

Heirloom Baby Quilt: A Beginner's Project

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Create an heirloom baby quilt over the course of the next several issues of Sew Beautiful and learn the best of heirloom sewing basics in the process.

TECHNIQUE: Beginning Heirloom Sewing, Part I of a Continuing Series

Anyone with basic sewing knowledge and a zigzag sewing machine can create an heirloom baby quilt. Whether you're brand new to this sewing genre or simply feel the need to brush up on the basics, our approach will let you focus on the task at hand without being overwhelmed by a large heirloom-sewing project. With the exception of this introductory article – which includes cutting instructions and a single block design – each issue will feature two new blocks. Assembly and quilting instructions will complete the series.

The finished quilt, as featured, is in white Victorian batiste, kissed with ecru. Once complete it will be perfect to display in a nursery, to use as part of a christening ensemble or to wrap up baby during any special occasion. Over the course of several issues, you will learn a variety of beginning heirloom sewing by machine techniques, including lace-to-lace, lace-to-entredoux, entredoux-to-fabric, lace-to-fabric (roll and whip), lace-to-fabric (three-step super-strong method), entredoux-to-gathered fabric, curved and mitered lace insertion (diamond, heart, oval and scallops), straight pintucks, shaped pintucks, cross-hatched pintucks, folded tucks, shadow appliqué, gimpwork, rickrack bridging, straight puffing, shark's teeth, inserting embellished fabric inside a lace shape and turned-edge appliqué using water-soluble thread. Whew! Let's get started!

IN THE ARTICLE

- Materials List
- Cutting Instructions
- Quilt Block #1 Instructions

MATERIALS (FOR ENTIRE QUILT)

(Finished quilt is approximately 37-1/2 inches wide by 45 inches long.)

NOTE: All materials will be purchased/collected and all cutting will be done according to instructions in this first article. This will ensure that adequate amounts of materials are available. Stock numbers listed are from Martha Pullen Company, and most other supplies are also available.

Fabric

- 3 yds Victorian batiste in white for quilt top and underlining
- 1 yd Victorian batiste in ivory
- 1-1/2 yds bleached muslin or other white quilt fabric for backing
- White quilt batting – crib quilt size

Lace and Trim

- 5/8 yd Victorian embroidered insertion #L-27740
- 1-1/4 yds ecru Swiss entredoux #S-ENT/E
- 7 yds ecru French lace insertion #L-176/965E
- 1-1/4 yds ecru lace beading #L-2/6208E
- 2/3 yd ecru rickrack, 1/8 inch wide
- 1 yd gimp cord
- 5/8 yd white silk satin ribbon, 1/8 inch wide

Thread

- Ecru Tanne 80 or Madeira 60 cotton thread
- Ecru rayon machine embroidery thread (Sulky 1082)
- Clear nylon monofilament thread (YLI suggested) for quilting
- White 50 wt cotton thread for quilting

Supplies

- 3- x 11-inch piece of water-soluble stabilizer
- 4-inch square of lightweight tear-away stabilizer
- Size 70 Universal machine needle
- Size 80 Universal machine needle
- Size 1.6/80 Twin machine needle
- Ruler (gridded quilter's ruler preferred)
- Blue wash-out marker
- Water-soluble glue or glue stick
- Spray starch, iron, and ironing board
- Glass-head pins
- Good, sharp scissors
- Small safety pin or bodkin
- Large safety pins for basting quilt layers together

GENERAL INFORMATION

These techniques work best on very lightweight, natural-fiber fabrics. Batiste in 100 percent cotton is the easiest

and most traditional fabric with which to work. The fabric should almost always be starched and pressed before it is sewn. In terms of thread, regular polyester or cotton-covered polyester sewing thread is simply too stiff and heavy to give good results. Instead, look for Madeira Tanne 80, a very soft, fine thread for embellishment work. A second choice would be Mettler 60, a slightly heavier thread that is still suitable, and a littler easier for both you and your machine to manipulate. The thread should match the color of the lace. The fine thread warrants a small needle. For this quilt, use a new size 70 Universal needle, and make sure your machine is clean, oiled, and running smoothly. (Also see "Sue Says..." on page 30 for a discussion of other recommended sewing room supplies.)

The stitch settings provided are not absolutes. Different machines stitch out differently. Use the settings as starting points, adjust up or down as needed, and use what works best for you.

The finished blocks for the quilt will be 8 x 10 inches. You will be working with blocks a little larger than that, because the embellishments often "shrink" the fabric a little. We will trim them all down to the correct size before assembling the quilt top.

