

## *We Dress Bleurette*

### **Fringed Dress – 1927**

Here is the perfect little flapper dress for Bleurette. Suzanne Rivière tells us to make the dress of a fabric which will be easy to pierce with a large needle; nothing too stiff or heavy, but something light and floating. Silk would, of course, be ideal, but if you choose carefully, a soft rayon, a modern chiffon, or a synthetic silk will be lovely.

You will need a sharp tapestry needle and silk or cotton embroidery floss, or pearl cotton size 5 in a matching tone, or a contrasting color to your dress fabric. Suzanne recommends to us the materials of the old French firm Dolfus, Meig, and Cie, who still make nice threads for needlework under the name DMC.

Having cut both the front and back on the fold, mark the fringe line on each piece with basting thread or other removable marking method, and note that the front line of fringe dips more than the back.

Slit the center back along the fold line from the neck to point “S” on the pattern. Sew the shoulder seams of the front to the back. The original pattern would have you simply turn under all the edges of the neck, back opening, and sleeves, and catch them with a decorative line of running stitch with pearl cotton or embroidery floss. Two small snaps are recommended to close the dress at the back.

Alternatively, a small facing could be applied to the neckline and back opening. This is known as a “keyhole” opening, due to its shape. Cut the facing as shown, and before applying it to the dress, finish the edges by the simple turn under method of the original pattern, but stitch it down with plain sewing thread. The raw edges will now be on the wrong side of the facing; pin the right side of the facing to the dress, and stitch them together using the 1/8” seam allowance shown. Clip the neckline seam allowance, and the bottom of the back opening, and turn the facing to the inside of the dress. Press well, and add the decorative running stitch around the neck and back opening. Sew on two small snaps to the back opening, lapping the right side over the left slightly.

Sew the side seams of the dress together and clip the underarm curve. Make a small hem in each sleeve, and stitch the decorative running stitch around each sleeve. Hem the bottom of the dress as shown.

Thread the tapestry needle with the fringe thread of your choice and test-stitch a couple of fringes to a piece of scrap fabric, for practice. Then fringe the dress all around, following the marked line carefully. Follow the diagram or these instructions:

- 1) Bring the needle through from back (wrong side) to front (right side) 1/4” below the marked fringe line.

- 2) Insert the needle just at the marked line (do not catch the basting thread, if you have one) and bring it out again at the exact place the thread first came through the right side—you are making a 1/4” back stitch, which will prevent the threads from tangling or from pulling through the light fabric of the dress. Pull the thread through to the front.

- 3) Take a minuscule stitch at the base of the this long back stitch, and put the needle through the loop created by this stitch, which makes a small knot.

- 4) Lay the working thread down along the length of the skirt and cut off at the hem. If you wish, you could cut all the fringes a bit longer, and trim them all at once

when the fringe is finished. Those who love beading could add seed beads or *delica* beads to the back stitch or the end of the fringe, or both!