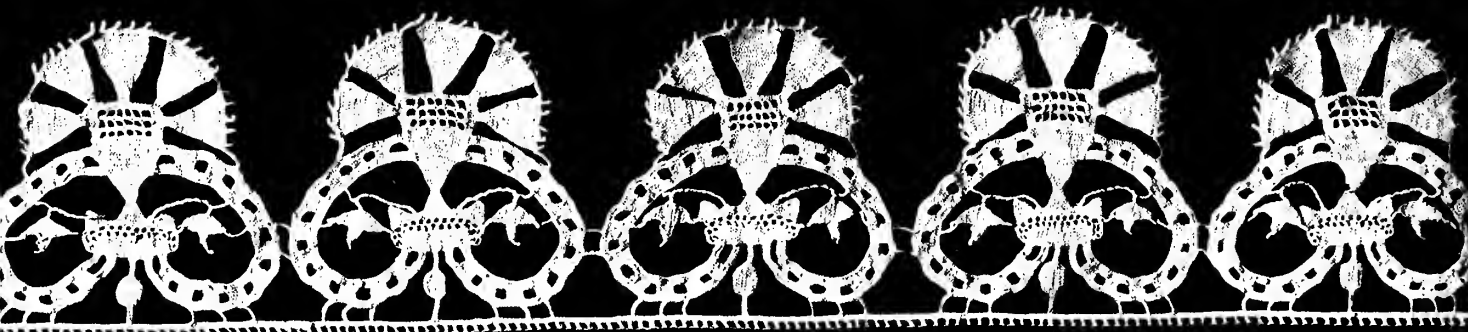
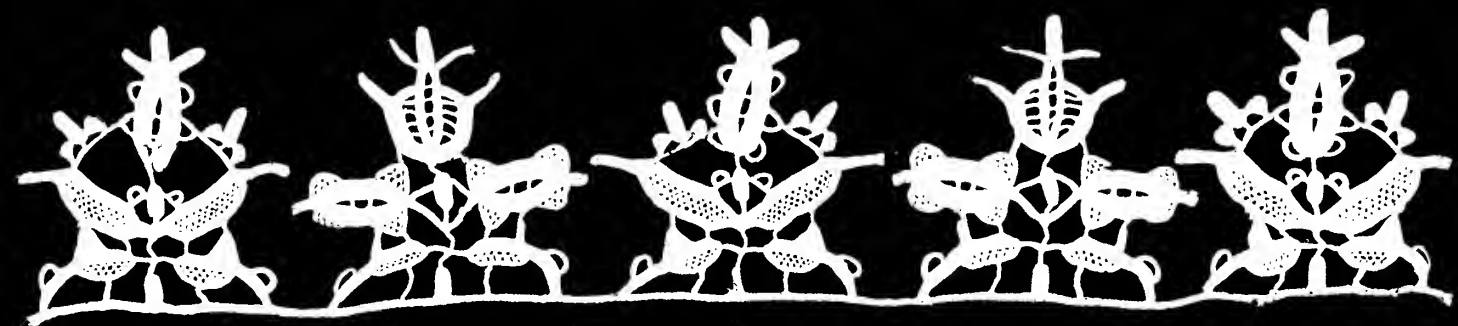


2. Needle-made *reticella* band
England or Spain, early 17th century, Linen, Height: 6 in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf 1962-50-210

tached to a bobbin and manipulated in a manner similar to that used in braiding. Each bobbin has a supply of yarn wound onto it and functions both as a weight and as a means to keep elements from tangling and unraveling. The term *pillow lace*, which is also used to describe this group of laces, refers to the commonly used support for the work, which resembles a pillow in shape and a large pin cushion in function. Bobbin-made laces are generally constructed on top of a carefully made guide, known as a *pricking*, which indicates where pins

should be inserted to hold the lace to the desired shape as work progresses.

The structures of all bobbin-made laces are derived from a four element flat braid—an over one, under one diagonal interlacing. Such four-element interlacing is made up of two movements: first, with the four elements divided into two pairs, a Z-cross of each pair, and, then, an S-cross of the two middle elements. By controlling the number of Z and S crossings of the basic movements, and the number of elements, various types of structures can be made.



From as early as the sixteenth century, bobbin-made laces were of two types: those in which the elements interworked with each other continuously throughout the entire fabric (figures 7 and 8) and those in which elements were begun and finished in specific areas, most often to produce separate motifs (figures 9-11). The first type includes metallic laces, which have been made throughout the history of lace as trimmings to be sewn flat against furnishings and clothing. The cities of Mechlin, Binche, Valenciennes, and Lille, among others, became famous for the production of fine linen laces with continuous yarns (figure 25). The second type of bobbin-made lace, in which elements interwork to produce separate sections, has a different aesthetic and is made by several different methods. Motifs can be made individually, one motif attached to another in various ways. A section can be started, such as the tip of a leaf, and then developed into a broad dense area, with yarn added to increase width or taken out to decrease it. Frequently, separately made pieces are held together by yet another set of yarns linked into them (figure 10), a technique used to its greatest advantage in Brussels lace (figure 17).

Bobbin-made lace, like its needle-made counterpart, was tightly worked during all of the sixteenth and most of the seventeenth century. As the industry grew, as techniques became more refined, and as fashions changed, structures opened up and spread across broader areas, producing light-weight fabrics with an evenly textured surface. A significant advance in the second half of the seventeenth century, most likely in Flanders, was the development of a structure in which a single yarn is interlaced, back and forth and over and under the others, and held in place by the diagonal crossings of the other elements, making it easier to produce an even lighter lace.

The choice of yarn for a lace depended on how the fabric would be used, the availability of fibers, and the desired effect. Metallic yarns were selected for their richness and luster and, because of their stiffness, were suitable for application to surfaces. Silk, which is flexible, was either used for costumes and accessories where drape contributed to its effectiveness or it was combined with metal, which gave it the support it inherently lacked. Silk has the added advantage that it can be dyed bright colors. Cotton and wool are more often found in "peasant

3. *top*: Needle-made edging

Italy, late 16th century, Linen, Height: 1¾ in.

Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-194

4. *center*: Needle-made edging

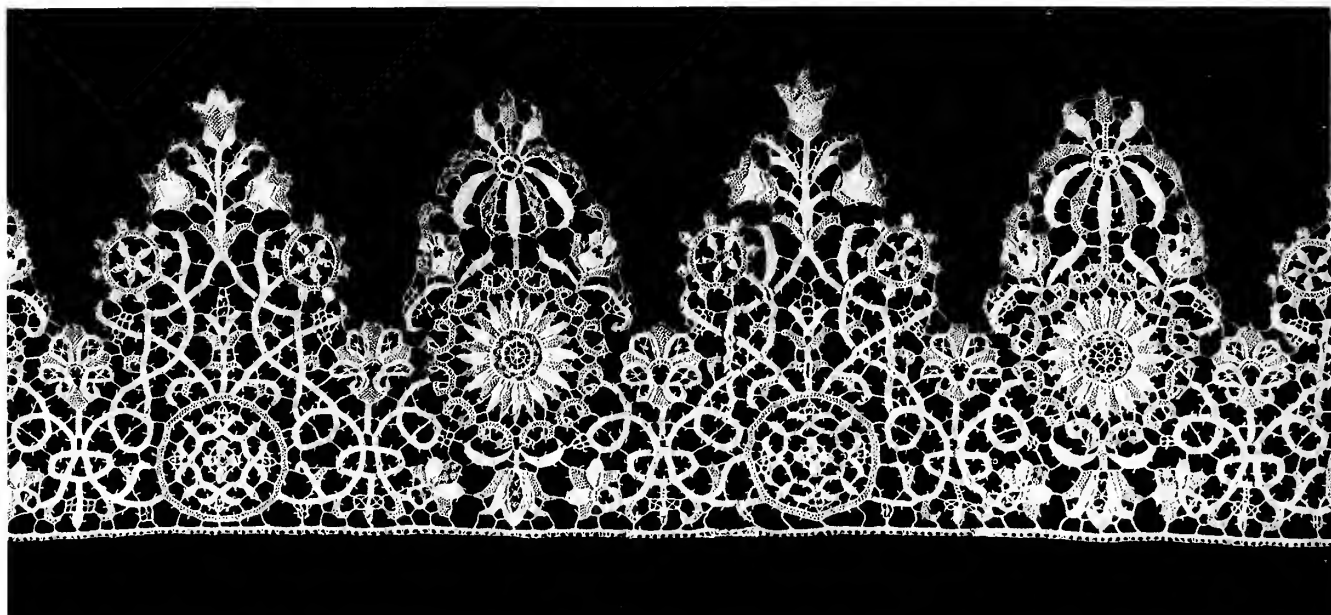
Italy, late 16th century, Linen, Height: 2½ in.

Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-29c
After a pattern published by Isabella Catanea Parasole in Rome in 1597.

5. *bottom*: Four needle-made tabs sewn to a withdrawn element work band

Italy, early 17th century, Linen, Height: 4¼ in.

Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-217



6. Needle-made edging with raised outlines
Italy, early 17th century, Linen, Height: 5½ in.
Gift of Mrs. Morris Hawkes, 1945-9-5

laces.” Cotton has a short, crimped fiber and cannot be spun into a yarn that is strong enough for lace, although in the second half of the nineteenth century, mercerization and machine spinning made it suitable for some laces, particularly machine-made. The fibers of wool are also crimped and too short for yarn for fine lace, although mohair and other long-staple glossy hairs have been used.

The yarn preferred above all others, and by far the most successful for needle- and bobbin-made laces, is linen. The long staple length of flax and its tensile strength make it possible to produce extremely fine linen yarn that can be worked into fabrics whose strength belies their fragile appearance. Natural stiffness gives fine

openly worked linen lace a unique crisp quality. Since flax accepts water readily, linen can be starched to an even greater degree of stiffness. Until this century linen was next to impossible to dye, although it could be bleached to a bright white, an effect which was further intensified by the reflection of light from the hard glossy surfaces of the fibers.

Books containing patterns specifically for embroidery and lace were available in Europe through most of the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century, and the period of their publication marks the first great period of lace manufacture. The first known publication appeared in Augsburg in 1523. Although most of the patterns published in the 1520s and 1530s

were for free-form and counted embroidery, a number were for withdrawn element work. In 1542, in Venice, Mathio Pagano published a book with patterns for *punto tagliato* (withdrawn element work) and *punto groposso* (the needle-made fillings). Pagano's work through the 1540s and 1550s progressed from patterns that were tight and geometric to ones that were bolder, animated, curvilinear, and on a slightly larger grid. The Cooper-Hewitt Collection contains several pieces that are closely related to patterns by Pagano (figure 1), along with the supreme achievement in withdrawn element work from this period, a depiction of the Old Testament story of Judith and Holofernes that was worked in about 1600 (see Cover).

In 1554 Pagano published *La Gloria e L'Honore di Ponti Tagliati e Ponti in Aere*. No doubt the second term refers to a fully developed needle technique for lace. The title page shows two women working with a needle on what could be lace. In the second half of the century, the trend was toward specialization, and techniques become easy to identify.

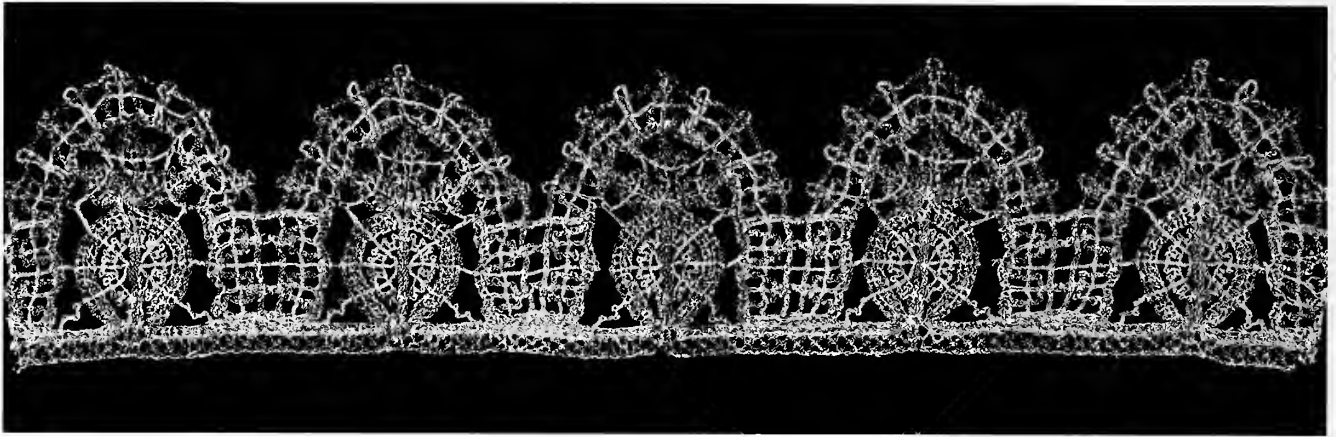
Between 1557 and 1559, Giovanni Battista and Marchio Sessa published four editions of *Le Pompe*, the first known pattern book specifically for bobbin-made lace. The patterns are unmistakably those for laces to be made with bobbins: angles and curves change direction, and openly worked sections lead into solid ones in a manner consistent with bobbin techniques. Some patterns are straight edged and of the same density as metallic structures, while others have triangular and rounded tabs on one edge and have been drawn with an understanding of fully developed techniques.

Animated and floral bands from this period

are frequently constructed by the repetition of two units, each placed end to end, alternately in different directions. Mermaids, animals, birds, and flowers were all incorporated into inventive geometric patterns suitable for *reticella*. In *Nouveau Pourtraicts de Point Coupé et Dentelles en Petite Moyenne et Grande Forme*, published by Jacques Foillet in Montbéliard in 1598, the patterns are arranged in order of complexity and size. Those for tab edges begin with "bien petites," and progress through "petites," "moyennes" and "gross," with the last called "La fin corone l'oeuvre."

The tab-edged border was a prominent design element in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Tabs were pointed at first, no doubt reflecting the natural shape of needle-worked ornaments on the edges of fabrics (figure 3), but soon became curved and fully rounded to accommodate bobbin techniques and more elaborate patterns (figure 8). They were used to accentuate the edges of the stiff ruffs, collars, and cuffs that were popular with both men and women. In the seventeenth century, tabs became extremely large and were shown off proudly on large white collars, made brighter by the black silk velvet and damask on which they fell. Each tab was a self-contained unit, generally filled with flowers, but sometimes with urns of flowers and double-headed eagles (figure 9). Many of these patterns were meticulously rendered in portraits by Northern European painters of the time.

Not many pattern books were published in the seventeenth century, a few showing designs for embroidery were published in German cities, but the five published by Bartolomeo Danieli in Bologna between 1610 and 1642 rep-



7. Bobbin-made edging
 Italy, late 16th century, Silk and metal-wrapped silk, Height: 3¼ in.
 Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1950-29-5

resent the highest achievement in Italian lace design. The diminished publication of pattern books no doubt signals the shift in lace production from palace or home workshops to more commercial workshops that operated on a more competitive scale. The details of technique were no doubt kept secret, just as they are today in some lace-making centers, and the sources of fine materials were jealously guarded. Venice was the most famous production center of the century, its speciality being bold and vigorous floral vine patterns embellished with shapes in high relief (figure 12). Venetian laces are surprisingly heavy and have great tension between the dense, thick opaque areas and the fine bars holding them together (figure 13).

The floral vines that appeared in the middle of the century were effectively used in long bands. The repeats of those bands are up to seventeen inches long and are unbroken by any sort of grid. The new form of men's collars—

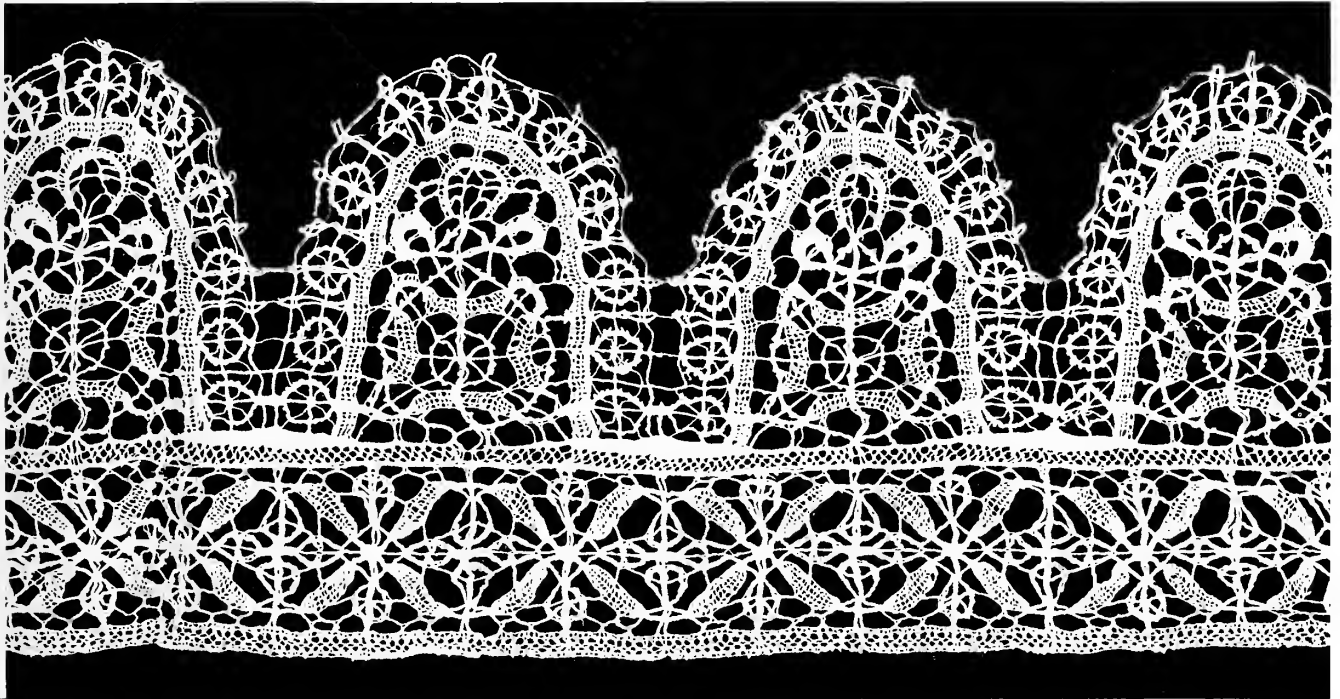
a flat band that was attached at the neck of the shirt, with two panels that hung down the front of the shirt—were patterned by vines, the scrolling ends of which symmetrically fill each front panel (figure 12). Later in the century, this collar was replaced by the cravat, a long plain band of linen tied around the neck, with a lace panel sewn to each end (figure 15). As time passed, the curving floral vine with relief details became smaller in scale and more delicate in drawing. Repeats increased in length from 17 inches to between 20 and 26 inches. Fashion now called for delicate laces that would drape, which increased the demand for linen of the finest quality. The new commercial era had suddenly shifted into high gear.

