

# Unusual Knitting Bags on "Opposites"

BY ELMER W. HICKMAN

LARGE KNITTING BAGS are seemingly in great demand, but, from the consensus of opinion, they should be unique.

Therefore, for the hand-loom weaver who has been seeking a solution to the weaving of a knitting bag that is distinctive and unusual in both color and texture, or to the weaver who would enjoy some compensation for his conscientious efforts at the loom, the bags described in this article should prove to be a satisfactory answer to the weaver's quest as well as a most gratifying source of income.

I, because there was no escape from a persistent friend's importunate appeal for an exceptional knitting bag, experimented with several patterns, different textures and many color schemes.

The first experiment was a bag of a Scandinavian technique. The pattern draft was similar to the one that was used for the back cover design on Sigrid Palgrens' weaving books; the colors, restrained ones, were carefully chosen, but the result proved—in the eyes of this particular color-crazed young lady—highly unsuccessful. "Something more daring" was wanted.

I next tried a fabric woven of crêpe wool on a mercerized cotton warp using the familiar "Honeysuckle" threading for the pattern draft. Illustration No. 1 shows this bag. The material was woven in solid color pattern stripes of brilliant blue, bright green, scarlet and black. An orange No. 5 mercerized Perle cotton was used for the "on opposites" weft shots. Each pattern stripe was connected by half-inch

stripes of variegated Rayon floss in plain weave. I once had been told in a color class that when one wished to pull colors together one could use orange, but in this case the orange Perle cotton was too strong and the proportions of it too evenly distributed with the pattern wool, so consequently most of the principal pattern colors were killed by its introduction into the scheme. The resulting fabric was only partly satisfactory. This bag really makes a better showing in the photograph than the bag about which I most desire to tell you—but is actually not nearly so handsome.

I realized by this time that what was wanted was a color combination that was entirely foreign to my first two experiments.

In working farther a bag was produced that seemed to have captivated every knitter who saw it. A pair of white woolen mittens from Czechoslovakia embroidered in raw harsh colors suggested the color combination for this astonishingly appealing bag. The coloring of these peasant mittens had always held a fascination for me, but I never before had analyzed the coloring to discover where lay its charm. Simple enough it was after a little careful study. Although the principal colors were almost direct complements of each other, the happy harmonious effect came from the proportion in which they were used. Each color, therefore, enhanced its complement. A vivid green, a luminous blue, a blazing red, a sunny yellow, a glaring cerise and a neutral natural white all combined to make a color scheme that was gay, attractive and, as Mrs. Atwater once put it, "amusing." Further interest was accomplished in the choice of colors for the knitting bag by adding gradations of tones of each of the principal colors used. To accentuate even more this daring combination, a medium yellow No. 5 mercerized Perle cotton weft thread was used for the "on opposites" shots. This gave a sparkle and vibrancy to the finished product.

The color problem was solved. The pattern draft was not so terribly important. "Maltese Cross," because it lent itself ideally to stripe arrangement, was chosen. One of a great many other threading drafts might have been selected; such as "Single Chariot Wheel," "World's Wonder," "Rosepath," etc. Any of these patterns, and many more, may be found in Mrs. Mary Meigs Atwater's book, "The Shuttle-Craft Book of American Hand Weaving." In weaving with the "on opposites" treadling, or lever combinations that give the pattern sheds on the Structo looms, pattern drafts should be avoided in which too long or too short skips predominate. Too long skips in a knitting bag would prove impractical for usage, and too short skips would have a tendency to cause indistinctness in the design.

The resulting fabric was astonishingly beautiful. I had many, many orders for this particular bag in the color

THE WEAVER



COLORS  
BLACK GREEN BLUE RED BLACK RED BLUE GREEN BLACK

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1  
*Plain stripes of variegated Rayon floss*

combination mentioned as well as other combinations. Continual requests for these bags seemed destined to make my recreational weaving hours only toilsome periods of a manufacturing establishment. The end of a twenty-yard warp came as a convenient excuse for not making any more. But after having looked recently, out of curiosity, at some of the knitting bags in New York City shops, I do not wonder at the numerous requests that I had for these strikingly colorful bags.

