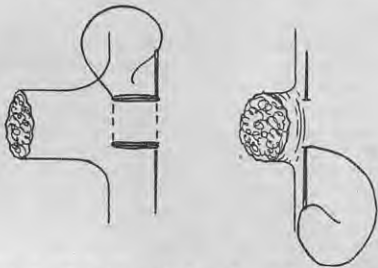


## FINISHING DETAILS OF FELT TOYS

**For felt toys:** Take a stitch through the underside of the body, a little way from where it joins the leg, and fasten the thread firmly. Put the needle into the leg opposite where it comes out from the body and take a long stitch through the underside of the leg. Pull the thread very tightly and take a long stitch through the underbody again. Repeat several times. Stitch through the leg one way, then one back the other way through the underbody, pulling the thread very tight all the time, so that the leg is held firm and close at right angles to the body. Repeat for the other three legs. On small animals it may be necessary only to sew from leg to leg rather than from underbody to leg. The baby camel, which has a very narrow underbody, was stitched like this.

**For cloth-covered animals:** Bend the leg in at right angles to the body, making a little crease on the inside where the two join. Slipstitch this fold into place, taking up as big a tuck as possible. If necessary, sew it twice, taking up a still deeper tuck the second time. All the stitches should be small and tight and the end finished off firmly. Repeat for the other



Left—Bracing stitches from the inside of the leg to the underbody to help make the leg firm. Right—The stitches pulled tight, drawing the leg up at right angles to the underbody. Very strong or double thread should be used.

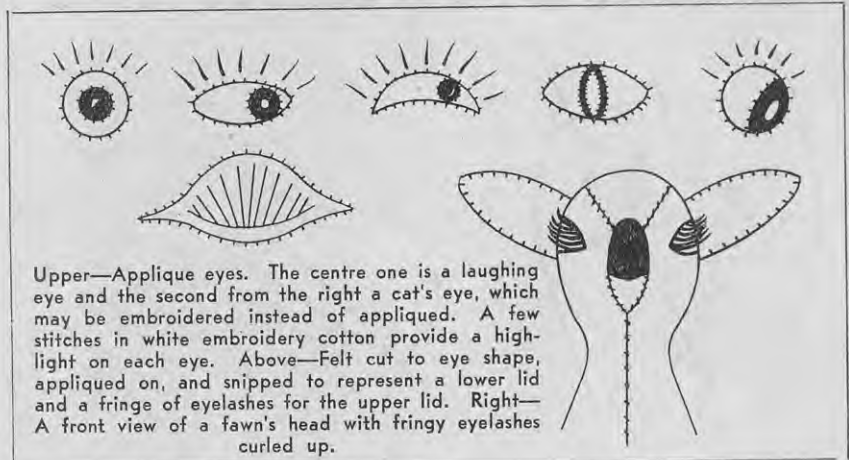
three legs. Any other part of the animal may be braced in the same way—for example, to hold a head, tail, or wing firm.

### Eyes

Glass eyes for toy animals cannot be bought readily now, and in any case embroidered or appliqued eyes are better on toys for small children, as they do not come off so easily and are less harmful if swallowed. For fur-fabric animals glass or button eyes look more realistic, but for felt and cloth animals felt applique eyes can be very satisfactory.

Cut a small circular or eye-shaped piece of felt in yellow, orange, or blue for the iris, and a small section in brown or black for the pupil. Sew the dark piece on top of the coloured piece and sew the whole eye in position with tiny overcasting stitches. A little spot of white made on the pupil with embroidery cotton gives a highlight and improves the look of the eye.

If long eyelashes are wanted for a deer, horse, or similar animal, cut an eye-shaped piece of dark felt and sew it round the edge into position. Then with sharp-pointed scissors cut along it  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. from the lower edge for the lower



Upper—Applique eyes. The centre one is a laughing eye and the second from the right a cat's eye, which may be embroidered instead of appliqued. A few stitches in white embroidery cotton provide a highlight on each eye. Above—Felt cut to eye shape, appliqued on, and snipped to represent a lower lid and a fringe of eyelashes for the upper lid. Right—A front view of a fawn's head with fringed eyelashes curled up.

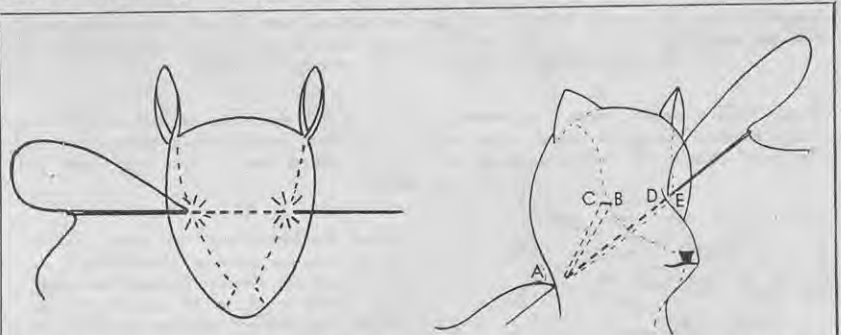
lid. For the lashes snip the upper lid into a fringe, radiating the cuts carefully. If the eyes are large, it may be necessary to sew a small piece of coloured felt under the lashes for an eyeball, but the fringed lash usually is sufficiently suggestive by itself.

For quite small animals embroidered eyes are probably best. Satin stitch should be used, one colour for the iris and a dark colour or black on top for the pupil. Again a white spot in each pupil adds a highlight and gives the eyes a sparkle.

If the animal has both eyes on the front of its face, for example, a cat, monkey, bear, and some dogs, the two eyes should be made alike, not a right and a left, or it will appear to squint. If the eyes are placed on the sides of the head (as in a horse, deer, elephant, rabbit, and most dogs and birds), a right and a left eye may be made, both looking up, down, or forward.

Before the eyes are sewn into position hollows may be made in the animal's head by what is known as "needle modelling" to give a more

realistic eye socket. Really thorough needle modelling is not easy, but for the more advanced toys it is worth while. First study the placing of the eyes carefully; an animal can be spoiled by having its eyes in the wrong place, and again pictures and sketches should be consulted to get this right. To model for eyes on the sides of the head several stitches are taken right through the head from one eye socket to the other, and by pulling these tight the desired hollows are formed. If the eyes are on the front of the face, the stitches should be taken right through from the eye socket to a point at the base of the back of the head; the hollow formed at the back of the head is not really wanted, but with care does not show much. The thread used should be strong, and several stitches should be taken and the thread pulled tight enough to make the hollows just right. On small animals with embroidered eyes sufficient hollow can often be made with the embroidery thread, especially on those with eyes on the sides of their heads.



Needle modelling to make eye sockets before sewing on the eyes. Left—If the eyes are on the sides of the head, pass the needle several times from socket to socket, pull the thread tight, and knot the ends. The knot and stitches are covered later by the eyes. Right—For eyes that look forward, begin at A and pass the needle to B, leaving a fairly long end at A. Carry the thread to C along the length of the eye socket and pass the needle back to A. Make as small a stitch as will be firm on the outside, then pass the needle to D, along the eye socket to E, and back to A. Pull all the stitches firm, repeat if necessary to make the sewing very strong, and tie the ends at A with a reef knot. Cut the ends fairly close and cover them later with a collar or bow. If woollen cloth or other rough fabric has been used, the knot may not show or need covering.