

WIPPELL'S



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This catalogue first published in 1989 has been reprinted in response to a continuing demand for comprehensive information on our products and services. The unique format is unchanged as the historically interesting information that is included on the items that we offer is of particular value to our customers. Since the first edition we have of course published other brochures including new and wide ranging styles in shirts and cassock albs. Our special design service has also been developed to meet particular needs in church furnishings and appointments.

Whatever your interest we will be pleased to receive your enquiry and to help in any way that we can.



IN THE BEGINNING

The seed was planted in the rich, red Westcountry soil of the parish of Clayhanger many generations before William Wippell and his goodly wife, Johan, set out on a cold November day in 1554 for St Peter's Church.

As they walked, William considered the prospect of this day with satisfaction. His first born was to be baptised. Richard he was to be named. Far away indeed seemed the days of bad harvests and as they paused on the hill and looked back, William could see his sheep grazing and knew that this was the way forward.

On arrival at the church, William's brother, John, and his wife greeted the threesome and they were joined by Rector Torre. Following devotions and in accord with King Henry's command, Richard's name was entered in the book.

William was to journey to the font twice more. With a sister for Richard named after her mother and later still with his second girl child, Mire, to die within twelve weeks.

The boy, Richard, married and made his own journeys to the font. The flock started by his father, like his children, grew and Richard Wippell won some of the wealth created by the great demand for wool.

LATER

As was the custom, Richard's eldest son, James, 'waited for the land' and in due course was content with his inheritance. Brother Thomas, however, had thicker blood in his veins and married into the parish of Uplowman, hardby the then thriving town of Tiverton, centre of the Westcountry wool trade.

Born during the reign of Charles I and living through the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration of Charles II and the regal tenure of James II and William & Mary, Thomas saw the English countryside change almost as swiftly as the Crown. Such was the quest for the golden fleece that homesteads were disbanded, hamlets and villages razed and time honoured common land enclosed in the interest of better management of the flocks. The present day 'patchwork' look to the Westcountry is witness to this activity, as are churches isolated from communities.

In April 1676 Thomas' fifth child, Georg Wippell, was born at Uplowman and in the fullness of time he married and farmed in the parish of Cadbury, some short distance across the fertile Exe Valley from Uplowman. Georg continued in the family tradition of farming sheep.

The march of the Wippell's through the parishes of Bickleigh, Cadeleigh, Thorverton and Rewe, following the river Exe toward the county town of Exeter accelerated in the next generations. Georg's eldest son, Richard, married at Cadeleigh in 1759 and with his wife, Jane Sharland, farmed at Perry, Thorverton, raising ten children. Son Joseph like his great, great grandfather was baptised on a bleak November day in 1774.



Church of St Mary the Virgin
Bickleigh

LATER STILL

As the seventh child and fourth son, Joseph saw little prospect in waiting for the land and upon marrying cousin Jane in 1802, he set off to make his mark in Exeter. Joseph was happy with his decision. He could see that the golden fleece that had served the family well was beginning to tarnish and that the future was in trade.

This was the time of the Napoleonic Wars, Britain standing alone against the tyranny of the Corsican Corporal and traders were awkwardly placed as regards their wares. Astute businessman that he was, Joseph decided that even during stringent times the belly creates its own market and he set about finding premises to start up a grocery business.

This he did at 175 Fore Street.

Trauman's Exeter Flying Post, 27th May 1802:

'Joseph Wippell, grocer and tea dealer, begs to inform his friends and the public that he has taken Mr Thos Bickham's Grocery trade and continues to carry it on in the same house nearly opposite Milk Lane, further he assures them that the orders they may favour him with will be executed on the most reasonable terms. Joseph Wippell has just received a fresh assortment of genuine teas and new sugars well worth the attention of the public.'

The shop was commodious and there was ample living accommodation above. In due course six children were born over this shop and all were baptised a few steps inside the ancient city walls, in St Mary Arches Church where Joseph was Rector's Warden.



