



# SHUTTLE CRAFT

APRIL

PORTFOLIO

1959

# SHUTTLE CRAFT

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**Portfolio Samples:** Cere-cloth, kneeling bench material, color combinations.

*Cover:* Screen by Rita Bretscher.

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The Shuttle Craft Guild was founded in 1922 by Mrs. Mary M. Atwater and operated by her until 1946. Mrs. Martin (Harriet) Tidball was owner-director from 1946 to 1957. It is now owned and operated by

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All other photographs by Russell Heffler, Bedford, Nova Scotia.

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# *From Weaver To Weaver*

Dear Guild Members,

Last year, when we compiled material for the March issue of SHUTTLE CRAFT, we had more than we could fit between the covers; and rather than cut or condense any of the material, we continued it in the April issue. This has happened again this year; and so, this month, we have included two articles by Miss Black on weaving for the church. We have also included Mrs. Pratt's article--which was promised last month. This is a transitional article, in that it was written specifically for the ecclesiastical issue, but it was woven of pine needles--and we are concentrating on the use of plant materials in this issue.

We are indebted to Mrs. Carl Bretscher of Carbondale, Illinois, for her article: "Weaving With Plant Materials." As you will see, she has done some excellent original research and experimenting in this field. When writing us Mrs. Bretscher stressed that what she had done and the ways she had done it were methods that she had found satisfactory and convenient for herself but they were not necessarily the correct nor the only way of working with plant materials. She did not want beginners to feel that she was "dictating" to them, nor experienced weavers to feel as she said, that she "didn't know from nothing." She has simply told us what she has done, what she has found out and pointed out many of the possibilities yet to be explored. In addition, her contagious enthusiasm for her subject is enough to make any weaver anxious to get at his or her loom and try out something new and different right away.

Wherever you are, and whatever your weaving knowledge you can experiment--and quite often with materials practically at your own doorstep. There are bound to be some disappointments in experimenting, but more important is the rich reward gained in fresh ideas for design, texture, color, threading and sleying.

There have been several fairly well-defined "periods" in handweaving in the United States and Canada. The first period was one in which handweaving was produced as a necessity--principally for clothing and household linens. Much later handweaving was almost synonymous with overshot--overshot rugs, overshot drapes, overshot bedspreads, overshot curtains and so on ad nauseam. Then as weavers inevitably became tired of overshot, they went to the opposite extreme of making the weave as simple as possible--plain weave or twill--and weaving with every conceivable type, weight and shape of weft. Again as a natural revolt against monotony in weave, weavers wanted to know about other weaves and consequently began to concentrate on what is perhaps rather loosely termed as the "theory of weaving," but in fact includes the why and how of weaves and techniques.

We have now come to the point where we have gained a fairly comprehensive knowledge of weaves and techniques, or if we haven't we can get good instruction quite readily. It is encouraging to note how far we have come even in the last ten years towards better and more accurate weaving instruction than was previously available.

But now that we have a greater knowledge of weaving "theory" it is time to apply fresh ideas in color, design and texture to our old weaves and techniques.

How does one go about getting the ideas? We firmly believe that one of the best ways is to experiment. Of course there are signs that experimenting is going on in the handweaving world now, but we feel that on the whole weavers are somewhat timid about it. We wonder, for example how many thousands of natural cotton or unbleached linen, Bronson lace place mats are turned out each year. You get the point.

Mrs Bretscher's weaving was with plant materials--a subject which quite evidently is fascinating for her and also quite evidently has supplied her with many new and exciting ideas for handweaving. Perhaps you live in a big city and haven't access to grasses and leaves, or perhaps this aspect of weaving doesn't interest you. Then how about experimenting with threads that are readily available to you--or as we have suggested before, with colors? No

matter where you live in Canada or the United States, colored threads are as close as your sample cards.

Suggestions have been made before in SHUTTLE CRAFT about where to look for color, and we won't reiterate them here; but we would like to make one more suggestion. Look for fashions in color. You may not realize that there are fashions in color, but if you stop and think of some of the color schemes used in interior decorating and women's fashions five, ten or fifteen years ago, you will understand what we mean.

For example, one color scheme we saw at a craft exhibition last summer combined mauve, chartreuse, scarlet and yellow very successfully. This color combination could be called a color fashion--certainly we wouldn't have dreamed of using it a few years ago, but we doubt if many, if any, of the people viewing the exhibition thought of these colors as being out of the ordinary. Other current color fashions might include the combination of orange and pink, scarlet and pink, scarlet and burgundy, blue and green, and watermelon pink and green.

Of course not all "fashionable" colors will appeal to you, simply because everyone has certain colors with which he is happiest. But keep an open mind, and quite often you will find some combinations of your favorite colors which are quite refreshing when used in different proportions, values and hues in your weaving. Where to find "fashions" in color? -- at good craft exhibitions and in the pages of up-to-date textile, fashion and interior decoration magazines.

So whether you are an inexperienced weaver or an experienced weaver, a beginner weaver or an advanced weaver--do try experimenting--with materials, colors, threading, treadling, sleying. Wind a few extra inches or feet of warp on your loom each time you put on a warp and try different weights, textures and colors of threads and different treadlings. Try removing some of the warp threads completely, or substitute a different color or weight of thread in some of the heddles.

Good luck!

Sincerely,



# WEAVING WITH PLANT MATERIAL

*by Rita Bretcher*

Among the back roads where the shoulders and ditches are the least disturbed by maintenance crews and along railroad right-of-ways the weaver will find a wealth of material for experimentation. And something can usually be found in every season of the year.

The plants I have worked with have been collected in Southern Illinois which has many sedges (Cyperaceae), rushes (Juncaceae), grasses (Gramineae) and cattails (Typhaceae). I have woven mainly with grasses only because I started with them and each warp suggests two more to try. Several Beard Grasses (the Andropogons), Indian Grass (a Sorghastrum) and cattails (Typha) have been woven and stored waiting are many sedges and rushes, other grasses, the leaf stems of the Mimosa tree, the seed pods of the Catalpa, and flower stems of Plantain. Still to be gathered are vines, ferns, more grasses including native Bamboo and Sorghum, long thorns from the Locust, Horsetails (Equisetum)—the list possible seems endless. Wherever you are you will find your own exciting and special assortment to try.

I did not trim any plants at the time of gathering for fear I might be throwing away a part I could use. I have used leaves of grasses alone, stripped stems alone and the whole plant including seed heads. Combinations of these work effectively in one design.

The plants which had dried before gathering seemed better protected for transporting and handling if tied rather closely in bundles. Grasses, sedges and rushes gathered while green, I discovered, needed more care in cutting and handling and looser tying. Cattails especially bend and bruise easily. The green plants I spread loosely in thin layers on the guest room bed for slow drying to preserve as much color in them as possible. Every day I turned the layers. For ventilation the air conditioner set on "fan only" and "exhaust" worked beautifully and I rather think the bedspread and blankets did a bit of work acting as a nice thick blotter. There are many other methods written up for drying plants—the one described here suited my surroundings and I have not heard nor read of anyone else trying this.

When dry I tied them in bundles rather firmly at about six inch intervals to protect leaves and seed heads. Some are stored flat and some hanging straight in dry, fairly dark places. Large bundles of very long grasses are stacked flat in the garage where they do get dusty but they have kept well. A few cattails I have precut into lengths for table mats already carefully planned and these together with seed pods and leaf stems are stored flat in a box so that with humidity changes they do not warp or curl.

As a general rule I find it much more difficult and time consuming to weave precut materials than to rough trim after weaving a shot and then

finish trim when the piece is off the loom. This makes a grand mess on the floor around the loom but it cleans up easily. A stout paper cutter does a nice final trimming job on many plants. For material too thick for the paper cutter, pruning shears are good. Material too heavy for pruning shears I precut to the length needed before weaving.

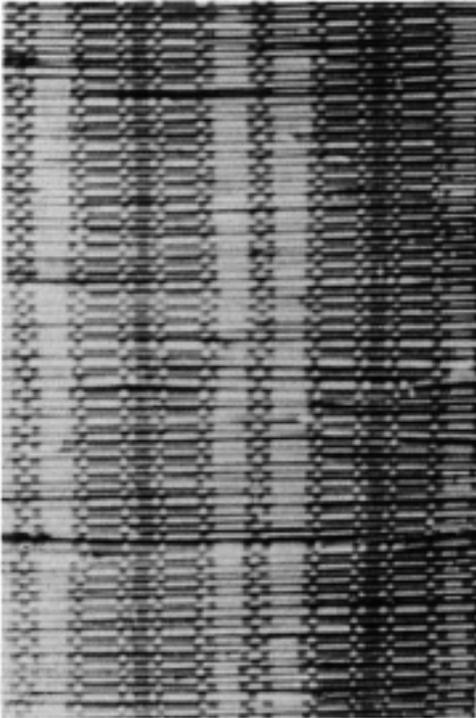
In all cases I have woven with materials fully dried which eliminates the mess and bother of dampening or soaking them and assures the material is fully shrunken. Most that I have tried others have written must be dampened. I had no trouble using them dry. To clean the plant material I waited until it was woven and then vacuumed it before applying a protective finish.

How to make a continuous weft of tied plant material is something few articles mention. (I wish Guild members would share their experiences in this particularly.) When some cattail leaves I was drying reached the wilted stage I stripped them into widths of about 3/8ths inches and tried tying them together. Tip end to tip end and base end to base end in a square knot worked! I couldn't manage a tip end to a base end—the tip always broke. This material was wound on a rug shuttle as the tying progressed. Before it was quite dry I wove it. It shrank in the web badly so I unwove it none too carefully. It did not break but some of the warp ends did indicating it is quite strong. After rewinding it on a shuttle it was woven again completely dry. It worked well and makes a most interesting flat, thin, crisp fabric. Could this method be the "secret" the Asiatic weavers use in preparing weft for their grass cloth? I am anxious for Spring to return and with it the new growth of grasses so that I can try tying some of them. Many species of grass leaves would shatter easily when dry but there should be some around that would have the flexible toughness of the Oriental grasses used. (Won't some of you who have access to them try salt marsh, coast and dune grasses?)



Planning warps is great fun as just about anything goes. The local feed and hardware stores have binder twine; plastic, silk and nylon fish lines; seine twine; chalk lines; copper bell wire; string—hunt for any of their items that could possibly be used. All odds and ends of weaving threads work well and take a second look at “weft only” items among them as many of these work well in a widely spaced warp. Don’t forget to search your sewing supplies either. Sewing thread is wonderful. Another is “feed sack sewing thread” which comes in colors and white, 3, 4, 5 or 6 ply from Bemis Bag Co. (601 South Fourth Street, St. Louis 2, Missouri). I have a soft dusty brown in 3 ply, a lovely color for the natural grass tones. It is not color fast to chlorox but it has held up well to light fading. I don’t believe wash fastness matters too much in this type of weaving. The protective finish given to weaving later protects threads used as well. Color fastness to light is probably most important.