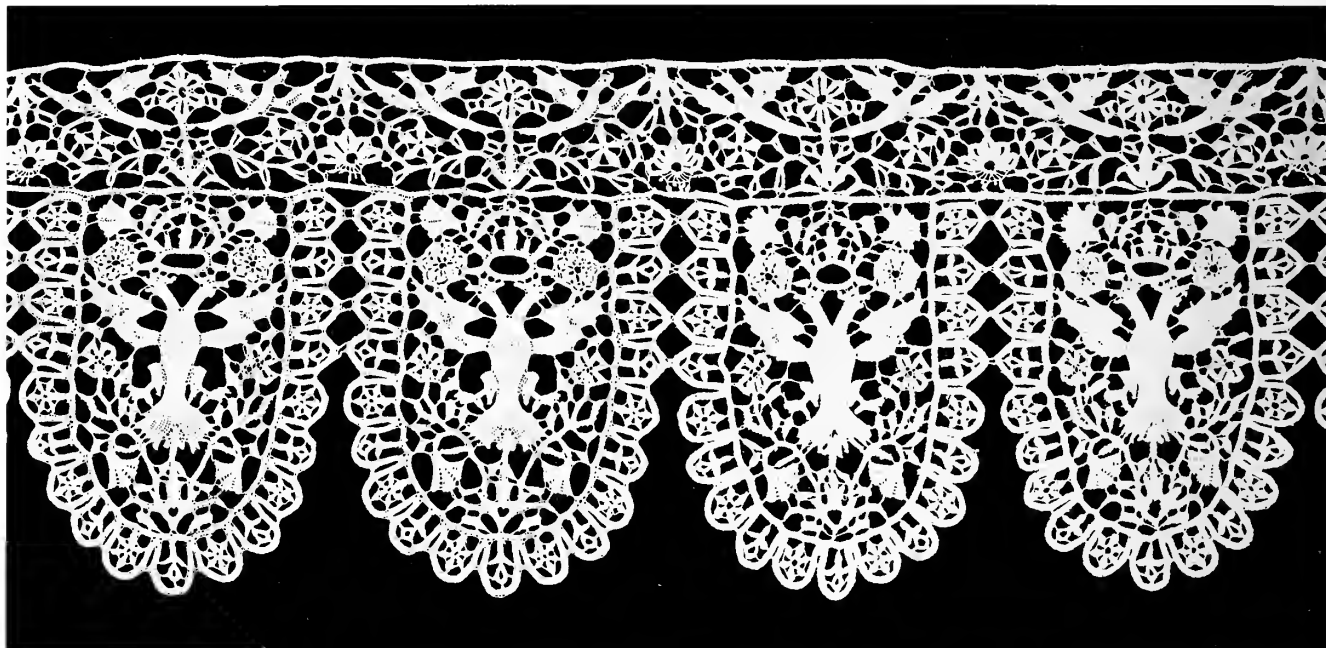
The traditional source for quality linen was the Netherlands, on the watershed leading to the North Sea, or what became Belgium and Holland. The history of this part of Europe has interesting parallels with that of lace, for the

struggle for ownership was primarily between France and Spain. In 1519 Spain gained control of the Netherlands, and the French found themselves in the uncomfortable position of being trapped between the Spanish on two frontiers. After years of conflict with Spain, the staunchly Protestant northern half of the Spanish Netherlands succeeded in becoming the United Provinces, what today is The Netherlands, or Holland. The Catholic southern half remained in Spanish hands as the Spanish Netherlands, or what today is Belgium. As part of a settlement of war with Spain in 1659, Louis

XIV received several towns within the Spanish Netherlands, on the fringes of the coveted linen industry. He also received Marie Thérèse, the eldest daughter of Philip IV of Spain, as his wife. As part of the marriage contract, Marie Thérèse had to give up claim to her inheritance when she married Louis, in return for a huge dowry. What followed is so closely associated with lace as to give it major political importance. After the death of his father-in-law, Philip IV of Spain, in 1665, Louis laid claim to the Spanish Netherlands on the grounds that his wife's dowry had not been paid. That same

8. Bobbin-made tab-edged band
The Spanish Netherlands (Belgium), early 17th century, Linen, Height: 5¼ in.
Bequest of Marian Hague, 1971-50-347

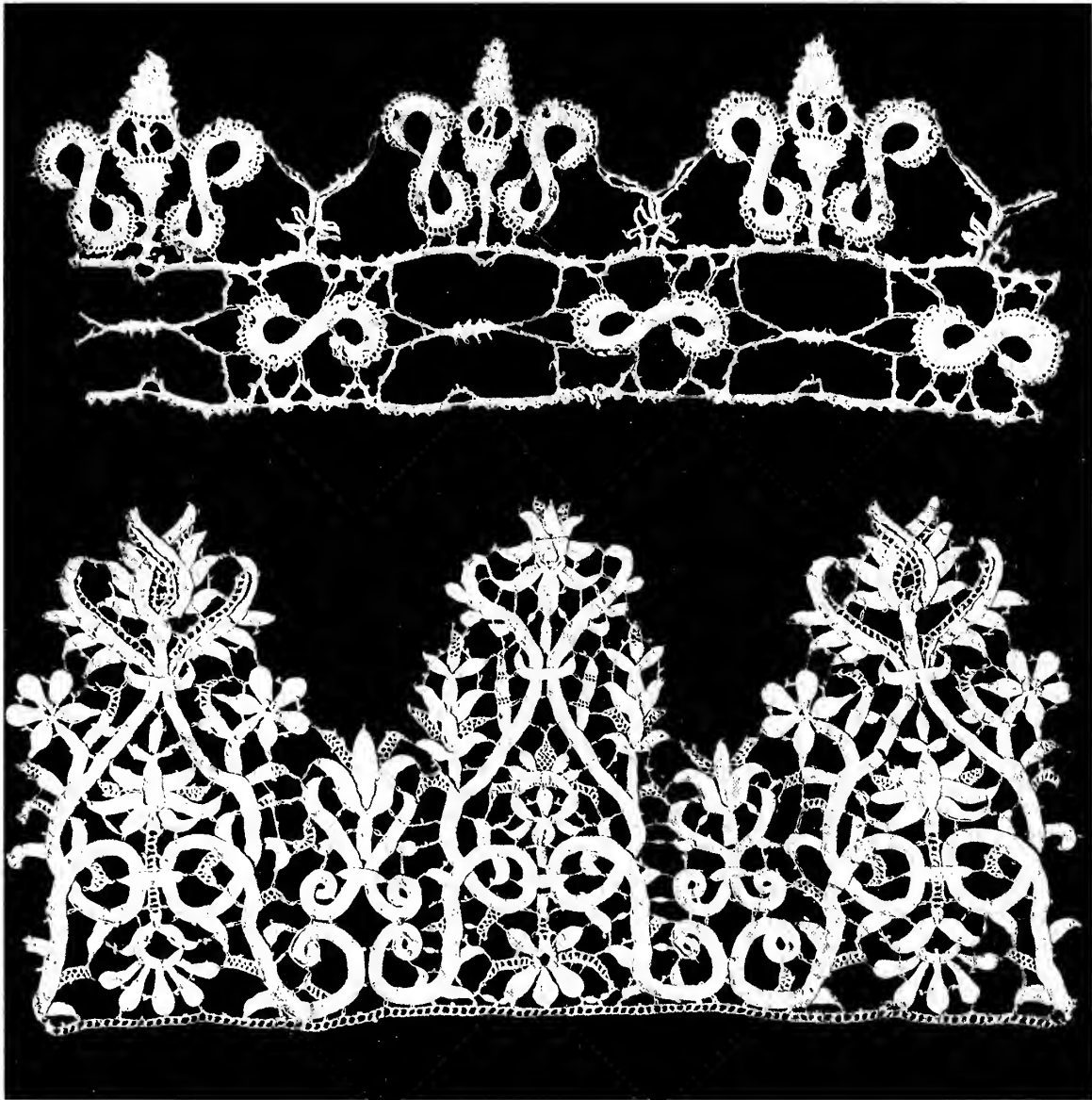




9. Bobbin-made tab-edged band
Italy (?), 1st half 17th century, Linen, Height: 8½ in.
Pauline Riggs Noyes Fund, 1956-17-1

year, Louis issued a proclamation establishing a state-supported lace industry in France. In the beginning of the proclamation he made it clear that he wished to strengthen the economy and to prevent money from flowing out of the country, including, no doubt, the large sums of money that must have been going from France to Spain for the purchase of lace from the Spanish Netherlands. The French laces were to be made in the manner of the needle- and bobbin-made laces of Venice, Genoa, and other countries. (Louis, slyly, did not mention The Netherlands by name.) The French products were to supply the Royal House and the court and were to be known as “points de France.”