Since the attractiveness of the material depended considerably upon the "on opposites" treadling, it might be well at this point—for the sake of beginning weavers—to give an explanation of the term. "On opposites" means just this: When one is using a four-harness loom, the first weft-shot is put in the shed formed by a certain treadle combination, such as treadles 1 and 2 used together. If the loom has six treadles instead of four, and a six-treadle tie-up is used, harnesses 1 and 2 are tied to one treadle, and the above combination is made with one treadle. The next treadle combination to be used for the second weft-shot will be the treadle or treadles that will bring down those harnesses that were not used the first time. In this case they are harnesses 3 and 4. In making this knitting bag, a shot of colored weft wool was used in the shed made by the first treadling combination; in the second shed a weft-shot of yellow mercerized Perle cotton was used. When the combination of treadle or treadles that bring down harnesses 2 and 3 is used, the following shed will be made by using the other two harnesses that were not used, or 1 and 4. Colored weft wool will be used on the 2 and 3 combination and yellow mercerized Perle will follow on the 1 and 4 combination. These groups of treadling combinations may be used as many times as one wishes. A study of the directions given for the bags described in this article will illustrate this explanation of "on opposites."

The following selected notes may also prove helpful in weaving these knitting bags: A good firm stroke of the beater is necessary to drive the weft into place. By so doing the weaver will be assured of a fabric that is rich in texture.

Although the warp is almost entirely covered by the weft in "on opposites" weaving, the warp should be of good quality and preferably of a neutral tone, such as Bernat's 10/2 natural mercerized cotton. There are little islands of warp that show in places, therefore should the warp be discordant to the main pattern colors the finished material will show a disagreeable muddy effect. For the main pattern stripes it is advisable to use soft wools thicker than the warp and the "on opposites" weft yarn. The knitting wool and the Shetland wool colors given in the directions are taken from Bernat's color cards. Silk floss, such as Bernat's Art Silk and Vittora Strand six-ply cotton, can be used very advantageously for pattern stripes should one not care for a wool weft yarn.

Each piece of material should, when taken from the loom, measure about 20 inches by 22 inches. Each bag is made up with the fold lengthwise of the fabric, the selvages serving for the top of the bag. After the sides are seamed to within two inches of the top they are folded in and tacked down, forming triangles on the inside of the bag. A boxed corner

on the two sides of the bottom gives the bag a good shape. It is then sewed into 12-inch or 14-inch handles with straight perforated edges.

If the weaver cares to use 12-inch handles the two end pattern stripes should have fewer weft-shots than are given in the directions; and but two and one-half inches of the white Shetland wool, at the beginning and at the end, should be woven. The directions are really for material to be used on 14-inch handles. To use cheap handles on your work is disastrous. The handles for these bags were purchased in dozen lots from a firm whose address Mrs. Atwater gave in one of her recent monthly weaving bulletins. I believe that the plain roundish top handles that I used most make the best appearing finished product. The bag in the illustration has an ugly handle, but that bag was the only one that could conveniently be procured to be photographed. The material should be sewed to the handles either with a strand of the yellow Perle cotton or a single strand of one of the pattern weft color yarns.

The bag may or may not be lined. Some of the people who bought the bags lined them with brilliantly colored plain sateens that matched one of the pattern yarn colors. When the bag becomes soiled the material may easily be turned, as the wrong side is quite as attractive as the right side.

Although the hinged handles—such as are shown on the one bag—are more expensive, they give, by far, a smarter and richer finish to the bag. At first it was thought that a pattern would have to be cut to fit the material into these handles, but it was found that the material could be seamed up like that suggested for the straight handles and sewed on the perforated ridges in the same manner as was done on the straight handles—allowing sufficient free space at the top of the seams to fit snugly up against the hinged portion of the handles. The bottom was first shaped in a circular form before it was sewed onto the handles. This shaping was done with the bag turned wrong side out.

