

### 31-20 and 31-22 : Samplers, made by Frances Cheyney, 1663-4



Band sampler in linen embroidered with coloured silk threads worked in Algerian eye, chain, cross, dot, double running and long-armed cross stitch. Rows of border patterns and spot motifs, including an oak tree with acorns, lambs and a figure of a man with rabbit. Made by Francis Cheyney, England, 1663.

Oak trees and acorn motifs were particularly popular after the Restoration of Charles II (1630-1685, reigned 1660-1685 because of Charles' alleged escape after the Battle of Worcester in 1651 by hiding in an oak tree. When Charles was restored to the throne in 1660, he established the Order of the Royal Oak to show his gratitude to those who had helped him. The acorn is also a symbol of rebirth, and became associated with the return of the monarchy. The inclusion of these motifs may well reflect the general joy resulting from the restoration of the monarchy.

An almost identical scene of a male figure beside an oak tree but with a castle in the background is found on a sampler in the Fitzwilliam (T.31-1928) and on another in a private collection.

White work band sampler in linen with eight rows of cut and drawn threadwork with needlepoint fillings, needle weaving and some raised and padded work. Made by Frances Cheyney, England, 1664.

Many mid seventeenth-century needlework panels depict biblical scenes, particularly those with strong female characters such as Esther, Susanna or Judith. This sampler shows Judith. In the apocryphal Book of Judith (Chapter 13), Judith's native town of Bethulia was laid siege by the invading Assyrian army under the command of Holofernes. In order to save the town and her people, Judith cut Holofernes' head off while he was asleep. She then gave the decapitated head to her maid, who smuggled it out of the camp in a bag of meat. Women had to defend their family, political beliefs, and often their households and property during the instability of the Civil Wars, and Judith was lauded as a role model. Alternatively - if there are children in the audience - the figures may just be a depiction of a woman with her child and a long-whiskered cat!

Both samplers were purchased by Sir William Burrell from Debenham & Freebody, 4 October 1930.

Details – 31.20



Details – 31.22