Colbert was made superintendent of the new industry, and the entrepreneurs serving under him were given nine years to establish it. The proclamation specifies that thirty women who were masters of lace making were to be brought to France from Venice, along with two hundred of the best women and girls from Flanders. These workers were to become French citizens and were to be distributed to eight cities which lay in a ring around Paris. In the south, in the Auvergne, it was Aurillac; to the southwest, Laudon; and to the west, Alençon. The remaining five were spread out in the northwest: Château-Thierry and Rheims, and the three that were closest to the border of the Spanish Neth-



10. *top*: Bobbin-made edging
Italy (?), late 16th century, Linen, Height: 2½ in.
Bequest of Marian Hague, 1971-50-362

11. *bottom*: Bobbin-made edging
Italy (?), early 17th century, Linen, Height: 5 in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory
of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf,
1962-50-259



12. *left*: Man's needle-made collar
Italy or France, 2nd half 17th century, Linen.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-28

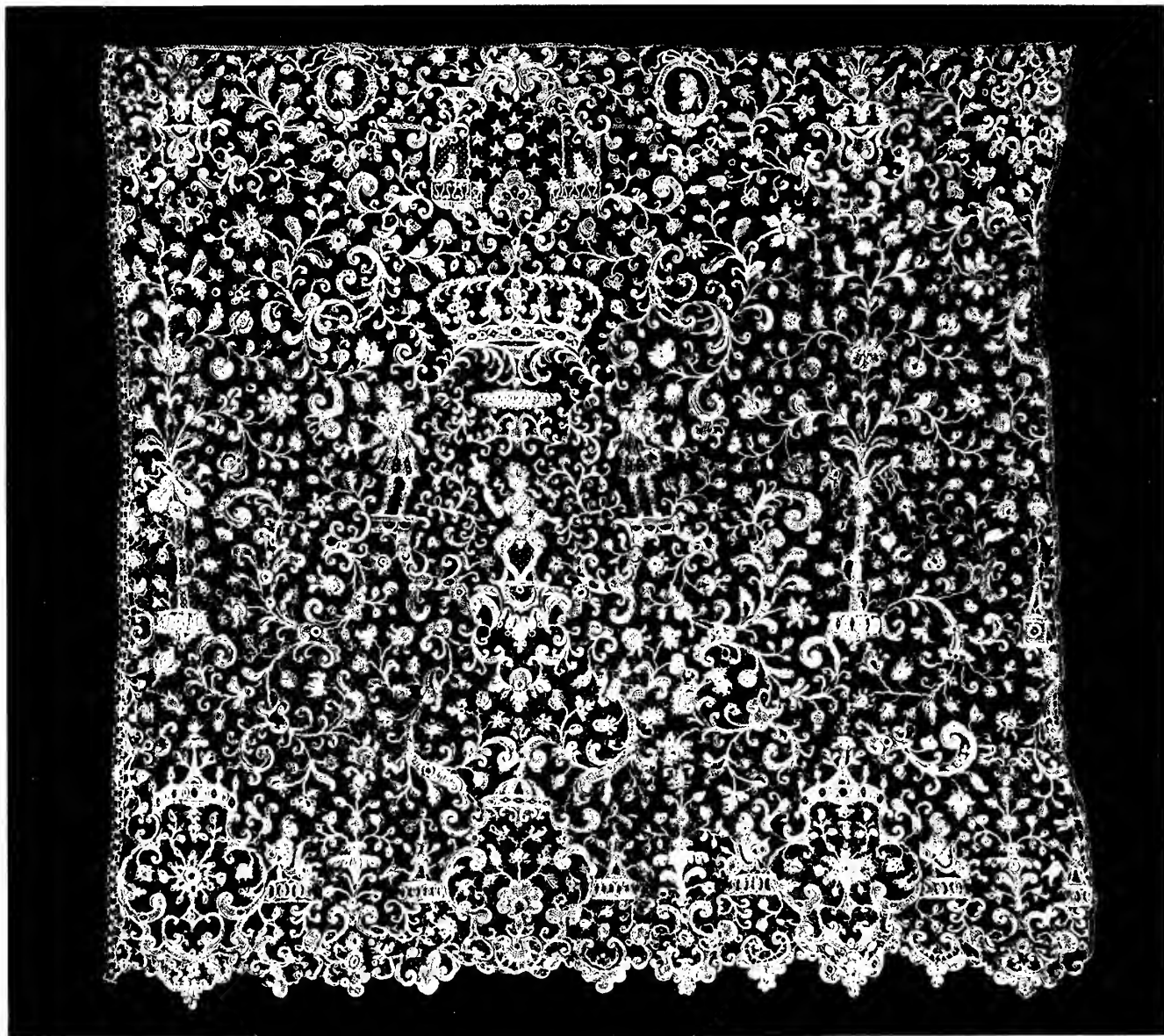
13. *below*: Detail of figure 12.



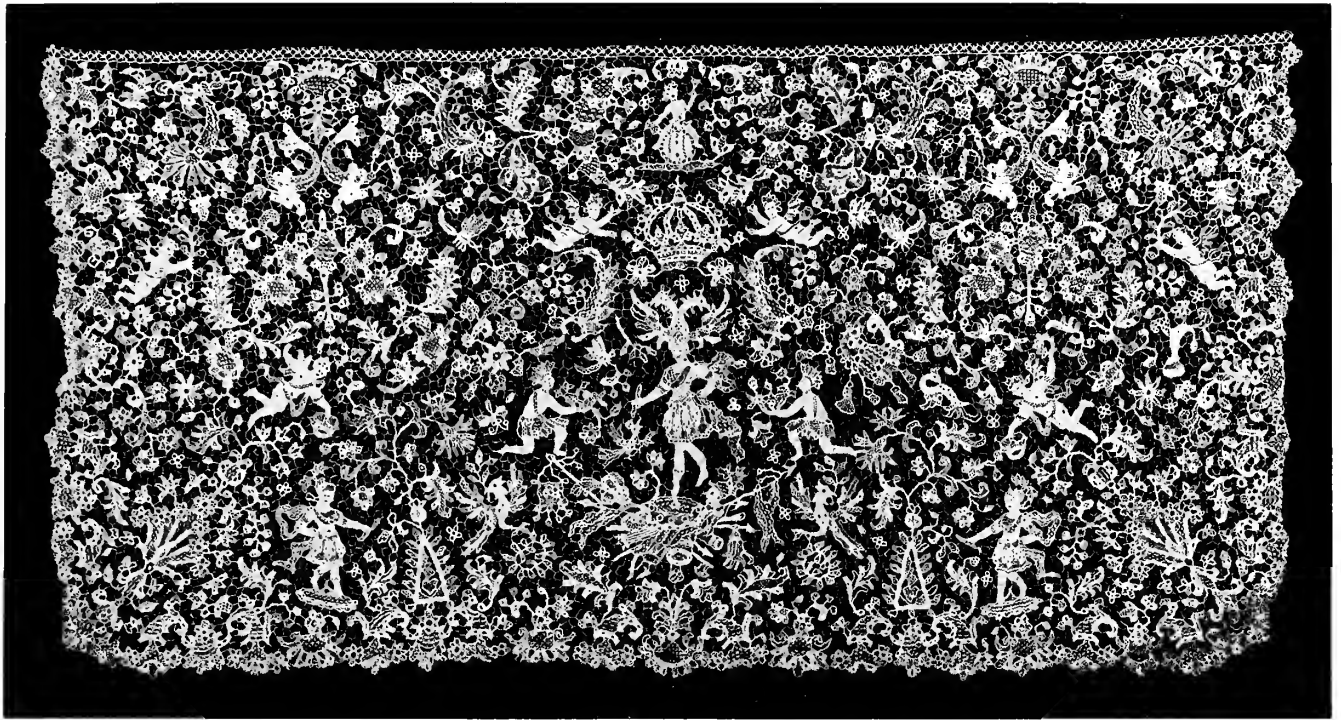
erlands, Arras, Quesnoy, and Sedan. The proclamation points out that there were already a considerable number of lace workers in Aurillac, Sedan, and Alençon. At the end of two years Louis expected to employ 1600 girls who would be supplied designs by artists under his employ. Seven shops were to be opened, four in Paris (including one in the Louvre). Workers were not to be discharged for any reason—a rule the police were to enforce. The shops could show the royal coat of arms and the inscription *Manufacture Royale des Points, Passements, et Ouvrages de Fil de France*. In addition, each city was given a certain amount of financial support. The proclamation was signed by Louis and others, including Colbert.

