

warp and weft

Vol. XX, No. 9

November, 1967

warp and weft

PUBLISHED MONTHLY (EXCEPT JULY AND AUGUST)
BY ROBIN & RUSS HANDWEAVERS, 533 NORTH
ADAMS STREET, McMinnville, OREGON 97128.

SUBSCRIPTION: \$4.00 PER YEAR.

BACK ISSUES: 40c EACH, PLUS 4c POSTAGE.

EDITOR: RUSSELL E. GROFF,

ASSISTANT EDITOR: ROBIN GROFF.

Vol. XX, No. 9

November, 1967

A Word from the Editor:

It is my hope that you will not get tired or bored with the many reports of the different things seen on my recent trip to the British Isles and Switzerland. I felt as though the article I wrote for this month was extra long, and yet, I just couldn't tell you all about it in a few words.

I might mention that I am paying for my trip now in more ways than one. Most of the yarns I ordered have come in but there are still about 400 lbs. of linen yet to come and also some 200 to 300 lbs. of silk that have not yet arrived. And I'm still paying for the trip, in that each time a shipment comes in, there is a payment of duty, shipping charges, freight charges, foreign shipping charges, customs brokers fees and others to pay on each shipment.

A good example is that we just received a shipment of 282 lbs. of Irish tweed, and the accompanying charges for these 282 lbs. was exactly \$280.00. So you can see that it is sometimes an expensive task to import yarns. And just as I'm writing this today, some 600 lbs. of linen have arrived, and the charges on this just for duty and shipping and broker fees is \$380.00. I've been broke for several months now just paying duty.

Well, you can see some of the pitfalls, and pleasures of such a trip as I made, in these reports I give.

Here in the shop we are busier than ever trying to sort these yarns as they come in, uncrating, wrapping and storing them so that they will not be soiled. It is a job that keeps all three of us, Janice, Robin and I busy, as well as the two girls who work in the shop on a part time basis.

Page 2

Our bins are all full now, and so we now work on sample sheets to advertise these new wares. This is a job to make out the sample sheets, but it is the only way that we can acquaint you with what we have purchased for sale to our weaving customers.

Our sample this month is one that I worked out and started before I left on the trip to Europe and am just now in the process of finishing. Hope that you will like it as much as we do.

Enough for this time, and we will look forward to visiting with you next month.

Russell E. Groff, *Editor*

This Month's Cover Photograph:

The cover photograph this month is from one of the Northern California Conferences and is a close-up of a stole or scarf that I thought was outstanding.

The decoration is provided both by the Danish Medallion technique, and also by the very interesting texture of the threads used in the warp, and also the frosted soft fuzzy texture of the thread used to create the actual medallion part of the weaving.

I have always felt that Danish Medallion is one of the most effective ways of decorating a fabric, and it would work very well in stoles, scarves, drapes, materials for lampshades, etc. Why don't you experiment with this technique and see what effect you can achieve.

This Month's Book Review:

This month I want to tell you about a book that I came across while on the weaving tour through the British Isles.

It is entitled **BRITISH SHEEP BREEDS, THEIR WOOL, AND ITS USES.**

This is a fascinating book, as it gives an outstanding picture of each of the many different breeds of English Sheep, and tells the characteristics of each of them, where they are found, and all of the pertinent facts about the fleece, the characteristics of the fleece, and how they are used.

The book is jammed full of pictures and sixteen of them are full page color pictures.

Many handweavers have heard often of such wools as Cheviot, Black Welsh Mountain Sheep, Scottish Blackface, Shetland and other

qualities of wool. This is a down to earth book telling you of the qualities of these wools and many others, and they tell you what the best uses for these wools are, and where they may be found, and then they give a picture of a flock of each kind of sheep described.

If any of you would like to see what the countryside of the British Isles is like without going there, the pictures in this book give you an excellent idea.

This was printed by the British Wool Marketing Board to acquaint farmers and laymen alike with the wool industry of the British Isles.

One of the color plates is a map showing where the various breeds of sheep are found, where the yarn is spun and manufactured into yarns and it makes you want to visit the country of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

The day of our return from this weaving tour, I started saving so that I could go again, and I'm tempted to use this book as my guide if I can ever go again, and visit all of the parts of the British Isles where these breeds of sheep are found, and photograph them. This would certainly take you to some of the interesting and out of the way places different than the usual tourist haunts, and would help you get acquainted with the country and its people.

This is an outstanding book, and I can recommend it highly, and particularly pleasing is the fact that it is \$3.75 plus postage.

TITLE: BRITISH SHEEP BREEDS, THEIR WOOL, AND ITS USES.

