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SOMERSET : WARWICKSHIRE WITH WORCESTERSHIRE & STAFFORDSHIRE

QUARTERLY  
JOURNAL  
OF THE  
GUILDS  
OF WEAVERS  
SPINNERS  
AND DYERS

GLOUCESTERSHIRE : HALLAMSHIRE AND DISTRICT : HAMPSHIRE

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## AIMS

The policy of this journal will be to further the aims of the above Guilds.  
These are:

- To encourage and maintain integrity and excellence of craftsmanship.
- To foster a sense of beauty of material, texture, colour and design.
- To provide opportunities for interchange of information, for enlarging knowledge at holiday schools, for demonstrations, lectures and library facilities.
- To co-operate with other guilds having like aims.



## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Hilary Bourne	Alice Hindson
Elsie G. Davenport	E. Sheila MacEwan
F. Dickinson	Hester Viney

*Hon. Treasurer:* Mrs. A. Broadbent



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Devon and Somerset Guilds Exhibition.** Weaving and Spinning Demonstrations. Royal Agricultural Show, Stover, Newton Abbot, Devon, 1-4 July.

**Dorset Easter Craft School.** Weaving and Vegetable Dyeing. Wareham. All interested persons welcome. Names to Hon. Secretary, Dorset Guild, now.

**Hampshire Guild Exhibition.** Working Loom and Spinning Demonstrations. Annual Burley Gymkhana, 4 August.

**Tapestry and Rug-Weaving Course.** Instructor, Mr. Aristide Messinesi. Lymington, 24-28 March.

**International Conference of Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles.** Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon. 17-27 July. Particulars from Dartington Hall.

## EDITORIAL

The launching of a Journal in these difficult days of paper shortage and high printing costs may perhaps seem daring and even foolhardy, but the demand for such a Journal had become so pressing that it was no longer to be denied. Where the will is sufficiently determined, the way can always be found and this, the first issue of the new Quarterly Journal of the Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers marks a real achievement on the part of the Guilds.

Two preliminary meetings were held in connection with the launching of the venture, the first at Bristol in May last year during the Exhibition of Weaving held there, the second a few months later in London; all the spade work being done by Miss Dorothy Luke of the Somerset Guild. Since the latter meeting of representatives, the three Guilds of Cambridgeshire, Newbury and Sussex have joined the ten original Guilds and taken an active part in launching this Journal.

It has been made possible by the creation of a reserve fund from grants and donations which guarantee its first year of life. These are the visible expression of the interest of the expanding Guilds in their own crafts; but they also reveal a deeper expression of faith in craftsmanship at a time when the tide of materialism has all but washed away the vestiges of individual creativeness and enterprise.

There are signs, however, that this tide is now turning. People of all walks of life are beginning to realize that, unless the handcraftsmen are there to maintain a standard of excellence, the great tradition of good workmanship which has been the mainstay of Britain will not survive.

The Guilds are today, as they once were in the past, the guardians of a standard. It is fitting that they should have a means by which they can express their views, make them known to other people and exchange ideas and practical advice.

Like a venture of old to uncharted seas, the Journal starts on its voyage with fair winds, bearing a cargo of good wishes—from Sir Ernest Goodale, K.B., C.B.E., M.C., of the Worshipful Company of Weavers, Mr. Wingfield Digby, Keeper of Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Miss Wilkinson, Principal of the London School of Weaving, Mr. Leach of the Leach Potteries and Mr. Dan Cooper, Member of the Architectural League, American Institute of Decorators.

The Editorial Committee, on their side, will try to maintain its liveliness and interest, but its ultimate success and survival must always depend on the Guilds themselves. *Floreat.*

EDITOR

## GOOD WISHES

It is with great pleasure that I welcome the birth of this Journal and wish it every success.

The growth of Guilds devoted to the crafts of spinning, weaving and dyeing, which has been so rapid since the last war under the skilled hand of Miss Hester Viney, clearly shows the urge in most of us to make things with our hands. What action is more satisfying than spinning or weaving, and what music more pleasant to a weaver's ear than the rhythmic movement of the shuttle in the loom?

Spinning, dyeing and weaving are crafts—let us not forget they are arts as well. There is no great merit in producing something by hand that is technically competent but ordinary and which a machine could have done better and with much less fatigue.

Let us produce something so individual that it is a work of art demonstrating the beauty of texture, colour and pattern.

The oldest of the City of London Livery Companies is the Worshipful Company of Weavers. Does this not show the antiquity of our craft? The motto of the Company also indicates the integrity of its devotees and practitioners: 'Weave Truth with Trust'. Finally, may I borrow the words of the toast given at banquets of the Company and say:

'I give you the health of the art and craft of spinning, weaving and dyeing, root and branch, and may they flourish for ever.'

ERNEST W. GOODALE

It was with the greatest interest that I heard that ten Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers in this country are combining to run a quarterly Journal. The information and exchange of ideas which a Journal like this can give to Guild members is, I feel sure, invaluable. In the old days of the medieval guilds to learn these crafts would have meant a long apprenticeship and some years in a workshop under the direction of a master of the craft. The technique of weaving, as of spinning and dyeing, follows principles which are basically simple but which lead on to infinite variety and to infinite possibilities of invention and refinement. As your Guild members well know, it is fairly easy to learn to weave; but to really master the craft needs talent and many years of work, almost a life-time. In our own day an enormous amount of knowledge—the residue of practical experience—can be learnt from books and from the pages of a Journal such as you are undertaking. By its means the Guilds can be transformed almost into one large workshop, where experiences and problems are shared and tuition and demonstration go forward.

I hope the Journal will also help to give these crafts the wider perspective which any craft needs if it is really to come into its own. John Farleigh, in his book *The Creative Craftsman*, quotes the textile designer A. H. Williamson as saying:

'A textile in itself is something that can be a work of art: it can be a means of expressing within limits a personal observation. At the same time, it is a craft that keeps in with everyday life and the period in which one is living . . . It should be . . . in contact with contemporary needs, just as all the arts of paint-

ing, writing, music and so on should fit into the pattern of present-day life.\*

This point of view is amply borne out by the history of textiles: whether one takes the finest carpets of Persia or the simple nomad rugs of the Turcomans, the shuttle woven fabrics of Byzantium and Lyons or the primitive fabrics of ancient Peru and the old tweeds of the Scottish Highlands. The craftsman has to live in the wider world of art and ideas as well as concentrating on his mastery of technical detail.