CUTTING

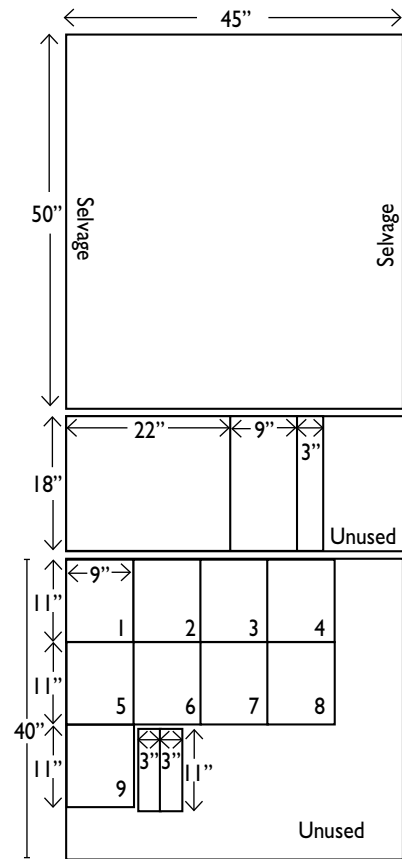
(Refer to cutting layout on page 74.)

1. From a torn, crossgrain edge of white batiste, measure along the selvage 50 inches and make a 1-inch cut; tear fabric from selvage to selvage. This piece of fabric will be used for underlining the quilt top. Label this piece and set aside for later.



White batiste Entredeux 1/8" Satin ribbon Embroidered insertion Lace-to-lace Entredeux-to-fabric

Photo 1



Cutting layout

2. Measure along selvage from torn edge 18 inches, make a cut and tear across to the other selvage. Measure along torn edge from selvage 22 inches, and cut along lengthwise grain (don't tear) to form a rectangle 18 x 22 inches for plain center rectangle. Label and set aside.

3. From remainder of 18-inch strip, cut a block 9 x 18 inches for shark's teeth block. Label this also and set aside.

4. From remaining fabric from the 18-inch strip, tear one strip 3-1/2 inches wide for puffing. Label and set aside.

5. Cut nine blocks of fabric measuring 9 x 11 inches. Label and set these aside also.

6. From unused fabric, cut two blocks 3 x 11 inches to be used in Block #1. The remaining pieces of fabric will be cut as you go along.

BLOCK #1

While making this block you will learn the basic, heirloom sewing by machine techniques of lace-to-lace, lace-to-entredeux, entredeux-to-fabric, and lace-to-fabric (roll and whip). You will make a "fancy band" strip, a part of which will be set aside for another block.

MATERIALS FOR BLOCK #1

- Victorian embroidered insertion
- Ecu lace insertion
- Ecu lace beading
- Ecu entredeux
- 1/8-inch white satin ribbon

Construction

NOTE: Step photos show general technique steps, and are not intended to represent the appearance of this particular block. Photo 1 shows the "anatomy" of Block #1, with components and techniques labeled for easy

identification. Refer to this photo during construction.

1. Spray starch and press dry the two 3- x 11-inch rectangles, and also lightly starch and press the strip of Victorian embroidered insertion.

2. Trim Victorian embroidered insertion to 2 inches wide, centering embroidery. You will trim about 1/4 inch off each long edge, including heavily stitched edge. The easiest way to do this is with a rotary cutter and long quilter's ruler.

3. Cut a 45-inch length each of ecru lace insertion and ecru lace beading. Press lace without stretching if it is wrinkled. *NOTE: I do not usually starch the lace.*

4. Set up machine with new size 70 needle and fine ecru cotton thread in both needle and bobbin.



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

5. *Lace-to-lace*: Place laces (one insertion, one beading) side by side, right sides up (if you can tell a right side!) with headings butted together (*photo 2*). Zigzag ($L = 1.0$; $W = 2.5$) laces together, so that one needle swing goes over the heading of one of the laces, and the other needle swing goes over the heading of the other lace (*photo 3*). Press this joined strip of lace; cut lace strip in half.

6. *Lace-to-fabric* (roll and whip): Place starched, embroidered insertion strip right

side up. Place one lace strip right side down on top of embroidered strip, with edge of beading $1/8$ inch in from raw edge of embroidered fabric (*photo 4*). Zigzag ($L = 1.0$; $W = 4.5$) so that one needle swing stitches over the lace heading, and the other needle swing goes just off the fabric edge. After a few stitches, the fabric raw edge should start rolling in toward and covering the lace heading (*photo 5*). If it doesn't, try increasing needle tension slightly. Stitch lace strips to both sides of embroidered insertion, with beading next

to fabric on both sides. Refer to *photo 1*.

7. Press little rolled hems toward fabric. *NOTE: This next step is optional, but I use it almost all the time, as it gives a much neater look, and keeps the little rolled seam from folding back under the lace.* From right side, zigzag ($L = 1.0$; $W = 1.0$) with a very tiny stitch so that one needle swing stitches over the folded-under fabric edge into the lace, and the other needle swing just catches the fabric.

