The Needlework Gazette's

Needlepointed Poppy Vest

Designed by Diane M. Schultz

The ***Needlework Gazette***

Stitching: The Journey is the Reward

www.needlework.com

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The Poppy Vest

There are garden flowers and there are field flowers. After doing the more formal rose, I wanted to venture into the carefree realm of the field flower. Poppies, daisies, and honey bees immediately sprung to mind. The red, the white, the yellow, so primary, so clear, so like the feel of an untamed field. To accentuate this unstructured and wild setting, I chose to do an asymmetrical design, the two sides not the traditional mirror image. Each side has its own character, unlike the other, yet working together to make a "whole". Not unlike a perfectly matched couple that separate are complete but together are better, even more interesting somehow.

The left side of the poppy vest features a bee just discovering the array of daisies and poppies. The black background brings the reds of the poppies forward accentuating the colors. The daisies provide a counterpoint both in size and direction. The right side shows the bee homing in on the largest poppy, flying into the design and toward the bee on the other side . This movement along with size and placement variations in the flowers contribute to the interest, balance and rhythm of the design.

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In this almost totally tent stitched design, the decorative stitch was not to be denied. The center of a real poppy looks exactly like a decorative stitch called spider stitch so of course it was used, also in an asymmetrical way which looks more like nature. Each design I do is an experiment in some technique and in this case it was in "tweeding" putting more than one color in the needle at a time. The result: if you use two different colors or shades in your needle at one time the result is very fur-like — perfect for doing animals and rough surfaces. If , however, you want the rich smooth surface of a flower petal, the two shades need to be very close in value. You too will experience this phenomenon as you work this project.

The full instructions including the color symbol definitions and the left and right side charts are included later in this booklet. I hope you will find the symbol charts easy to read and the fold-out color chart should make it easy to reference the symbols no matter what page you are working.

I hope you enjoy this project!

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Poppy Vest Instructions

The instructions that follow should provide everything you'll need to complete the two panels. See the finishing section (page 28) for information on turning the panels into a wearable vest. The basic steps to completing the project are:

1. Gather all the materials you'll need to complete both panels. It pays to get all the yarn and canvas together to avoid differences in lots. See page 8 for a materials list.

2. Cut your canvas to the two 18" by 30" pieces required (see page 8) and tape around the edges.

3. Mark the center of each canvas by folding each in half in both directions (using thread or a canvas marker). The center points are marked on the symbol charts.

4. Mount the canvas on a frame, and organize your yarns so you can get to them easily

5. Now the fun part! Stitch each panel. Assuming you're using 12-count canvas, you'll be stitching with two strands of Persian yarn. We recommend you stitch these on a frame, as the shape of the resultant piece is important in creating a correct vest. A roll frame works especially well due to the large size of each side.

6. Finish the piece into a vest. We do not provide instructions for this phase here. See McCalls pattern #6105 for a vest pattern that is compatible with this design.

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Poppy Vest Materials

The materials for the Poppy Vest described here are those related to the needlepointed front panels. You will need additional materials for finishing, such as fabric for the back and lining.

Yarn

The Poppy Vest design makes use of 20 different color yarns, with an additional 13 colors created by mixing these yarns. The following are estimates for the amount of each yarn you will need for both the plain and blended colors. We've provided estimates for Paternayan Persian yarn in terms of the number of 3-ply yards required. You will be using this yarn two plies at a time for the number 12 canvas, but it comes in 3-ply form.

Paternayan Color Name	Yarn Number	Num 3-ply Yards Rqd
Pale Rusty Rose	934	8
Light Strawberry	954	15
Medium Strawberry	952	35
Medium Salmon	841	36
Dark Strayberry	950	37
Dark Cranberry	940	18
Black	220	227
Bright White	261	24
Oå White	263	15
Pale Beige Brown	465	7
Light Pearl Grey	213	5
Medium Perl Grey	212	5
Pale Mustard	715	2
Autumn Yellow	727	5
Light Honey Gold	734	16
Golden Brown	441	10
Pale Khaki Green	645	9
Light Khaki Green	644	14
Medium Khaki Green	643	26
Dark Khaki Green	641	22

Canvas

You will need two pieces of 12-count interlock canvas, each 18" by 30", cut so the selvage runs the long way. Choose a high grade canvas such as orange-line to ensure even sizing. It would be best to cut the two vest panels from the same 36" x 30" piece of canvas to improve the chance of he two panels matching. We've observed large variations in the actual count of various batches of canvas. Tape these around the edges (1" Scotch #234 masking tape works good). Be sure to cut the pieces so the selvage runs in the long direction.

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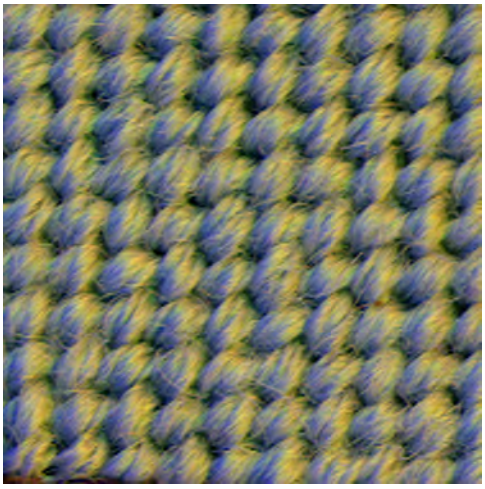
Stitching the Poppy Vest

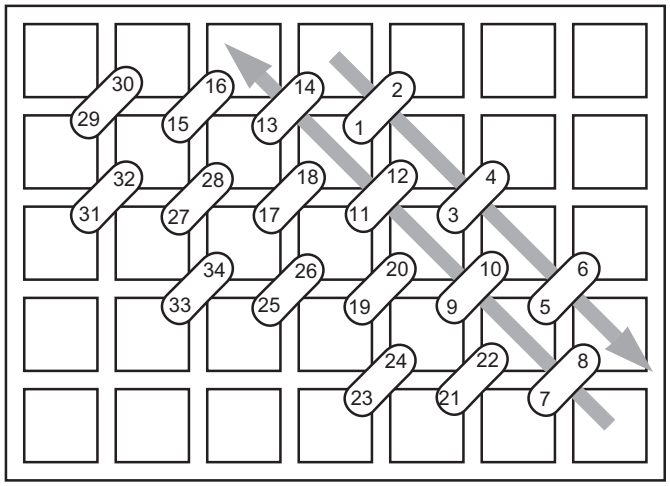
The vest is stitched almost entirely in the tent stitch with the design coming from the change of colors. There is one decorative stitch used to provide a textural element at the center of the poppy, the spider stitch.

The Tent Stitch

The Tent Stitch is a generic name for the standard area fill stitch – probably the most used stitch in needlepoint. The version shown in the diagram on this page is the Basket Stitch version, so named because the back side looks woven. The Continental Stitch is indistinguishable from this on the front, but is stitched right to left in horizontal rows turning the canvas upside down for every other row.



The Tent Stitch in Use



Stitch Chart for the Tent Stitch

The Spider Stitch

The centers of the poppies are over-stitched with the spider stitch. Since this doesn't show up on the stitch chart except for the medium khaki green tent stitch that will lie under the stitch, use the photos to guide you. Notice that unlike the diagram below, those placed in the design are done unevenly so as to appear more organic, and in perspective.