I wish the Editorial Committee every success in their work for the Journal.

G. F. WINGFIELD DIGBY

I wish to send the very best of good wishes to the Guilds' Journal for a most successful career. I am sure that this Journal will fill an important place in the lives of many hand weavers and be of great help to them, and I should like to tell you now that I shall be pleased to support it in any way I possibly can.

With repeated good wishes and in anticipated pleasure of the first issue.

DOROTHY WILKINSON

As from one craft to another I welcome the re-establishment of a Weavers, Dyers and Spinners Journal. A good workshop periodical, besides telling an interested public of what is being done, also serves as a forum for the exchange of thought as to why and how it is best done, and it should lead towards raising standards. After two wars it was inevitable that standards both of ideas and of execution should waver and lose direction. Workers were disbanded, workshops abandoned and the threads of tradition cut right and left: new Government regulations for industry came into force which have borne down hardily on handcrafts for which they were not planned. But in the ten years of uncertainty which have elapsed thousands of young people, not only in these islands but all over the industrialized world, have been turning from the factory and the office to craftsmanship as a more creative way of life. They want to enjoy their work intimately and to let free their feeling in it; but the resulting products are all too often aesthetically deplorable and technically the outcome of less than a half training. Consequently many observers come to the conclusion that handcrafts are today bogus and out of date.

Apart from personal beliefs this conclusion is contradicted by the widespread movement mentioned above, but it only goes to show that unless work done in this way is alive it is hardly worth doing and will not, in the long run, convince a broad public of its intrinsic worth. The quality of life in any form of art can only spring from vitality in the man who makes it and in the social background of which he forms a part. Craftsmanship of our time differs from traditional craftsmanship to the extent to which local traditions have been broken by the industrial revolution, with the consequence that, instead of inheriting, in the main, a local tradition, the craftsman inherits all traditions and has the historically sudden task of stretching himself to world pitch. The fact of the matter is that he has to be a creative artist. Seen in this light it is not surprising that so much of the work being produced is ill digested. He is in a worse position than the musician who is usually content to be an interpreter of a composer's ideas. If he is not able to digest the influences which we as moderns inherit, his work is bound to be haphazard in concept. And if, on the other

hand, he does not get through workshop training, his execution is liable to be amateurish. There may be a lesson in modesty to be learned from the musician.

Two questions have constantly been put to me, in Japan, America and Europe; 'What is a good pot?' 'How does one become a good potter?' So, if your Journal translates these questions into textile terms and keeps hammering away at the answers rejecting all second bests, I have a hope that something may be achieved.

Your readers may be interested to hear of the International Conference of potters and weavers which is to take place at Dartington Hall in Devon, during the last ten days of July. The main objective will be the one I have set forth in these few words of welcome. There will also be an exhibition of a selection of the best English work in these two crafts produced since 1920 and this will be taken on a six months tour by the Arts Council.

BERNARD LEACH

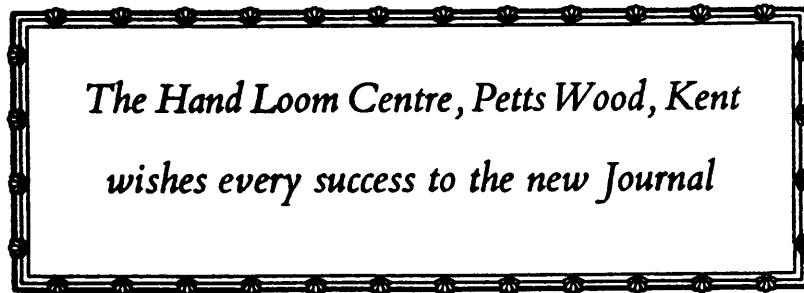
I am very happy to learn of the launching of your new quarterly Journal.

The growing interest in handweaving is to me, as a designer of fabrics and interiors, a very important and heartening development. Improvement in the beauty of the settings we create to live in must always stem from the arts. The imagination which creates a beautiful handwoven design has a specially practical application because the object created can fulfill a useful purpose.

It seems to me that the handweaver should always be guided by the conception that he or she is creating an artistic object. The weaver who produces a whole series of beautiful designs has a far greater scope of expression than one who reproduces the same design over and over. Marvellously contrived power looms have long been able to reproduce good designs endlessly. May handweavers never fall into the error of trying to duplicate that performance.

A small piece of originally designed material has a wide range of usefulness in the home, as a hanging, a pillow cover, a table cover, or for a number of other uses which can be contrived to let it make its unique contribution to an over-all plan. Handweaving has a secure place as an art and a limitless field for development as long as it maintains the freedom of imagination which is the very essence of any handcraft.

DAN COOPER



## FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

by ETHEL MAIRET

**U**NTIL the nineteenth century, hand spinning and weaving were universal; they were limited along certain definite lines; they depended entirely on traditional methods, developed over thousands of years, handed on in families and districts all over the world. Although they reached great heights, it was always along the lines of what the hand looms could do, using the various types of handspun yarns. Traditional weaving in the home is still in existence in many parts of the globe, but is rarely in demand and the quality and beauty of traditional methods have gone, or are going quickly. This is seen, possibly at its worst, in Scandinavia where the technique remains but not the quality.

Why is it that handwork now is so different from what it was? A deep-rooted change has been happening during the last two or more centuries and power methods have entirely altered the character of textiles. In pre-machine days the yarns and colours were critically understood; the breeding of sheep for the best wool, the growing of the right kind of cotton or flax were known by every weaver. Now this kind of knowledge is disappearing; the throwing of a shuttle is thought to be weaving.

The quality of hand weaving is not the throwing of the shuttle; that is of the least importance. It is determined by *what* is thrown; the knowledge of the possibilities of the actual loom or spinning wheel; the way the loom is tied up; the understanding of tension; and the deep understanding of colour and the kind of yarns suitable for different purposes. An experimental outlook is very necessary: this is lacking in most handweavers, possibly because they do not know the foundations well enough. The essential is to know the whole background and how to use it to the best advantage with new ideas added.