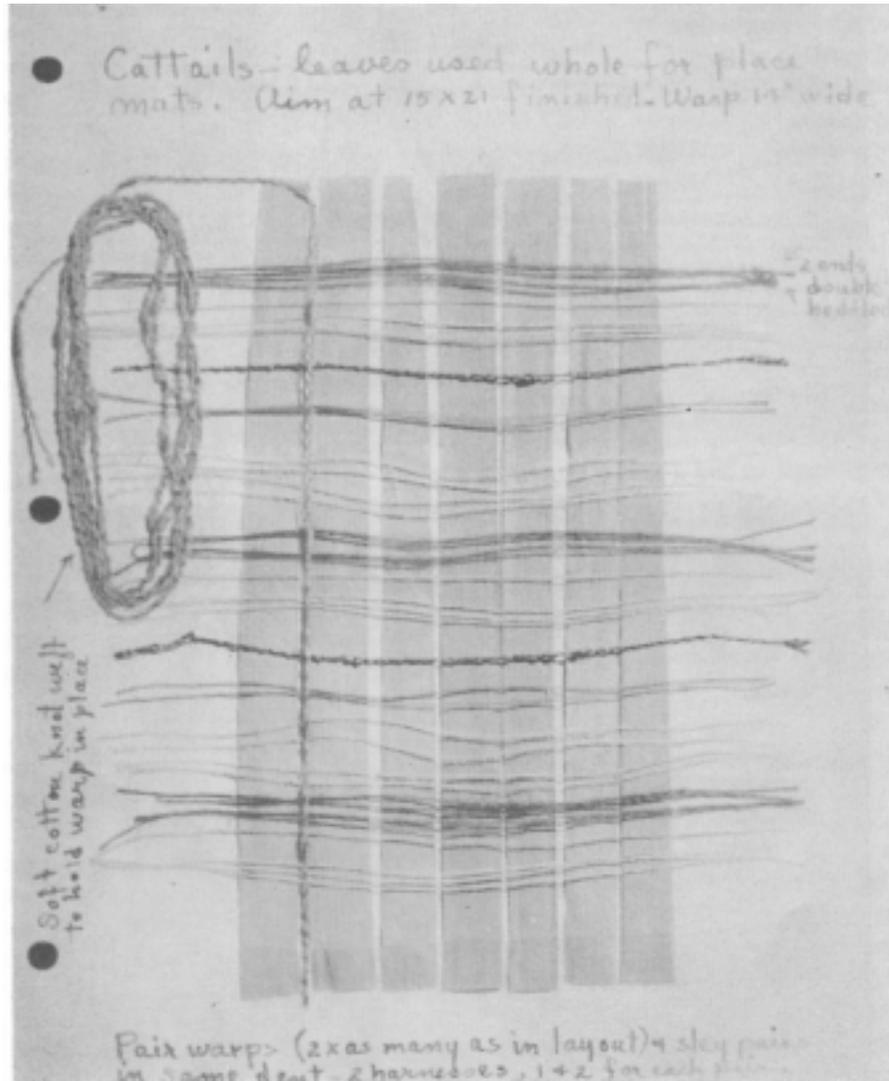
Tinting and dyeing threads to get just the color wanted is sometimes necessary, especially for such items as seine twine which to my knowledge comes only in off-white. Ropes and many twines have interesting natural tones that go well with plant colors and there is more range of tone to be had in them than one would imagine. It is a good idea to take samples of twines you have with you when on the prow—you might discover a binder twine, for instance, of an entirely different color.



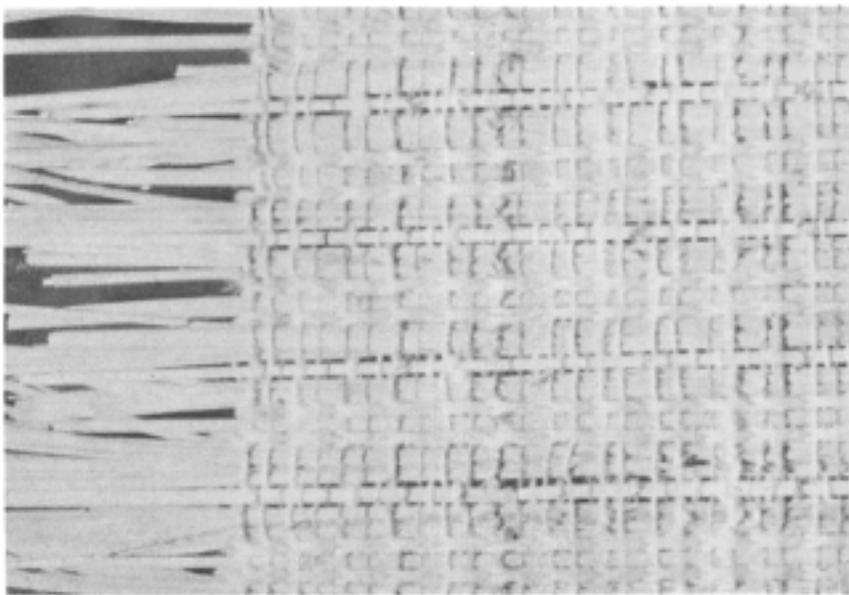
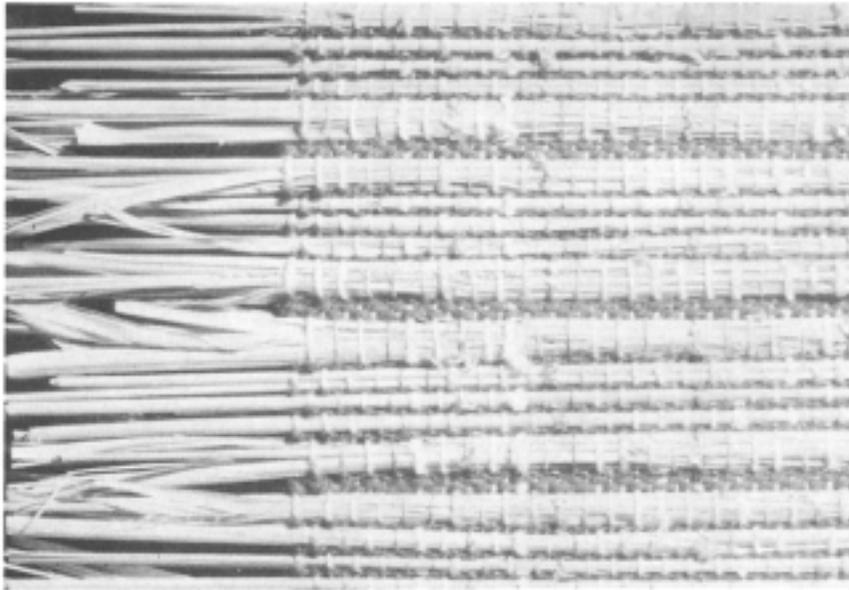
It is quite possible to weave grass without binding weft thread picks to help hold it in place. Since the warp needs to do all the wrapping about the weft to have it woven closely and well, the warp cannot have much tension. On one piece the only way I could achieve this was by having a slack warp. Pressing the beater against the fell while changing sheds formed a clear shed which stayed open from the sagging weight of the fabric while the beater was returned to rest and another length of grass inserted.

When I have to leave an unfinished piece of weaving of this sort I tie my beater firmly against the fell. This keeps the rigid grasses from loosening in the woven piece. It need not be tied if the beater will rest against the fell and stay there and if no kind souls are apt to push the beater back to rest for you.

One method of planning warps for this weaving is to tape plant material to a sheet of paper, then lay warp threads over this. If wanted, weft can be laid between plant material wefts and spacing of these planned.



Even "weave" the threads on the paper layout and tape them down when placed. Often the effect can be a two harness weave. If not, write the effect as a pattern block draft to be translated into a threading draft. This is a good time to make use of a draw-down to test your own threading draft, said piece of advice after sad experience of not testing one myself.



Another method of designing a warp that is fun to do is to put the bundle of plant material on a table and get out every thread you have that goes nicely with it. Take scraps too—often dashes of color are good accents. Tie these scraps together and don't trim the knot but have the stringy ends for added texture. When the knot reaches the fell there are many things that can be done with those ends and the usually wider than normal sley of such a warp eliminates these strings being troublesome in

beating and shed changing. Decide how long the warp is to be and begin making it on a reel or peg board. The ribbon of warp that builds up is concentrated color and texture enabling one to see the effect developing. There will be no definite repeats—the whole warp becomes one big repeat. Glancing occasionally at the plant material lets the eye soak in its colors and helps in the color designing. Next sley the warp, and that too is done free design method. Then you can tell if you have too much (in which case take some out of the chain) or too few ends (in which case make another small chain to add) for the desired width. The size of the reed is determined by the largest warp thread used. With the warp spread in the reed, lay some plant material under the warp. If an accent needed here or there, add it to the warp now. When satisfied with the warp and sley, thread it from front to back and attach to the warp beam—sectional or plain, it doesn't matter which—and beam it on. (Beautiful stoles can be designed this way also.)

An interesting sectional beam repeat can be designed in the reed of the tensioner, then place the spools on the spool rack and beam the warp.

This type of designing is good for the reed business. I have several times bought more, and coarser, reeds in order to use a "special" warp material. I'm down to needing a No. 4 now and when I get to lenoing corn stalks in a rope warp I'll figure something else out: a straight toothed rake head tied to the beater? or nails spaced in corrugated cardboard strips plugged into beater grooves? or try no reed at all? It can necessitate improvising heddles also—making string ones, or for heavy nubs and ropes a large enough washer for the eye with the rest of the heddles in string or cord might work.

Weaving of this kind is perfect for developing the writing of one's own drafts. It actually is easier than hunting for a draft that will group and weave threads into the effects that suggest themselves. One project will illustrate the simplicity and truth of this.