PUBLISHER: British Wool Marketing Board
COST: \$3.75 plus 15c postage.

AVAILABLE: Robin & Russ Handweavers

An Increase in Subscription Price Of Warp and Weft

We have had a 22½ per cent increase in the cost of having Warp and Weft printed, and also, the bulletin is being sent out via first class mail. As a result of this change, the mailing costs have gone up about 65 per cent and with the expected increase of first class that has been passed by congress, it will be up about 100 per cent or over what we had it as of January 1967.

Because of this, we are going to give notice

that effective February 1, 1968, Warp and Weft will be \$4.50 per year. We are keeping the increase in price to a minimum to just defray the increased costs that we have in getting it out to you.

A Visit to a Ramie Mill in Switzerland

For the past ten years, we have been importing 16 colors of Ramie from one company in Switzerland. When I found I could go to the British Isles and then to Switzerland, I wrote to the ramie mill, and asked if I could visit their plant and see how the ramie was prepared and spun into thread, and what was done with the ramie thread.

Their reply was to let them know when I would arrive and that they would be most pleased to show me through their plant, and they asked if they could do anything else. Because of this, I also asked them if they could arrange for me to visit a woolen mill, a silk mill, and a linen mill, and their reply was that it would be all arranged for me.

I arrived at the Ramie mill a good distance outside of Zurich one rainy afternoon, and went in to check and see if all the details were worked out.

Mr. King, the man in charge of foreign sales, told me that I was expected back at the plant at 8:30 in the morning so that I could spend the morning touring their plant.

I arrived at 8:30 and the tour began. The first room I visited was the board room, where I was shown many, many different samples of the ramie threads, and some of the products made from Ramie. I found that this particular mill started in 1828 and that their first industry was making and selling hats of all things. Upon further questioning, I found that much of the ramie they produce is used to make hats, and it was the unavailability of the ramie to make the hats, that started them in production of the Ramie threads. I saw cowboy hats, panama hats, and decorative straw hats of all kinds made of Ramie. This was most interesting to see and find out the why and how such a business got started.

Most of the Ramie fiber there comes from the Philippines, although some of it does come from Florida also. It comes to them in a

(Continued on Page 6)

FALL FOLIAGE

An interesting texture weave which was planned to try and incorporate the colors you see in fall leaves into a fabric.

THREADING DRAFT:

4		L		G	
3	R			R	
2		X		X	
1		X		X	

KEY TO COLORS IN THE WARP:

- X – Rust colored single ply homespun
- G – Green Gold 2/16's worsted
- R – Rosemary Red Loop Mohair
- L – Gretta Gold Loop Mohair

WARP THREADS USED:

There are 4 different threads used in the warp, as listed in the key to colors in the warp.

The rust colored single ply homespun is a 2½ run yarn, with 4,000 yards per lb.

The Green Gold 2/16's Worsted yarn is available on 2 oz. spools, and it has 4200 yards per lb.

The Rosemary Red loop mohair, and the Gretta Gold loop mohair are both fine loop mohair yarns with about 2,000 yards per lb.

WEFT THREADS USED:

We used two different tweed yarns in the weft. Both are 1-1/4 run wool tweed yarns, made of New Zealand wool, and one of them is an olive green with flecks of brighter green and yellow as the nubs in the yarn. The second weft tweed is a sort of sage green with flecks of lighter green as the nubs in the tweed yarn.

REED USED:

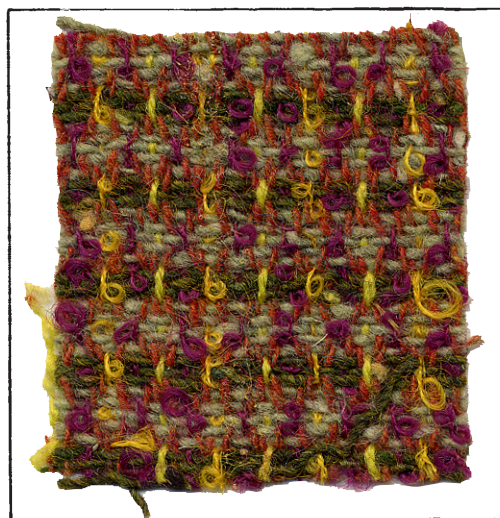
A 10 dent reed was used, and it was double sleyed, 2 ends per dent. No attention was paid to the different textured threads in each dent. In other words, there were sometimes 2 homespun yarns in one dent of the reed, and sometimes there was one loop mohair and one homespun and sometimes there was one 2/16's worsted and one homespun yarn, in a dent.