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## TRADITIONAL TWEED WEAVES

by JOHN E. TOVEY

**T**HE origin of the name tweed is doubtful, but one fairly well substantiated suggestion is that it is derived from the old English word 'tweel', the name of the weave which we now know as twill. John Murphy, writing his *Art of Weaving* at the end of the eighteenth century, discusses many 'tweels', amongst them the one most familiar to

handweavers, the 2 and 2 twill. This was used to produce an open cloth, with a fairly heavy yarn set at 12 threads to the inch, both warp way and weft way. Such cloth would be extremely hard-wearing, as an open cloth cannot tear as easily as a close one and the thicker yarns would not break easily if caught. At the same time, the rather rough and hairy cloth would catch fine rain or mist on the hairs long before water penetrated, and the garment would be to a large extent waterproof. In a cloth of this kind, every thread is easily visible and has its full value in the pattern; therefore traditional tweed weaves are small all-over weaves, often depending on single threads for their effects.

Today the term tweed is extended to cover lightweight woollens set up to as many as 28 threads to the inch, but such cloths are a long way from the original tweed. Now we often weave a tweed in a plain weave instead of a twill, to give a lighter cloth than the twill of the same yarns and sett, and some of the old twill patterns have been modified to produce a similar effect in a plain-weave.

#### Simple Twills

The fundamental design from which the others have been derived is very simple, one colour for the warp and another for the weft. In a twill weave, this produces a strong diagonal line running straight across the fabric. Care must be taken in choosing the colours. Strong contrasts such as fawn and brown need very careful weaving, as the slightest variation in beat is visible. As a general rule it is advisable to use one strong colour and one neutral, or, if a softer effect is desired, two colours which will mix together and apparently make a third. The latter is usually more successful when used for a plain weave; the small spots of colour mix together better and the result is more lively than a warp and weft of a similar colour. For example, a bright emerald green woven with a strong purple heather mixture will produce a green heather mixture suitable for a sports jacket for the most retiring male.

Another often used weave is twill with a 2 and 2 warp and a plain weft. Several varieties are possible, the simplest being a warp of two threads light, two threads dark, and a weft of either the light or the dark colour. As a tweed should be woven 'square' (the same number of weft threads as warp threads per inch) the weft will account for half the colour of the finished fabric. With the 2 and 2 warp and a weft of one of the colours, the cloth will be either three-quarters dark and one-quarter light or three-quarters light and one-quarter dark, depending on which colour is chosen for the weft. The terms light and dark are used because, as a general rule, colours of the same tone value should not be used together since they tend to kill each other from a short distance, making the cloth look rather lifeless.



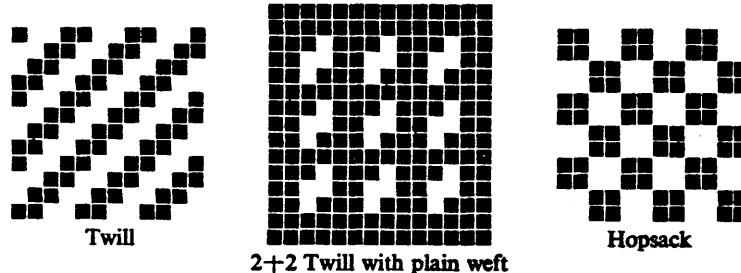
### Hopsack

This is a weave which gives a firm full cloth. In a tweed, it is usually a 2 up 2 down weave, but it does not move diagonally like a twill. Although it makes a cloth similar in thickness, the weave itself derives from the plain weave, each warp end and every shot of weft being doubled. The simplest threading for this weave would be 1,1,2,2, but the most convenient is 1,2,3,4 the tie-up being 1 and 2 to one treadle, 3 and 4 to the other. There are several ways of putting in the doubled weft. The most convenient involves the use of six shafts, which is beyond the scope of many handweavers, but a practical method is to use a double shuttle, with two separate bobbins running at once. Two shuttles can be used simultaneously, one following the other through the shed. This method involves the holding of two shuttles at once in one hand, which may create some difficulty until skill has been acquired. The least satisfactory method is to wind a double thread on one bobbin, as the thread inevitably twists on itself and does not give a true hopsack weave.

It is possible to use a single shuttle and catch the end selvedge thread on the return shot. On most foot-power looms this end thread can be left not threaded through a heddle, so that it lies in the middle of the shed, half-way between the top and bottom. The shuttle will run beneath it on leaving the shed and can be placed over it on the return shot. As far as making good cloth goes, any of the methods outlined above are possible, but the speed of weaving varies considerably. Of course, only one selvedge need be considered in single shuttle work, as the first row of each pair always catches the selvedge where it enters the shed.

### Herringbone and Waved Twill

This is a twill which reverses direction every so often, but which half-drops at the reverse, thus producing a 'cutting line' in the cloth. A

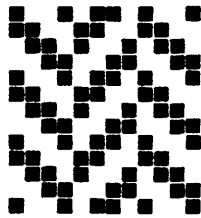


waved twill, such as a gooseye, has a weak spot on every alternate row of weft, where there is a float of 3 threads at the point; the herringbone

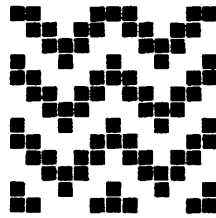
has not this disadvantage. In addition, while the waved twill gives the effect of a horizontal wavy line, the herringbone gives vertical stripes of right- or left-hand texture. The threading for herringbone is 1.2.3.4., repeated any number of times (from 2 up to 5 being the most usual) and then 2.1.4.3. for the same or a different number of times.

### Dogtooth

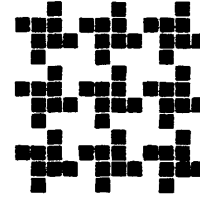
For a lighter weight of fabric, a plain weave can be used and a very effective pattern for this is the dogtooth. In a plain weave, a dogtooth is woven by putting 2 light and 2 dark in warp and the same in weft. This is a weave where the number of threads to the inch must be the



Herringbone



Waved Twill



Plain-weave Dogtooth

same in the warp as in the weft. A little latitude is permissible in plainer fabrics, but a colour weave effect of this type depends on the regularity of the weave, apart from consideration of good craftsmanship.

The names of some of these small weaves differ considerably in various parts of the country, but the names that I have used are ones in general use in the industry. Several patterns such as the basket weave and the dogtooth now exist in a plain-weave version as well as the original twill. Some manufacturers differentiate the smaller weave by a different name, e.g. puppy tooth, dogtooth, hounds tooth, while others refer to plain-weave dogtooth and twill weave dogtooth.

In a future article I hope to deal with the basket weaves, one and one stepped twill, twill dogtooth, shepherd's plaid, checks and so on. I shall also show how to work out these colour and weave effects on squared paper. Once the method of doing this has been mastered a large range of very delightful weaves is at the weaver's fingertips.