Treuman's Exeter Flying Post, 22nd May 1817:

'On Thursday morning a female servant of Mr Wippell, grocer in Fore Street, met with a shocking accident by a fall from an upstairs window. She had incautiously placed a chair on the ledge of the window and was standing out cleaning the glass, when her hand slipped from its hold and she was precipitated to the ground. Her arm was broken in two places and her skull fractured. She was conveyed to the Devon and Exeter Hospital and there is hope of recovery.'

26th May 1817:

'The servant girl who fell into the street from the window of a respectable grocer's house in Fore Street, died last week in hospital.'

Joseph clearly prospered and eventually moved out from over the shop to join the local merchants and notaries in a house on St David's Hill. His eldest son, Joseph Jnr, was born in 1810 and on reaching his majority his father bought for him the old-established drapery business, Arden & Spry, located at 219 High Street, Exeter. Joseph Jnr and his newly-won wife, Elizabeth Pearse, set up home in St David's Hill, opposite Joseph Snr and 'went to trade'.

Treuman's Exeter Flying Post, 7th August 1834.

'Woollen Draper, 219 High Street, Exeter, 1st August 1834—Wm Arden respectfully announces his retirement from the above business and takes this opportunity of expressing his best acknowledgements to the Nobility, Gentry and Public for the distinguished patronage with which he has been liberally honoured and solicits continuance of the same for Mr Joseph Wippell Jnr whom he with confidence recommends as his successor.'

'Joseph Wippell Jnr in soliciting a continuance of that support which has for a long period been so liberally bestowed upon his predecessor begs to assure the Nobility, Gentry and his friends that the most strenuous exertions shall be made on his part to merit the same. The stock having been taken at a considerable reduction, he pledges himself to offer every advantage to all who may honour him with their commands.'

N.B. To the above he has added on extensive assortment of fashionable London hats.'

17th March 1836:

'Joseph Wippell Jnr begs to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry and his friends in general of the receipt of his well selected stock of goods for the approaching season which he intends offering at his usual moderate prices. London hats of superior make well worthy of attention.'



'The 1789 premises at 219 High Street Exeter'

TRADE

Clearly Joseph Jnr had his father's business acumen and quickly added to the services offered since 1789 by his predecessors at the High Street shop. Selling cloths, serges, calicoes, ducks and galloons was not the stuff for a son of Devon's red soil. Better he should look into manufactory and provide his customers with end products. This he did and quickly earned a reputation as a tailor of distinction, a funeral director and a decorator of churches.

Joseph Jnr, sought out the Royal Worcester Company and enlisted their help with encaustic tiling and parian wares. He displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851 and laid a very solid foundation for the next generation of the Exeter Wippells.

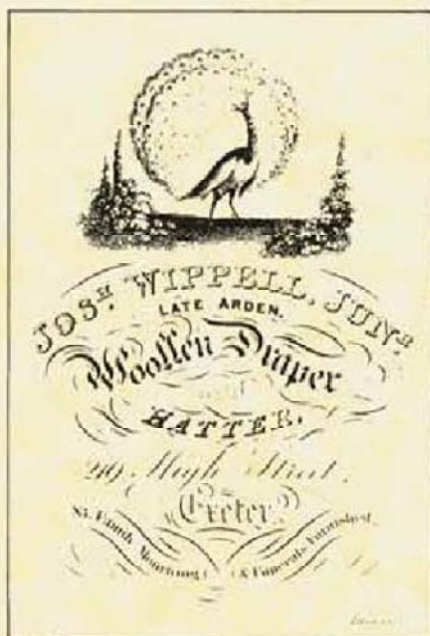
Joseph Jnr and Elizabeth raised nine children. Their first born son, Henry Hugh, arrived in 1842 and joined his father in the business in 1863. Joseph Jnr retitled the business J. Wippell & Company and it continued to operate from the High Street address. When Joseph Jnr retired in 1879, Henry Hugh was the owner of a rapidly expanding company.

