

TUFTED WEAVING

By ELMA A. CLARK

The very meagre or casual comment of tufted weaving in articles about Early American home weaving is in itself an answer as to its challenge for attention. First, it is not fitted to as many uses as most other techniques. About the only use for this method, in Early American weaving, seems to have been for coverlets. This again is an answer to why there are so few examples found in the inherited treasures of Colonial times. The reason is because a careful and elaborate draft must be prepared to execute a pleasing and desirable result.

Mildred Stapley, in her book *Popular Weaving and Embroidery in Spain* pub. 1924, Wm. Helburn, Inc., N. Y., describes the loop weave (confite) as being one of the most prevalent techniques in the eighteenth century in Spain. Large pieces made up of three or more narrow widths with the large pattern divided so that only after the narrow pieces were united was the pattern completed.

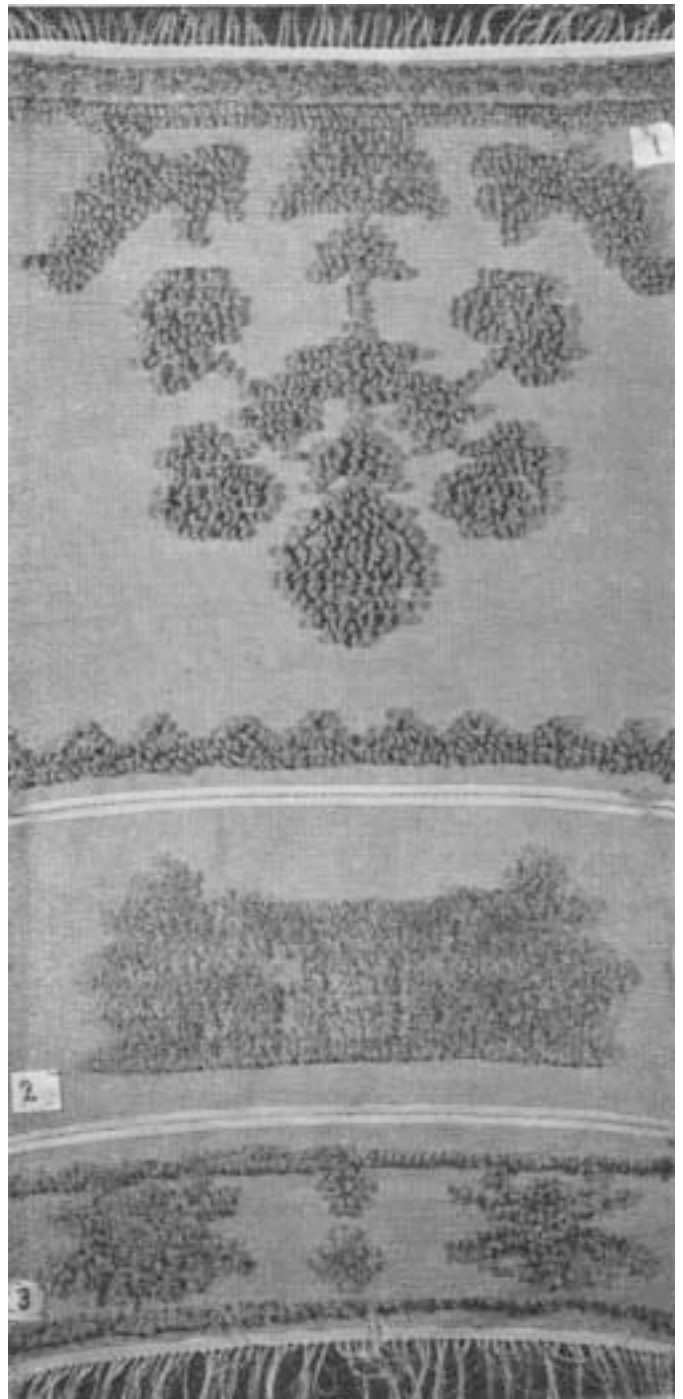
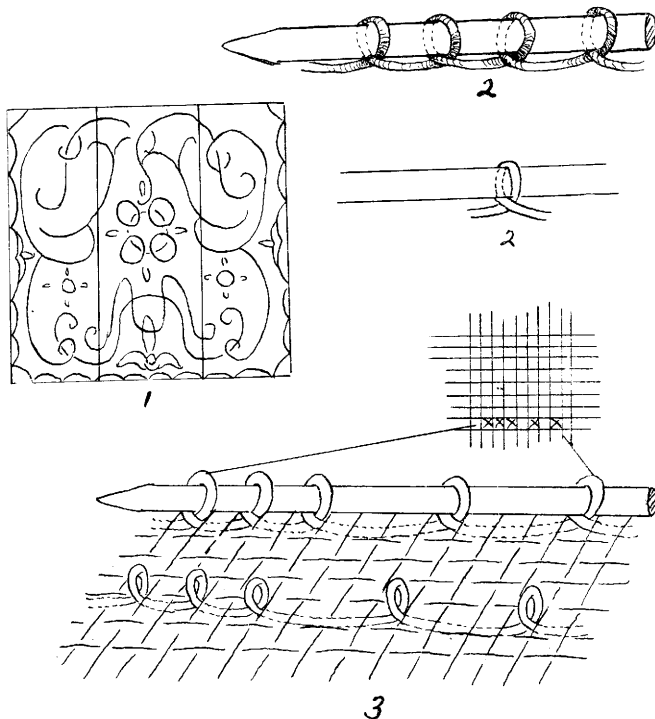
The Scandinavian method seems to be done with fine material with a close dentage using the twill 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 set-up. The loop is brought out in one of the pattern combinations with the 1 - 3 and 2 - 4 tabby as the binder.