8. Press this lace-embroidery strip again. Cut off an 11-inch length for

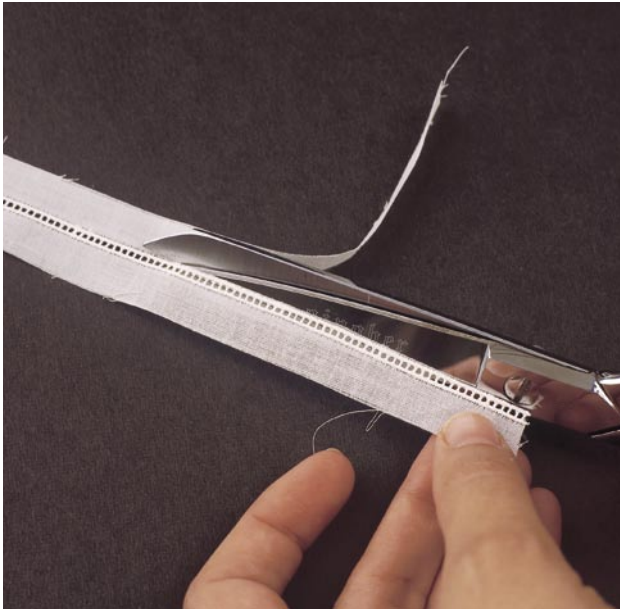


Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8

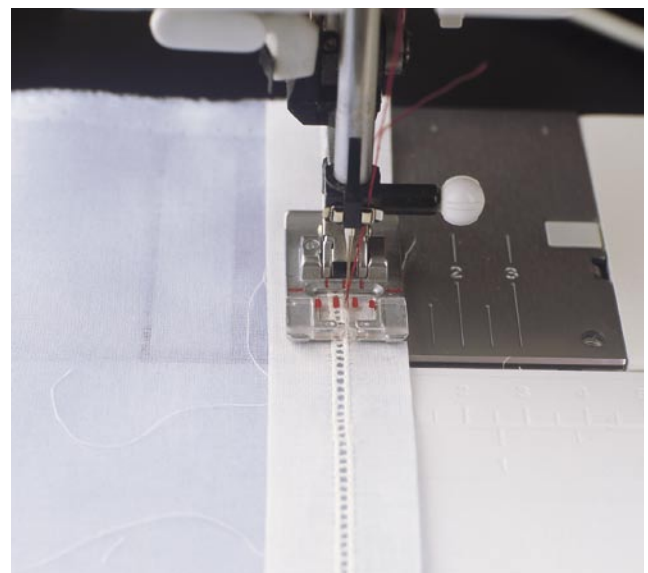


Photo 9

this block, and set aside remainder for later.

9. Cut 22 inches of entredeux. Starch well and press dry. This is important, because it helps to pre-shrink entredeux. If this step is omitted, when the piece with the entredeux stitched into it is washed, the entredeux will shrink and pucker the fabric.

10. *Lace-to-entredeux*: Trim batiste edge off one side of entredeux right next to heavily embroidered “ladder.” There should be no fabric remaining on

that side; entredeux will not ravel (*photo 6*). Cut this length of entredeux in half. With lace and entredeux both right sides up, butt trimmed edge of entredeux up to heading of lace insertion (*photo 7*). Zig-zag (L = 1.0; W = 2.5 – 3.0) together so that one needle swing stitches over lace heading, and the other needle swing goes into the entredeux holes (*photo 8*). Stitch entredeux to both sides of lace/embroidery strip (*photo 1*).

11. *Entredeux-to-fabric*: Place entredeux and the 3- x 11-inch rectangles of

white fabric right sides together with raw edges even (*photo 9*). With entredeux on top, use a straight stitch (L = 2.0) to stitch-in-the-ditch right along entredeux “ladder” (*photo 10*). Stitch again 1/8 inch away and trim seam allowance (*photo 11*). Roll and whip seam allowance by zigzagging (L = 1.0; W = 4.5) so that one needle swing goes into fabric right along previous straight stitching, and the other needle swing goes off the edge of the fabric rolling the seam allowance (*photo 12*). *NOTE: I usually do this second*



Photo 10

roll-and-whip stitching with entredeux on the bottom.

12. Press this little rolled hem away from entredeux. Just as in Step 6, stitch a tiny zigzag (L and W = 1.0) from right side so that one needle swing goes into the “ditch” right next



Photo 11

to the entredeux “ladder” and the other needle swing just catches the fabric fold.

13. Starch and press block one more time.

14. Cut the 1/8-inch white satin ribbon into two equal lengths. Using



Photo 12

a safety pin or a bodkin, weave ribbon through holes in lace beading. -SBS

About the Designer

Sue Pennington Stewart is a primary designer for all Martha Pullen Company endeavors, including *Sew Beautiful* magazine and *Martha's Sewing Room* for PBS. She is a popular teacher at Martha Pullen schools, and is a published author. Sue owns an heirloom design business, *Fit for a Princess*. See the Shopping Guide on page 85 for more information.