The Spider Stitch in Use on the Poppy on the bottom of the right panel

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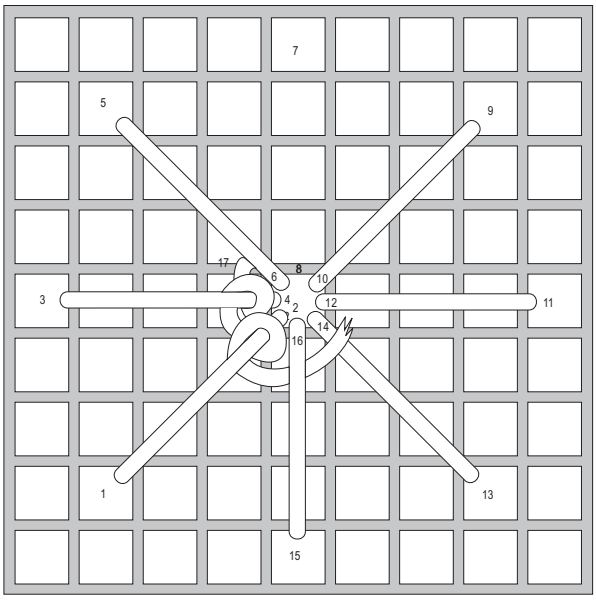
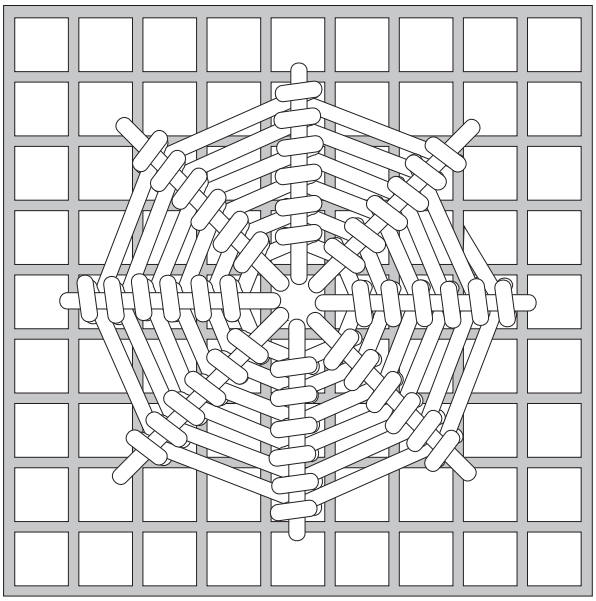
The Spider Stitch (Continued)



After the spokes are stitched through the canvas, you begin working on top weaving the thread under two spokes and back over one.



Go around and around until the spokes are full. Usually when you think you are finished, you can go around two more times.

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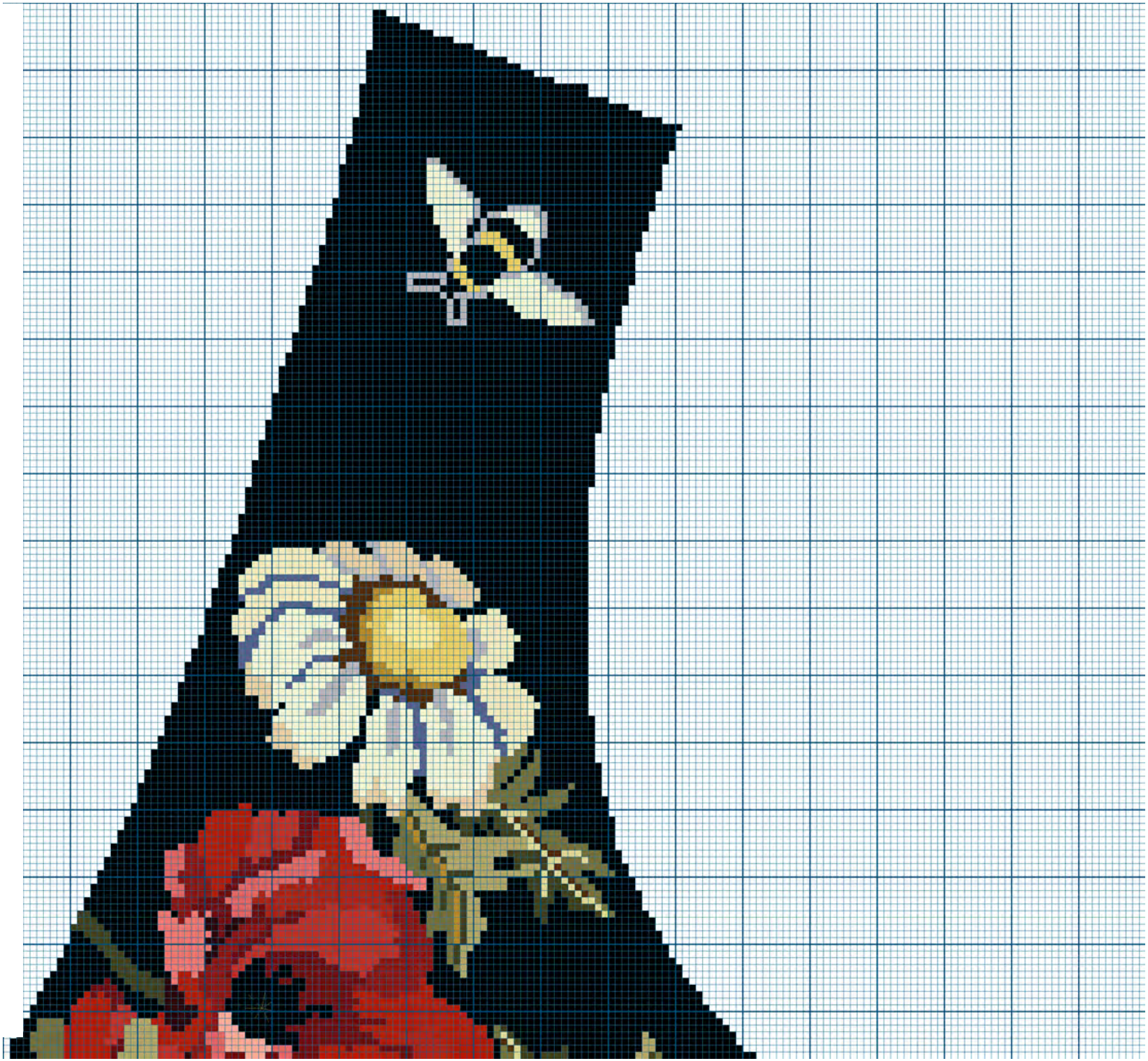
Left Side Color Chart

(for reference only)

The Charts for stitching the left and right side are the black and white symbol charts that follow.

We hope this smaller color chart will help as a general reference and where you need a quick overview.



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Materials Notes

12 Mesh interlock canvas

2 pieces: cut size: 18 in. x 30 in.

Finished Size: 13 in by 26 in. (each side)

(13 in. from the center front to the side seam

26 in. from the shoulder seam to the longest point in the hemline)

160 stitches x 313 stitches

#20 tapestry needle

20 shades of Paternayan Persian Yarn

(separate and use two plies of the 3-ply strand of yarn)

Scroll frame: Highly recommended

Stitches

This vest is stitched entirely in tent stitch (chart on page 6), except for the centers of 3 poppies which are top stitched with a spider stitch (chart on page 6-7)

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Poppy Vest Left Side Charts

This diagram shows you how the following left side symbol chart pages fit together as well as giving you a quick page reference so you can find where you left off. Each chart picks up where the previous chart ends, so there is no overlap from chart to chart. The rows and columns are numbered to help you find matching locations across charts, and the center point in each direction is marked with an arrow.

Each square on the chart represents a single tent stitch over a thread crossing on the 12 count canvas. The squares are coded with symbols for each color. Note that inside the vest proper, an empty square indicates use of Bright White (Paternayan 216), while outside the edge of the piece, they are not stitched.

To make stitching easier, the color symbol/yarn chart has been made a fold-out page at the back of the book. When opened out, you can have the information in sight no matter which of the chart pages you are working on.

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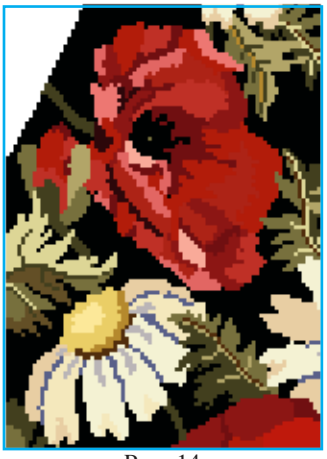
Page 13



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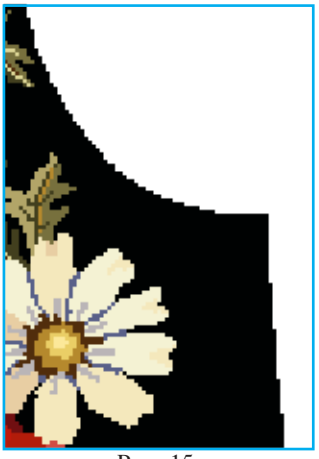