A MAN OF HIS TIME

This was the age of invention and progress and Henry Hugh Wippell proved equal to the challenge. Clear in vision and determined in aim, he felt the groundswell of restoration and building in the Church of England and at full flood was ready to meet the demand. He was innovative and secured Royal Letters Patent on the design of school furniture. As a founding member of the Exeter Gas Light Company he was well placed to bring to the public a wide range of secular and ecclesiastic gas light fittings. So successful was this venture that for a time Henry Hugh had to import his lamps from the Continent until such time as he was able to increase the pace of his workshop building programme to meet the demand.

By 1882 the Wippell Company had outgrown the High Street building and following a fire opposite the ancient Guildhall which destroyed property through to the Cathedral Yard, Henry Hugh bought the sites, commissioned an architect of local repute and built new four-storey premises.

He then proceeded to support his retail successes by pursuing a policy of 'manufactory', purchasing land and acquiring buildings in various parts of the city.



Joseph Wippell Jnr's calling card, as used in 1834.

His was the first business in Exeter to use the telephone and the first in due course to convert to electric lighting. By nature he was restless in his energies and although in the midst of building a large woodworking factory in Exeter, he travelled to London and negotiated a lease on prestigious premises in Charing Cross and within weeks had opened the company's first London shop in 1897.

Such was his success that in 1902 Henry Hugh decided to register the company which was then restyled J. Wippell & Company Limited.

Henry Hugh married thrice. His first wife, Emma Gadd, following their marriage at St Mary Arches Church in April 1868, gave him a son, Joseph Charles born 1869 and a daughter, Kate Elizabeth born 1870. Joseph Charles joined his father on the Board of Directors of the 1902 company.

His second wife, Jane Haynes, mothered his children, Ernest Henry (also joining his father on the Board), daughters Winifred, Ellen Margaret, Irene and sons, Ashley Gordon and Donald Hugh (both to become Directors in due course).

Henry Hugh's ability and the respect with which he was held in the community was marked by his election to the office of Mayor of Exeter in 1909-10. He died in 1912.

THE FOLLOWING DECADES

When the sons of England were in the fields of Flanders, the ninth generation of the family faced difficult times. Two of the four Wippell sons and most of the skilled craftsmen employed by the company responded to the Colours. Notwithstanding its depleted resources the firm continued to offer a full service and contributed to the national effort by supplying military clothing.

Following the 1918 return to sanity was a period of intense activity. Premises were set up in Manchester, the company acquired the managing interest in a specialist Royal Warrant holder's business in London and moved to its present Westminster address. Travelling representatives were located at strategic points throughout the country and travellers left England on regular and extensive trips to the USA and Canada. During this time two generations of the family served the company—Joseph Howard Wippell joining his father, Joseph Charles, in 1922. This association lasted only until the untimely death of Joseph Charles six years later, but brothers Ernest Henry and Donald Hugh continued to steer the company through the busy times.

In the mid war years the Faculty Jurisdiction Act was introduced to maintain the highest standards of artistry and craftsmanship in the service of the church. Such was the company's reputation that it quickly won the respect of the newly appointed Diocesan Advisory Committees and secured much work upon the recommendation of a number of notable architects. The order books were full and the future held promise but by the end of the third decade the storm clouds were beginning to gather in Europe for a second time.

The unthinkable happened and again the company's employees responded to the call. This time, however, things were different, there was an urgency and desperation that imposed severe restrictions on all businesses. Raw materials and labour were directed to the war effort. Premises were requisitioned and within months ladies were sewing parachutes rather than cassocks and vestments and skilled men beyond the age of conscription were making signals equipment and torpedo mechanisms rather than chalices and crosses.

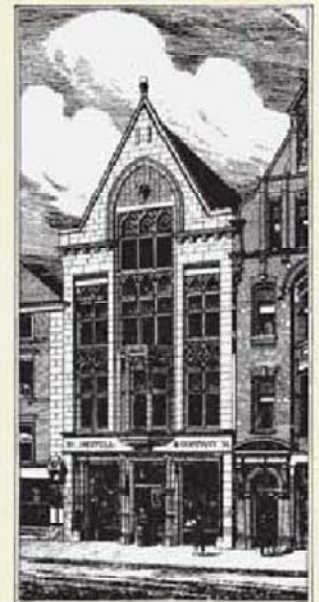
Following peace the return to normal was frustrated by the continued restrictions on raw materials. The priority then being the rebuilding programme and getting industry back on its feet. These difficulties were resolved by the company founding a National Association of firms engaged in similar work to bring pressure to bear on the Government and winning recognition from the War Damage Commission of the valuable contribution to be made to the refurbishing of blitzed churches and public buildings. By the late 40's the company was able to resume its traditional role as clergy outfitters and church furnishers.