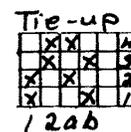
Two very heavy cotton boucles, one soft light gray, the other blue, a black glazed cotton and a fine yellow rayon nub as a close set group were pleasing over Andropogon stems but divided, as tabby would, the effect was lost. However I did want to be able to tabby them in the heading of the mat. That meant they needed two harnesses. The group looked interesting spaced a bit over two inches apart. I wanted the woven piece to be reversible which meant including another group on two other harnesses to work oppositely to the first group. For spaces between I used widely set ends of rust 20s linen and arranged them so that they would tabby for both the plain woven headings and for the on-opposites weaving. The following draft developed:

Warp:

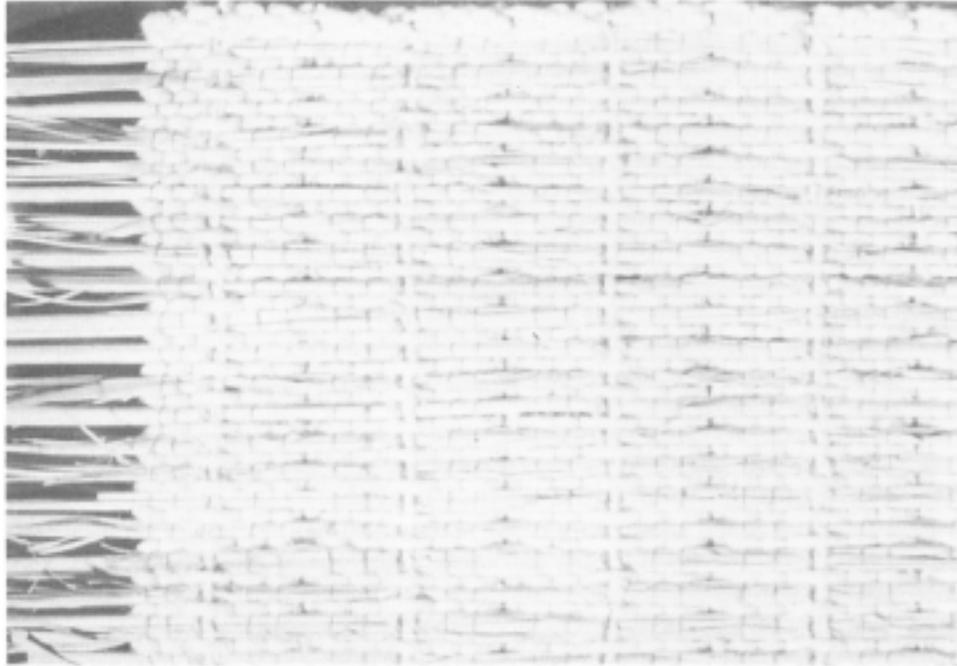
- 1 -- 20 singles rust linen
- 2 -- heavy blue cotton nub
- 3 -- glazed black cotton
- 4 -- yellow rayon nub
- 5 -- heavy gray cotton nub



Sley: #6 reed  
 ◡ = in one dent

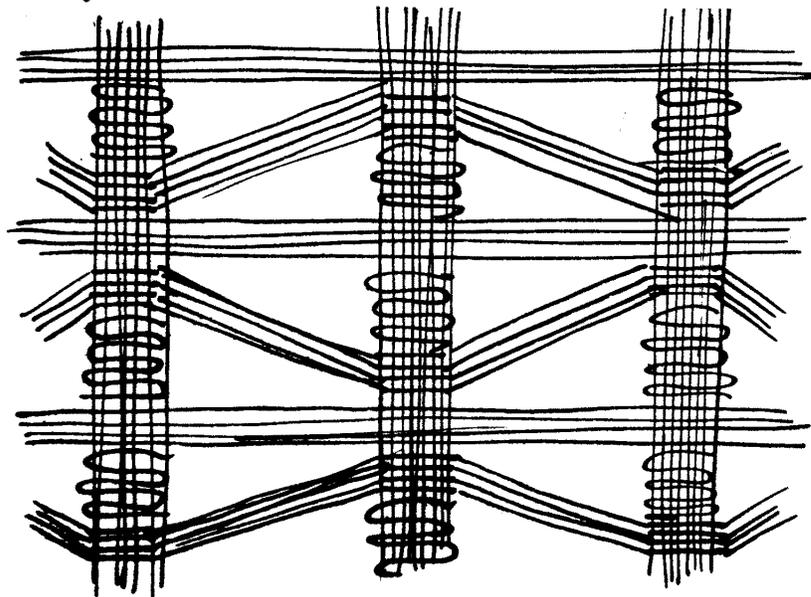


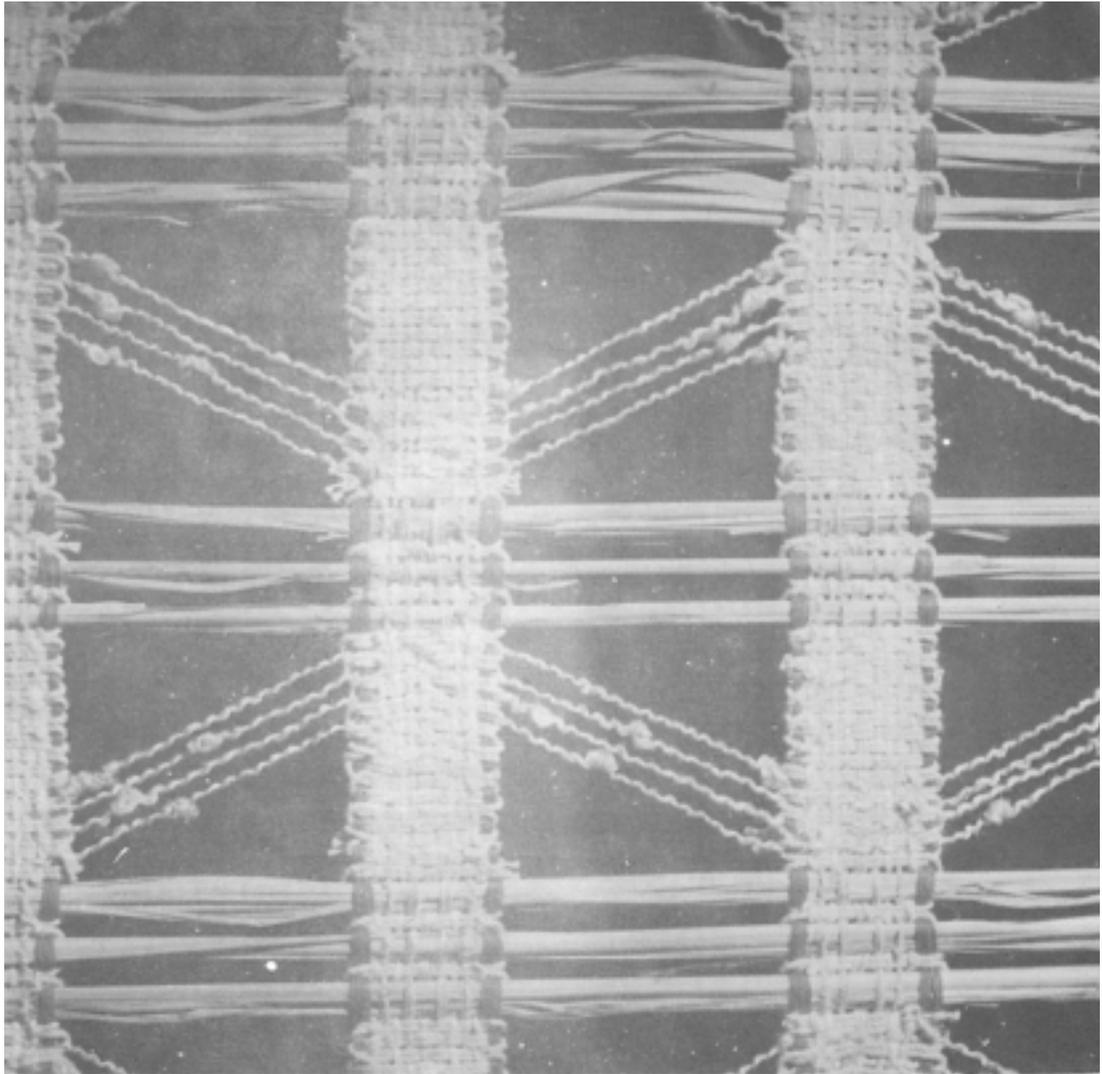
Alternating grass on treadle 1 and a weft pick on treadle 2 achieved the effect designed for. Other treadlings produced additional effects.



Experimenting with all the unusual methods of weaving you can think up just comes naturally too, especially with the following approach in designing. An architectural room divider in which Indian Grass was to be used because of its stoutness and great length needed to have a good shadow pattern when light came through it. With no particular regard as to how it could be woven I did a sketch of the effect I was after.

Preliminary sketch for weave of screen.





Bracketed groups thread together in same heddle & same dent.

