

## 16<sup>th</sup> c Tentstitch

There are many Elizabethan examples of small pouches, usually embroidered in silk on a linen ground. These “sweet bags” were so named because they held herbs, or perhaps sweetmeats, and were very common as presents. Small pouches can be seen hung from women’s belts at about shin level, but drawstring opuches were rarely seen worn by men, although still used as money purses (within a larger pouch) and gaming purses.

The deer is a common Elizabethan symbol and there were many delightful examples to choose from. I have used a dappled deer from a tentstitch panel for this pattern. Although I have given a full chart for this, it could also be worked as slips, then applied to a velvet ground. Another option would be to work it in shaded detached buttonhole stitch and again, apply it to a ground.



Sweet Bag, 1600.  
Silk thread on linen ground  
(Beck p18)

### Materials – tentstitch version

- 16 count evenweave linen
- Linen for lining
- Madiera silk thread in yellows (2211, 0113 & 0105, or 0113, 0105 & 0112), silver greys (1803 and 1804), red (0511) or equivalent silks
- Silk or silk-like woven cords

### Materials – slip version

- Materials as above (without the red silk, unless for tassels)
- Red velvet for ground (in addition to materials above)

### Notes:

The embroidery must be worked in a hoop or frame for both versions.

Sweetbags are often square in shape. You could adapt the pattern by moving the base star up 2 stitches and the top stars down 3 or 4 stitches. Remove 2 rows of stitches from the base and 15 from the top.



Deer from early 17<sup>th</sup> c  
tentstitch panel. Silk on linen  
(Beck p51)



Needlework pattern from Thomas  
Trevelyon’s *Miscellany 1608 MS*  
(Cavallo, endpapers)

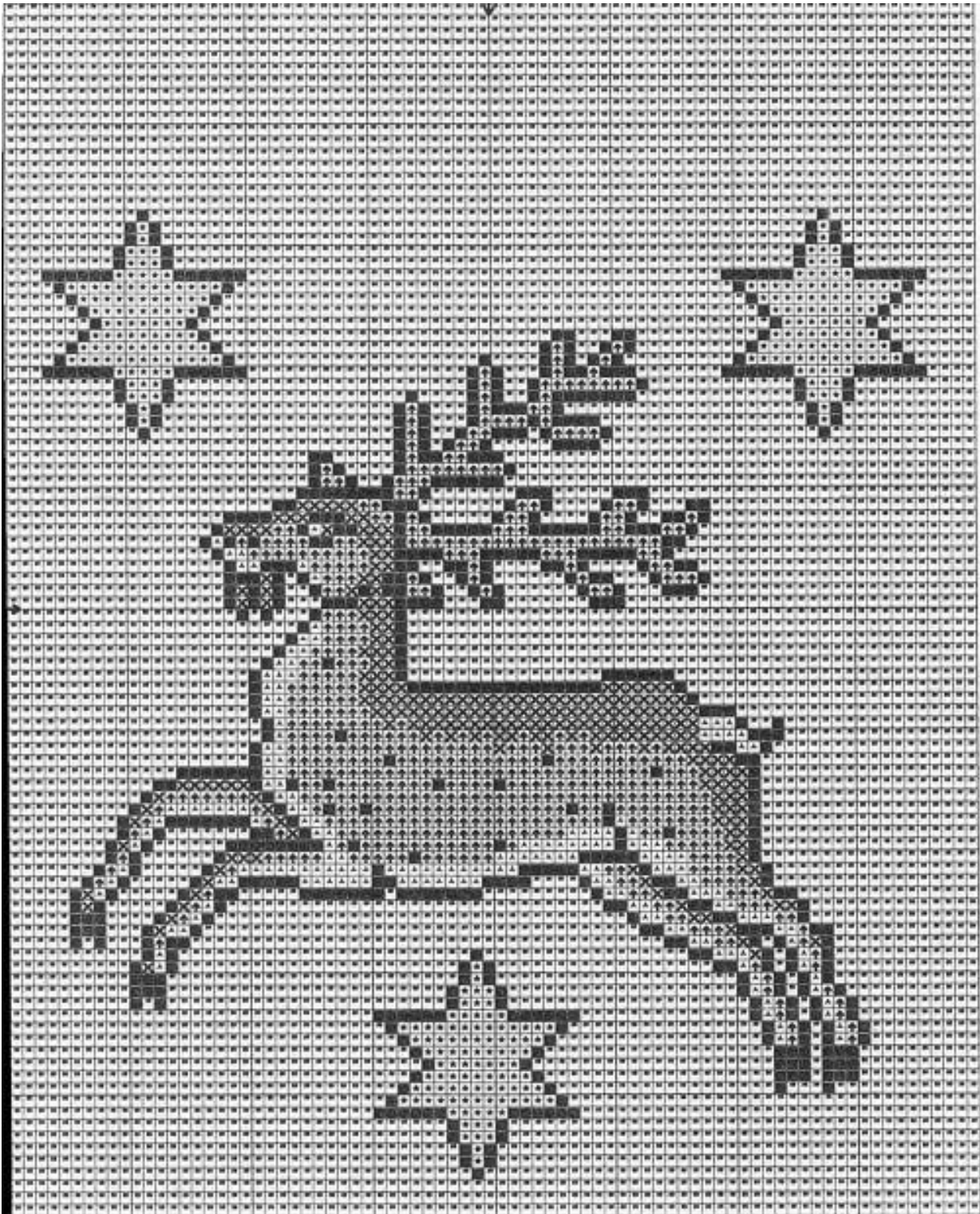


Pattern from *A shole-house for  
the Needle* (Shorleyker M3)

### Finishing:

If the entire piece is done in tentstitch, you could simply use pierced holes. Otherwise, holes for the draw cords may need strengthening with embroidered eyelets to avoid wear. The sides of the bag are sewn together, with the hanging cords sewn along the sides of the bag for extra decoration. Three tassels would be perfect along the base and the draw cords should also end in tassels.

**16<sup>th</sup> c Tentstitch**



**16<sup>th</sup> c Detached buttonhole**