In the 50's and 'swinging 60's' new styles of design and changes in liturgical practice presented challenges and opportunities. History repeated itself as these were times not unlike those encountered a century before by Joseph Jnr and son, Henry Hugh Wippell. During this period the company ventured into high quality secular joinery work and quickly established a reputation as specialists in University, Banking and Public buildings work. At the same time the firm was appointed official rosemakers to a number of English and overseas Universities. In 1950 following a 40 year pattern of frequent sales trips to the USA it was decided to establish a permanent branch sales office in New Jersey.

During the 70's the company acquired a controlling interest in the church furnishing activities of A. R. Mowbray & Co and a subsidiary—Wippell Mowbray Church Furnishing Ltd was formed. This association with Mowbrays lasted 10 years until Wippells decided to purchase the minority Mowbray interest and since 1980 Wippell Mowbray Church Furnishing Ltd has been a wholly owned Wippell company.



The 1883 Exeter Premises
(Cathedral Yard)



The High Street frontage
of the Cathedral Yard,
Exeter premises



THE PRESENT

What of Wippell's in 1989? Is it so very different to the company that was trading in 1789?

200 years ago ladies in crinolines and gentlemen in frock coats were received in the High Street shops with the grace and courtesy of the times, they were served with 'the most strenuous exertions' and we 'pledged to offer every advantage to all who may honour us with their commands'. Whilst the social graces of those times are no longer adopted by society, the underlying qualities of courtesy and service remain as the mainspring of our activities.

Is the quality the same? Undoubtedly. With 200 years of practice in the various skills we employ, our continued success is witness to our ability to produce work of a very high standard.

To some, the celebration of two centuries in business may appear to be a little self-indulgent, but we believe that it is worth note. It provides us with a signal opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all who have supported our endeavours to date and to invite your future interest in the services we have to offer—'we pledge to offer every advantage to all'.



This mercers emblem is based upon Runic symbols. The triangle representing the family unit, the cross the eldest son, the 'W' being the family initial and the shearmans hook as appropriate to the family's trade. (It is coincidental that the shearmans hook coupled with the triangle result in the initial letter for Joseph.)

Originally used as a mark for identifying ownership of bales of wool, since the mid-nineteenth-century, this emblem has been used by the company as a house sign.



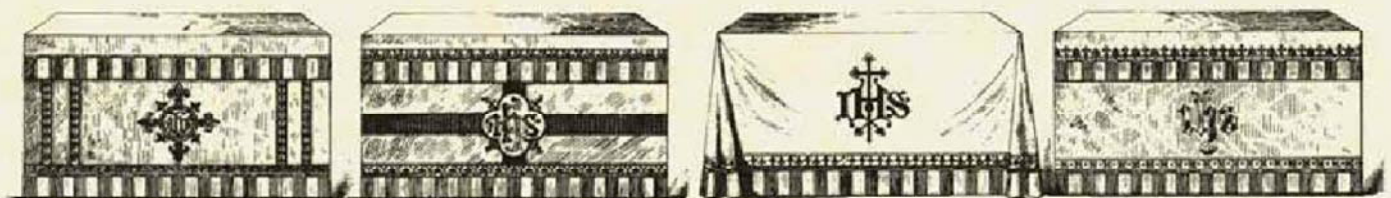
120 years before this photograph of a corner of our old Cathedral Yard workrooms, taken in 1910, visitors to Joseph Wippell's High Street shop would have been greeted by a very similar scene of activity. The ladies would have worn full-length,

tight-sleeved dresses and white aprons covering buckled, high-heeled shoes and their hairstyles upswept beneath pleated linen caps. The flooring would have been uncarpeted and candles would have provided light during the early and

late hours. The embroidery frames and the trestle tables would have been unchanged. The 1910 photograph includes a clock and wall calendar indicating that a six-day week of 54 hours was worked at this time.