φ = skipped dent      ⤵ = one dent

A to B -- screen

Reed: #8

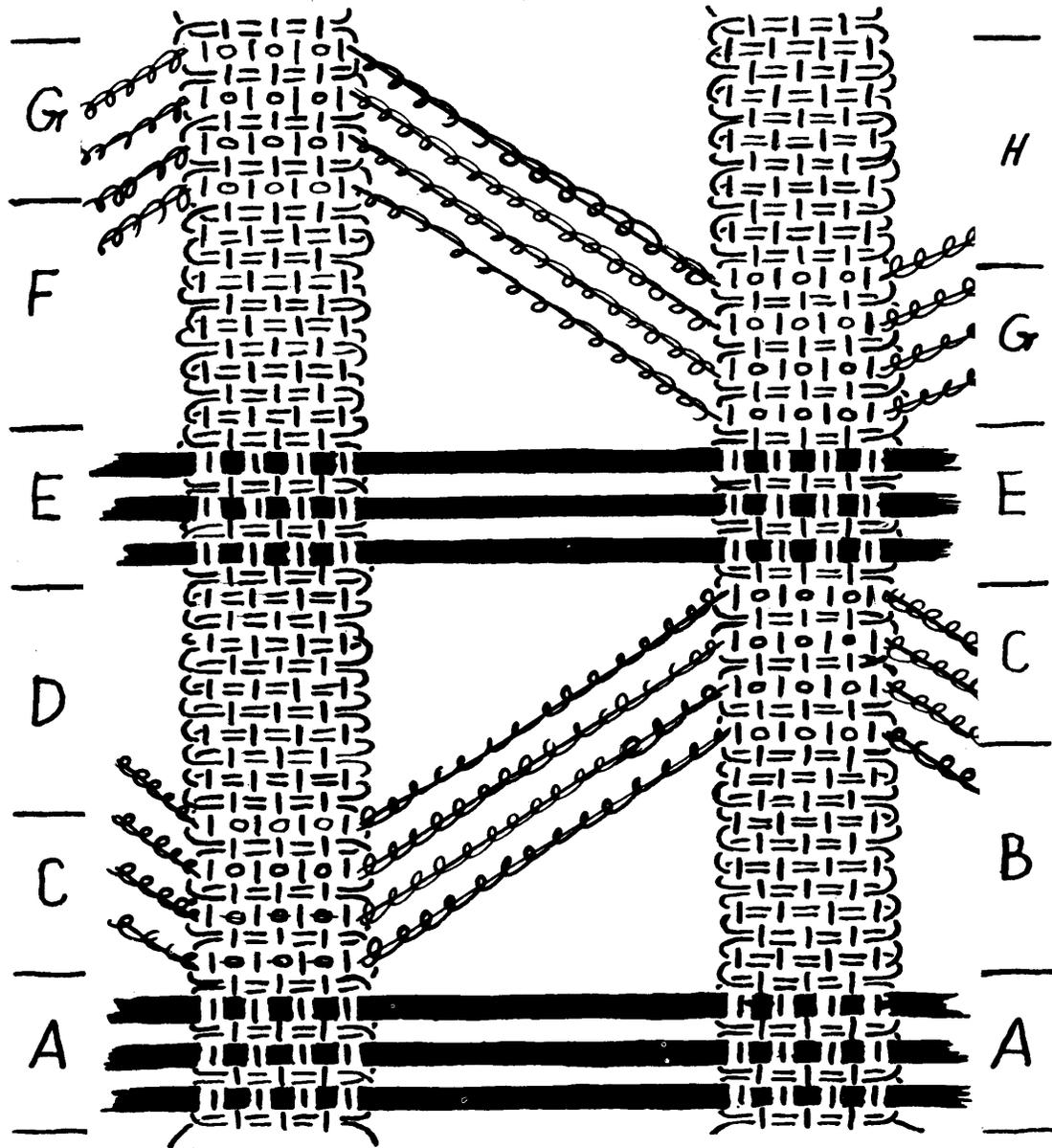
A to C -- mats

Warp:

- 1 -- 3-ply brown feed bag sewing thread
- 2 -- heavy boiled linen boucle
- 3 -- beige cotton "lace" novelty spin
- 4 -- white 9-ply suffortified rayon
- 5 -- gray singles homespun Pa. linen
- 6 -- 14/2 boiled linen
- 7 -- #40 sewing thread or plastic fish line

Next I arranged bands of mixed warp for a sampler in tabby weave (page 11, A to B) and experimented on the loom as to how it could be woven to achieve the effect. The first trials were messy failures but worth their

Diagrammatic Scheme of Weave Structure.



Order of weaving: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and repeat.

Loom Beater can be used for A, B, E and F sections.

Stick Beater must be used on all other sections.

Wefts:  ○ = jute and rayon nub;

 = seine twine;

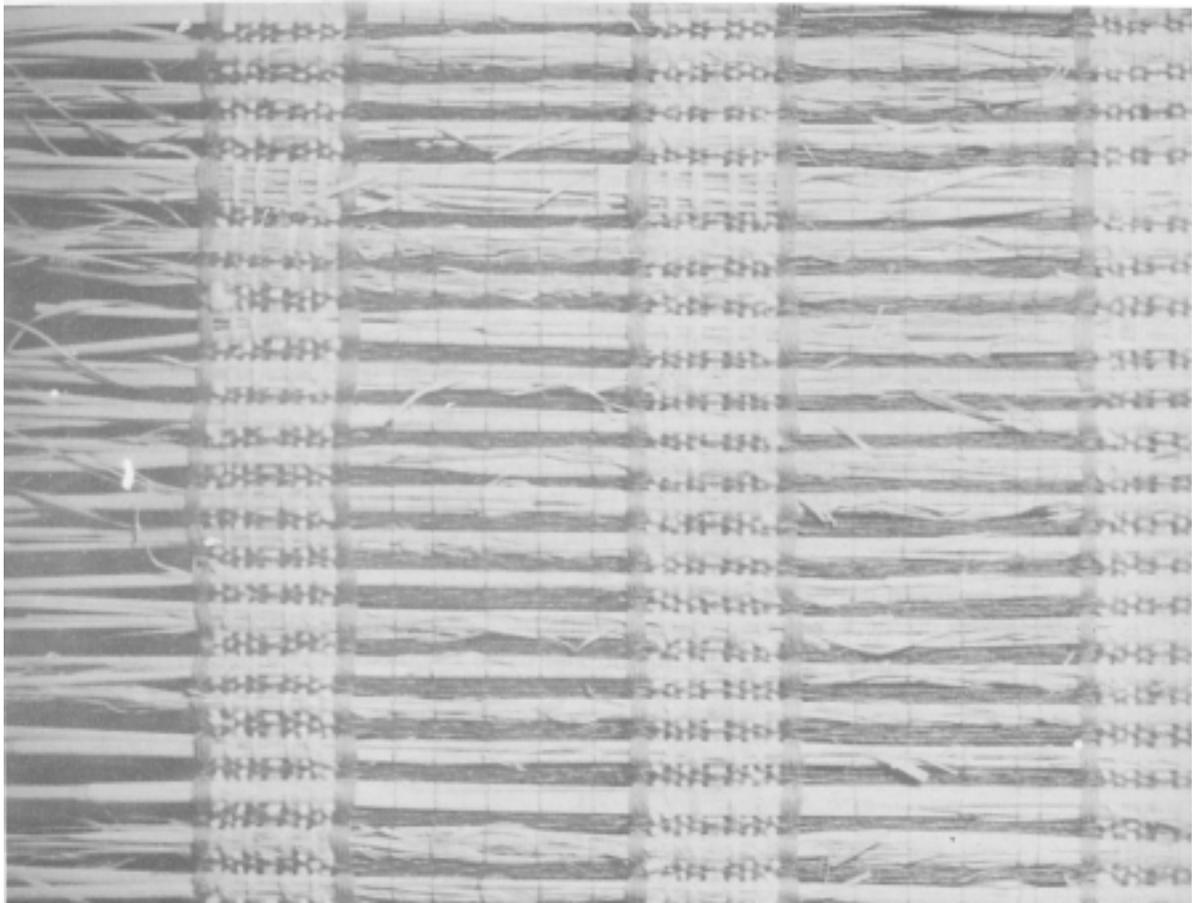
 = Indian grass.

Warp = "l" in diagram.

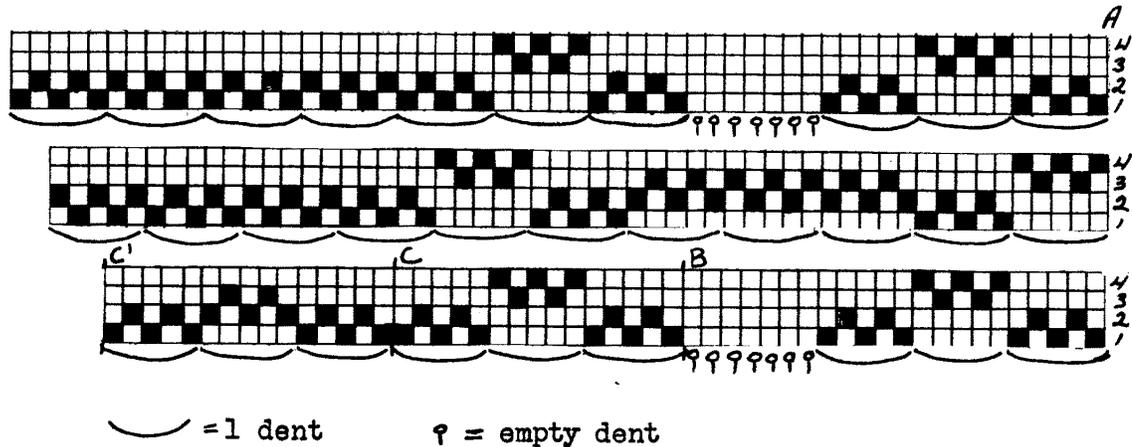
weight in gold for knowledge of thread behavior gained. No. 18 seine twine as a weft worked (page 12) but it comes only in off-white and was not right in tone. From the sampler I could estimate yardage needed and adding an extra skein to be safe, I soaked them overnight in a bucket of water, drained them and put them into tea until they reached the soft rose tan I wanted. (That tea was brew even an Englishman would run from; a pound of tea boiled for some time and strained. Much less would have done I think.) K—Photo 8 around this district somewhere ???

Adapting your own warps and drafts is another natural step in designing. The Indian Grass has rather broad, long leaves which the screen warp caught adequately. The warp was good in color and texture for Andropogon also but the growth habit of these grasses and the finer leaves called for a warp that would bind them in oftener. The solution was sewing thread added in tabby (page 11 B to C) between the bands of original warp (page 11 A to B). The color used was similar to that of a weft used alternately with the grass picks, and a series of mats each a different color scheme was woven. The toning produced by the colors of the fine warp had amazing differences. One mat with a soft, bulky two ply spun rayon for weft had plastic fish line used for the added warp. This fish line is exciting in the effect gained and could be used for many things. I would recommend sectional rather than chain warping methods for it. Try it first in a short sample warp to find its behavior pattern—it is different, it tangles and knots very easily and has a will of its own!

13



Still another method of designing was using one plain thread for warp and wrapping this around three stems of grass to get a crammed warp pattern. This effect was translated into a four harness draft:



A to B is pattern repeat; B to C to balance draft;  
 C to C' may be substituted for beginning and end.  
 On-opposites treadling: 1-2 vs. 3-4.  
 Spanish Lace treadling: 1-3 vs. 2-4.  
 Warp: 3-ply feed sack sewing thread.  
 Reed: #8.

This could be woven as designed—see photo, page 6—and also had possibilities treadled and woven in other methods. See next photo. For instance twilling an overshot type draft can produce some interesting results. Such a draft is fun to do in Spanish lace technique also and a good screen can be developed with bands of coarse lace between bands of grass stalks. Queer texture threads for this can be used also. By trying any mixture once, even the most unlikely you can dream up, you will come up with some exciting concoctions. Be sure to write down what you do as you go along as the distortion of many of the weaves makes the effect hard to analyze later. I find this part of designing a distinct nuisance—when the ideas are coming along nicely and just seeming to weave themselves, the taking time to write the stuff down seems to break in and interrupt the spell of the weaving and the expressing of the ideas that come. Usually you can wait until the sample is done to write it down but it sometimes doesn't work to weave a second sample and then go back to the first to write it. That process ends up with nothing written down.

There are many uses for fabrics woven of plant materials: architectural room dividers, screens, casement fabrics, window and porch roll shades, table mats, runners and cloths, picnic and patio table cloths, wall coverings, decorative wall hangings to name a few.