Two years after issuing his Lace Proclamation, Louis initiated his first war and marched through the Spanish Netherlands and into the United Provinces to claim his wife's inheritance. At the end of the war, in 1668, he received twelve fortified towns on the border, including the now familiar lace centers of Binche and Lille. Louis's second war began in 1672, two years before his nine-year deadline for establishing a lace industry in France. Louis was unable to gain control of all of the Netherlands, and in the settlement of 1678–79, a number of cities were restored to Spain, including Binche, although France gained some cities this time, among them, Valenciennes.

In the 1680s Louis was at the height of his power, and it is from this period that we can begin to identify French-made laces (figure 14). His economic system was working, except that huge sums of money were sacrificed for his war in the Netherlands and the building of Versailles, to the detriment of other programs



14. Section of a needle-made flounce with raised details
France, 1670s, Linen, Height: 24½ in.
Gift of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1950-121-36



15. Needle-made cravat end
France, late 1690s, Linen, Height: $9\frac{3}{4}$ in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-18a

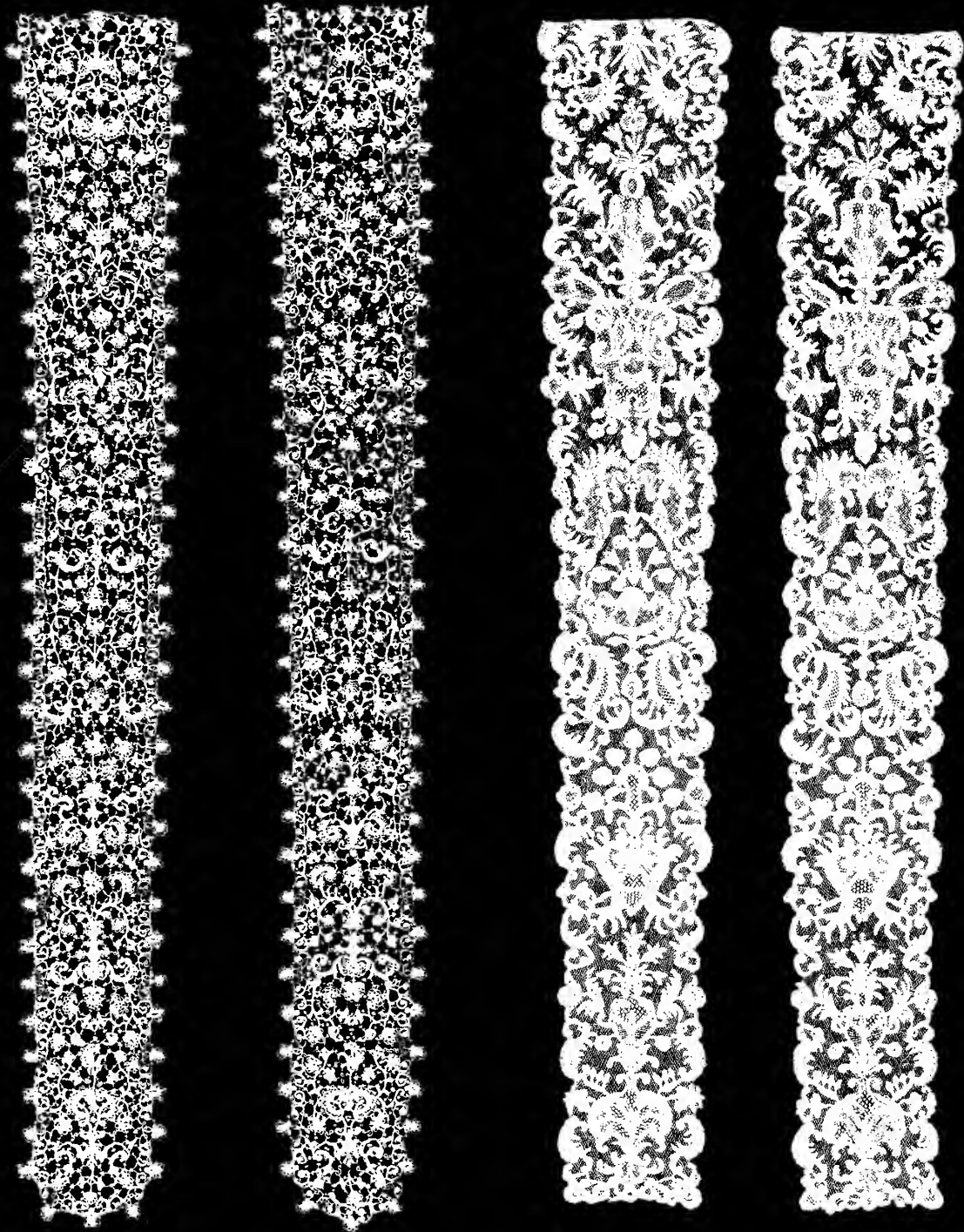
which in the long run would have made France stronger in more areas. Lace was used extravagantly now for dresses, aprons, flounces for dressing tables, and bed furnishings. One of the most unusual uses was in a fashionable lace headdress, usually ornamented with diamonds and ribbons, that was worn perched on top of the head, tilted forward at a beaklike angle. Hanging from the back of the headdress were long streamers, which were sometimes worn pinned up. They were called *barbes* in French and *lappets* in English. Lace streamers also hung

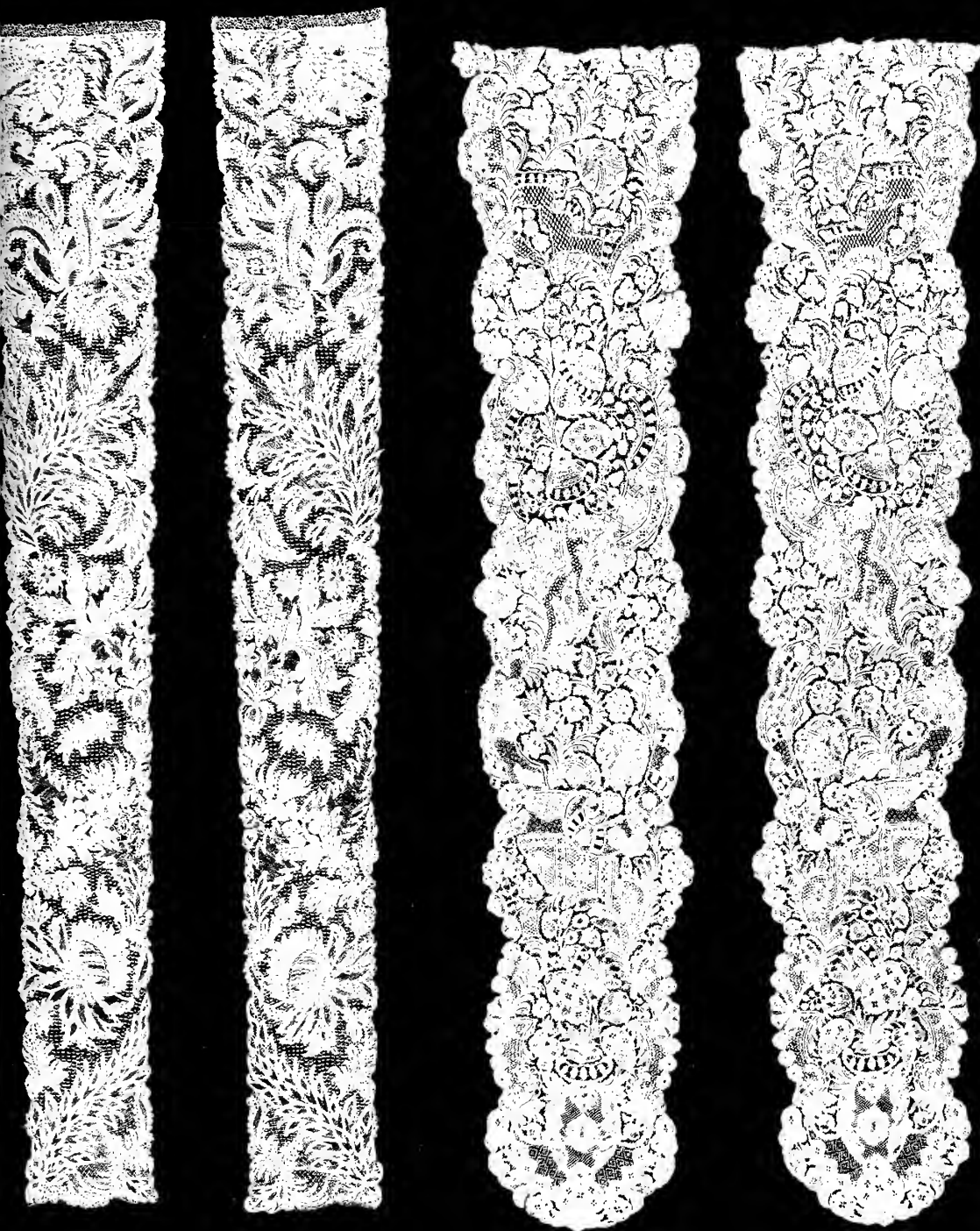
from the sides of the headdresses and covered the ears (figures 16 and 17).