CO. VELVET & CLOTH COVERS

Altar Frontal designs featured in a catalogue dating from 1862.



Church Decoration.
219, HIGH ST^Y Exeter CORNER OF QUEEN'S

Joseph Wippell begs to submit the following List to the attention of those engaged in Church Restoration, & having correspondence with the first Church Decorators in the Kingdom he is enabled to furnish the various Articles supplied by them at their published Catalogue prices, in addition to those of his own Manufacture, all orders being executed with correctness of Design, punctuality, dispatch and moderate charges.



Embroidery work under way in our present workrooms.



200 years on from our beginnings, we occupy different premises, but are still located in the Cathedral City of Exeter. Clearly during this time there have been many changes but the basic craft skills upon which the company was founded have endured. The best embroidery is still stitched entirely by hand and the best methods of making up and the finest materials are still used in our work.

The ladies pictured opposite would find a 4½ day working week and modern creature comforts alien to their experience but would find nothing strange about the working methods and would rejoice that the quality of work which they helped to establish was being maintained and improved.

An extract from a hand-printed brochure published by Joseph Wippell in 1834 to invite custom at his newly-completed shop premises at 219 High Street, Exeter.



The bold treatment of colour and the modern interpretation of embroidery of this festal Altar Frontal and Cope has resulted in a dramatic setting for worship in the Chapel of Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire. Such work requires careful consideration and much experience to ensure success and an important part of our service is to advise and assist with projects where special factors need to be taken into account.