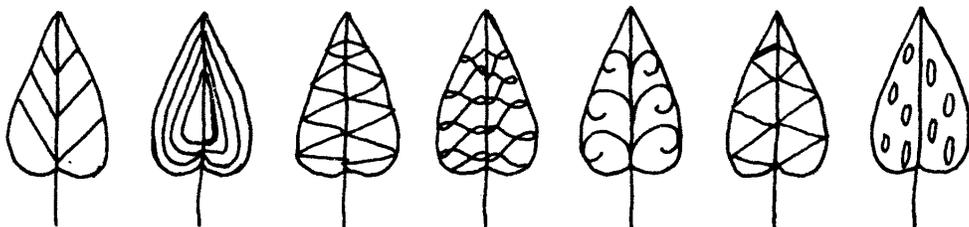


It is imaginative creative weaving full of fun and surprises for the weaver who tries it. It makes no difference how inexperienced the weaver is while at the same time it can challenge the most experienced.

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Living as we do in a country which has the highest and lowest rise and fall of tides in the world we have many salt marshes and the cutting of the salt hay each August, on the moon tide, is a familiar sight. It is stacked on wooden ricks at low tide and many a tourist stops amazed to see, seemingly, great stacks of salt hay floating on top of the water.

Gathering the grass, or hay, is difficult as it is rough, tough and grows in wet red mud. However, we shall endeavour to follow Mrs. Bretscher's injunction, gather some marsh grass, weave it and make a report to her and to you next winter of our success—or otherwise!



# COW-CHOKE

*by Mary E. Black*

Always on the lookout for new materials for our weaving we were very thrilled one August day a few years ago when we suddenly came upon a stand of beautiful plumed grass beside a narrow country road in the back hills.

Bustling out of the car we were so busy gloating over, and harvesting, the long firm stalks that we were quite oblivious to the approaching cart until a booming voice said, "what you women goin' to do with that old cow-choke? The animals won't eat it."

We told the farmer, to whom the voice belonged, that we wanted it for weaving which brought forth the information that "old Aunt Ellen, Maw's sister, usta weave blankets and them rag mats."

In spite of his knowledgeable "background" of weaving it was a bit beyond his imagination to understand how and why we could weave with grass. Perhaps at this point we weren't too explicit ourselves—just how we were going to use it wasn't too clear. Anyway we had an interesting conversation plus some welcome help in harvesting our crop.

Upon our return home we laid the grass stalks flat, on some improvised racks in the garage where the air could circulate all around them, and they would be out of the bright sun.

After the stalks were dry we stripped off the leaves, cut off the slender tops and seed heads, tied them in bundles and stacked them in a dry corner to await winter weaving days.

From this harvest we wove two place mats set; a picture of our initial experiment is shown below. Our warp colors were chosen to match the stripes in our Susie Cooper china, light brown, aqua, rust and beige. These colors seemed particularly pleasing against the shaded honey-colored grass stems, the largest of which were about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter. When dry the grass is very hard and does not crush as so many grass stems do. From our own experience we can vouch for its durability. We have been using these place mats constantly for over five years. Perhaps the warp is a bit faded and a corner or two the worse for wear but we are loathe to give them up until there's a bundle of new grass ready to weave more.

Cleaning? Nothing could be simpler. A little hot water in the sink, detergent and a stiff vegetable brush does the trick, followed by a quick rinsing. Washed and stood on their ends in the sink after breakfast they are dry and ready for use at lunch time.

For warp we used 4/8 carpet warp sleyed two ends per dent in a 10 dent reed. The arrangement of the warp can be seen in the photograph. The sequence of the colors in the stripes, beginning at the right was as follows:

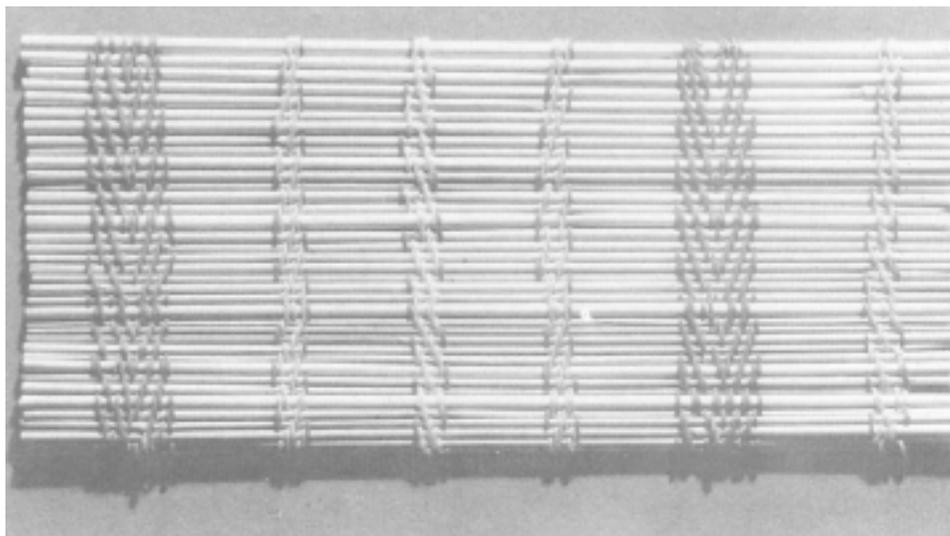
2 brown; 15 rust; 2 brown  
1 brown; 6 aqua; 1 brown  
1 brown; 6 beige; 1 brown  
1 brown; 6 aqua; 1 brown  
2 brown; 15 rust; 2 brown  
2 brown; 15 rust; 2 brown  
1 brown; 6 aqua; 1 brown

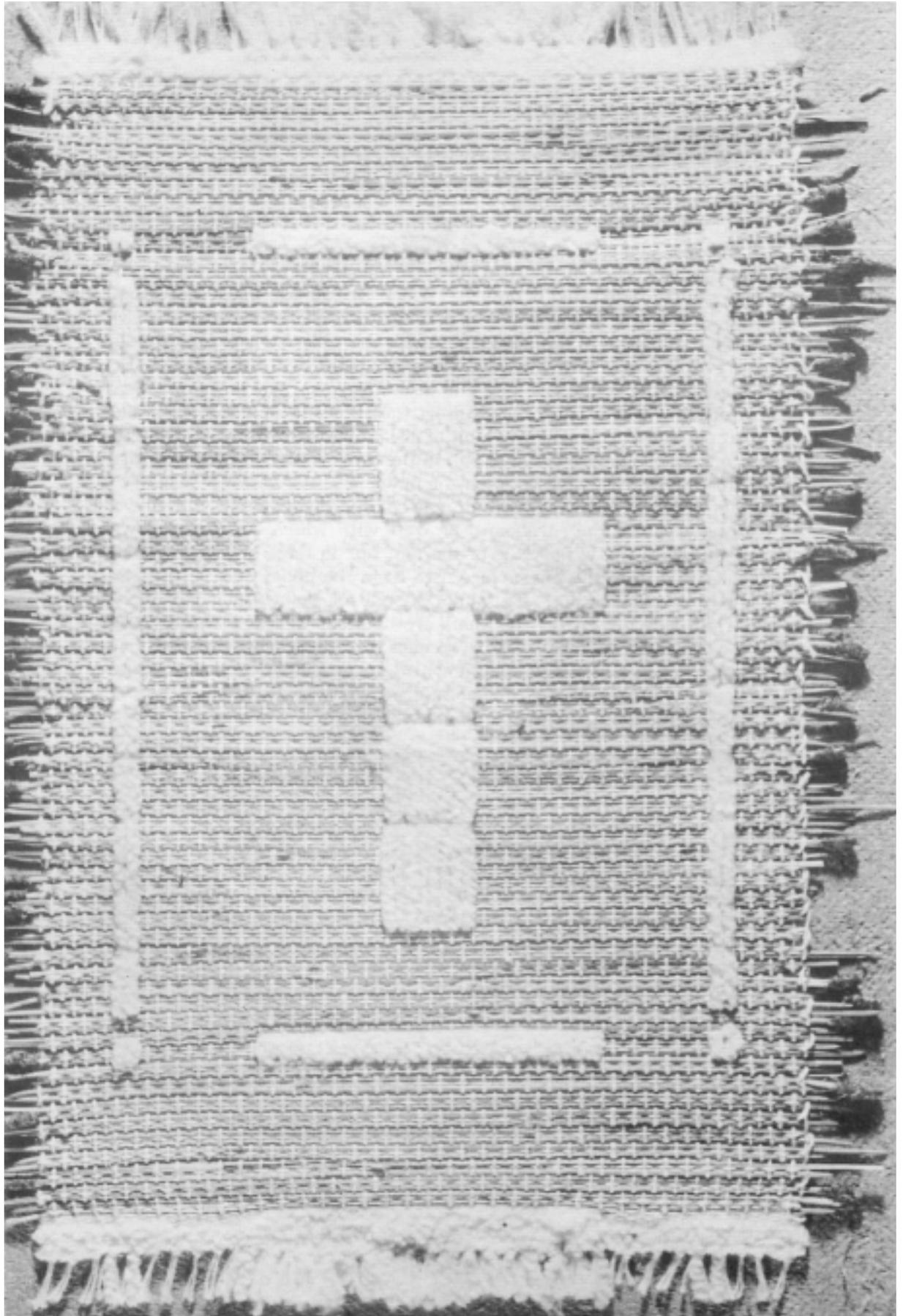
The skipped space in the reed between the stripes is about 1".

Our sample illustrated is only 10" wide. A full size place mat should be about 18" and the warp should be arranged to suit the additional width. The narrow stripes were threaded plain twill; the wider stripes were threaded in a reverse twill. Treadling was for a 2/2 plain twill throughout. For place mats cut the stalks 18" long and insert them so that large and small ends alternate. For a lamp shade insert the stalks so that the large ends are all at one side. This will give a bit of a slant and after removal from the loom the warp can be drawn up to pull in the top. Weave in pieces of cardboard, about 3 or 3½" wide between the mats.

After removal from the loom do not cut the mats apart. Starting at an end mat remove the cardboard, or weft with which the weaving was started, and with the wrong side of the mat up, on table or lap, take four warp ends, two from the top surface, two from the under and tie them together with a square knot. This knot should not show when the mat is turned right side up. After the knots are tied, cut the next 2 mats apart and tie warp ends. After all the warp ends on all the mats are tied, trim the ends back to ½ inch and stick down to under side of mat with household cement, airplane glue or finger nail polish.

The ends of the mats can be trimmed with kitchen shears.