Louis's third war, fought on the German frontier, rocked the French economy and the lace industry. Practically every European power rallied against France, the strongest of them being the Anglo-Dutch alliance cemented by William of Orange of Holland, who was chosen king of England in 1688. Louis could not sustain a struggle against so many adversaries, and by the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697 was forced to give up his fortresses in the Spanish Nether-

16. Pair of needle-made cap streamers with raised details, France, 1690s, Linen, Length: 27 in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf 1962-50-61

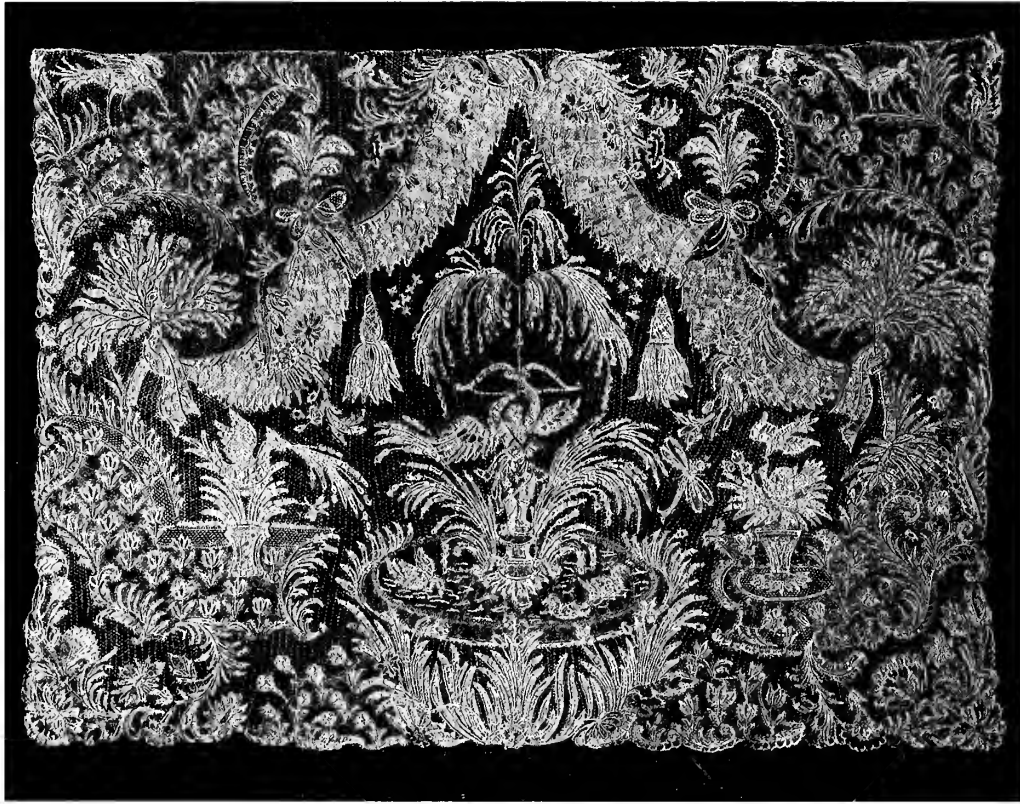
17. Pair of bobbin-made cap streamers, Brussels, late 17th century, Linen, Length: 20½ in.
Gift of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf 1950-121-7





18. Pair of
needle-made cap
streamers,
The Spanish
Netherlands
(Belgium), early
18th century,
Linen, Length:
26 in.
Gift of Richard
Greenleaf in
memory of his
mother, Adeline
Emma Greenleaf
1950-121-5

19. Pair of
Bobbin-made
cap streamers,
Brussels, 1st
half 18th
century, Linen,
Length: 25 in.
Bequest of
Richard
Greenleaf in
memory of his
mother, Adeline
Emma Greenleaf
1962-50-37



20. Bobbin-made cravat end
Brussels, 1st half 18th century
Linen, Height: 12½ in.
Purchase in memory of the Council 1947-99-1

lands. In spite of the fact that Louis in the end could not control the lands in which the finest linen yarn was made, he saw to it that French design dominated the industry.

After the fall of the towering head piece, small caps with streamers attached to them became popular. The streamers, which were broader at the top, and varied in length and overall shape, formed a perfectly matched symmetrical pair of self-contained design units which frequently displayed patterns that coordinated with those on the crown and ruffle of the cap. The rectangular format of the streamers

gave the designer the opportunity to fill the space with a non-repeating composition. The essence of fine eighteenth-century lace design can be found in the cap streamers collected by Richard Greenleaf, and now in the Cooper-Hewitt Museum (figures 16-19). The densely packed fruits and flowers that lavish many streamers (figure 19), and the equally important vertical patterns of the 1720s (figure 21), have close parallels in the patterned silks from the first two decades of the century.

A great deal of care was also given to the design and execution of the panels attached to

men's cravats (figure 20). They were generally less stately and austere than the cap streamers and were patterned with self-contained hunting scenes and mythological figures. The gardens and fountains that were planned and built with great care in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were also popular motifs, both on these fine lace cravat ends and as repeats on horizontal bands and wide borders.

Another popular use of lace in the eighteenth century was as trim on the elbow-length sleeves of women's dresses. Usually three gathered bands of three layers were attached to the sleeve. The bands increased in width as they descended to just above the wrist, and they encircled the lower arm in huge arcs.

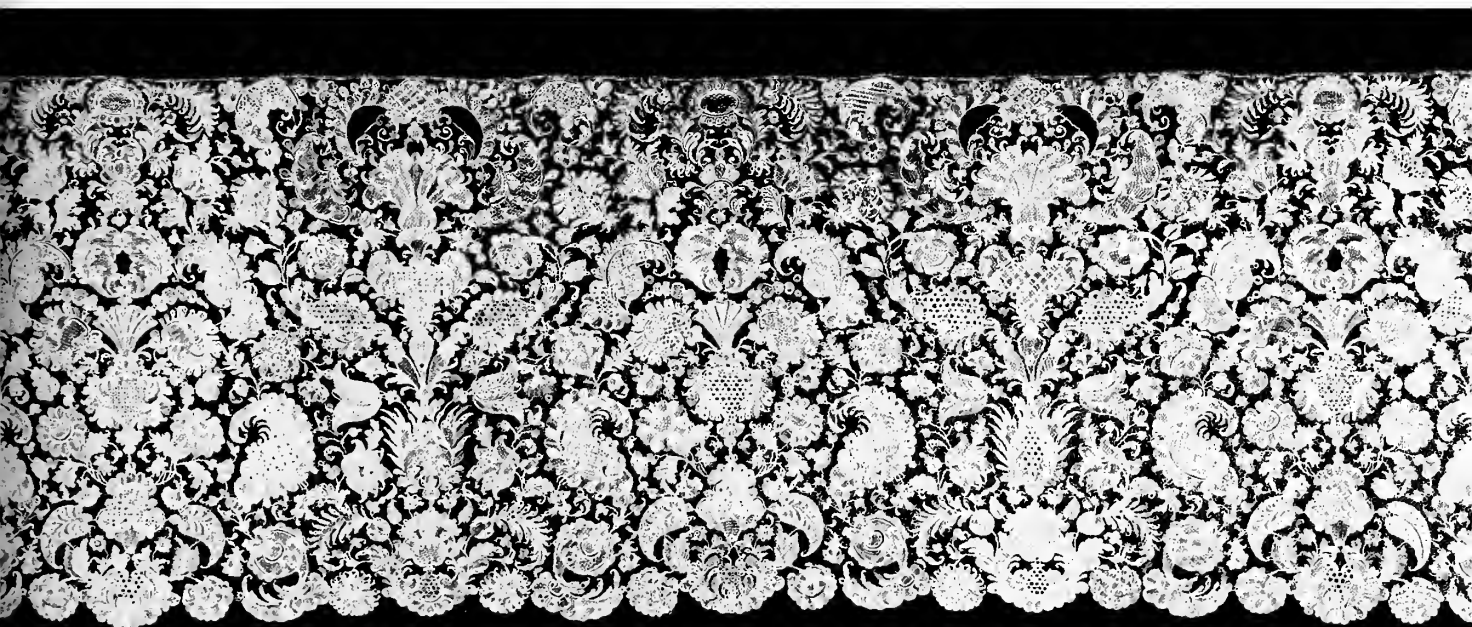
As the eighteenth century progressed, both needle-made and bobbin-made nets covered in-