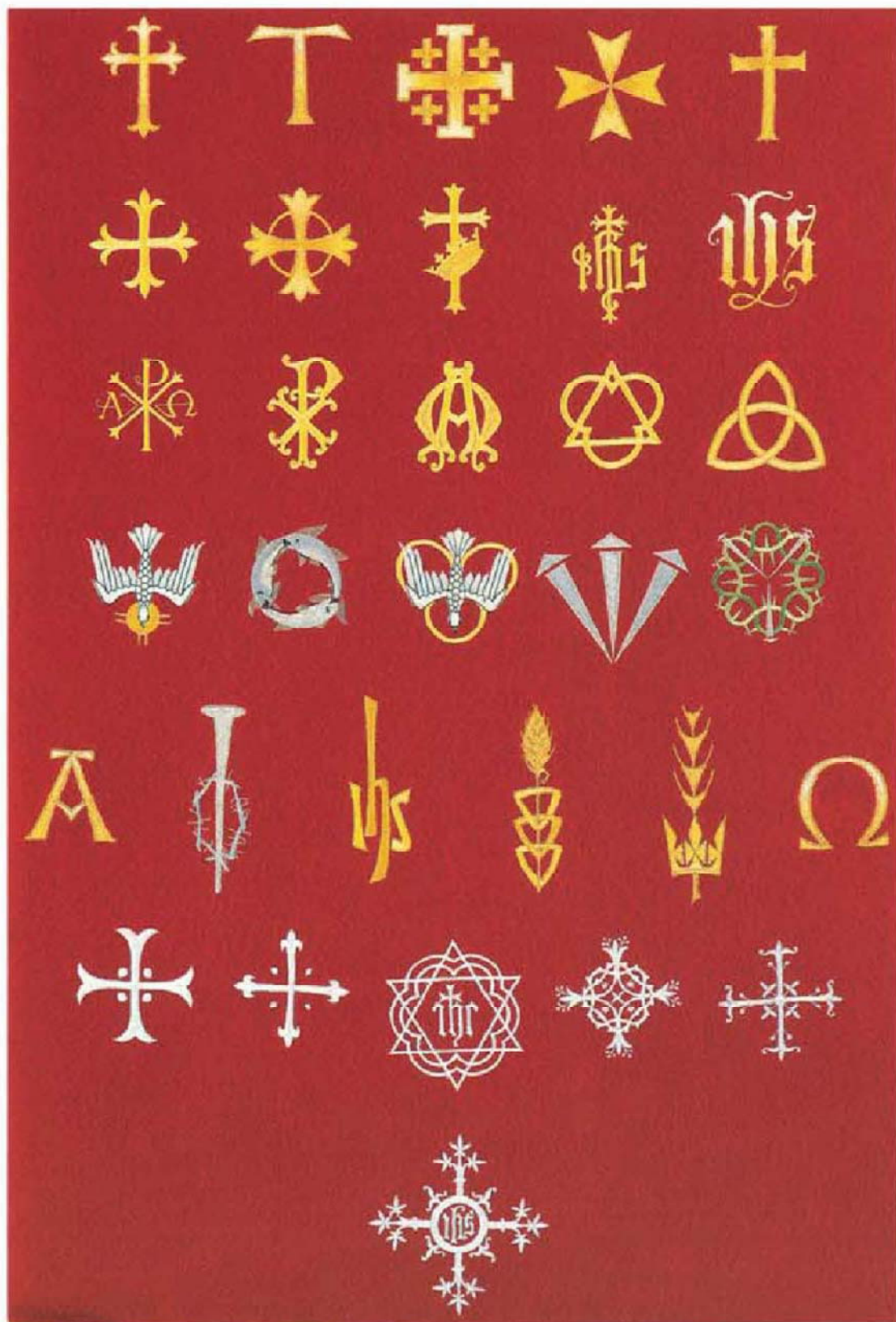


SYMBOLS—Hand Embroidered, Hand Appliqued and Machine Embroidered

Illustrated below is a range of motifs selected for the embellishment of plain vestments and hangings. Each has a liturgical significance and many are appropriate for use at all times. Symbols can be entirely hand embroidered in the traditional manner, they can be worked in applique and edged down and many are

suitable for embroidery by machine directly onto the item under consideration.

Our machine embroidery is to an exceptionally high standard and compares favourably with traditional hand work. Motifs offered in this medium are worked in fine threads into the chosen base materials.



Left to right:

1, 4, 5, 6, 2706

100, 101, 105, 112
12

2402, 127, 122,
133, 23

29, 2707, 162
2708, 2709

18, 2426, 2424
2425, 2423, 19

32, 105, 42, 44
104

13

FRINGES, ORPHREYS, BRAIDS AND TRIMMINGS

Fine quality trimmings are essential to the finished effect of vestments and hangings and the illustrated examples are usually available from stock or on prompt delivery.

Fringes are woven in rayon in 2" and 3" sizes and special colours and combinations are available at extra costs.

Woven orphrey bandings in the styles, colours and widths shown prove effective as a way of trimming

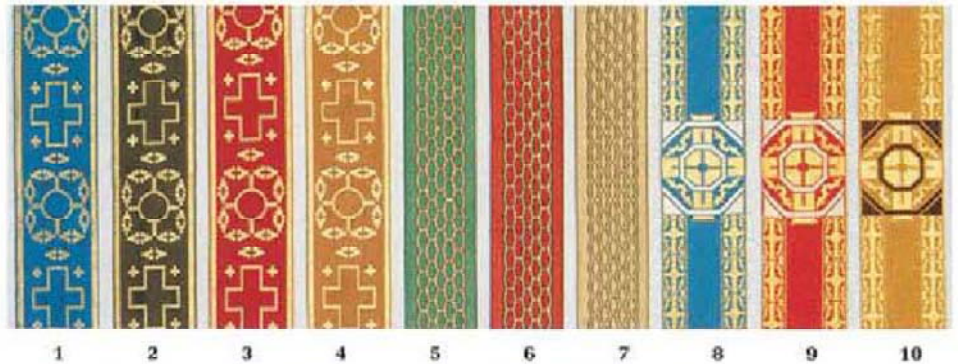
vestments and smaller hangings and orphrey bandings made up from our wide range of plain and patterned materials and velvets, outlined with any of the illustrated braids, are readily available as alternatives or for the embellishment of larger hangings.