# SMALL WALL HANGING

by Lenora Broadhead Pratt

The technique used in this small wall hanging has been called by various names, Spot Weave, Warp Brocade, or Warp Pattern Designing. It offers a multitude of possibilities, as one is working with two warps. One, a background upon which the second, a pattern-warp is woven or brocaded. It is loom controlled and although at first appears to be limited in design by the number of harnesses, it need not be so—though the use of half-heddles placed on dowels and raised by hand, another harness is added. The second warp is raised or lowered as one wishes the design to appear on the surface or not.

In planning a design, a drawing the size desired should be made. From this the threading is more easily worked out for each warp, then combined, writing it out for each group of threads to go in each dent.

I find it helpful to measure, chain, and sley each warp separately, then draw the threads through the heddles. The background warp is threaded on harnesses 1 and 2, the pattern warp through the remaining heddles as indicated by the design.

A double warp beam is desirable, but not necessary. I use my horizontal warping reel, which has a friction brake, then weight the base so that it will not be knocked out of line.

The tie-up should be for the convenience of the weaver. I prefer to weave using both feet; the left for the background, treadles 1 and 2 tied to harnesses 1 and 2 respectively; the right foot for the design, treadles tied as the design requires.

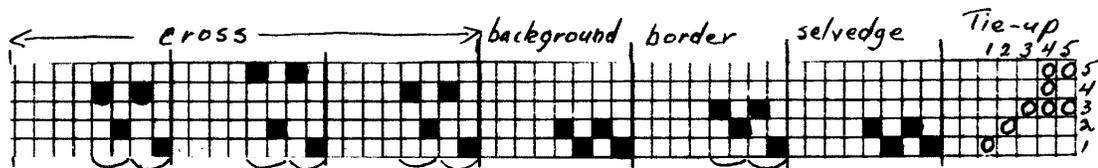
For this wall hanging I give the following data:

WARP: Background is 20/2 bleached ramie, design is 6-cut white chenille.

WEFT: Single needle of the Jeffrey Pine (*Pinus Jeffreyi*), 20/2 ramie and 1/64 reinforced silver metallic wound together, and #50 white sewing thread.

REED: 10 dent, sley ramie at one per dent, chenille with the ramie, 1 per dent where design occurs.

THREADING AND TIE-UP:



WEAVING: Weave an edging of chenille. The needles are then placed singly. If they are not long enough for the width of the hanging they may be overlapped, placing the narrow tips over each other about 1" or if more than two are needed they are overlapped tip over bud end. The tension is particularly important, as too loose a tension will be still looser when removed from the loom and the needles will slide out, and too tight a tension cuts the needles. However, as always in planning your first warp, add some extra for experimenting!

Weaving progresses in the following order: treadle 1-needles, 2-ramie, 1-needles, 2-needles, 1-ramie, 2-needles; this sequence is repeated throughout the hanging. The pattern warp is raised or lowered at proper intervals as follows: lower border-treadle 4, the lower portion of the cross is treadle 5, the arms of the cross treadle 4, the upper portion of the cross is treadle 5, and the upper border is again treadle 4. Treadle 3 is used throughout except for the small portion at the beginning and end of the weaving.

The long warp floats of the pattern threads will have to be tied down at intervals and this should be considered in the original design. In this case, the pattern threads were dropped when the weft shot was to be the ramie, the sewing thread was thrown in the shed, the pattern threads raised, and the ramie placed in the same shed. Weaving then continues as before.

This technique is limited in use because of the long floats appearing on the back of the fabric. However, I find it still has tremendous potential.

I add the following references which may be of help.

*Shuttle Craft*

June 1954 vol. no. 6 pp. 10-12 "Designing in Warp Pattern." June-

July 1957 vol. XXXIV no. 6-7 pg. 11 picture pg. 12.

"The Weaving of Tapestries," Trude Guermonprez.

*Handweaver and*

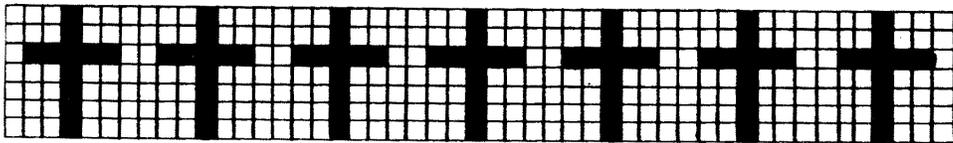
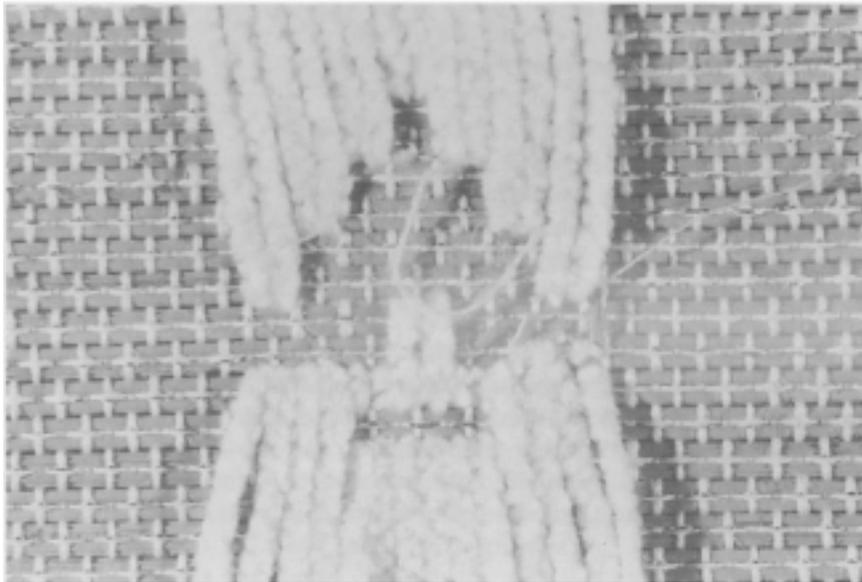
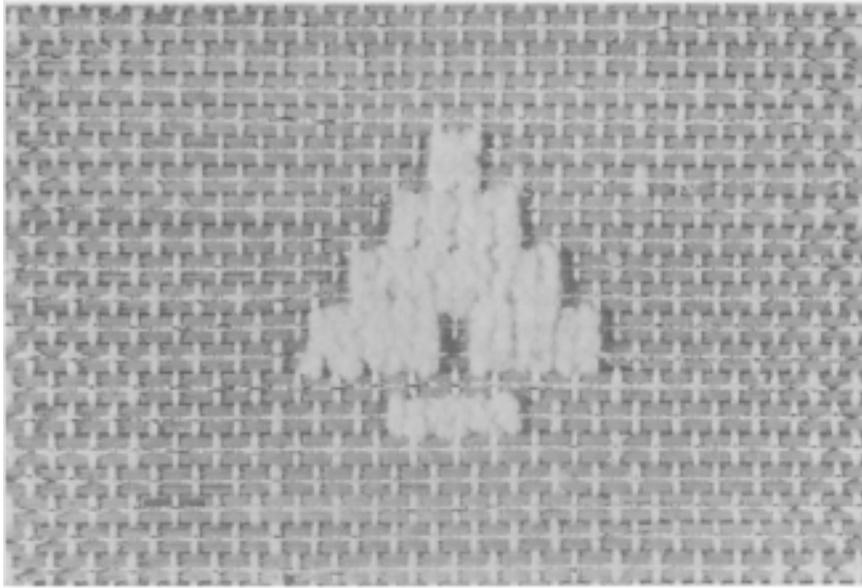
*Craftman*

Fall 1954 vol. 5 no. 6 pp. 15—"Double Warp Weaving from Harriet Tidball's Looms," Dorothy Byran.

Shuttle Craft Guild members will no doubt be interested in seeing the charming little Christmas card that sparked our interest in asking Mrs. Pratt if she would consider weaving a piece especially for this issue of SHUTTLE CRAFT.

Both photographs are the natural size of the woven article. The first shows the right side of the material. Notice how the white warp and weft skips make a pleasing background of little stars or snowflakes. And though you probably cannot see this in the photograph, each little background star sparkles subtly because of the flat silver metallic thread that is twisted loosely with the white ramie weft.

The second photograph shows the wrong side of the material. Certainly not an aesthetically satisfying sight, but interesting, as it shows what the chenille pattern warp looks like on the reverse side.



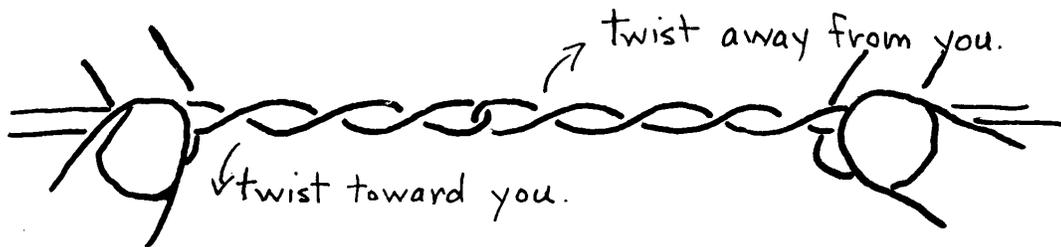
## LEARNED at the LOOM

Here's a twist!—and one we have found to be very useful.

Suppose you have an unlabeled cone of linen—or any other thread—and you want to know if it is the same grist as some other thread; take a length of each of the two threads—about 10" or so of each—and double the two threads, passing one through the other thus:



Hold thread A between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, and thread B between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. Give a sharp twist of thread A towards you and thread B away from you—and you can see at once whether or not the threads are of the same thickness. Easy!

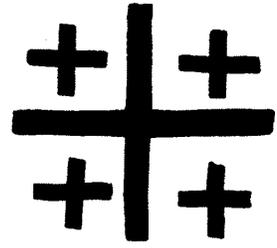


You may think that you could see or feel the difference or likeness of two threads just as easily or accurately, but we have found this little trick more accurate.

It is handy too, when you have two *like* threads—for example 2/16 worsted—spun by *different* mills. They may both be labeled as 2/16, but one may have a looser or tighter twist than the other. The twist will effect your slewing and ultimately the finished product. By twisting the two threads together you will soon find out whether it is necessary to substitute a finer or heavier thread than the one you originally thought would be suitable.

“Never underestimate the power of a woman with a hairpin”, I muttered savagely to myself as I snatched a sturdy wire hairpin from my greying locks, bent the points back at a 45 degree angle to the shank, spread the top open a bit, held my invention against the bobbin winder shank and forced the bobbin up over it onto the shank. It worked! Perhaps not quite as fancy as the wire spring method recently described in SHUTTLE CRAFT, but a very efficient first aid.