## WARPS AND WARP MAKING

by HILDA A. BREED

**T**HE warp forms the basis or framework of the construction of the web; behind it lies the purpose of the work. It may be utilitarian, tweed, hardwearing cloth for curtains or other furnishing, hard yet gay materials for use in brilliant sunlight, light and soft for the old or the very young, airy and graceful for happy occasions. Your fanciful imagination and all your knowledge of yarns, fine and coarse, plain and 'fancy', are brought into action when planning warps.

(a) **Tweeds.** In these, warp and weft are of equal importance. The cloth is standard in weave and built for wear. It is best to plan colour designs in multiples of 4. This is especially true of the simple 2+2 twills and of herringbone, and is advisable for standard tabby (plain) weaves. Much time is saved by having a regularly recurring order of 2's or 4's when drawing in.

There are, of course, standard patterns to be made in colour woven in 2+2 twill, involving other colour arrangements, such as alternate (1+1) ends of contrasting tones, or a 3+3 arrangement. They derive for the most part, however, from the 2+2 or 4+4 arrangement. The popular 'Shepherd's Plaid', for instance, is comprised of 4 ends dark in tone and 4 ends light. The alternate dark and light mentioned above will give a pleasant zig-zag.

The scale of the pattern and the weight of the cloth will depend both on the count of the yarn and the denting of the reed. All 11-cut wool may be dented 2/9 or even 2/12 and the cloths produced will be of medium or heavy weight. A 6-cut wool can be dented 2/5 or 2/7 for a coat material of loose or close texture. The pattern chosen will be correspondingly fine or bold.

(b) **Warps that are mere weft holders.** These may be neutral in colour, either dark or light, or similar to the intended weft, and high enough in count to allow the weft to predominate. A plain black or plain unbleached cotton of as high count as 2/40's may give the weaver endless scope to fashion colour or texture stripes of infinite variety. The sett must be close enough for strength and to prevent the weft from cramming and concealing the warp entirely, say 20 or 28 per inch. Such a warp is a delight to weave since it leaves the weaver as free as the wilds to insert what he wills. Texture may range from fine to coarse, from smoothest to roughest yarns. If his inclination is such, fleece, raffia, jute, rushes, cellophane or charmingly shaded cottons may be used for mats, bedspreads, hangings or cushions. The work grows under his fingers like a painting.

(c) **Warps forming the theme of the piece,** the question to be answered

—the subject to be embellished. Such are spaced warps and ‘fade outs’, warps of uniform type of yarn but cunningly striped in colour, warps in which plain and fancy yarns are mingled, either regularly or as you will, warps in which a heavy cord-like yarn contrasts, let us say, with a fine gimp. Lately I have made a warp of three thicknesses of linen yarn. These were warped in 16 ends of each and reeded 1/16, 2/16, 4/16, with the result that I had stripes of one inch, half inch and quarter inch widths. When cross checked, the effect was both interesting and satisfying, but as coloured stripes it also proved pleasing. To such warp design there is no end and one’s ingenuity, sense of pattern and colour, and delight in lovely softness of handle or firm strength may have unlimited titillation. If the yarns you plan to use are not obtainable or fail to please, spin your own.

(d) **Scarves and squares.** These may partake of the character of a, b or c. If they are to be of classical type to wear with tweeds, they can easily be made on the simplest looms with rigid heddles, usually spaced about 14 ends per inch. They may be entirely of handspun wool and derive their beauty from the subtlety of the yarn made from the softest fleece obtainable.

Scarves and squares made on a four-shaft loom can, as it were, break all the rules. Spacing (and beating, when it comes to weaving) may be of an openness quite unorthodox, or open and close spacing may be used regularly or at will. Fine silk in brilliant colours makes a warp for a weft of softest wool. Gold, silver, or other metal threads mingle with wool to make warps for the airy scarves we wear at night. Our skill in handling delicate materials may be put to the test by using soft lightly-spun wools of our own or others’ spinning.

If the loveliest and subtlest colours give you pleasure, try dyeing a made warp of wool or silk with natural dyes. The warp can be made in sections and, though using the same dye, two or more shades can be obtained by using different mordants. A tie-dye method on all or part of the warp gives an interesting effect.

The making of a scarf should be like the writing of a lyric: it can be the loveliest outcome of your knowledge, skill and imagination—a gift fit for a queen.

Finally, whether the warp is made on clamped warping pegs, on a warping board or on an expensive warping mill, the aim is the same: to arrange *in order* the requisite number of threads, each of *precisely the same length*. If this last is faithfully done, there is no need to disturb the warp from its chain in setting it into the raddle. There should be no need to brush or pull out the ends separately. Simply pay out the chain as required when rolling it on to the back beam.

## THE THREAD OF LIFE

by DOROTHY WILKINSON

CROSSPATCH, *Crosspatch, sit by the fire and spin*—the author of those lines was a Psychologist and Occupational Therapist if ever there was one, for it is hard to think of anyone remaining mentally ruffled while spinning. The very action of the wheel gives a sense of calm and rhythm, qualities which seep down in to the mind of the spinner and are incompatible with evil or troubled thought. So Crosspatch may well be considered one of the earliest patients on whom occupational therapy was practised.

One of my spinning students some twenty odd years ago came to me from a brain specialist, who recommended some use of hand and foot which would bring back co-ordination to those limbs, impaired after a serious brain operation. The patient, a Scot and a very brave and determined lady, suggested spinning for this remedial purpose and I was lucky enough to be chosen to help her. I spent hours with her while she patiently wrestled with the problem during several short visits, since continued work of more than twenty minutes or so was too tiring. The task seemed well nigh impossible till at last we evolved a system which succeeded so completely that the wheel and hands were controlled simultaneously. Her joy can be imagined and she has often told me that her spinning wheel saved her life.

I have taught all my pupils by this method ever since and the normal student usually gets hand and foot co-ordination and spins within an hour's tuition. But I always take very good care to impress on them that to spin well entails long and patient practice, and that no one will spin well and easily unless they are carefully taught to analyse what is happening in each part of the mechanism of a spinning wheel.