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Poppy Vest - Left Side

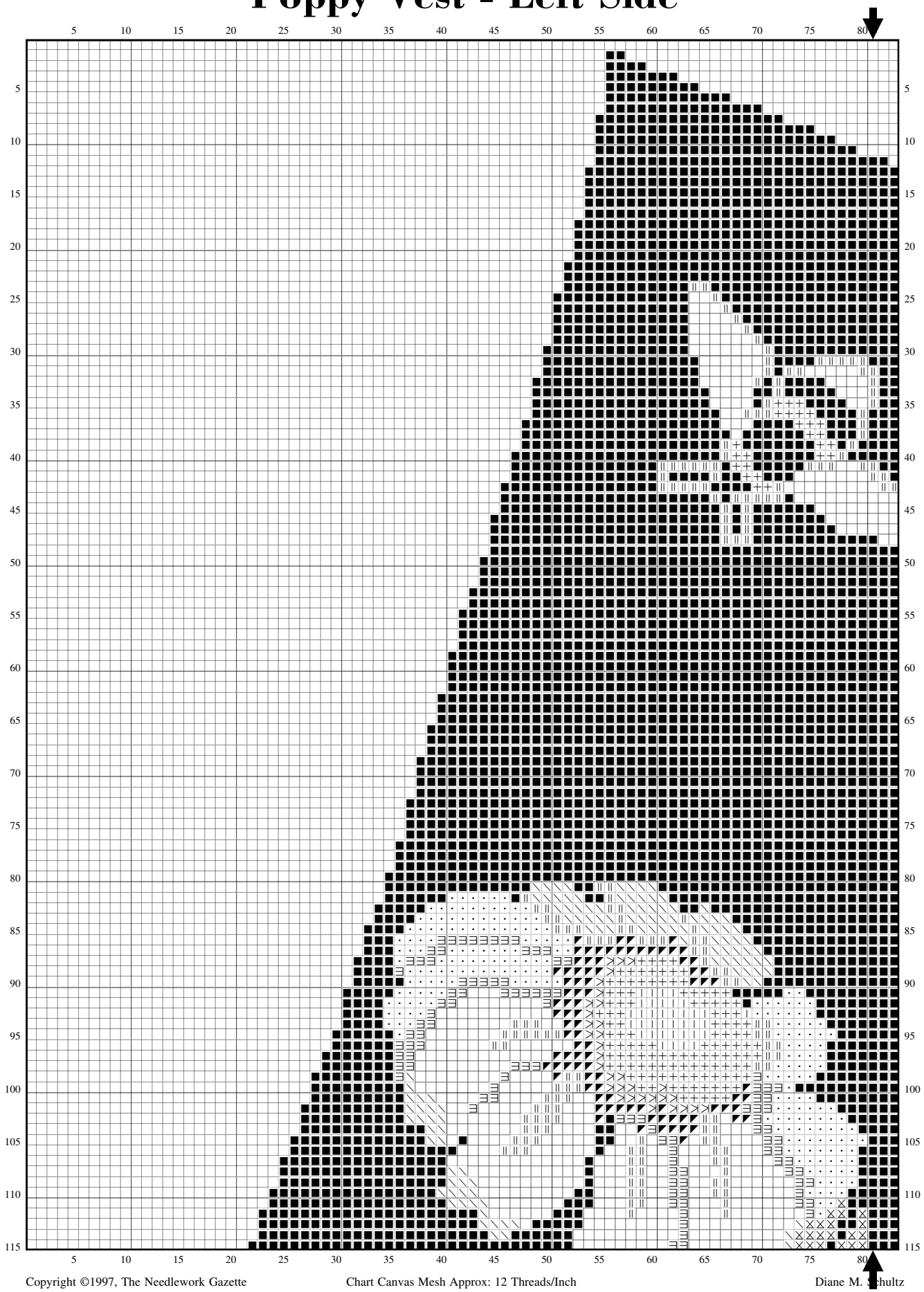

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Chart Canvas Mesh Approx: 12 Threads/Inch

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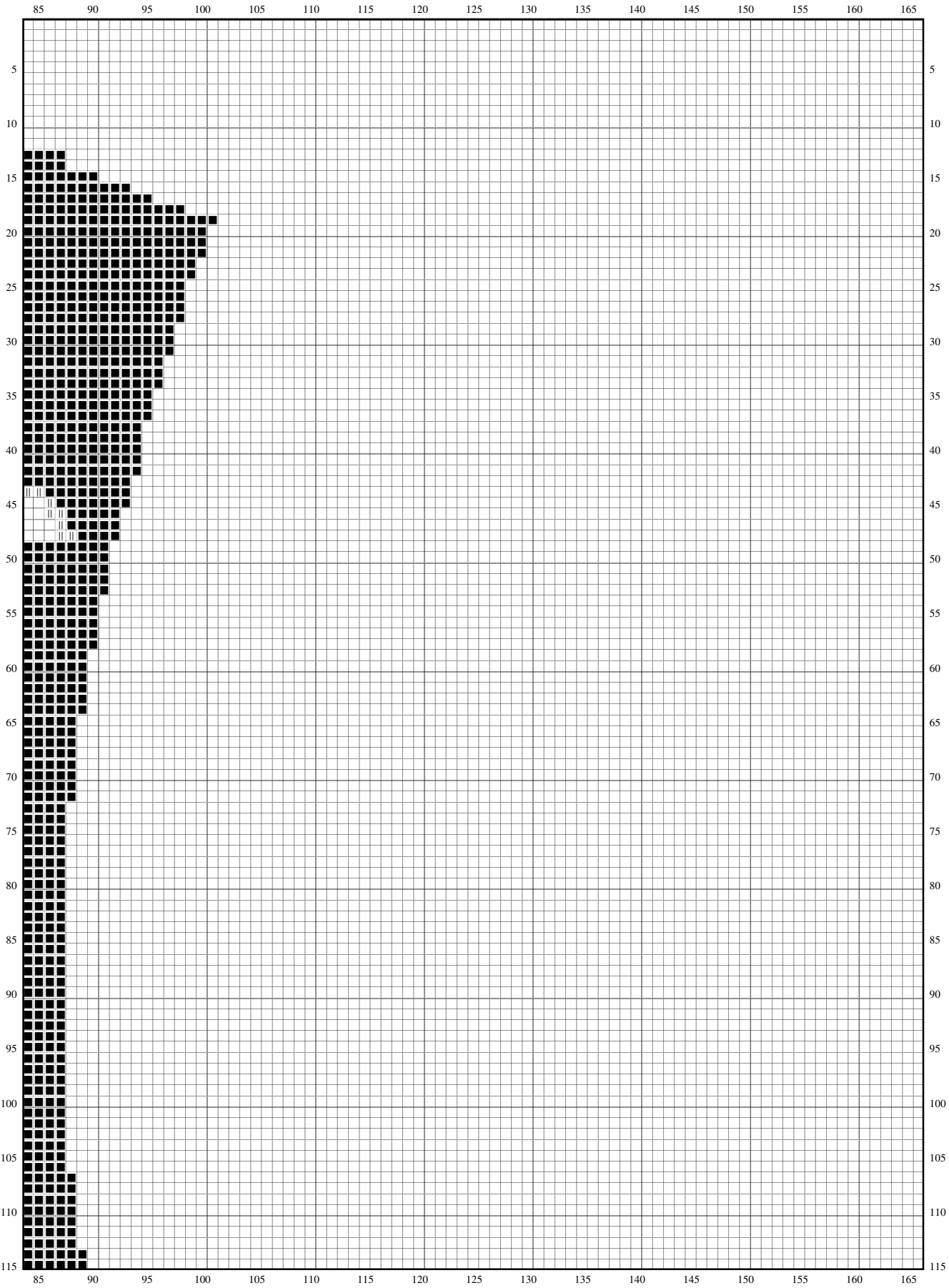