# WEAVING FOR THE ALTAR



*by Mary E. Black*

In addition to frontals, superfrontals and the fair linens (which we discussed in the March 1958 issue) there are a number of other cloths which can be handwoven for the altar.

Because they are all in a plain weave, and none of them very wide, they can be woven by weavers whose weaving is usually restricted by loom width or number of harnesses. The main requirement, regardless of whether you are a two, or multiple-harness weaver, is excellence in weaving. Even beat and good selvages are compulsory.

These cloths, which are not generally seen are nevertheless an integral part of the altar vestments.

The first of these, which is laid directly on the altar and completely covers it, is called a cere-cloth. For many years these cloths were of waxed linen to prevent moisture forming between the top of the altar, or mensa, and the fair linen. Of recent years, since heat has been introduced into places of worship this waxed linen cloth has been generally replaced by a heavy coarse linen cloth. The waxed cloth, though necessary at one time, was a fire hazard and could not be washed or satisfactorily cleaned. The coarse linen which has replaced the wax cloth can be washed whenever necessary.

The cloth to which the superfrontal is attached is also of coarse rough linen. It is the size of the mensa and to it, across the front, is attached the superfrontal. A frontal when used, is hung on a rod fastened to the face of the altar at both ends. The superfrontal hides both this rod and the open space between the top of the frontal and the altar.

Over this is placed a plain linen cloth, the size of the altar top. Many churches have done away with this particular cloth. But it is pointed out that where a superfrontal with its backing of linen is not used, it is necessary to have this plain linen because the fair linen should not rest directly on the cere-cloth, especially if it is a waxed one. While it is permissible to use a good quality flannelette or canton flannel for this purpose, a coarse white linen cloth is considered preferable. For this use:

Lily white linen art. 107, size 20/2 for warp

Lily white linen art. 107, size 10/2 for weft

Sley: 24 threads per inch.

Thread and treadle for plain weave and beat to obtain a 50/50 fabric.

The fair linen is placed over this plain linen cloth.

For the cere-cloth and the frontlet cloth we suggest:

Warp: La Fileuse Canadian unbleached #14 linen

Weft: La Fileuse Canadian unbleached #10 linen

Sley: double in a 12 dent reed.

Thread and treadle for plain weave and beat to obtain a 50/50 fabric. We did not experience any difficulty in weaving this linen as it is heavily sized. In planning these cloths, allowance should be made for shrinkage



in both length and width. The finished web should be given at least two good washings before hemming. If possible hang it outdoors in the sun on a windy day after the first washing but do not allow it to become dry before ironing. One of the cardinal rules in the care of church linens is to iron them while still wet. Never allow them to dry as sprinkling is apt to cause spotting and wrinkling. Neither should they be folded, but carefully rolled on cardboard mailers after ironing.

Although we have not mentioned the credence cloth previously, this should be of the same material and style as the fair linen and woven just as carefully. It should be the width of the table and should hang down a little at each end. A small flat cross, or ecclesiastical design, may be woven in the exact center.

Under the credence cloth there should be a piece of natural or white linen the exact size of the top of the table. This can be woven of the Lily linens mentioned above.

Altar and credence table should be covered with dust covers between services.

One school of thought suggests that there be two dust cloths for the altar. One placed at the back of the altar over the fair linen to protect it from wax which may drip from the candles. The second cloth, somewhat longer than the first is placed over the front part of the altar. These two cloths should be of such widths that they will meet to completely cover the fair linen when in use. A dust cover is also needed for the credence table. This should be slightly larger in all its measurements than the linen credence cloth.

There is some difference of opinion as to material and color for these dust covers so it would be well to consult with your church authorities before weaving them.

If the back dust cover for the altar is to remain on the altar throughout the service it should certainly be of linen, but if not it and the front dust cover and the credence table dust cover could all be woven of a heavier material such as Searle Grain's white or ecru mixed cotton and rayon, boucle or Lily's cotton boucle on a 2/8 cotton or rayon warp. One advantage of the heavier dust cloth is that it will not need the care which a linen one requires because of creasing and wrinkling in handling.

In conclusion we wish to stress again the necessity of consulting with the church authorities before making definite plans for ecclesiastical weaving; the necessity of using only the best of material; and, a warning not to attempt ecclesiastical weaving unless you are a good weaver as poor workmanship is not acceptable for use in places of worship.

#### REFERENCES

Perry; Edith Weir—"An Altar Guild Manual—Revised"—Morehouse-Gorham Co., New York. \$1.00.

Richards; Rev. Warren—"Altar Linen, Its Care and Use"—The Faith Press, Ltd., 7 Tufton Street, Westminster S. W., London. 20c.

McNeill; L—"Sanctuary Linens, Choosing, Making and Embroidering" 60c.

The above books may be obtained from the Anglican Book Centre, 600 Jarvis Street, Toronto. Prices given above are subject to change.

# GROUP WEAVING PROJECT FOR YOUR CHURCH

*by Mary E. Black*

The weaving of material to cover the kneeling benches of your own, or, some other church in your community could well provide an excellent project for a group of weavers who like to work together.

On the other hand the weaver who does not mind repetition and whose weaving supplies all, or part, of his income would find such a project profitable.

Regardless of who undertakes it, it will be a big job and should be approached in a business-like manner.

Materials should be purchased in quantity at an advantageous price; measurements must be accurately taken and the finished pieces must be correctly woven to these measurements; some guarantee must be given that the coverings will be finished at a date to be agreed upon, and a price must be set in advance for both the finished pieces and for the weavers.

Durability of yarns and color fastness are two important points to be considered. Avoid hard, shiny or glossy yarns, keeping in mind that these bench covers must be subservient in every way to everything else in the church. It must be remembered too that the covering is to cushion the benches, therefore it should be fairly thick. The material should not be bulky or it will be difficult to nail it neatly to the benches, yet it must be firm and sturdy. Edges must be straight and even or guimpe will be required to cover them which will add considerably to the cost of covering the benches. Cotton and wool; dull rayon warp with wool pattern, or some of the better man-made yarns are all suitable.

With regard to measurements these must be accurately taken as the benches may not be all the same length. If foam rubber or some other type of padding is to be tacked under the woven covering an allowance must be made. Trial covers should be woven to determine the shrinkage, if any, that occurs when the material is taken from the loom and whether or not tacking it onto the bench brings it back to its original measurements. It is advisable to weave a carpet warp heading, at least 2" wide, at both start and finish of each cover. This will turn under much more neatly than the cut end of the material which is apt to fray. These warp headings should be stitched across on the machine several times, or even stitched to a piece of carpet binding to re-inforce them. This will also prevent the ends ravelling when the covers are taken off for cleaning.

The color or colors chosen will depend entirely upon the colors of the floor coverings already in use in the church. These, while of the same color may vary considerably as to shade. In one church the sanctuary carpet was a deep crimson; the tile in the aisle was a scarlet tone and the velvet cushion on the litany kneeling bench was a third shade of red. This

may at first seem to present a problem but actually it was rather easily solved by using a scarlet red warp to match the tiles; a weft to match the velvet cushion; and, for pattern thread a rich crimson homespun to match the sanctuary carpet.

The completed sample blended nicely with all three shades. The same method can be used to blend any three colors, such as we did with three shades of green for our portfolio samples. If possible have the darkest of the three colors the most predominant.

Whether or not to weave a plain or patterned material must be given serious consideration. If either aisle, pew or sanctuary coverings are figured then by all means weave a plain material, mixing the three colors at random in the warp. If other floor coverings are plain a patterned material would be quite in order, but use discretion and avoid a large design. Broken twill, rosepath with a tabby, or a small unobtrusive pattern such as Marguerite Davison's Gothic Cross are all quite suitable. Avoid pattern floats of more than three threads.

Our sample was woven as follows:

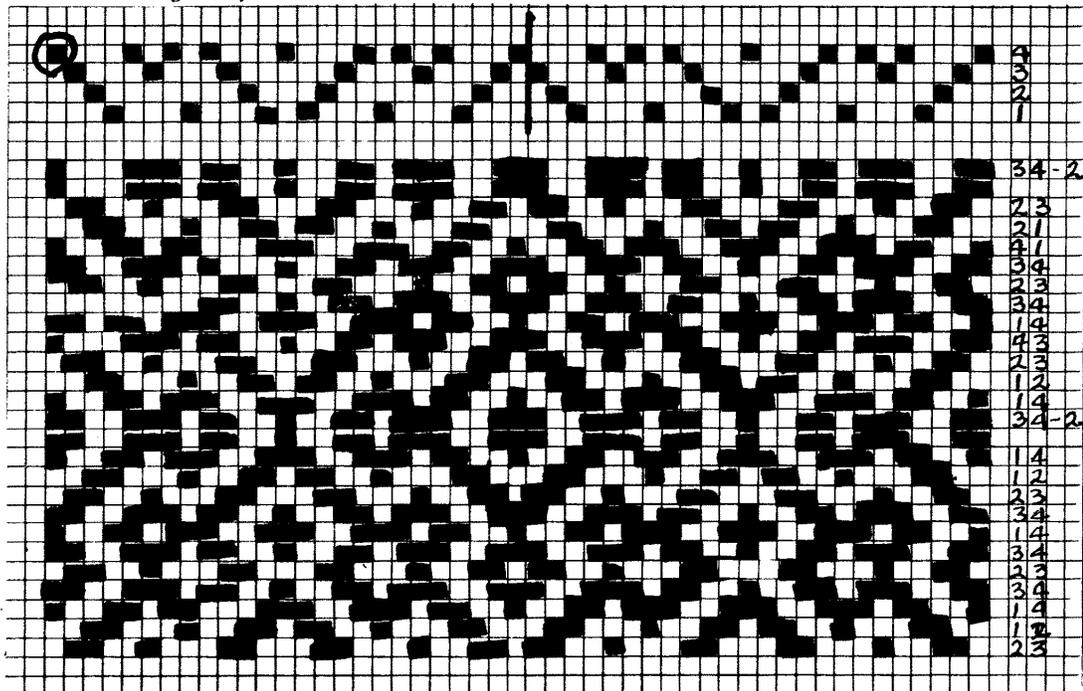
*Warp:* 2/8 cotton or rayon (Lily, Searle Grain).

*Weft:* 2/8 cotton or rayon (Lily, Searle Grain).

*Pattern:* heavy single ply homespun yarn (Tranquillity)  
: or carpet thrums.