TIE-UP DRAFT:

4	X	X	O	O	X	O
3	X	O	O	X	O	X
2	O	O	X	X	X	O
1	O	X	X	O	O	X
	1	2	3	4	5	6
				A	B	

X—tie-up for Counter-balanced looms.
O—tie-up for Jack-type looms.

SAMPLE:



TREADLING SEQUENCE:

1. Treadle No. 1 – sage green tweed
2. Treadle No. 2 – sage green tweed
3. Treadle No. 3 – sage green tweed
4. Treadle No. 2 – sage green tweed
5. Treadle No. 1 – sage green tweed
6. Treadle No. 3 – olive green tweed
7. Treadle No. 4 – olive green tweed
8. Treadle No. 3 – olive green tweed
9. Treadle No. 1 – sage green tweed
10. Treadle No. 2 – sage green tweed
11. Treadle No. 3 – sage green tweed
12. Treadle No. 2 – sage green tweed
13. Treadle No. 1 – sage green tweed
14. Treadle No. 4 – olive green tweed
15. Treadle No. 3 – olive green tweed
16. Treadle No. 4 – olive green tweed

END OF ONE PATTERN REPEAT. Repeat over and over as desired.

MORE ABOUT THIS FABRIC:

First of all, I should mention that you want to use a light or medium double beat. Throw the shuttle and beat, and then change to the next treadle and beat the second time. This prevents the threads from clinging together, and there is a slight tendency to do this with the mohair and the homespun yarns used in the warp.

Secondly, we were surprized and had no trouble with breakage in the threads used in the warp. The single ply rust homespun seems to have a good strong twist and we never had one broken thread of this except where there was a knot.

The same also applied to the loop mohair. We had no broken threads in the loop mohair except for knots, and either once or twice a loop pulled apart.

We had this fabric set up in the reed 40" wide, and it wove down to 38½" width which was a surprize to me. I had expected that with the mohair threads in the warp that it would weave down narrower than it did.

On this fabric, surprizingly enough, we did not put on 4 cotton or 8 cotton selvage threads as we quite often do with an all wool warp. We had very little trouble with broken selvage threads, but I do want to suggest that if you do have such trouble, that this would be an excellent place to use a temple or stretcher.

I might mention that I was using the Leclerc No. 120 boat shuttles in weaving this fabric, and I left the weight of the shuttle take care of the selvage edges. In no way did I try to control the thread in the bobbin or on the edge of the fabric, but I let the weight of the shuttle as you throw it through the shed pull in, and it was just this that controlled what I thought was a good selvage edge for the type of threads used.

Also, when finished, I feel that it is important that you finish this fabric properly. I'm going to suggest that you do as I mention on most samples, and that is wash this fabric in lukewarm water, and this time I'd suggest that you use ivory snow or lux, as I'm sure that the two weft threads and perhaps the rust homespun warp thread will have a little oil in them. The soap will help

to remove this. Then rinse thoroughly 2 or 3 times, and allow it to drip dry, and then steam press on both sides of the fabric.

COST OF THE VARIOUS THREADS USED:

The rust homespun is a lot of about 100 lbs. we purchased and it is on sale at \$4.00 per lb. This type of yarn would normally sell for about \$5.50 to \$7.50 per lb.

The 2/16's green gold worsted yarn comes on 2 ounce tubes of 525 yards each and they sell for \$1.00 each, or for \$7.85 per lb.

The rosemary red loop mohair and the gretta gold loop mohair both have about 1,800 to 2,000 yards per lb., and both are the same price at \$3.50 per lb.

The two threads in the weft are the heavier 1-1/4 run wool tweed yarns with about 2,000 yards per lb. Both colors in this are \$3.20 per lb.

COST OF THE FABRIC:

In a 12 yard warp, 40" wide, I found that it took 1 lb. 10 oz. of rust homespun, 14 oz. of rosemary loop mohair and 6½ oz. of the gretta gold loop mohair, and 3½ oz. of the 2/16's worsted. Combining the cost of these 4 threads together, we find the total warp cost was \$12.75 or the cost per yard comes to \$1.07 per yard.

I lost count of the amount of each color of weft thread used, but checking on the total weft threads of both colors in one yard, I find that 1 lb. of the tweed is enough weft for 3-1/3 yards. Thus, the 2 weft threads at \$3.20 per lb., would make one yard of weft cost 97c per yard.

Thus the total cost per yard would come to \$2.04 per yard.

WARP COST PER YARD, 40" wide	\$1.07
WEFT COST PER YARD, 38½" wide	.97
FABRIC COST PER YARD	<u>\$2.04</u>

The Book Corner:

We are going to start a new section in Warp and Weft, and each month we hope to mention 4 or 5 different books that are available on handweaving or other handcrafts.