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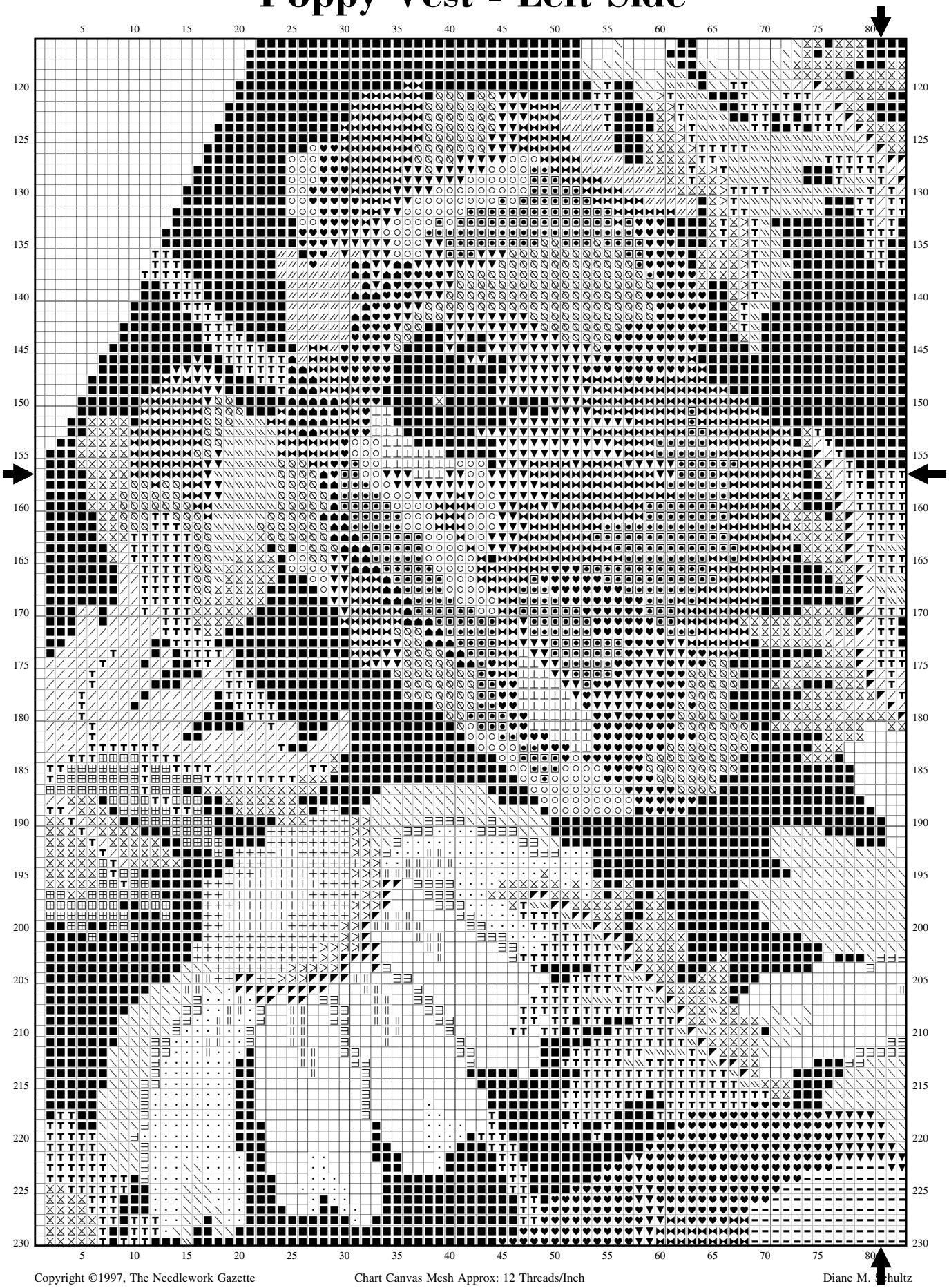

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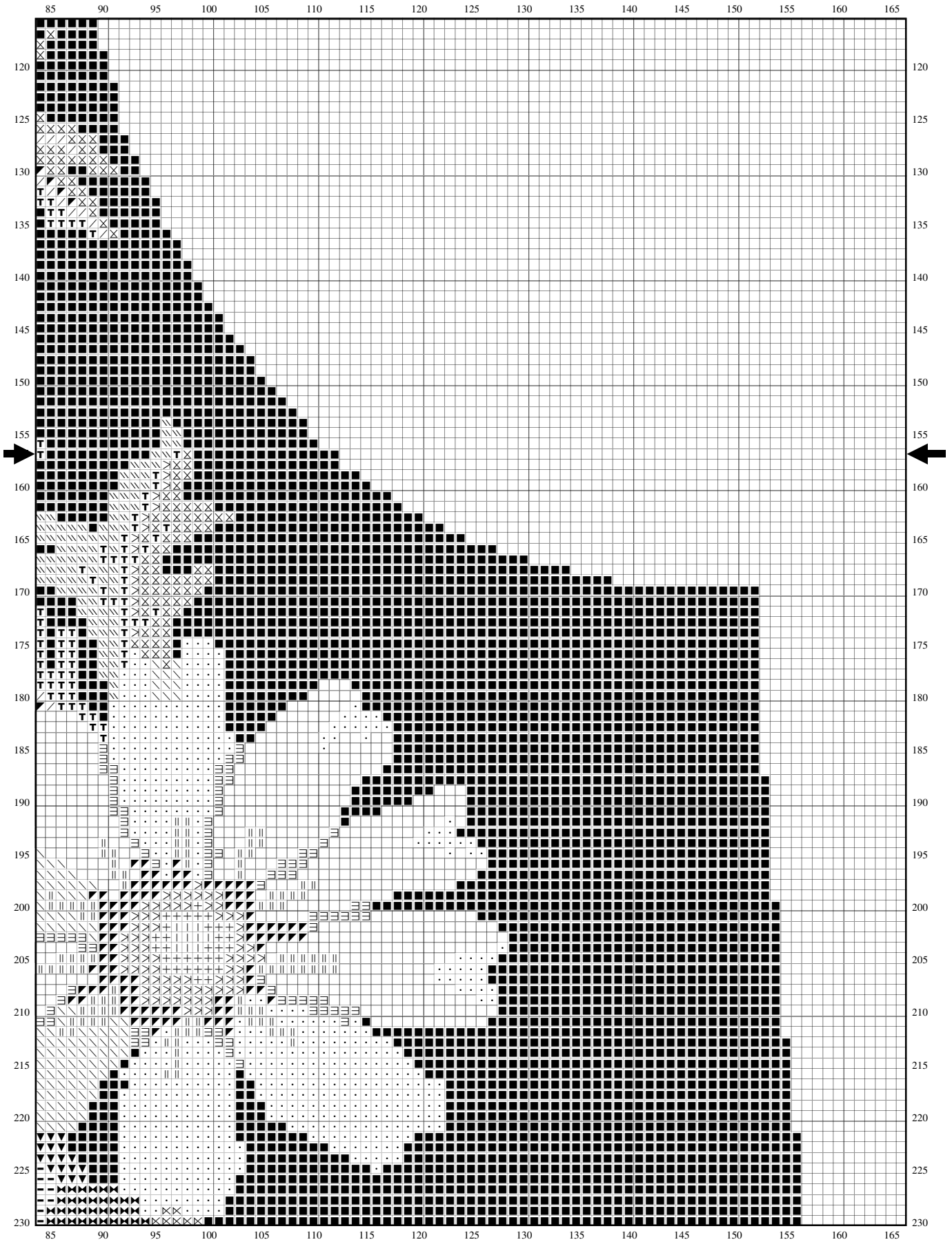

