BOBBIN LACE - BASIC MOVEMENTS AND STITCHES.

Numbering Bobbins and Pairs
Bobbins and pairs are always numbered from the left, unless instructions are given to count from the right or from the edge, which may be the left or right, according to the situation. Bobbins and pairs are renumbered after every movement.

Basic Movements
Almost all bobbin lacemaking is a mixture of twists and crosses.

Twist
Using a pair of bobbins pass the right hand bobbin over the left hand bobbin (figure 1). When two pairs of bobbins are being worked the instruction to 'twist' applies to both bobbins. If only one is to be twisted or if the bobbins are to be twisted a different number of times this will be stated.

Cross
Using two pairs of bobbins, pass the second bobbin from the left over the bobbin on its right, i.e. number 2 over number 3 (figure 2).

Cloth Stitch
Cloth stitch is the stitch that produces the woven areas in lace. The stitch is made using two pairs of bobbins that work cross, twist, cross, i.e. using four bobbins numbered 1-4

- pass 2 over 3 (figure 3) (renumber)
- pass 2 over 1 and 4 over 3 (bobbins 2 & 4 move together) (figure 4) (renumber)
- pass 2 over 3 (figure 5)

Cloth stitch braid
This braid requires 5 pairs of bobbins and Coats crochet cotton no. 50 or 60 or linen no. 50 or 60. Copy the pricking (figure 7), checking that there are there are 10 squares to 1 inch and adjusting the size if necessary. Transfer the onto the pricking card by pricking through the dots and then drawing the guide line with a fine felt tipped pen.
Fasten the pricking to the pillow and knot one pair of bobbins securely to a pins set up at each of the points point a, b, c, d, and e.

Place a pin in each hole a-e at the top of the pricking and tie one pair of bobbins to each pin. Adjust the bobbins so that they are untwisted, all the same length and that there is about the same length of thread between the pins and the bobbins as the length of the bobbin. The two bobbins of pair 1 that will work rows to and fro across the pricking are called the workers; the pairs they work through are called the passives.

Work cloth stitch using pair 1 with each pair across the row, until the original pair 1 reaches the right hand side. Twist the workers (right over left) and place a pin in pinhole no. 1 (figure 7), the first hole below the top row of pins, between the workers (now pair 5) and pair 4.

Work back across the row with the same workers making cloth stitches with each pair in turn, then twist the workers (right over left). The stitches are made exactly as before; they are not reversed when the direction of the row changes. Set up pin 2 between pairs 1 & 2 in the highest available hole on the left side (figure 8).

Continue making rows of cloth stitches until you are comfortable.

Summary
Cloth stitch is always worked with two pairs of bobbins. At the end of each stitch the pairs are renumbered then one pair is discarded and the next comes into play. One pair of bobbins, called the workers, travels across and back and make the rows; the others pairs remain in their places and travel down through the rows, the passives.
Half stitch
Half stitch is made using any two pairs of bobbins that work cross, twist, i.e. using four bobbins numbered 1-4
pass 2 over 3 (figure 10)
pass 2 over 1 and 4 over 3 (bobbins 2 & 4 move together) (figure 11)

(It is really two thirds of a cloth stitch not a half)

Using the same pricking as for the cloth stitch sampler (figure 7) and Egyptian cotton no. 60/2, start with freshly wound bobbins, or continue from the cloth stitch braid. Work rows as for cloth stitch but use half stitches (figures 46 & 47). This time only one thread of the original pair travels across the row, the other bobbin making the pair changes as each stitch is made. The bobbin travelling across and its temporary partner at any particular time are known as the workers. Continue making rows of half stitches until they become comfortable.

Half stitch braid
This braid requires 5 pairs of bobbins and Coats crochet cotton no. 50 or 60 or linen no. 50 or 60. Using pricking for the cloth stitch braid (figure 7) follow the sequence for making the cloth stitch braid making half stitches instead of cloth stitches, but do not make the twist at the end of the row; it is not necessary since a half stitch finishes with a twist.

It is easy to undo mistakes in cloth stitch, not as easy in half stitch. If you need to rectify a mistake undo all the twists along the current row, remove the last pin set up and undo the single worker across the row, leaving the twists on the other threads. Repeat undoing the twists, pin and single thread, finishing with removing the single thread until you have removed the mistake and all pairs have one twist. Then resume making. You usually need to remove one more row than expected.