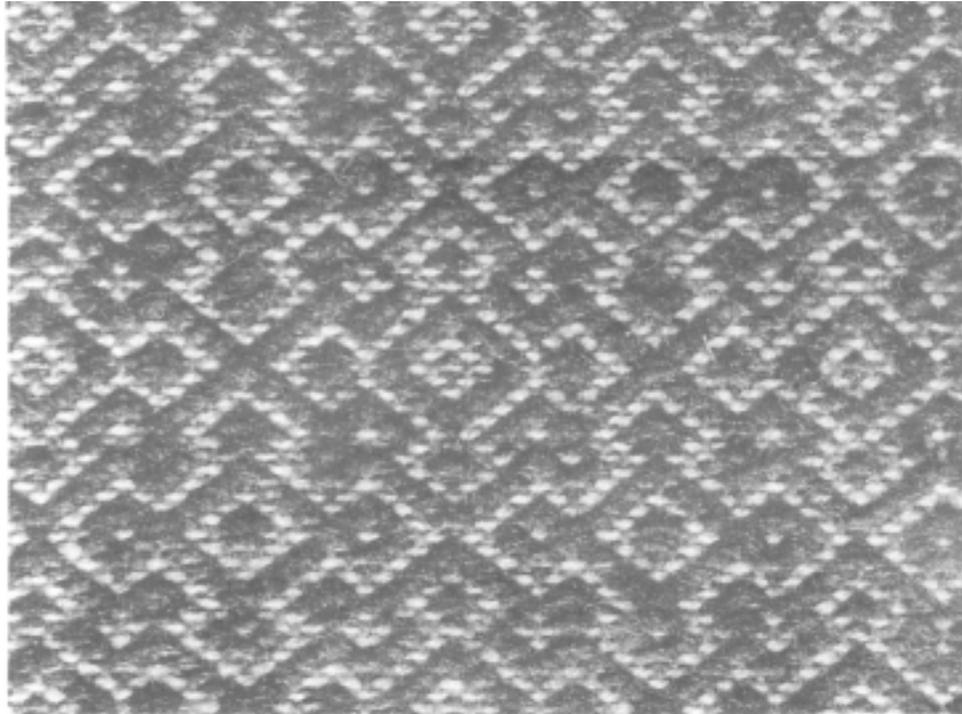
*Sley:* 18 threads per inch. If thrums are to be used sley 16 threads per inch.

*Threading draft:*



*Tie-up:* Standard.

*Treadling:* As shown in drawn-down (with tabby).



## LOOM LANGUAGE

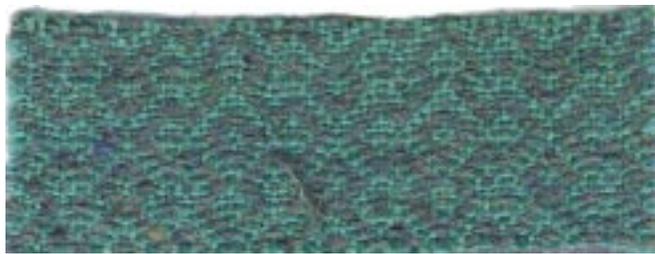
Since we defined several of the most used ecclesiastical textiles last March under *Loom Language*, we will not repeat them here, but will include a few terms found in this issue of SHUTTLE CRAFT and not already defined.

*Cere-cloth:* Cere, according to Webster, means to cover or close with wax. Hence the cere-cloth is a waxed linen cloth. It is the cloth placed directly on the top of the altar and covers the whole of the mensa. Its purpose is to protect the altar from wine or wax stains; and also to protect the fair linen from moisture seeping up from the altar. In modern churches and drier climates where there is no danger of moisture, the waxed cloth has been replaced by an unwaxed coarse linen cloth.

*Credence:* A shelf, small table or cupboard near the altar where the elements of the sacrament are made ready.

*Credence cloth:* The linen cloth which covers the top of the credence in width, and hangs down slightly at the ends.

*Phylactery (ies):* A small square prayer box containing parchment upon which certain texts from the law are inscribed, worn by pious Jews upon the forehead and left wrist.



# THE WEAVER'S BOOK SHELF



*by Boris Veren*

Miss Joyce Chown has just written me that the March 1959 issue of SHUTTLE CRAFT will again be an ecclesiastical issue, and has asked that I contribute a review of books on that subject. The editors of the magazine know the paucity of material on church weaving, in spite of the current and active interest among weavers and designers. Miss Chown writes me: "From what you said last year, we know you don't have any books on ecclesiastical weaving, but I'm wondering if perhaps you may have something on symbols used in the Christian churches and Jewish synagogues or possibly something in the field of art books which may show woven or embroidered textiles used in the church—either hangings or wearing apparel such as chasubles, etc. Or possibly you may have something on embroidery which would give weavers ideas for designs, sizes, etc." Now, in the face of this charming plea, how can I leave my office today to Jeep down the road and see if the newly bull-dozed 6/10 of a mile leading to Burns Summit, where Craft and Hobby will move next year, is still its vertiginous winding self. After the biggest storm and gale of my memory—winds of 70 miles an hour battered and almost blew away one of the greatest weaving libraries in coastal California—the day is sunny and inviting. But March winds are blowing down from Canada, and I will try to contribute to the meagre bibliography on the subject.

There is co-incidentally a brand new book from England on the subject of church embroidery by Beryl Dean called ECCLESIASTICAL EMBROIDERY, and a sumptuous beautiful volume it is. Church embroidery has until recently tended to be too much wedded to the past. Here, for the first time is a book, devoted entirely to the subject, whose primary aim is to stimulate the ecclesiastical embroideress, and we hope the weavers, to produce work which is both of the present day and which is completely worthy of the church. To fulfill so wide a task, Miss Dean, herself a craftswoman of the highest reputation, has perforce to be exhaustive. The history of church embroidery; its symbolism; its wide application to vestments and the designing of banners, altar frontals, kneelers, palls, burses, etc., and in addition the materials and techniques which can best carry contemporary design into practice—all these are clearly described. Outstanding examples of work, both historical and present day, are illustrated by a wide selection of beautifully reproduced photographs. The practical nature of the book is assisted by over 100 of the author's own explanatory diagrams, and by information, nowhere else obtainable, as to where the materials exclusive to the craft can best be obtained. This important pioneer work thus has a

two-fold value—as a practical working guide and as a comprehensive reference book.

The Contents include: Introduction and History; Design and Colour; The Liturgy; Symbolism; Materials; Equipment; Goldwork; Applique; Laidwork; Figure Subjects; White Work; Lettering; Canvas Work; Making Up; Index. In size the book is a large quarto 7½" by 10", with 258 pages, with a total of 190 illustrations and superbly produced in England.

The book is entirely non-sectarian. The author gives instruction applicable to Roman usage as well as to that of the Church of England. The price is \$9.75.

In the March 1958 issue of SHUTTLE CRAFT, which was an ecclesiastical number, a reference was made to the book: THE BOOK OF SIGNS by Rudolph Koch. We stock this beautiful collection of primitive and mediaeval symbols, set in Professor Koch's own "magere deutsch" type. This book contains 493 classified and documented illustrations, collected, drawn and explained by the celebrated typographer Rudolph Koch. It is divided into 14 categories, including General Signs, The Cross, Monograms of Christ, Other Christian Signs, Monograms of the Mediaeval Church, besides Botanical Signs, Chemical Signs, Astronomical and Astrological Signs, etc. It is an amazing collection and what is more amazing still is the ridiculously low price of \$1.00. But do add 10c for postage so that I do not go bankrupt.

From France, my shelves have one of the old timer classics of the DMC Library, in an English edition of ECCLESIASTICAL VESTMENTS AND ALTAR LINENS. This is a handsome paper covered volume with 9 full color plates, plus 38 figures in color, giving complete details and instructions for the making of church furnishings and altar linens, including the vestments for the Mass (the chasuble, stole, maniple, burse and chalice veil); the dalmatic, the deacon's stole, cope and humeral veil; and the altar draperies: the antependium, the ciborium veil, and the tabernacle veil or canopy. The second group of sacred vestments include all the linen articles which are used during the Mass, altar cloths, communion cloth, credence cloth etc. The book also contains reference to trimmings and special embroidery techniques to be found in the other beautiful DMC books, and we have all that are currently in print. (Price \$1.65 plus 10c postage).

Finally a collection of designs from Italy titled RICAMI RELIGIOSI, which has many designs, color reproductions for several embroidery techniques, with illustrations of The Last Supper, and Madonna in cross stitch, patterns for file, pillow lace edgings, cut-work, applique, etc. (Price \$2.00).

These items incidentally, are listed in another of Craft and Hobby Book Service's catalogues: "Books For The Needleworker" and SHUTTLE CRAFT readers may have this list by writing me at Coast Route, Monterey, California.

A book to be published this year is RELIGIOUS IDEAS FOR ARTS AND CRAFTS by Russell and Ruth Barbour. It is to have 50 pages of Christian symbols and designs reproduced for use in dozens of ways suggested by the authors, with specific instructions explaining how the designs can be transferred, enlarged, colored in, etc.

## CHURCH COLORS

The following information is general only; it does not pretend to cover the subject specifically or completely and is offered here only as a general guide. Nor can we state categorically that there is one red, one purple or one green shade or tint that is correct for church use. Lighting, architectural features and other controlling factors must be taken into consideration when choosing the exact shade to be used.

Certain colors have, since the beginning of the Christian churches been used to designate certain seasons of the year, feast, and martyr's days.

Thus we have white which is used for the joyous feast days and seasons such as Christmas and through the Epiphany, at Easter, All Saints and other festivals.

Red, the color of blood, love and fire is used especially for martyrs, Whitsunweek and for the Apostles.

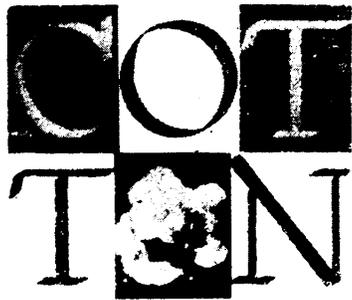
Green, the color of growth and hope, is used through the Trinity season, with a few exceptions, which extends through the summer months and up until the beginning of Advent.

We find violet, or purple, symbolizing penance in use through Lent, some pre-Lenten Sundays, Rogation and Ember days and during Advent.

Black, the symbolic color of mourning is used at funerals and on Good Friday and on some other special occasions.

In some churches cloth of gold is substituted for any of the colors except purple and black, but cloth of silver may replace white hangings only.

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Regular membership \$7.50      Portfolio membership \$17.50

(The Portfolio edition of SHUTTLE CRAFT is the same as the regular edition but includes woven samples of some of the textiles for which directions are given in the text.)

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# Shuttle Craft Guild

Mary E. Black      Joyce Chown  
Bedford, Nova Scotia, Canada

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