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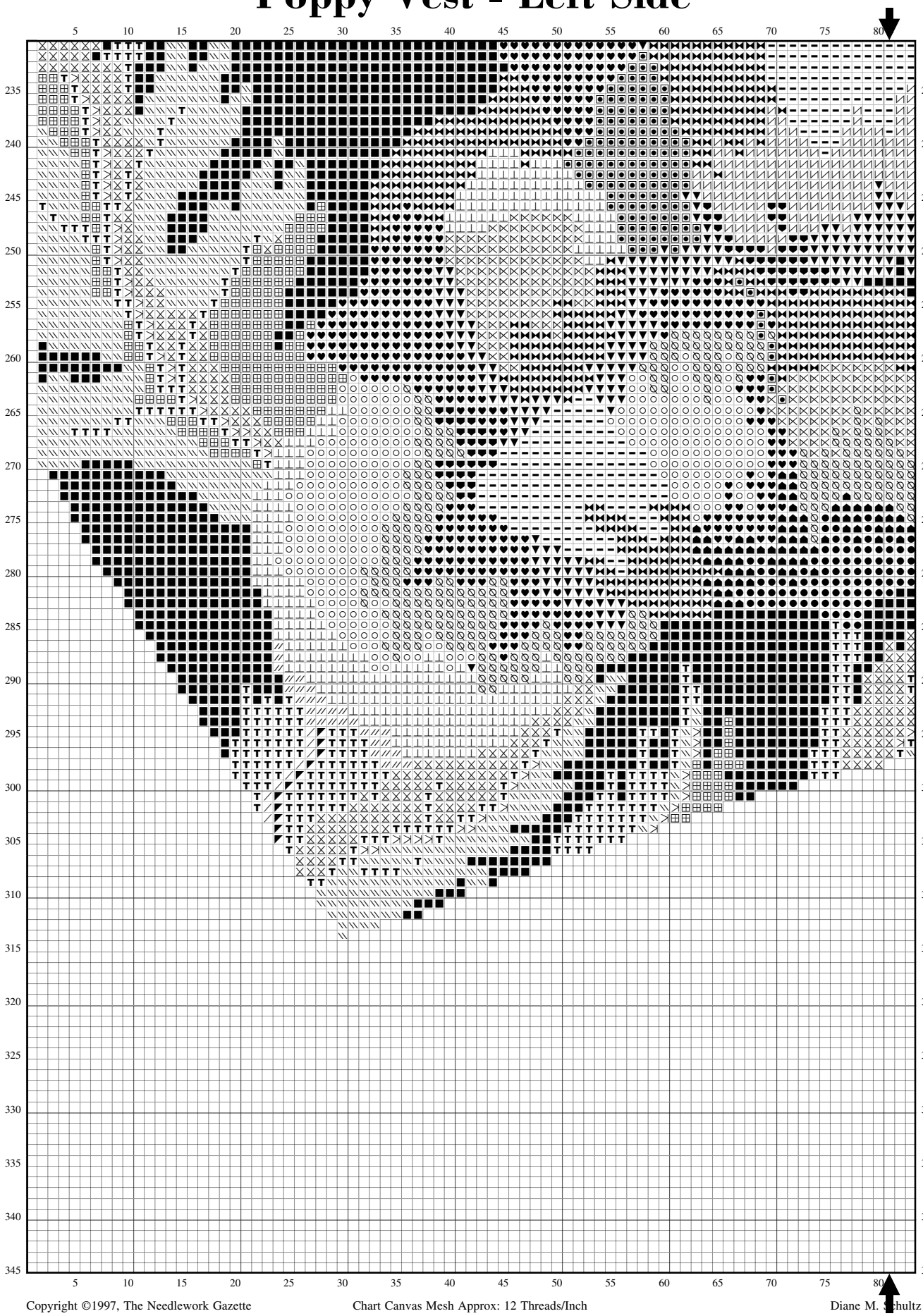

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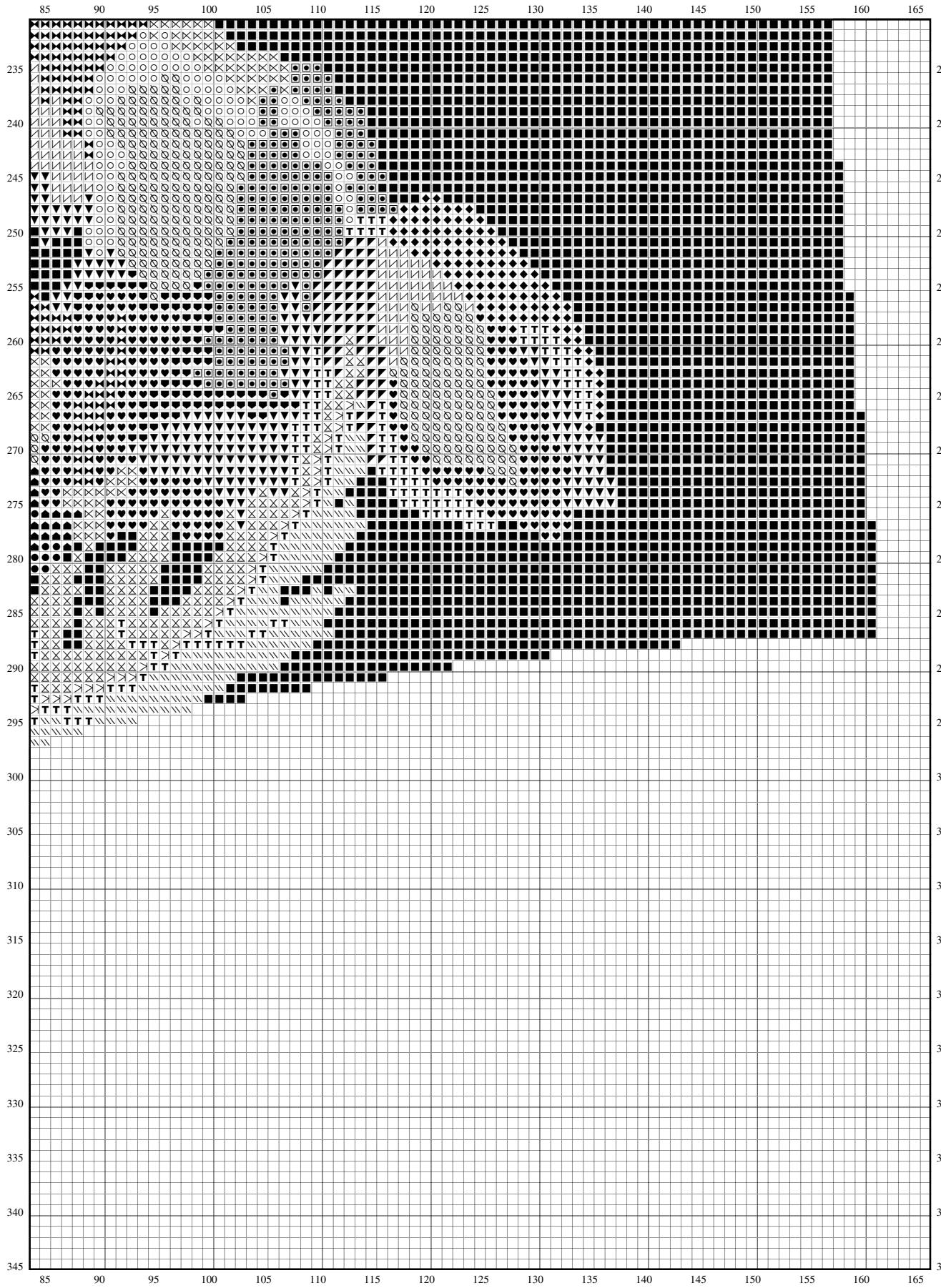

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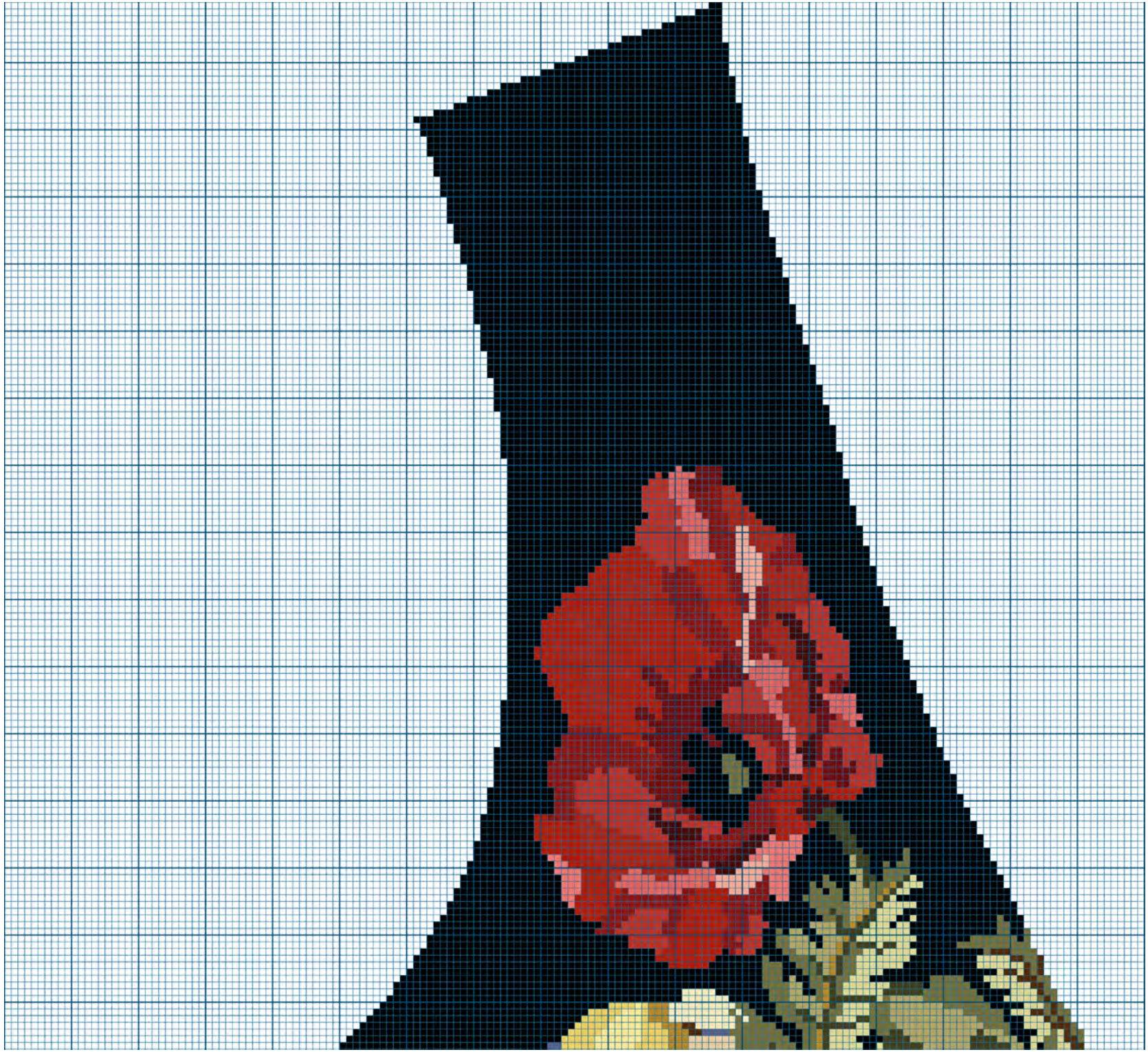