Trimming braids in general are supplied 1/2" and 1" wide with some styles 3/4" wide.

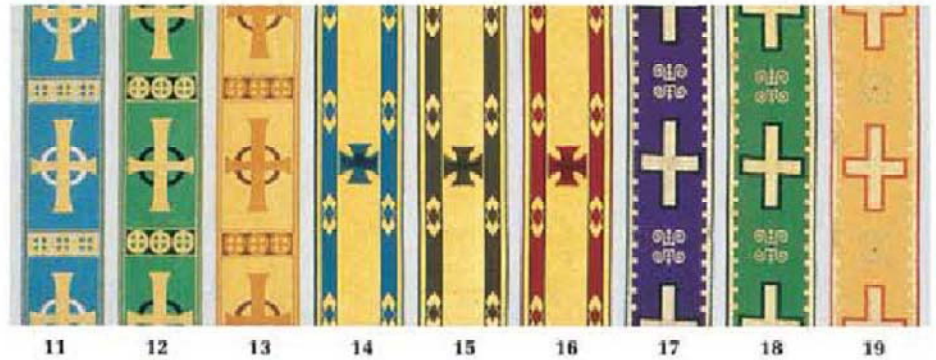
Tassels can be supplied in complementary colours for vestments and hangings.

Orphrey bandings 1-19,
52, 59-70 do not require
narrow braid edgings

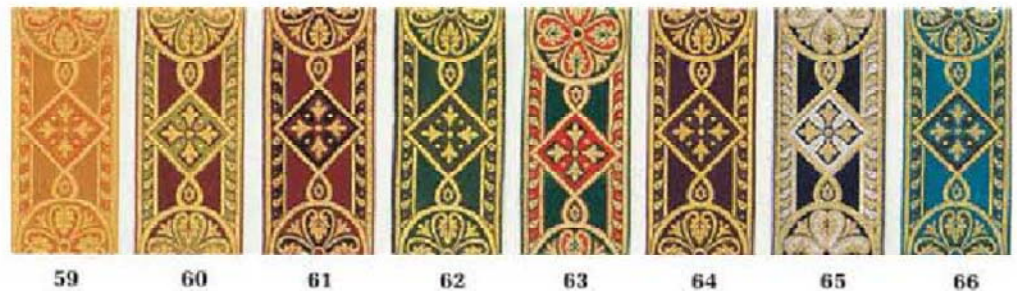
- 1, 2, 3, 4
St Paul (3" wide only)
- 5, 6, 7
Becket (3" wide only)
- 8, 9, 10
St Chad (3" wide only)



- 11, 12, 13
St Thomas (3" wide only)
- 14, 15, 16
St Patrick (3" wide only)
- 17, 18, 19
St Gregory (3" wide only)



Ravenna
3" wide only



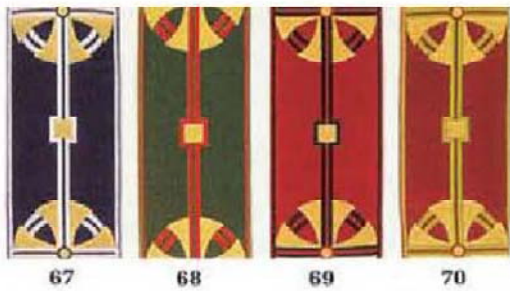
52—Ecclesia (3" wide)