For the practised spinner I believe there are few things more conducive to a calm and balanced mind than spinning. One of my students told me that during the London Blitz she always got her wheel. She lived in a big block of flats and at first, as all the inhabitants went to the shelter in the basement, she went too, and hated it. One evening, when the sirens went, she happened to be spinning and she continued to spin. After that evening she made a practice of getting her wheel as soon as the raids began and, instead of waiting in the shelter for a direct hit or for the danger to pass, she was calmly and happily spinning at the top of the building. There is no better way to keep one's head than to use one's hands, of this I am sure.

To talk of the things one loves is always to risk being thought sentimental, but the time that I spend in spinning gives me some of my greatest happiness and spinning wheels have come to be some of life's

most priceless possessions. As the yarn travels from my hands onto the bobbin it seems to conjure up thoughts of beautiful things that I have known—thoughts of those I have loved who are no longer with me in this life, music, mountains, downs and hills and flowing rivers, the ebb and flow of tides and the sound of the sea. Perhaps flowing water, of all things in nature, comes most to mind, for the flow of fleece to the wheel instinctively suggests it. I always tell my pupils to keep the fleece 'fluid', so that it goes as running water towards the spindle eye.

Spinning gives to me a wonderful feeling of Eternity. As I cast my mind backwards to the countless thousands of years that mankind has spun and forward to the time when my last length of thread will be spun, as I watch the little bridge of fleece travelling ever onwards to become thread, it seems symbolic of that tiny step which we all shall take from this world to the next. When my own time is up and my wheel is still and I shall spin on it no more, I can only hope that others will find in it the joy that I have found and that on and on, for still thousands and thousands of years, yarn will yet be spun by one of God's best gifts—the human hand.

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## GUILD REPORTS

**EDITORIAL NOTE:** *The Editor regrets that owing to pressure on space it is not possible to publish names and addresses of Guild Officers or particulars of individual Guild meetings in this issue. Forthcoming events of general interest will be found on page 2. Hon. Secretaries are asked to send in their Reports for the next issue not later than 30 May.*

### **Cambridgeshire**

The Inaugural Meeting of the Cambridgeshire Guild was held at Cambridge-shire House on 1 December, 1951. This Guild has been formed with a view to giving help to Weavers, Spinners and Dyers of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon-shire and the Isle of Ely. It is intended to hold periodic meetings with a speaker on subjects of interest to people engaged in the crafts.

Miss Davenport from the London Guild of Weavers gave some very useful advice to both weavers and budding weavers. Altogether about thirty people attended the meeting and much enthusiasm was shown.

*Fenweave, Witchford Works, Ely*

I. ALLEN (MRS.)

### **Cornwall**

Cornwall Guild was formed on 12 March, 1951, by Mrs. Todd-Brown (now Devon Guild) and Mrs. Rixon (Chairman) who has given hospitality for monthly meetings and demonstrations. The Guild now has fifty-three mem- bers.

The Guild is fortunate in having amongst its members, Miss Violetta Thurstan, Mrs. Simpson and Miss Comer. These members have already given helpful assistance.

The Guild hopes to be represented at the Royal Cornwall Show at Redruth, 11-12 June.

F. B. MONKTON (MRS.)

SINGER (MRS., NEW HON. SEC.) *The Croft, 34 Mount Wise, Newquay*

### **Devon**

The Devon Guild now numbers over seventy members. Quarterly meetings are held in Exeter, and arrangements have been made for Spinning and Weav- ing Schools in February and March.

Under the auspices of the Devon and Somerset Guilds arrangements have been made for an exhibition of work at the Royal Show in July at Stover. The Royal Show calls for a high standard of craftsmanship and Devon and Somerset are hoping for the support of all the South-Western Guilds.

*The Old House, Chudleigh*

VIOLET PELLEW (MISS)

### **Dorset**

The Dorset Guild held their Christmas Market in Dorchester in November, 1951, when members and associate members had the opportunity of selling their work. There was a fair attendance of the general public and though the sales were less than the year before, it was considered satisfactory.

The members, with some from the neighbouring Guilds, had the pleasure of two visits of interest in the past year: one to Frome to the Mills of Messrs. Tuckers, where fine cloth is made, one to Messrs. Heathcoat's Mills at Tiverton, where a variety of cloth and articles are made.

In December and January of this year the Guild held their Christmas School at Bridport, in co-operation with the County Education Department. Those who came as students were taught weaving methods, with an emphasis on tweed weaving, and the spinning of woollen and worsted yarns, with a demonstration of vegetable dyeing.

The Guild will take part in various exhibitions and Agricultural Shows during the year.

*Min Aern, Worth Matravers, Nr. Swanage*

HESTER VINEY (MISS)

#### **Gloucestershire**

The Gloucestershire Guild have just celebrated their second birthday by throwing a party to their members and friends.

During the first year they had talks on Tartans, Australian Wool and Weaving, Curtains and Furnishing Fabrics and American Indian Weaving.

The past year included demonstrations on Vegetable Dyeing and Spinning, talks and illustrations on Colour and Design, Cloth Construction and Finishing, Cloth Industry of the Stroud Valley, Romance of Vegetable Dyeing. Schools have been held in Dyeing and Beginners' Schools in Spinning and Weaving. Visits have been made to the Clifford Mill, Stratford-on-Avon and a member's workshop in the Wye Valley. In collaboration with Gloucestershire Rural Industries the Guild exhibited at the Three Counties Show and visitors were very interested in our dye plants and spinning and dyeing demonstrations. We welcome new members, friends and visitors.

We are a small Guild with a membership of about fifty. Owing to our members being scattered over the County we try to accommodate them by holding our meetings at various centres.

On 15 March a School was held at Gloucester College of Art, the subject being, 'How to put on a Long Warp'.

*Elm House, Norton, Nr. Gloucester*

L. M. BOODLE (MRS.)

#### **Hallamshire and District**

In the summer of 1951, a small band of five interested persons in the Sheffield area started to meet monthly as a Weavers' Circle. Very soon a Spinner was added and in four months the number had grown to twenty-nine.

It was then decided to form a Guild, for the benefit of craftsfolk in South Yorkshire or North Derbyshire. In the five months since its inception on 20 September, 1951, the membership has grown to seventy-five, thus demonstrating that, even in this highly industrialized area, there is a genuine love of craft work. As Sheffield cannot in any way pose as the centre of the weaving interests of Yorkshire, the old local name of Hallamshire was adopted.