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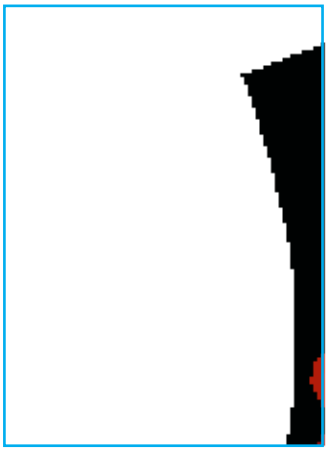
To make stitching easier, you may want to print a copy of the color/symbol chart at the back of the book (page 29). You can then have the information in sight no matter which of the chart pages you are working on.



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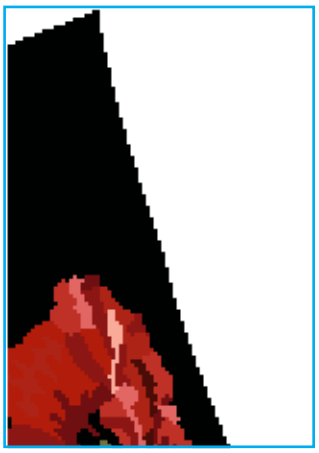

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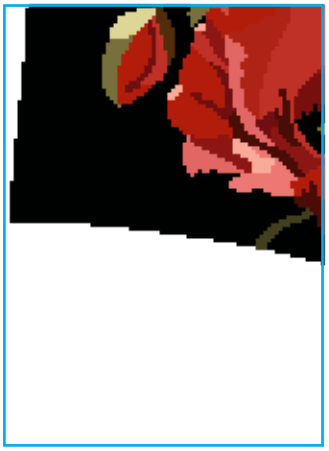

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Poppy Vest - Right Side

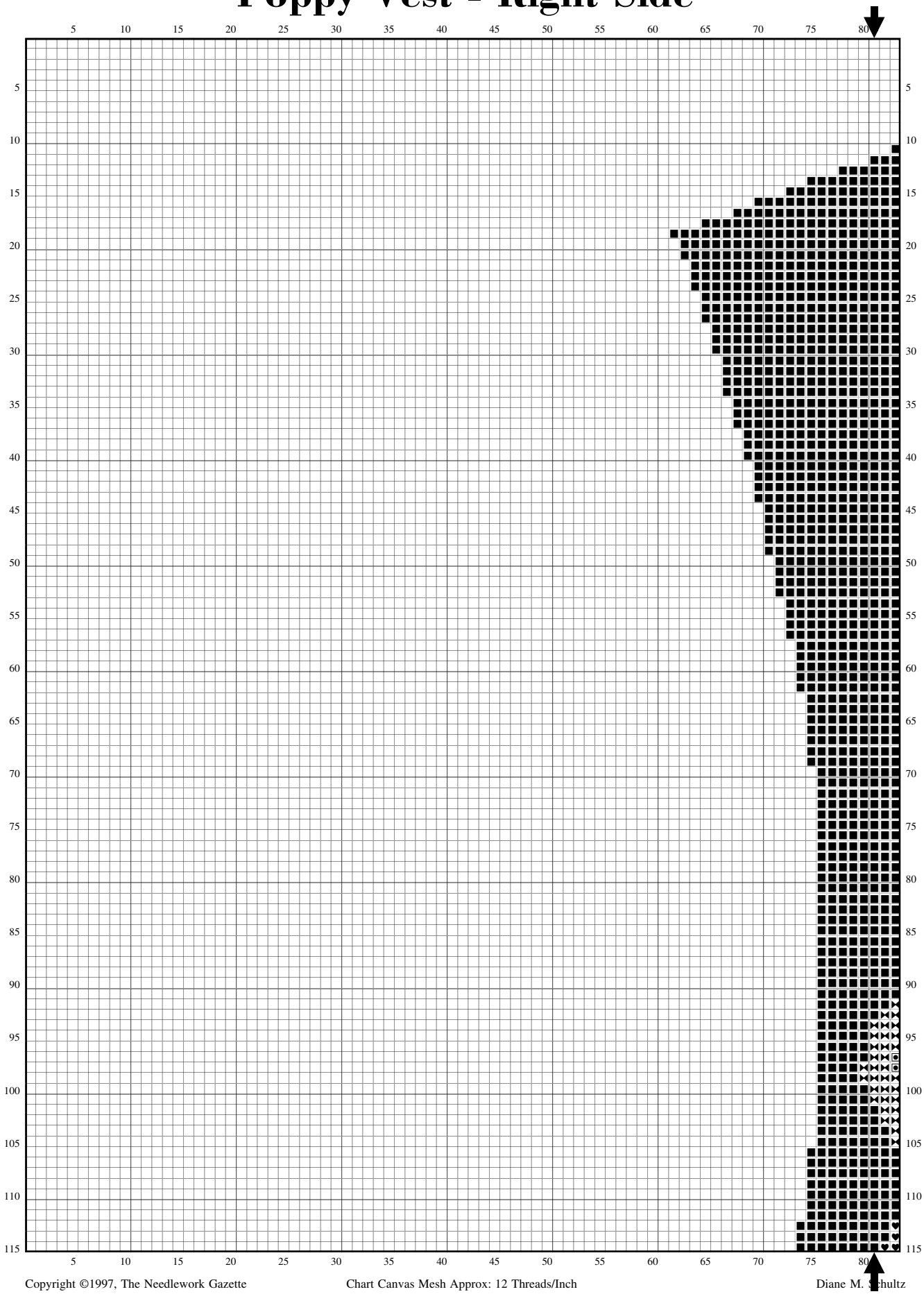

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Chart Canvas Mesh Approx: 12 Threads/Inch