If I were planning a coverlet, I should set up my warp to be woven in three strips, the two sides for borders, and the center containing the greater part of the central design, but with a careful plan to have the space and design balance and lines of the design and borders related. Drawing 1.

In the illustrated examples the warp used is Bernat's Egyptian cotton 24/3, 16 dentage, two harness, and Bernat's blue candlewicking. When lifting the loop for a tuft always have the wicking follow the *same* direction around the round stick which holds it in place.

(Insert drawing 2.)

A large knitting needle may be used, but if a large piece of work is being done, the smallest size dowel stick, i.e. 1/4", can be cut and pointed. This may be up to 24" long. I have



found it best to withdraw the stick after following the pattern line with a row of tabby, like warp, and a row of tabby, blue wicking, then beating it again very firmly.

(Insert drawing 2.)

1. Throw one thread, like warp thread, in the alternate shed. 2. From *left to right* throw one blue candle wicking in the opposite alternate. 3. One thread, like warp, in the first alternate. 4. For first pattern row, in second alternate, from right to left, on blue candlewicking. (In this order, always bring the wicking for the non-pattern row from left

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BOOK REVIEW

A DOCTOR IN HOMESPUN

Autobiography of
Mary Phylinda Dole, B.S., M.D.

This is the story of an unusual woman — Mary Phylinda Dole, M.D. — who as a young woman ventured into the pioneer path of the woman medical doctor, to become tremendously successful, and who in later life (since her retirement) has opened a new world for herself by devoting her energies to the art of weaving, the proceeds of which have gone to establish a Medical Fellowship at her alma mater, Mt. Holyoke College, and to which she is still contributing.

Dr. Dole, physician and weaver, writes her story simply and unaffectedly. The narrative is crowded with the rich experiences of her childhood in Shelburne, Massachusetts, of her study in the leading European medical centers, her return to Greenfield and her patients in that section for whom she became the first lady doctor. It was there a patient said of her, "When the night is so bad the men won't go out, we know we can get you."

After some years of devoted practice in Greenfield, Dr. Dole felt the urge to try new fields (an inheritance, according to Dr. Dole, from her father who was a 49er). Her description of her life in New Haven, her friends, her lovely old house with the beautiful ballroom is vividly told.

The weaving that has brought her fame in recent years was first learned by Dr. Dole in an effort to find some

occupation for a dear friend, invalided. And when Dr. Dole's own health failed, she took up weaving, which she calls her "life saver." These are some of the things weaving gave her:

"The ability to bear pain, almost to forget it at times. New work when it looked as though my life-work was ended. Gave broader interests and made life worthwhile.

"It proved the great value of handicaps overcome."

"The one to whom I owe most in my color education is Margaret Whiting of Deerfield", continues Dr. Dole, "her criticisms were always constructive." One incident Dr. Dole tells of is the time she was trying to find a color scheme for the Mary Lyon coverlet. Visiting Margaret Whiting and looking over her old Japanese prints, Dr. Dole found just the colors she wanted. She took the print to Mr. Bernat and asked him to dye some yarn to match, which he did. Thereafter, when she went to Bernat's, she looked for different shades of those colors and finally achieved the desired color combination.

At almost eighty, Dr. Dole still drives her Franklin car, weaves long hours at her loom and has given us the story of her life. The great interest of her life, however, is her Medical Fellowship, and to that end bends all her efforts. *Note:* "A Doctor in Homespun" is available by writing either to Mt. Holyoke College or to Mary P. Dole, Shelburne, Massachusetts. The edition is limited. Price \$2.50.

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to right.) Then always the row of wicking which is to be used for the tufting thrown from right to left.) When picking up the loops for pattern, keep the shed open as the material has to have plenty of slack, or reserve, to draw from; the rows taking more or less, depending on the number of tufts in different rows. If following a cross-stitch or fillet crochet pattern, *every other* opening of an *open shed* is counted as each square in the pattern, thus, eight open spaces to an inch in the warp uses only four squares in the pattern. So, if a pattern block has twenty-four squares, forty-eight are counted out in the open shed. It is much easier to see a count in this way than to count threads on the flat undivided warp. Drawing 3.

Figure 1 shows the result from using this method. Figure 2 is the same method with the loops cut, showing a loss of detail but possibly a desirable texture for a rug. In this case, the lines of a fairly close pattern are lost after cutting the loops. It is sometimes well to view the undesirable in order to visualize the desirable. In figure 3, the same pattern is woven twice, one cut and one uncut, in the piece. If cutting is to be done, a wider spaced, or more simple pattern should be chosen. This method would lend itself nicely for the popular large knitting bags, or large envelope bags using rags or heavy yarns for the tufting and finer material for the binder. The heavy Bernat rug wool could be used for interesting

MONK'S BELT and KINDRED DESIGNS

by MARGUERITE P. DAVISON

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of the treadling directions. The Finnish Weavers contribute much in this direction, recognizing that many patterns are enhanced by unique treatments of the treadles. The Cat Track and Snail Trail, Whig Rose and Rose Path, all rose patterns related to Monk's Belt, are well known examples of this fact.

In the treadling directions the numerals under the tie-up instructions specify the number of times that particular combination of treadles directly over the numeral is to be used. As it would be cumbersome to indicate the tabby thread in each instance, the use or absence of the tabby is noted.

Where more than one pick or pattern thread is needed to make the pattern, that numeral is given which is actually used in the illustration. If a coarser or finer pattern yarn is employed by the weaver, this number must be diminished or augmented as the case may require to keep the balance of the pattern.