Starting with a display on a modest scale at the kind invitation of Messrs. Newton, Chambers, Ltd., makers of IZAL, we proceeded to a larger three-day Show, under the auspices of the Sheffield Chrysanthemum Society. The spinning wheel was a constant attraction, and there was a small rigid-heddle loom making a scarf; a four-shaft table loom (to the Guild's own design) making cushion covers; and a 42-inch Kentish loom weaving a length of tweed. A board loom and tablet-weaving were also displayed.

The very varied exhibit of members' work, which covered almost every stage



of weaving, and included some lengths of London-finished tweed, drew large crowds, and the remark was heard on several occasions that nothing like this had been seen before in Sheffield.

Meetings have been well attended. Demonstrations of warping, and gating the loom and of spinning with the upright wheel; with talks on plain weave, pattern building, summer and winter, etc., have been given. A popular feature of all meetings is the display of members' work brought for discussion. Help is given in choice and supply of suitable yarns and equipment, and private tuition has been arranged for many members.

Although a young and small Guild, we feel that the sustained enthusiasm of our members augurs well for a bright future and that a high standard of craftsmanship is really being sought.

*Oak Tower, 134 Uppertorpe, Sheffield, Yorks.*

R. O. ILIFFE

#### **Hampshire**

The Hampshire Guild was inaugurated at Burley on 15 July, 1950. There was an attendance of thirty-seven original members. Our membership now numbers 160.

We have four General Meetings a year, at which lectures or demonstrations are given by well known and accomplished weavers and spinners.

We have an excellent library and members make very good use of the many beautiful books of instruction and design that we have been fortunate enough to receive as gifts.

Several parties of members have visited the Solent Carpet Factory, at Southampton; others have been to sheep shearings.

We had an Exhibition and Sale Tent with working looms and spinning wheels at the local Gymkhana; also a Sale of Work and Exhibition just before Christmas at Winchester.

*Sandy Shoot, Burley, New Forest*

EILEEN RICHARDS (MRS.)

#### **Kent**

The Guild was founded in October 1949 and now has a membership of fifty. Talks, demonstrations and schools for spinning, natural dyeing and weaving are held at various centres in the county.

*145 Bell Road, Sittingbourne*

W. HARCOURT BRIGDEN

#### **London and Home Counties**

At the suggestion of Miss Hester Viney, Hon. Secretary of the Dorset Guild, a number of weavers were invited to a meeting to discuss the formation of a London and Home Counties Guild. A Resolution to that effect was put to the 130 people present and the first meeting of the 'London' Guild was held on 18 March, 1950. The Officers and Committee were elected and the L.C.C. School at Addington Street was lent for monthly meetings which were held there until October of this year when we moved to the newly-decorated Holy Trinity Schools. Here the Guild members meet on the second Saturday of each month (except August) at 3 p.m.

From these beginnings the Guild has grown into a sturdy child with over 350 members, a quarterly Bulletin and a band of experts, always ready

to come forward and hold demonstration lectures which are greatly appreciated by members who attend in large numbers most regularly. These demonstrations are proving very helpful and the subjects chosen are selected from the suggestions sent in by members.

Our library is growing slowly but steadily and our librarian tells us that members who borrow books return them promptly and keep them in excellent condition. We are always seeking for new and out of print books, either to purchase or as gifts, and the librarian would be delighted to hear of any which might be available.

During our two years of existence we have arranged three Exhibitions, two for our members to show their own work and exchange views and problems, the third at Harrods which lasted three months and was visited by thousands of people including their Majesties Queen Mary and King Haakon. We met many weavers from all parts of the world and a number of them visited our Secretary. An exchange of Bulletins was arranged with those from Australia and New Zealand. These make interesting reading and can be borrowed from our librarian.

A heavy amount of correspondence on all types of questions concerning weaving, spinning, dyeing, selling, and particularly enquiries for advice on the purchase of looms, yarns and for instruction, are received by the Chairman, Secretary and Members of the Committee. Technical problems are dealt with by the Educational Sub-Committee, which it was found necessary to form and a very large number of weavers from all parts have been helped with their difficulties by a devoted band who give of their knowledge and experience ungrudgingly and voluntarily.

Our members are backing the new Journal most loyally and many of them are telephoning to ask when it will be available as they say 'they cannot wait to see it'.

Visitors from the other Guilds are always very welcome at our Monthly Meetings and it is sincerely hoped that those who can do so will call and make themselves known to us.

*35 Portland Place, W.1*

D. SHAW (MRS.)

#### **Somerset**

#### **MAY**

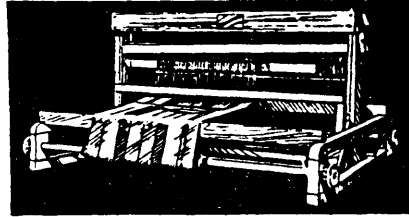
During the Exhibition staged in the Bristol City Museum, which included work by members of the South-West Counties, a meeting attended by representatives of five Guilds took place to discuss the possibilities of this Journal, which has now materialized.

That the work this Exhibition entailed was worth while was proved by the high standard of exhibits and the interest shown by the general public, the attendance during the week being over 7,500. Demonstrations of weaving and spinning were one of the great attractions, also a section set apart for work of members who had been weaving for only one year. Another feature was the exhibit of hand-woven vestments, hangings and braids woven by the Downside Abbey members which created so much interest that an outing was arranged to visit Downside Abbey where members were shown the work in process.

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#### **AUGUST**

A five-day school of weaving and spinning was held at Bishop Fox's School, Taunton, with an attendance of twenty-three men and women drawn from all parts of the country. The equipment was kindly lent by the Taunton College of Art.

#### **SEPTEMBER**

A one day meeting of Somerset and Devon Group Associate Members took place in Exeter. Demonstrations of spinning were given during the morning, in the afternoon work was brought by members for criticism and discussion. This was the final joint meeting before Devon formed their own Guild.

An invitation was extended to Spinners of the Guild by the Taunton branch of Messrs. Ebenezer Prior, Wool Staplers, to meet in their warehouse, where, surrounded by thousands of fleeces, a talk and demonstration on wool sorting was most helpful.

#### **OCTOBER**

An open meeting of an unusual character was held in the Byre Theatre, Wells. Short talks with demonstrations were given by members from the stage, the background was a colourful and attractively arranged display of vegetable dyed wools and work brought by members. A spotlight was focussed on the demonstrators! It was an interesting meeting and delighted the audience.

#### **NOVEMBER**

Described in the local press as 'one of the most interesting and fascinating exhibitions ever to be staged in Bridgwater' was of three days duration and was held in The Art Centre Theatre.