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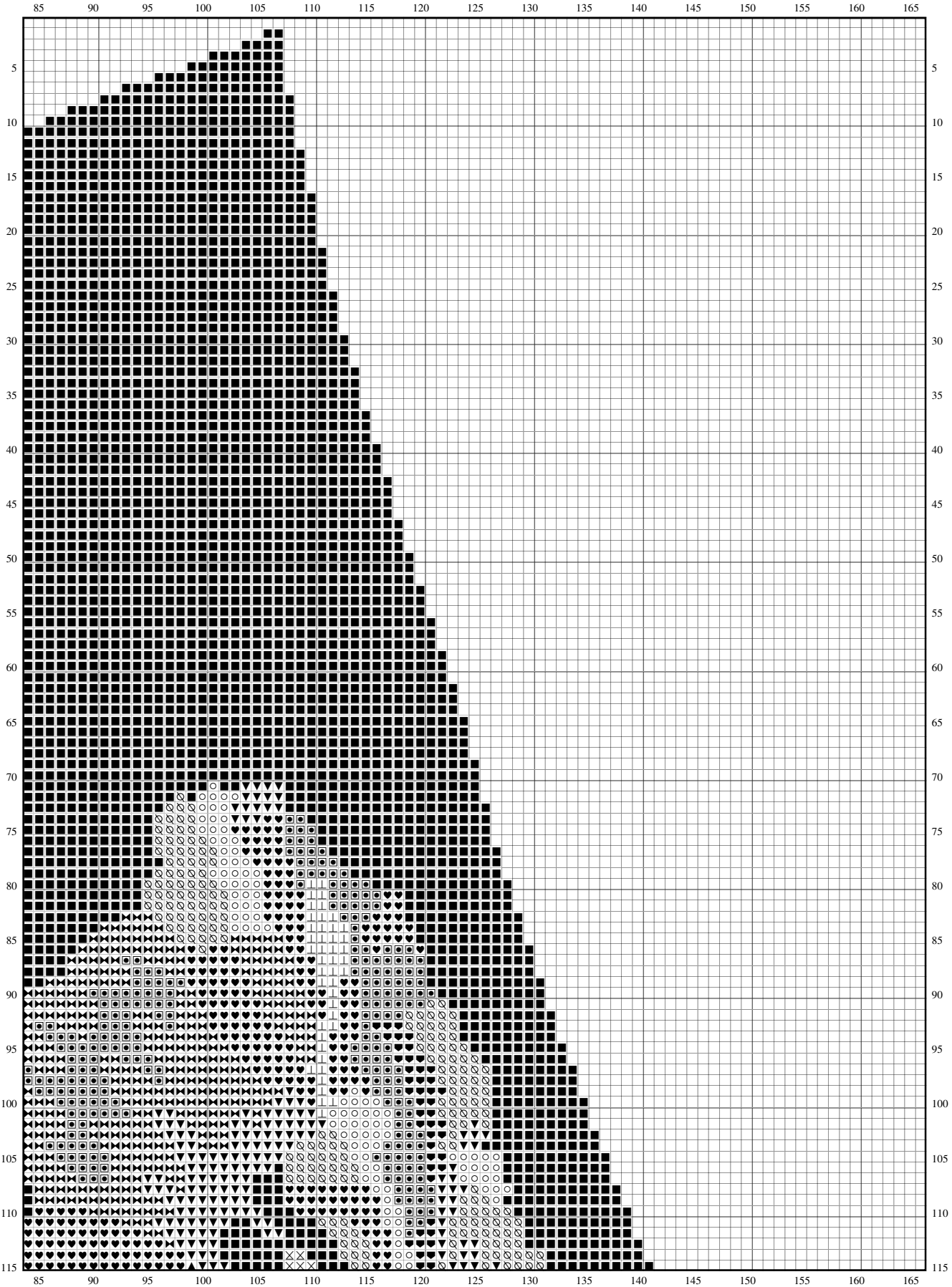
Poppy Vest - Right Side



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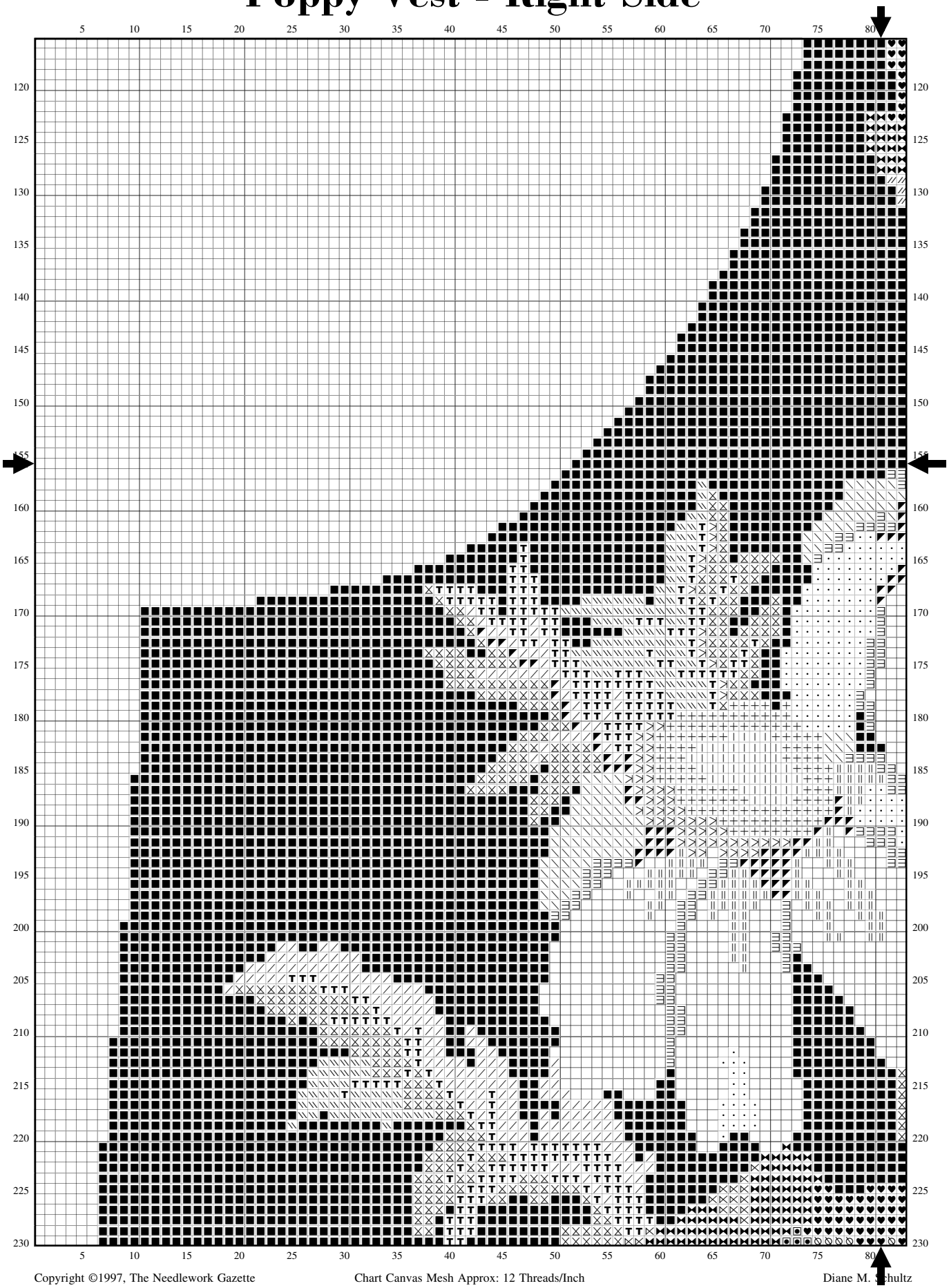