In weaving you will have many short pieces of yarns because, sometimes, only one shot of a color is woven. The ends of all pattern yarns should be turned around a selvage

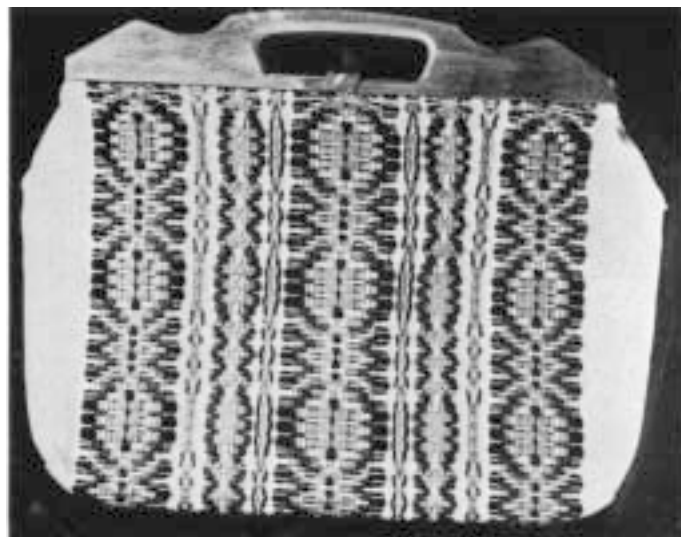


ILLUSTRATION No. 2

warp thread and placed in the same shed as its own color weft yarn, otherwise the colors at the selvage will not appear clearly defined.

**WEAVING DIRECTIONS:**

Warp: Bernat's 10/2 mercerized cotton, natural color, set at 20 threads to the inch. Use a No. 10 reed.

Weft material: Bernat's 4-ply knitting yarn for the wider stripes. Bernat's Shetland yarn in white or natural, and colors for the narrower stripes and body of the bag. Shetland yarn colors should correspond to the 4-ply wool yarn colors.

**Thread:**

Selvage—1, 2, 3, 4.....	4 threads
Pattern—six times.....	468 "
Edge (to balance)—1, 2, 1.....	3 "
Selvage—4, 3, 2, 1.....	4 "
	—
	479 "

Color key for pattern weaving (numbers refer to Bernat's knitting and Shetland yarn cards):

B—black, No. 1196	DB—dark blue, No. 1161
M—maroon, No. 1153	MB—medium blue, No. 1160
OR—orange, No. 1158	LB—light blue, No. 1159
S—scarlet, No. 1152	BG—blue green, No. 1154
C—cerise or rose, No. 1174	Y—yellow, No. 1156
MG—medium green, No. 1171	W—white Shetland, No. 801
YG—yellow green, No. 1182	PY—yellow Perle cotton No. 5
DG—dark green, No. 1172	—No. 220

**TREADLING DIRECTIONS:**

Weave one-half inch in plain tabby with yellow Perle cotton—for seams. Three inches in plain tabby with white Shetland wool yarn. Each pattern shot is followed by a shot on the opposite shed—except between two different pattern sheds. If more than one color is woven on the same combination of harnesses—as 1 and 2—a shot of mercerized Perle cotton must be woven on the opposite between the different colors in order to make the shed. This occurs at the beginning where maroon and black are inserted into the shed made by the same harnesses.

Stripe (a). All pattern shots in four ply wool. "On opposites" all in yellow Perle cotton.

**Pattern:**  
 Treadle 1, twice, color B  
 Treadle 1, twice, color M  
 Treadle 2, 3 times, color OR  
 Treadle 3, 3 times, color OR  
 Treadle 4, 4 times, color S  
 Treadle 1, 3 times, color C  
 Treadle 2, 2 times, color MG  
 Center. Reverse, beginning with the cerise shots.

**Opposite:**  
 Treadle 3, twice, Y (Perle cotton).  
 Treadle 3, once  
 Treadle 4, twice  
 Treadle 1, twice  
 Treadle 2, 3 times  
 Treadle 3, twice  
 Treadle 4, once

Stripe (b). All pattern shots in Shetland yarn. Opposites in white Shetland yarn.

Four tabby shots in white Shetland.  
 Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, in white Shetland—no tabby.

**Pattern (colored Shetland):**  
 Treadle 1, once, color M  
 Treadle 2, once, color M  
 Treadle 3, once, color C  
 Treadle 4, once, color C  
 Treadle 1, once, color YG  
 Center. Reverse, beginning with the cerise shots.