An outstanding feature was the hand-spun vegetable dyed section. The arrangement of the demonstrators on the well-lit stage was picturesque and attracted large numbers of onlookers throughout the period. Many of the exhibits were sold and a number of orders taken.

The County Education Committee now employ several experienced members of the Guild as instructors at their evening adult classes for weaving.

*The Western School of Needlework,  
Weston Street, Weston-super-Mare*

T. M. D. THOMAS (MISS)

#### **Warwickshire, with Worcestershire and Staffordshire**

The second Birthday Meeting of the Guild was held on 1 December, 1951. There was an exhibition of members' work, carefully judged by independent adjudicators. Members found the constructive criticism very helpful. Miss Viney addressed the members and congratulated the Guild on the remarkable development in a short period of two years. She made reference to the proposal to publish a Journal for weavers and of an appeal that would be made for funds. Mrs. Boodle of the Gloucestershire Guild assisted with the judging and also addressed the members.

*18 Salisbury Road, Moseley, Birmingham 13*

GEORGE E. SMITH

#### **Sussex**

The first Annual General Meeting was held on 24 January, in Battle. The Chairman said there were now sixty members spread over a large area. The opinion of some thirty members was that the numbers would increase if

meetings could be held in different parts of the County. It was decided to have monthly meetings and to go to Hastings for the next one and perhaps to Eastbourne and further west later.

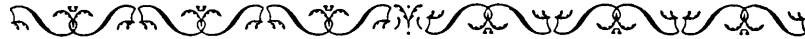
The high-light of the year's activities had been during the Battle Pageant in the Festival of Britain when the Guild took part in the Market surrounding the Green where only old rural crafts were included; the stands were rough booths and the helpers wore medieval costume and sold their wares to the pilgrims visiting the Abbey, to the Crusaders and their retinue newly back from the Crusades (and to the general public). In five half-days £215 of members' work was sold and tremendous interest created. Demonstrations of weaving and spinning were given continuously and many children learnt to spin with a spindle much to the amazement of the onlookers.

In December two small Sales efforts brought another £40 to members and it is hoped to expand this effort on behalf of members as a *separate entity* apart from the normal functions of the Guild. It has also been decided to keep a stock of some warp yarns suitable for beginners as much money and time is wasted writing for patterns and paying postage on small amounts.

Other future plans include visits to various weaving studios, flax mills, etc., and a weaving school for a week in the Spring.

*Blacklands, Crowhurst, Battle*

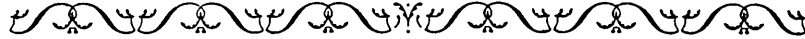
M. C. CARRINGTON (MRS)



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## BOOK REVIEWS

**Navajo Shepherd and Weaver:** GLADYS A. REICHARD (J. J. Augustin, New York City), 50s.

This fascinating book will entice those with a superficial knowledge, yet keen interest in weaving and the allied crafts, far beyond the stage of being satisfied with the possession of a loom and a book of traditional patterns.

The Navajo shepherds and weavers of the famous blankets, with their still primitive methods, are creating works of art with wool from sheep they breed specially for this purpose. The author lived and worked with the Navajos for four summers and gives a real insight into their ways and methods. The chapters on 'Yarn' (all spindle-spun) and 'Colour' are particularly engrossing.

The book is well illustrated with photographs and diagrams of individual designs.

To quote Dr. E. L. Hewett, *Ancient Life in the American Southwest* :

'The "Navajo blanket" has become known far and wide as a thing of beauty and utility. It has become [their] major resource, has dominated their culture, and contributed more than any other one thing to their welfare and virility. It has weathered the degenerating influence of commercialization and is an outstanding illustration of how an aesthetic factor may shape the destiny of a people'

Bully or cajole your local library into procuring a copy for your delight.

GLADYS E. DICKINSON

**Elementary Textile Design and Fabric Structure:** JOHN READ, F.T.I. (The Textile Institute, 10 Blackfriars Street, Manchester 3). *Revised and enlarged edition*, 1950, 12s. 6d.

This concise and lucid book is written primarily for students preparing themselves for designing in the cotton industry, where sixteen shaft looms are usual. The title might mislead the handweaver, who probably thinks of elementary design in terms of two or four shaft fabrics. The structures, shown so clearly in the many diagrams, could be adapted for use on hand looms by adventurous weavers who use eight or more shafts and who already have sound knowledge and experience of the possibilities of their yarns.

Yet it is not as a practical pattern book that this small volume will appeal to handweavers, but rather as a source of information about the problems which face the industrial designer of fabrics. It is so clearly written that any weaver, with a genuine curiosity about cloth structure, will be interested to learn about the many familiar fabrics explained; especially if he has a linen glass and samples of fabric at hand to study as he reads.

MARY KIRBY

**Wool Cloth Sample Book** (Dept. of Education, The International Wool Secretariat), 6s.

This publication, though in appearance a mere bound bunch of tailor's patterns, includes, besides its fourteen actual samples of common woollen cloths, much information concerning their structure and is a useful guide to the ways of making woollen cloths for different purposes. The weaves are illustrated by

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point paper designs and by magnified drawings of the interlacings of the threads, and the characteristics of each cloth are described.

For the many hand weavers whose approach to the craft has not been via the technical college this is an excellent summary of how the commoner woollen cloths are made.

This is not to say that they can all be reproduced; fine setts and high finish render many unsuitable for hand loom production: still it is a good thing to know the general ways of the industry of which we are a small specialized part.

The book has one surprise: in the point paper designs black appears to indicate warp. All other books on textile design with which I am acquainted employ the convention that black means weft. Is this, like the left-hand drive, an insular practice, and does the internationalism of the publisher's title demand that we fall into step with some contrary continental mode?

JOHN V. D. KILBRIDE

**Notes on Carpet Knotting and Weaving:** C. E. C. TATTERSALL, Department of Textiles, Victoria and Albert Museum. (H.M. Stationery Office), 1s.

Of late, weavers, amateur as well as professional, are showing a keen interest in the many varieties of carpet and tapestry weaving and are enquiring for technical books relating to these forms of textiles. This booklet contains a lot of general and technical information for which a prospective carpet weaver might be very grateful. A photograph of a model loom, presented to the Museum by William Morris, is accompanied by a brief account of how it functions; technical processes are described in a summary way and, to illustrate them, life-size photographs of sections of carpets have been reproduced, as well as diagrams of the different kinds of knots, fringes and selvages; there is a short paragraph on design and one on materials in common use for warp, weft and pile. The reviewer, however, disagrees with the author's opinion that synthetic dyes may one day rival the vegetable dyes in quality.