THIS MONTH WE WANT TO TELL

YOU THAT *BYWAYS IN HANDWEAVING*, by Mary Meigs Atwater is once again available. Price is \$7.95 plus 15c postage.

With the increase in popularity of Macrame work, we will bring to your attention a book on this subject which is available and which was published in 1949. It is the *SQUARE KNOT HANDICRAFT GUIDE*. Reasonably priced at \$4.75, it has many pictures and directions for macrame work and knotting work. Most of you know that at one time, many of the sailors in the past, when off duty, had a hobby of square knot work, and this book was written by two such sailors to tell you about their hobby. Postage is 15c.

Another interesting book, which will probably not be available long is the book, "*CONTEMPORARY TAPESTRIES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA*." The text is written in English, the pictures are outstanding and many of them are in color. This book features the tapestries from several studios in Czechoslovakia and also the work of several individual artists and painters. Price is \$6.95 plus 20c pp., and I believe it would cost \$10.00 to \$12.00 to publish this same book in the U.S.

Ramie Factory in Switzerland (Continued)

DECORTICATED form. The ramie plant is like an Elderberry plant somewhat in that it has an inner pithy core, and then the fibers and then the outer bark. The inner core has to be removed as well as the outer bark. When you examine the word, Decorticator, you can see what the word means. Decore — means to remove the inner pith of the ramie plant. Cate means to remove the outer bark of such a plant. Some of this work is done in Switzerland, but most of it is done in the Philippines. The ramie then comes to the mill in bales of perhaps 400 to 600 lbs. in size, and it looks like a sort of coarse straw type bale until you examine it a little closer and then you find the coarser ramie fibers. Some of the natural ramie is so white in color that quite often it does not have to be bleached to have a white yarn. On the contrary, sometimes they have to dye it a color, to get a slightly darker natural color.

Then the fibers are taken to a room where they are thoroughly soaked in water, and with

perhaps some chemicals, and they pass through this series of rollers two or three times, and this helps to remove more of the gum, inner core, and outer bark, and also the moisture makes the fibers a little more pliable and a little less apt to break.

The steps after this are almost identical to that you would see in a linen mill in the preparation of linen into yarn. The ramie fibers go through a series of combs (hackles they are sometimes called) to separate the fiber and pull it out to length, and to get the fibers all to lay parallel to one another. This fiber is quite fine and lustrous and beautiful and white. IT WAS SO WHITE AND BEAUTIFUL AND LUSTROUS THAT I PURCHASED SOME OF THIS IN ROVING FORM FOR THE VARIOUS HANDSPINNERS TO TRY OUT.

After combing, the fibers are combined into a roving about 1/2" thick and about 15" wide. Then, there is a separation here and some of it is prepared for use in making hats, and the rest is then spun just as a linen is to make threads. It was most interesting to follow the preparation of the ramie for use in the manufacture of the hats.

The roving is sort of pressed flat and made quite condensed, and perhaps controlled to a width of 15". Then it goes in the roving form into a machine that moistens it, starches it and then flattens it out until it is almost like a non-woven fabric, pressed quite flat, starched stiff, and about 15" wide. It is then rolled up into large rolls of from 3 to 5 feet in diameter. From here it was taken to a cutting machine with a series of knives and is sliced lengthwise into ribbons of varying widths, depending upon the kind of hats that will be made of it. I saw some of these widths of about 1/4" or less up to about 1" in width. I know that I often wondered how the threads in a Panama hat or closely woven cowboy hat were prepared and here was the whole process being done in the ramie mill. Then these long lengths of ramie in narrow widths are sold to the hat manufacturers. The company I was visiting does not make any hats but just makes the thread for these and sells it to the hat manufacturers. I examined these hats very closely, and came to the conclusion that you could not tell them apart from the finest Panama Hat

on the market, and I felt that perhaps they would be stronger and more durable than the material used in Panama hats.

Of course, we have digressed here, telling of one of the other uses of ramie, but I must get back and tell you that the other preparation, the spinning of the ramie roving into threads is almost identical to the spinning of linen threads. The same type of machines are used as in linen production.

Then they took me into the dye-room and showed us the latest and most modern methods of dyeing the yarns. I was most impressed with the dyeing procedures as most of the colors in ramie that they sell are sold as washfast and sunfast colors. This is most unusual, as many, many of the yarn manufacturers do not put any kind of a guarantee on their colored yarns.

And then I went into the wrapping and shipping department and saw the ramie yarn and ramie straw being packed for the shipment to countries all over the world.