53—Venetian Tapestry

54—Ludlow Brocatelle

55—Wakefield Brocatelle

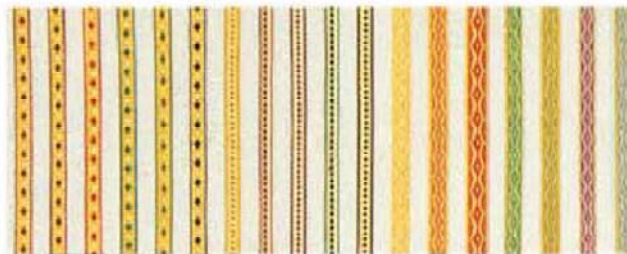
FRINGES, ORPHREYS, BRAIDS AND TRIMMINGS



Padua
3" wide only



56. Ashdown 57. Winchester 58. Velvet



Pompei 1/2" wide 600—605 Roma 1/2" wide 606—610 Firenze 1/2" wide 611—617



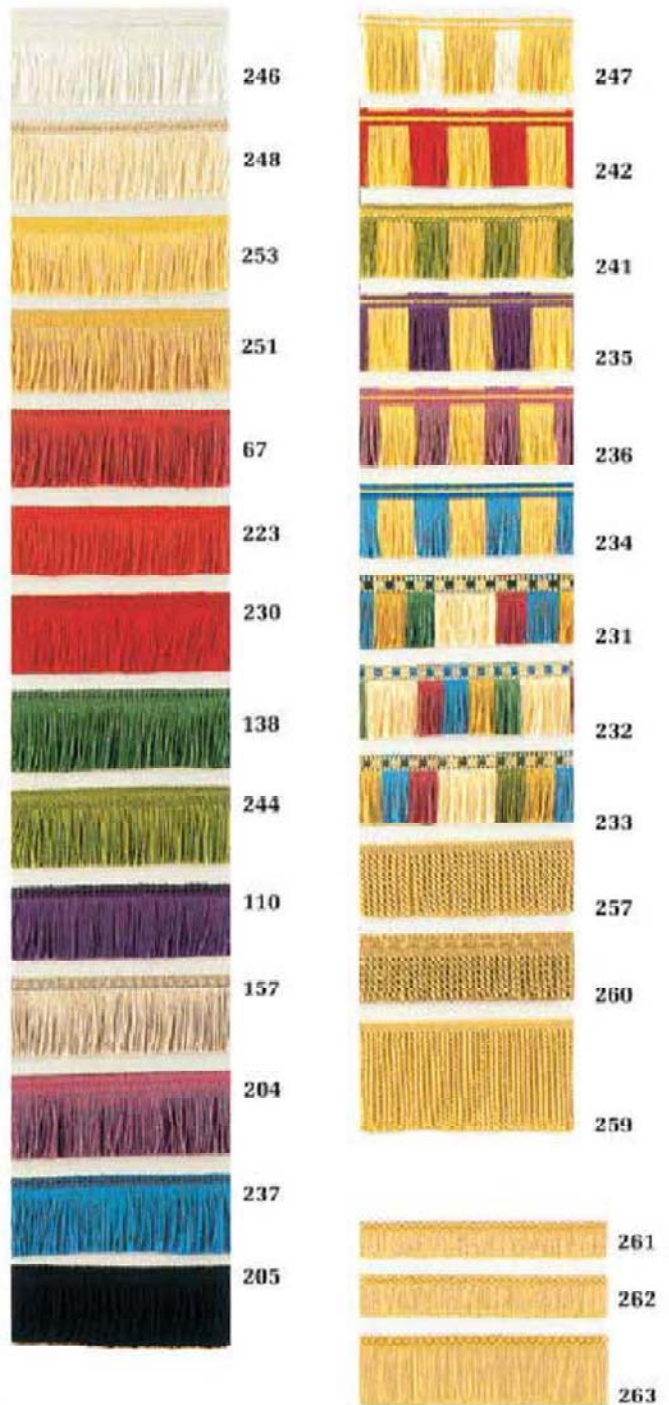
A B C



D E

- A—20, 21, 22 Becket (1/2" and 1")
- B—23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 St Benet (1/2" and 1")
- C—31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 Guildford (1/2" only)
- D—37, 38, 39, 40, 41 Ecclesia (1/2" and 1")
- E—42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 St Julian (1/2" only)

FRINGES



Eucharist 6 1/2" wide
available in illustrated
colours only

Orphreys 53-58 are available in any colour and quality from our four material groups and are illustrated with narrow braid edgings to choice.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that orphrey bandings, braids and fabric widths remain constant, due to the variations to be expected in manufacture we cannot guarantee to maintain stated widths or precise colour shades.