ARISTIDE MESSINESI

#### SHORT NOTICES

**Notes on Spinning and Dyeing Wool:** MAY HOLDING (Skilbeck), 4s. 6d.

A useful introduction to the two crafts: encourages experiment.

**Costing for the Country Craftsman** (Rural Industries Bureau), 1s.

Explains the principles of costing and gives several examples of calculations for particular jobs.

**So Spins the Silkworm:** ZOE, LADY HART DYKE (Rockliff), 15s.

A delightfully entertaining account of the silkworm farm at Lullingstone, Kent.

**Weaving and Pattern Drafting:** K. GRASSETT (London School of Weaving), 5s.

A book for beginners; instructions for warping with frame and mill; use of the raddle; setting up and entering treadle loom and beginning to weave.

*Some of these books may be out of print, but can be obtained second-hand or through County Libraries.*



## JOURNAL INFORMATION

### EDITORIAL

The Editorial Committee will welcome :

- (a) Letters to the Editor.
- (b) Suggestions for future articles.
- (c) Suggestions on practical matters connected with the crafts.
- (d) Questions and comments.

All correspondence should be addressed to Miss M. Barker, 123 Crouch Hill, London, N.8. The Editorial Committee reserve the right to publish or reject at their discretion all matter thus submitted, unless specially requested to withhold publication.

### COPIES

Annual subscription: Members, 4s. Non-members, 6s.8d. Including postage. Single copies of the Journal for non-members and additional copies for members, sent by post (1s. 8d. per copy, including postage), can be obtained from Mrs. Dickinson, 80 Heathcroft, Hampstead Way, London, N.W.11.

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### NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

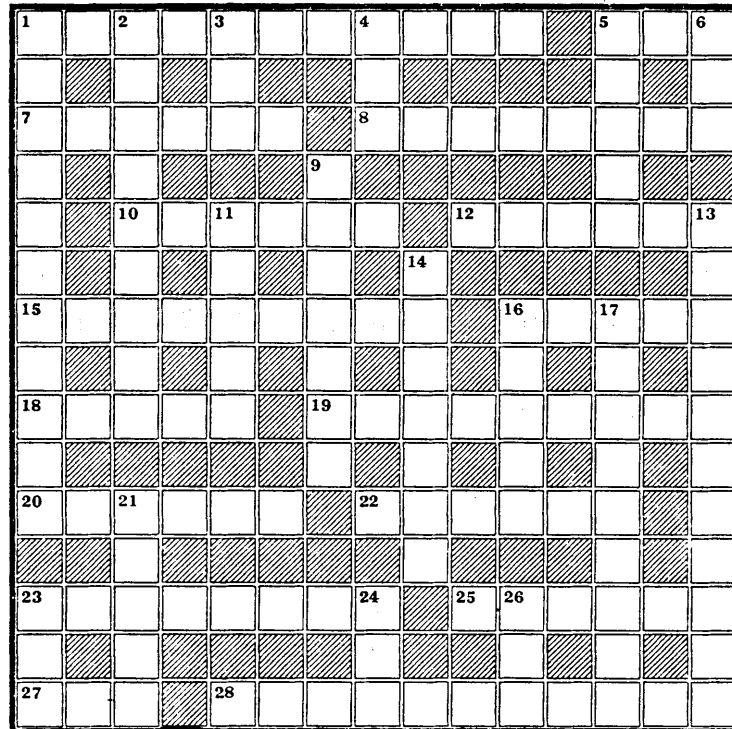
**Ethel Mairet.** Royal Designer for Industry. Pioneer Handweaver. Author of several books on handweaving.

**John E. Tovey.** Weaving Instructor, Birmingham School of Art.

**Hilda A. Breed.** Teacher at Howells School and now at Avery College.

**Dorothy Wilkinson.** Principal of London School of Weaving.

## A WEAVER'S CROSSWORD (No. 1)



### ACROSS

1. Surely also a true lover's? (7, 4)
5. The best, whether worsted or pupils. (3)
7. A curse to spinners, a blessing to weavers. (6)
8. An American composer mistakenly wrote a marching song for this. (8)
10. Largos (anag.). (6)
12. The reverse of one who added materially to the gaiety of Festival Hall. (6)
15. Membership of the ancient guilds was a . . . of good craftsmanship. (9)
16. Synthetic yarn. (5)
18. *Red* tape? Not necessarily. (5)
19. A fruitful place in which to search for our founder. (3, 6)
20. Known to all weavers and the name of a great reformer. (6)
22. The proper accompaniment of sage produces this. (6)
- 23 and 27. The lady in 19 across may be said to be this of the guilds. (6, 2, 3)
15. To do this was Penelope's homework. (6)

28. Weaver's sporting event? (11)

### DOWN

1. No jolly miller lives by this. (7, 4)
2. Dyestuff, a by-product of clog making. (5, 4)
3. Forty-five English inches. (3)
4. Cotton may grow here in London. (3)
5. Not tabby, but it will do. (5)
6. A fitment essential to 1 down. (3)
9. Stir up. (7)
11. The 'cross' according to Hooper. (5)
13. Dear to the amateur—gardener or weaver. (11)
14. A headless wool stapler. (7)
16. Oddments of yarn are . . . . store. (2, 3)
17. A sort of overturned spinning wheel. (1, 3, 5)
21. Careful calculations please for this number of ends. (5)
23. Aim on its head. (3)
24. The parts of a well-made loom do this perfectly. (3)
26. A muddled warp thread. (3)

## SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

**Odds and Ends** of fluff from warps and looms. Mrs. Carrington, Blacklands, Crowhurst, Battle, Sussex, would be glad to receive parcels of anything clean, however scrappy, to sell again; the proceeds going towards a fund to pay for lessons in spinning and weaving for those who cannot afford it.

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**Sussex Guild**. Write for particulars to Mrs. Carrington, Blacklands, Crowhurst, Battle, Sussex.

## BOOKS — *old and new*

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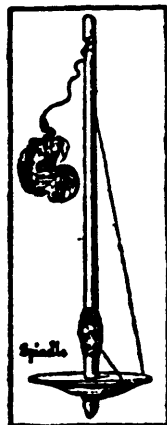
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