After this most interesting morning (it was now 11:45), Mr. King told me then that he had planned on taking me to a hand-weaving shop that used many of their ramie yarns in their weaving. We were treated to lunch at an ancient and old hotel in Zurich, and then we drove through the Swiss countryside to Berne, Switzerland. We stopped to visit and see some of the beauties of Berne, and this is a medieval town that you should not pass up on your trip to Switzerland. It was fascinating with its block after block of interesting stores of all kinds, all under cover of a closed over walk way. Mr. King told me that many of these shops and stores were exactly the same now as when they were built in 1500 and 1600.

We continued on our journey to visit the weaver, and went through the beautiful Swiss countryside and saw the farmers at work in the fields. We finally arrived at Zaziwil, and visited the Emmenthaler Handweaving home. This was a large private home of 3 floors and also several other cottages nearby. In almost every room there was a loom and there were many kinds and types. Some were regular floor looms, some were flyshuttle, and there was even a dobbie loom and a jacquard loom, all worked by hand.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Why not advertise your old loom, duplicate equipment, and other such items in this section. Price per 5-line ad is \$4.00. Payment to accompany your advertising copy.

IN STOCK:

Fabri and Afghan. (Color cards 35c). The Handweavers' Workbasket, Box 399, Rt. 1, West Chicago, Illinois 60185.

NATURAL GREY HEAVY SLUB LINEN.

This is imported from Switzerland. It is 2½ lea, slub linen, that can be used for warp or weft, in the dark natural grey color. \$3.20 per lb. on tubes of about 1 lb. 4 oz. each. 750 yards per lb. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

6/4 NATURAL GREY LINEN RUG WARP.

This is another import from Switzerland. It has 450 yards per lb., the same as an 8/5 linen. Available on 1 lb. 2 to 4 oz. tubes. Price is \$3.20 per lb. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

BLEACHED WHITE SLUB LINEN.

This is spun in Switzerland. It has 750 yards per lb., is 2½/1, and would probably work for warp as well as weft. Price is \$3.20 per lb., on tubes of about 1 lb. 3 oz. each. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

BYWAYS IN HANDWEAVING,

by Mary Meigs Atwater is available again. The price is \$7.95 plus 15c postage. Has many interesting finger techniques of weaving, as well as card-weaving and others. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

8" SMALL MINIATURE SWEDISH SHUTTLE

This well-made shuttle is excellent for use on all types of sample looms. Price is \$1.85 plus 10c postage. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

One room on the top floor was the working room where suits, skirts, aprons and other items were tailored. Then after working through Mr. King as the interpreter, we ordered some fabrics and hope someday soon to have two of these fabrics to use as samples in Warp and Weft.

Then we went to downtown Zaziwil, where they had a weaving room in the top of an old house. This was the display room for the buyers and tourists, and it was jammed full of many of the fabrics in forms of coats, pillows, suits, skirts, blankets, robes, scarves and 1001 other handwoven items.

This was a most memorable day and one that I will remember for a long time to come, and I hope that some day we might make this same visit and trip again.

The Weaver's Marketplace

<p>Compact Folding NORWOOD LOOMS</p>	<p>Five Widths 16" — 22" — 30" — 40" — 50" Made of Cherry The Norwood Loom Co P. O. Box 272 Baldwin, Michigan</p>
<p>NEW!!! Functional Overshot by Grace D. Blum A basic source for modern designs. Contains concise directions for weaving almost any overshot threading, in 24 different methods and 32 woven swatches. \$16.50 per copy. Mailed prepaid when check accompanies order. Hand Weavers' Work Basket Box 399, R. R. 1 West Chicago, Illinois</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">HANDWEAVING YARNS and SUPPLIES</p> <p>A wide variety of distinctive yarns, developed especially for handweaving is available for prompt shipment in quantities to suit your needs. <i>Write today for FREE CATALOG and PRICE LIST.</i> The Handweaver's Headquarters Lily Mills Company Dept. HWWW Shelby, N. C.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">BOOKS AVAILABLE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BYWAYS IN HANDWEAVING, Atwater \$7.95 2. CONTEMPORARY TAPESTRIES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA by Ludmila Kybalova — English text \$6.95 3. SQUARE KNOT HANDICRAFT GUIDE \$4.75 4. BRITISH SHEEP BREEDS, THEIR WOOL AND ITS USES \$3.75 <p style="text-align: center;">For each book, add 15c postage</p> <p>Order from: ROBIN & RUSS HANDWEAVERS 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128</p>	

warp and weft
 533 NORTH ADAMS STREET
 McMINNVILLE, OREGON 97128

