



(above) Transferring Nature's Patterns. This girl scout has chosen pine branches and cones to make her design.

(at right) Girl Scouts learn to weave on 100-year-old looms, guided by mountain women who have inherited this craft, at Camp May Flather, Shenandoah Mountains, Virginia

(below) The making of patchwork quilts in true American style is a favorite handicraft project of New England Girl Scouts



Transfer Nature's Patterns

By Marguerite Ickis

WOULD you like to catch forever the orange and rust and flame of autumn leaves in a square of material that will make a lovely wall hanging, an attractive card table cover or a colorful jacket for a favorite book?

New Jersey Girl Scouts make these squares by combining their nature studies with their handicraft work. Girl Scouts studying for their tree-finder badge must learn to recognize twenty-five trees and shrubs when in leaf. When walking through the woods in autumn, girls pick up and identify all the bright leaves they can find and, to press them flat, immediately put them between the pages of old magazines brought along on the hike. They are careful to choose leaves still holding plenty of color as these contain enough moisture to make them practical to work with. Faded leaves are apt to be brittle.

After making a collection of leaves, one Girl Scout made a wall hanging in the following fashion:

Cover a large table with newspapers and place over the paper a square of unbleached muslin, held firmly by thumb tacks. Keep your pile of autumn leaves beside you and work out on the muslin a design that pleases your fancy. One Girl Scout's design had eight chrysanthemum leaves in the center, gray birch and wild cherry leaves clustered in the corners and scarlet Virginia creeper for the border. (This border is very effective if the slender tips of stems sprouting new buds are used.) Pin the



Stowall Studios

edges of the leaves to the muslin, using four or five pins for each leaf. Use India ink, which comes in a wide choice of fast colors, for the background and apply it by putting one end of an art blower in the bottle and blowing close to the material, always keeping the same distance away from the cloth. To learn to do this smoothly, try it out with paper and ordinary ink first. Another way of doing the background is to take a piece of old screening and tack it on two blocks of wood about three inches high. Set the blocks of wood on the cloth, dip an old tooth brush in a saucer of ink, and brush it back and forth across the screen. Move the blocks about until the whole cloth is splattered. Let the cloth dry for about ten minutes and then carefully remove the leaves and place them, other side up, in the same pattern beside the muslin. The square now has a background of the color of the ink and many differently shaped white leaves. Note the shadings of the leaves and reproduce their colors on the design with wax crayons. Place a damp cloth, just wet enough to steam, over the right side of the design and press it with a medium hot iron. This will set and blend the colors and permit the square to be laundered with care.

The girl in the picture has chosen pine branches and cones to make her design. When Girl Scouts carry out this handicraft project with Christmas in mind, they pin sprigs of holly on muslin, linen or silk and use black India ink for a background. The red berries and green leaves make cheerful, Christmas card table covers. At Easter time Girl Scouts make lovely designs with pale colored crocuses and in summer they use wild flowers or cut-outs of butterflies. Any time of year is appropriate for assembling a little menagerie of your own by cutting out pictures of animals from magazines, carrying out the same process and either coloring the animals naturally or filling them in solidly in black. Animal designs make amusing nursery or school room panels.



Capitol Photo Service

(above) In response to a handicraft contest run by the American Girl Magazine, this book was bound and the sampler cover embroidered by Girl Scouts of Troop 1, Groton, Mass. It won the first prize and was presented to Mrs. Herbert Hoover at the White House

(at left) Loading the kiln for firing. Both the pottery and the kiln were made by Girl Scouts at Camp May Flather, Shenandoah Mountains, Virginia

(below) Basketry is another primitive craft taught by mountaineers to Girl Scouts at Camp May Flather, Shenandoah Mountains, Virginia



Stowall Studios



Stowall Studios



Paul Parker Photo

This backdrop for a Russian ballet, made from ordinary brown wrapping paper, was designed and painted by students at Camp Edith Macy, the national Girl Scout leader's training camp at Briarcliff Manor, N. Y.

The American Indian motif has been used effectively to decorate her tepee by this Girl Scout.



In the Pioneer Unit at Camp Andree, Briarcliff Manor, N. Y., Girl Scouts set up their own primitive looms and weave straps for pack baskets from heavy cord

Primitive musical instruments — toms-toms and pipes of Pan — are fashioned and decorated by Girl Scouts for use in their primitive camp orchestra

