31-10 : Sampler, said to have belonged to Mary of Modena.

Linen embroidered with coloured silk threads worked in chain, eyelet, rococo, satin and tent stitches and French knots. On the left are spot motifs, including flowers, birds and butterflies surrounding a female figure and her dog. Some are unfinished, revealing the original drawing beneath. The right half is sewn with geometric patterns and stylised symmetrical motifs possibly worked by a second woman at a later date. Made in England, circa 1650-1700.

Samplers such as this, with its range of randomly scattered individual and often unlinked motifs, are known as 'spot motif' samplers. Several of the naturalistic flowers drawn with their stalks are similar to the slips popular during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Named after gardeners' cuttings, or slips, these floral motifs embroidered in tent or cross stitch were individually cut out and applied to a wide range of domestic furnishings, such as bed and wall hangings, cushions and curtains. They were copied from drawings of flora and fauna printed in contemporary herbals and pattern books, such as John Gerard's Herbal or General History of Plants, published in 1597.

The female figure wears a dress of the 1630s with a collar in the style of the late 16th century. The floral wreath in her hair suggests that this is a personification of Flora or Spring. A dog, a traditional symbol of fidelity, accompanies her.

This sampler was previously in the collection of the Countess of Ranfurly, where it was described as from the belongings of Mary Este, d'Este being the maiden name of Mary of Modena (1658-1718), second wife of James, Duke of York, later James VII and II (1633-1701). Purchased by Sir William Burrell from Frank Partridge & Sons, 1 July 1925.

Samplers were worked by girls of approximately eight-ten as means of learning different stitches and patterns. After working a coloured sampler, they would often move to make white work samplers, then needlework panels and finally a casket.