**Opposites (white Shetland):**  
 Treadle 3, once  
 Treadle 4, once  
 Treadle 1, once  
 Treadle 2, once  
 Treadle 3, once

Then: Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, in white Shetland—no tabby.

Four tabby shots in white Shetland.

Stripe (c). Four-ply wool. Opposites in yellow Perle cotton.

**Pattern:**  
 Treadle 1, twice, color DG  
 Treadle 2, twice, color DB  
 Treadle 3, twice, color MB  
 Treadle 4, twice, color LB  
 Treadle 1, twice, color BG  
 Treadle 2, once, color Y  
 Center. Reverse, beginning with the blue-green shots.

**Opposites:**  
 Treadle 3, once  
 Treadle 4, once  
 Treadle 1, once  
 Treadle 2, once  
 Treadle 3, once

Stripe (d). Four tabby shots in white Shetland.

Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, white Shetland—no tabby.

**Pattern (colored Shetland):**  
 Treadle 1, once, color MB  
 Treadle 2, once, color MB  
 Treadle 3, once, color BG  
 Treadle 4, once, color BG  
 Treadle 1, once, color YG

**Opposites (white Shetland):**  
 Treadle 3, once  
 Treadle 4, once  
 Treadle 1, once  
 Treadle 2, once  
 Treadle 3, once

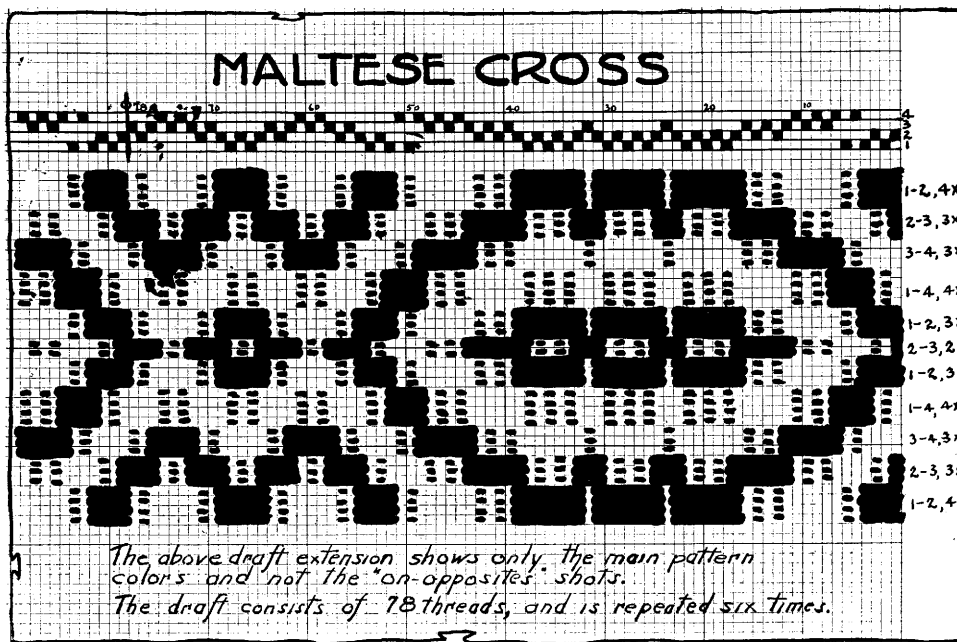
Center. Reverse, beginning with the blue-green shots.

Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, white Shetland—no tabby.

Four tabby shots in white Shetland.

Stripe (e). Wide middle stripe.

**Pattern (four-ply yarn):**  
 Treadle 1, twice, color B  
 Treadle 1, 3 times, color M  
 Treadle 2, 3 times, color OR  
 Treadle 3, 3 times, color OR  
 Treadle 4, 5 times, color S  
 Treadle 1, 4 times, color C  
 Treadle 2, twice, color MG  
 Opposites (yellow Perle):  
 Treadle 3, twice  
 Treadle 3, twice  
 Treadle 4, twice  
 Treadle 1, twice  
 Treadle 2, 4 times  
 Treadle 3, 3 times  
 Treadle 4, once  
 Center. Reverse, beginning with the cerise shots.