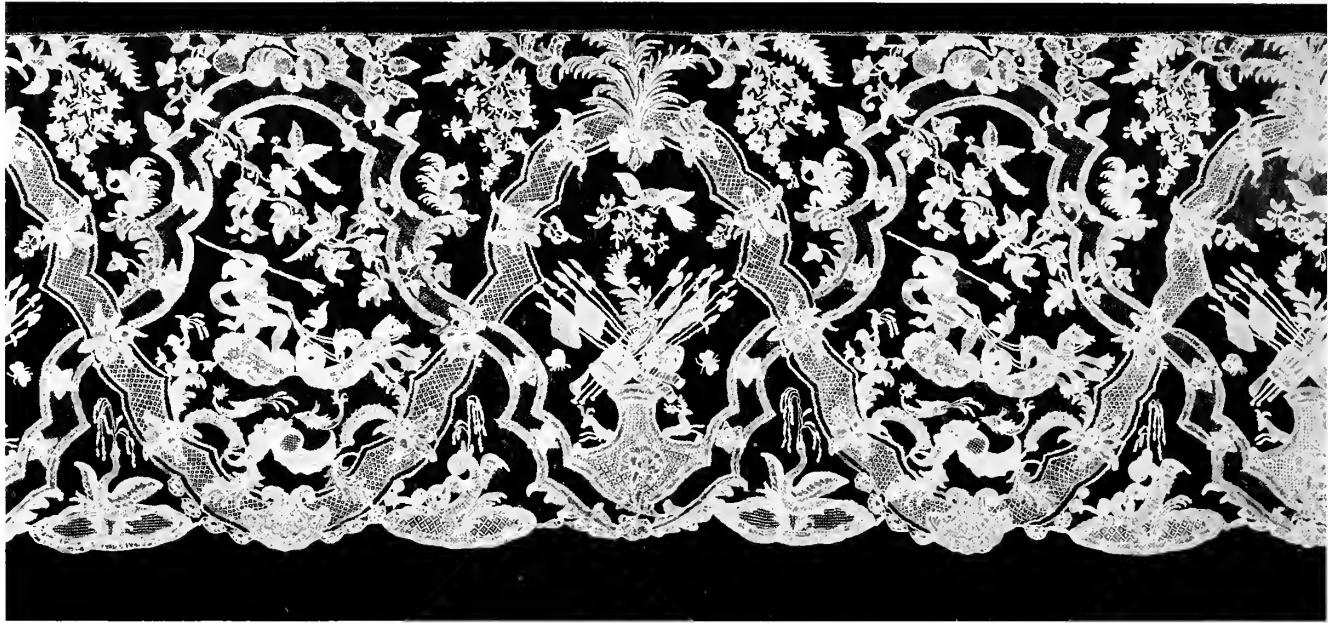
creasingly broader areas (figure 22), so that by mid-century motifs were isolated on a net background. After a momentary flourish in the 1760s (figure 23), lace designs became merely decorative and lost the power and drama they had had in previous decades.

By the end of the eighteenth century, men had begun to limit the amount of lace they wore, and the cravat with lace was replaced by a plain band tied around the neck. Lace was used only to trim the cuffs and the front of the shirt. Women's dresses had also become more restrained in color, pattern, and material, although laces were used as trimmings.

When Napoleon came into power, he tried to revive the French lace industry, which had suffered greatly as a result of the Revolution. A much cited commission is the set of bed fur-

21. Needle-made flounce with raised details
France, 1720-30, Linen, Height: 23¼ in.
Susan Dwight Bliss, 1967-46-28





22. Bobbin-made flounce
Brussels, mid-18th century, Linen, Height: 25 in.
Gift of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1950-121-44

nishings that Josephine ordered at Alençon, but which, by the time they were completed, went to his second wife, the Empress, Marie Louise of Austria. The hangings display a fine use of recognizable flowers, the lily being a dominant motif (figure 24). The Cooper-Hewitt Collection also includes a number of laces made for Napoleon's marriage to Marie Louise in 1810, and numerous drawings for lace and embroidery, important among them being those for Napoleon, which incorporate all of the motifs associated with him.

In the nineteenth century, men no longer wore lace, and it was due to the influence of the queens of the century that fine hand-made

laces continued to be produced. For the most part the needle- and bobbin-making industries declined, having succumbed to machine production and specialized local industries using hand-made openwork techniques. By the 1850s a white lace veil and dress were the choice of the middle-class bride for her wedding—the one day in her life when she could appear dressed like a queen.

Although lace designers relied on all of the styles prevalent in the nineteenth century, their most significant contribution was the use of naturalism. More flowers can be correctly identified in laces from this period than from any other (figure 26). Baroque and rococo styles

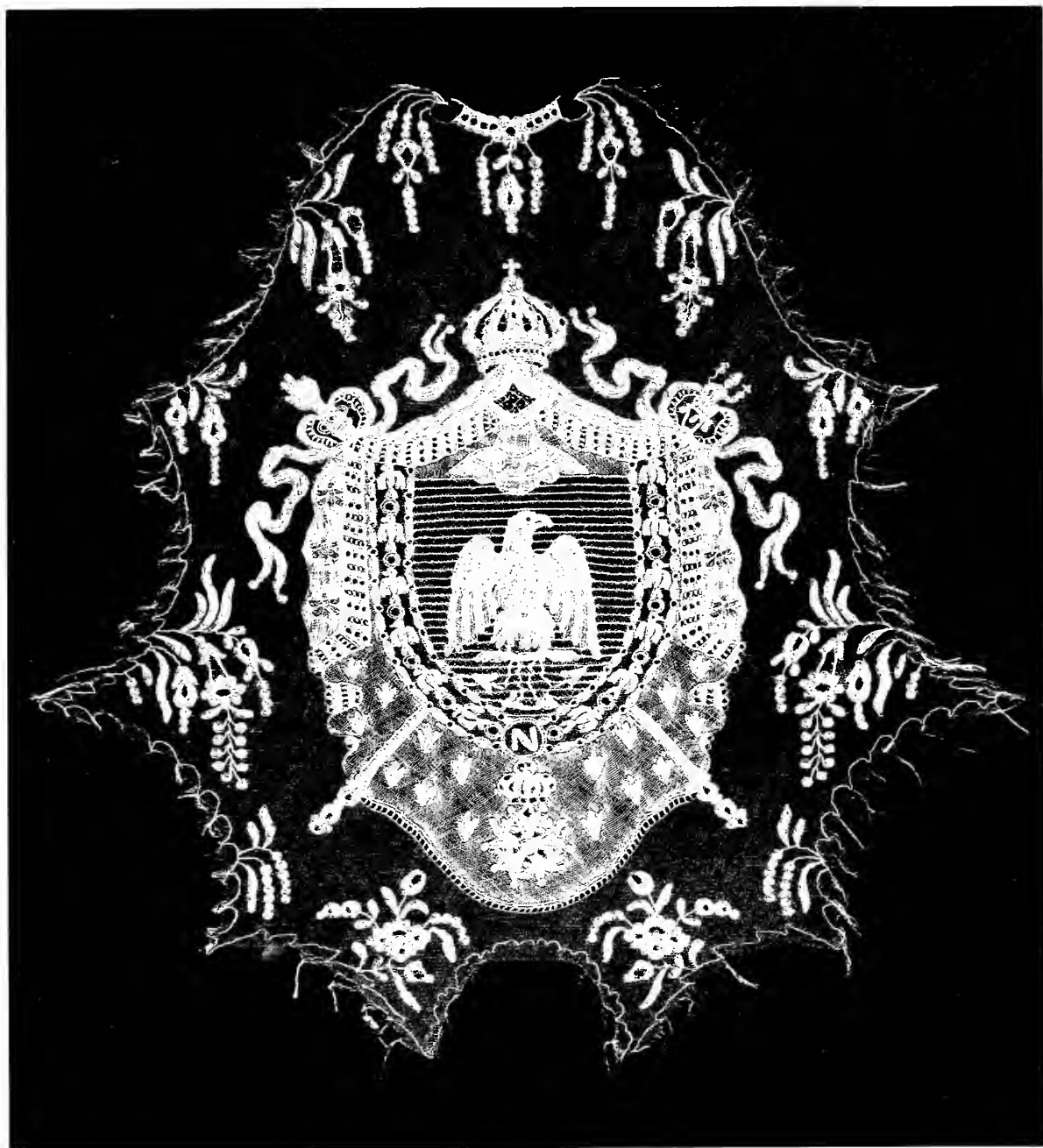


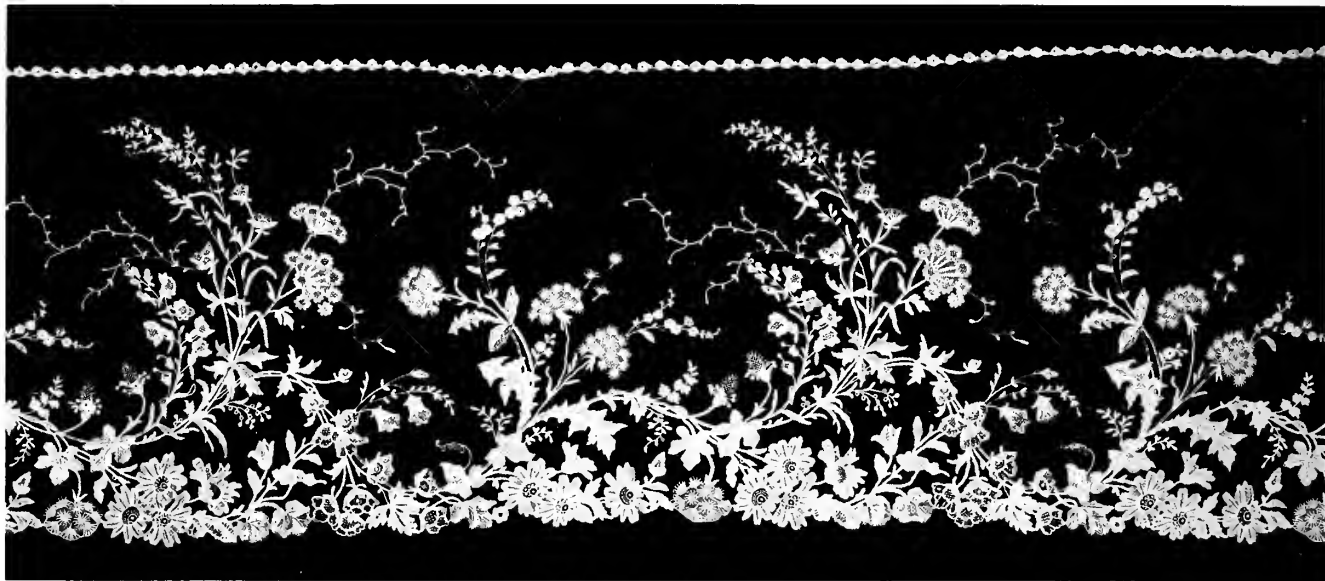
23. Section of a bobbin-made flounce
Brussels, 1760s, Linen, Height: 24½ in.
Gift of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his
mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1950-121-45