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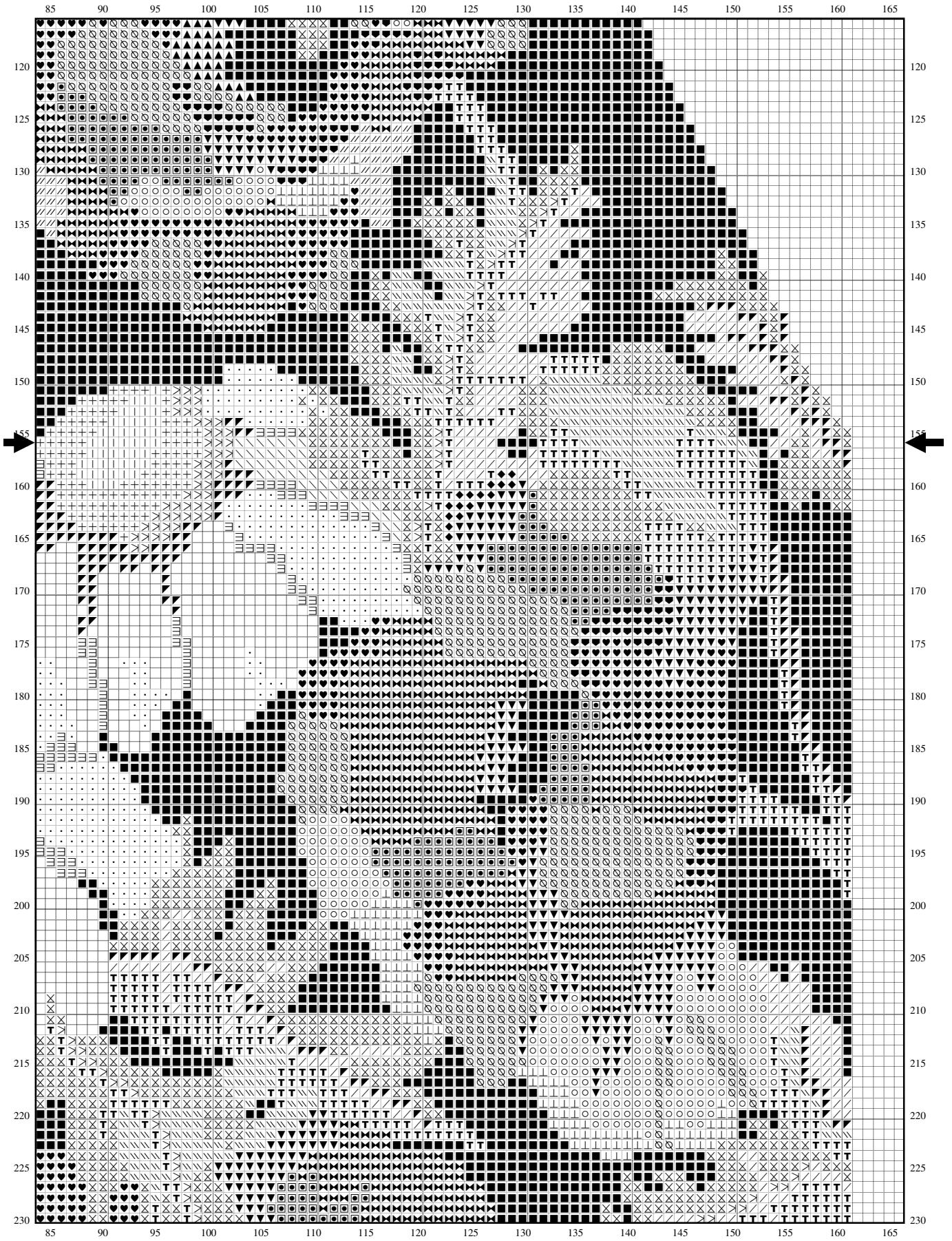

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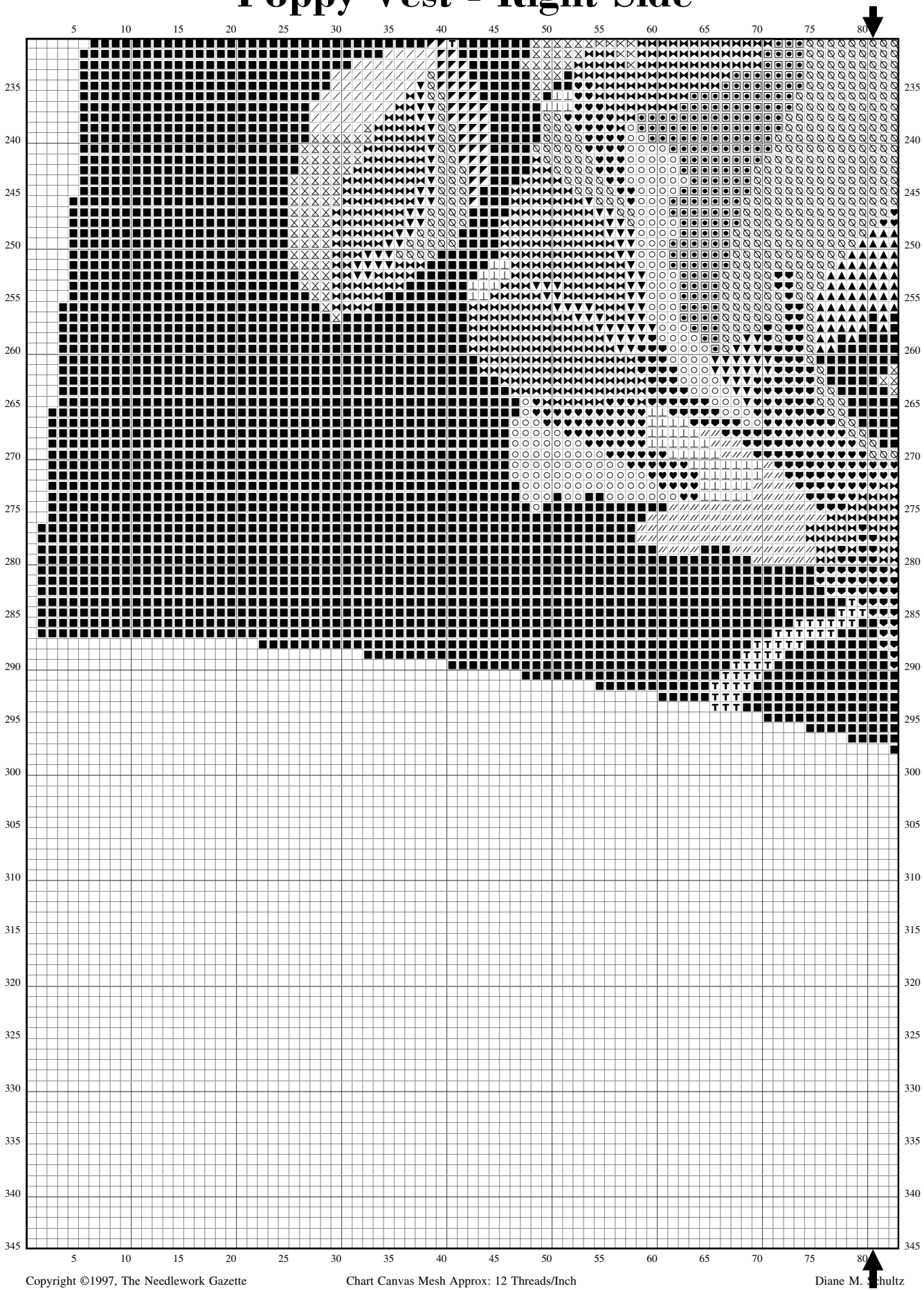

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Finishing

This project is for fairly experienced stitchers, not because the stitching is hard, but because of its size and the finishing. When you complete the two sides, their outside shapes have to match. This is why a frame is highly recommended and blocking is so important.

The vest itself is designed to work with **McCalls pattern #6105** which is a simple basic vest sewing pattern. If you are not an accomplished tailor with experience stitching bulky fabric, we strongly recommend you find a professional to finish the garment for you as we did in the case of the finished vest you see on these pages.

The deep arm holes and the ability to vary the size of the back pretty much makes this a one-size-fits-all pattern.

One piece of advice:

If the finishing technique of pulling the entire vest through the shoulder seams is used, pick something like a soft wool crepe for the back and not something heavy and bulky. On a different vest, Diane found a wonderful textured upholstery fabric that caused no end of problems.

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Poppy Vest Color Chart

1 Pale Rusty Rose #934

2 Light Strawberry #954

3 Medium Strawberry #952

4 Medium Salmon #841

5 Dark Strawberry #950

6 Dark Cranberry #940

7 Black #220

8 Blend 1 & 2 #934 + #954

9 Blend 2 & 3 #954 + #952

10 Blend 3 & 4 #952 + #841

11 Blend 5 & 6 #950 + #940

12 Blend 5 & 7 #950 + #220

13 Blend 6 & 7 #940 + #220

14 Blend 3 & 5 #952 + #950

15 Blend 4 & 5 #841 + #950

16 Bright White #261

17 Off White #263

18 Pale Beige Brown #465

19 Light Pearl Grey #213

20 Medium Pearl Grey #212

21 Pale Mustard #715

22 Autumn Yellow #727

23 Light Honey Gold #734

24 Golden Brown #441

25 Pale Khaki Green #645

26 Light Khaki Green #644

27 Medium Khaki Green #643

28 Dark Khaki Green #641

29 Blend 28 & 24 #641 + #441

30 Blend 26 & 27 #644 + #643

31 Blend 27 + 28 #643 + #641

32 Blend 27 & 24 #643 + #441

33 Blend 7 & 28 #220 + #641

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