24. Section of the border of a needle-made bed furnishing produced by Clérambault - Alençon, France, about 1810
Linen, Repeat: 11¼ in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-69

25. Bobbin-made coat of arms of Napoleon I
Lille, France, after 1804
Linen, 14¼ x 13¾ in.
Bequest of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1962-50-317





26. Border: needle and bobbin-made motifs sewn to machine-made net
Brussels, Belgium, late 19th century, Linen, Height: 13 in.
Gift of Frances Morris, 1951-111-75

were revived, including in the 1860s the use of the eighteenth-century fashion for cap streamers. The most popular and longest lasting styles for interiors were revivals of the Italian and Spanish Renaissance. Heavy tables were invariably covered with red damask, on top of which were placed lace cloths worked in an appropriate Renaissance revival pattern.

Whereas lace had previously depended for its sale and development on the support of the wealthy and on the patronage of duchesses, kings, emperors, and the church, in the nineteenth century it was saved from extinction by businessmen, reformers, and individuals anxious to preserve local traditions and to provide a source of income for workers. In the second half of the century a great many important six-

teenth- and seventeenth-century pattern books were reprinted by publishers in Vienna, Leipzig, Venice, Bergamo, Paris, Berlin, and London, in support of the revival of interest in antique laces and embroideries. Practically every country was involved in this revival, even the United States, which had a weak lace tradition. There were several embroidery and lace-making societies in this country, among them one started in 1890 by Sybil Carter, an Episcopal missionary who taught lace and embroidery techniques to American Indians across the nation (figure 28). Notable among the industries in Europe was that set up in 1872 on the island of Burano near Venice, one of whose customers was J.P. Morgan. In Bologna the Aemilia Ars Association produced lace commissions for the

Vanderbilts and Baches, among other important patrons. Their products were extraordinarily fine, and some are still being mistaken for older works. In the Cooper-Hewitt, the apron from the Greenleaf Collection is such an example of recently uncovered identity (figure 29).

In the early twentieth century, laces were made in the styles of the major design movements. Many laces were produced in Central Europe, particularly in Vienna, and were based on "peasant" styles and techniques that were compatible with modern design. The majority of the patrons of the industry and the collectors were anxious, however, to have traditional laces. Late in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, antique laces were commonly re-

shaped to be used over again and were sometimes tinted in tea or coffee to add the appearance of greater age. High prices were paid for laces up until the 1940s, and a surprising number of collections were formed. Mrs. Henry Clay Frick had hers mounted on boards covered with blue simulated leather, with her name stamped in gold on each and with a companion catalog. Many delightful teas were had to admire friends' treasures, and out of such meetings developed the Needle and Bobbin Club, incorporated in New York in 1916.

Two of the founding members of the Needle and Bobbin Club generously supported the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. Marian Hague, a teacher, writer, and collector, and an advisor to

27. Machine-made band
France, 1920s, Silk, Repeat: 4 in.
General Purchase Fund, 1982-5-1





28. Bobbin-made lampshade cover

Made by the Sioux Tribe, Minnesota, for the Sybil Carter Indian Lace Association

New York, early 20th century, Linen, Height of band: 12¾ in.

Gift of Mrs. Bayard Cutting in memory of Mary Parsons, 1943-44-2

the Textile Department, helped the Museum set up lace study cards, a set of which was circulated to schools. Her own collection, rich in technically interesting historic laces and embroideries, came to the Museum after her death in 1971. Richard Greenleaf, who collected laces and embroideries in France, also gave the Museum many fine fabrics. For ten years prior to his death and bequest in 1962, he, too, acted as an advisor to the Museum, and his remarkable laces and embroideries are the backbone of the Museum's lace collection.

After a lapse of over thirty years, interest in

lace making and historical laces has been re-awakened in this country and abroad. Several notable centers of lace making exist today, with contemporary designs being produced in Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, and England. And, although their number is small, here and there can be found artists, teachers, and rare individuals who are learning historical lace techniques for pleasure. Since it is now extremely difficult to collect handmade laces, the Cooper-Hewitt is fortunate to have a collection to serve this renewed interest.

Milton Sunday
Curator of Textiles



29. Apron with needle-made borders and tassels
produced by the Acemilia Ars Association
Bologna, Italy, early 20th century, Linen, Height of lower border: 7¼ in.
Gift of Richard Greenleaf in memory of his mother, Adeline Emma Greenleaf, 1950-121-1

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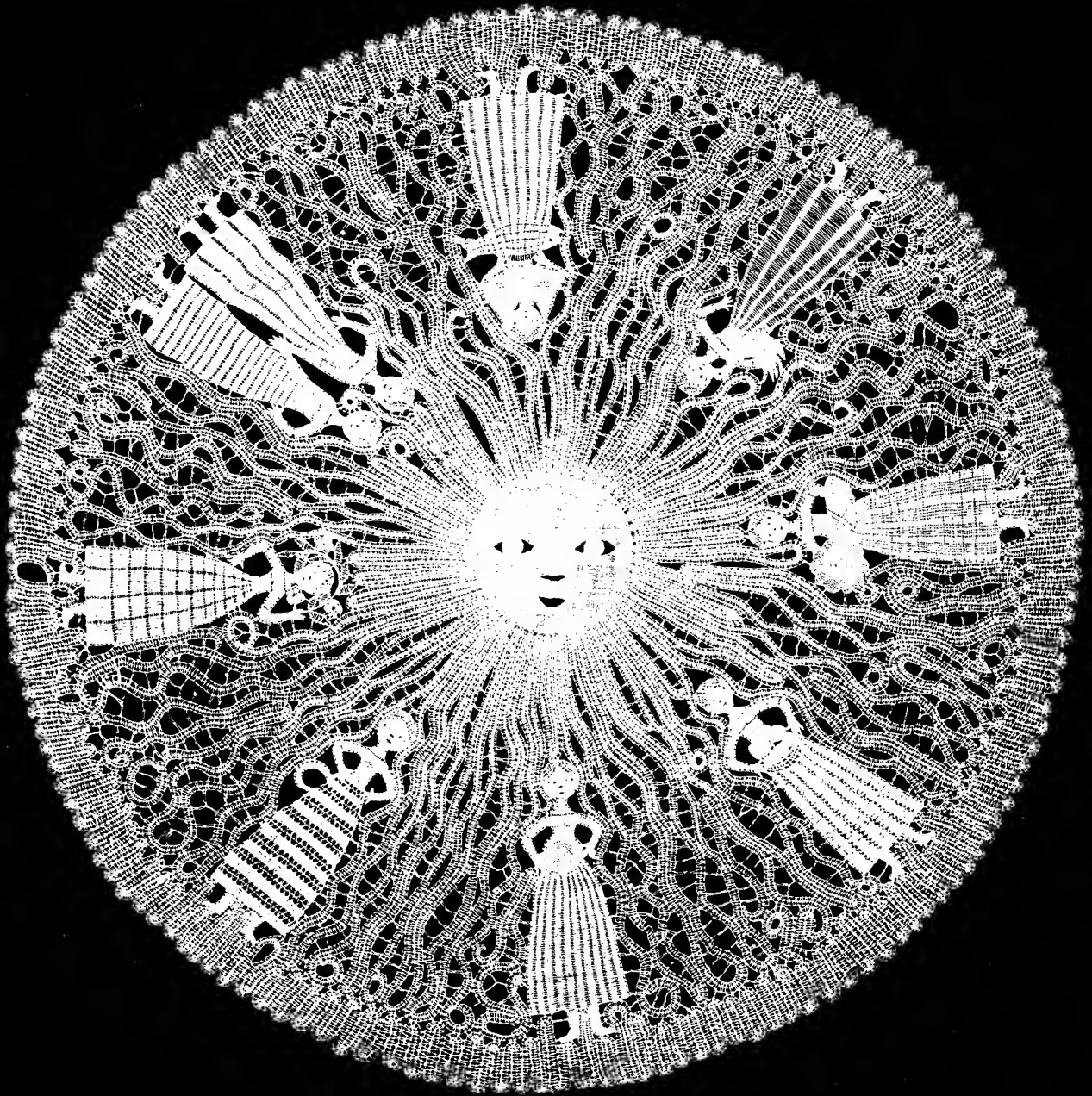
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