Repeat stripes (d), (c), (b), (a). Begin with the four tabby shots of white Shetland. At the end of the material weave three inches tabby in white Shetland and one-half inch tabby in yellow Perle mercerized cotton as was done at the beginning.

Another interesting color combination—autumn colors—that proved extremely attractive is the one given below. Because the treadling differs somewhat from the one above, it, also, is given.

Key to colors:

Black—B, No. 1196	Rust—R, No. 1179
Brown—BR, No. 1190	Blue—BL, No. 1192
Scarlet—S, No. 1152	Dark green—DG, No. 1184
Orange—O, No. 1158	Light green—LG, No. 1182
Medium orange—MO, No. 1157	Blue green—BG, No. 1151
Yellow—Y, No. 1156	Lavender—L, No. 1164
Green (leaf)—MG, No. 1183	Purple—P, No. 1165

Weave the beginning before stripe (a) as above.

Treadling directions:

Stripe (a).

Pattern (4-ply wool):

Treadle 1, twice, color B  
Treadle 1, twice, color BR  
Treadle 2, 3 times, color S  
Treadle 3, 3 times, color O  
Treadle 4, 2 times, color MO  
Treadle 4, 2 times, color Y  
Treadle 1, 3 times, color MG  
Treadle 2, twice, color P

Opposites (yellow Perle):

Treadle 3, twice  
Treadle 3, once  
Treadle 4, twice  
Treadle 1, twice  
Treadle 2, twice  
Treadle 2, once  
Treadle 3, twice  
Treadle 4, once

Center. Reverse, beginning with the MG shots.

Stripe (b). All pattern shots in colored Shetland. Opposites in white Shetland.

Four tabby shots of white Shetland.

Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, in white Shetland—no tabby.

Pattern (colored Shetland):

Treadle 1, once, color BR  
Treadle 2, once, color BR  
Treadle 3, once, color R  
Treadle 4, once, color R  
Treadle 1, once, color MG

Opposites:

Treadle 3, once (white Shetland)  
Treadle 4, once  
Treadle 1, once  
Treadle 2, once  
Treadle 3, once

Center. Reverse, beginning with rust.

Then: Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, in white Shetland.

Four tabby shots, white Shetland.

Stripe (c). Four-ply wool. Opposites, yellow Perle cotton.

Pattern:

Treadle 1, twice, color BL  
Treadle 2, twice, color MG  
Treadle 3, twice, color MG  
Treadle 4, twice, color LG  
Treadle 1, twice, color BG  
Treadle 2, twice, color L

Opposites:

Treadle 3, once  
Treadle 4, once  
Treadle 1, once  
Treadle 2, once  
Treadle 3, once

Center. Reverse, beginning with the blue-green shots.

Stripe (d). Four tabby shots, white Shetland.

Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, white Shetland.

Pattern (colored Shetland):

Treadle 1, once, color BR  
Treadle 2, once, color BR  
Treadle 3, once, color S  
Treadle 4, once, color S  
Treadle 1, once, color MO

Opposites (white Shetland):

Treadle 3, once  
Treadle 4, once  
Treadle 1, once  
Treadle 2, once  
Treadle 3, once

Center. Reverse, beginning with the scarlet shots.

Treadles 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, one shot each, white Shetland.

Four tabby shots of white Shetland.

Stripe (e). Wide middle stripe.

Pattern (four-ply yarn):

Treadle 1, twice, color B  
Treadle 1, 3 times, color BR  
Treadle 2, 4 times, color S  
Treadle 3, 3 times, color O  
Treadle 4, 3 times, color MO  
Treadle 4, twice, color Y  
Treadle 1, 3 times, color DG  
Treadle 2, twice, color P

Opposites (yellow Perle):

Treadle 3, twice  
Treadle 3, twice  
Treadle 4, 3 times  
Treadle 1, twice  
Treadle 2, 3 times  
Treadle 2, once  
Treadle 3, twice  
Treadle 4, once

Center. Reverse, beginning with the dark-green shots.

Beginning with the tabby white Shetland shots, repeat stripes (d), (c), (b), (a).

Weave three inches tabby in white Shetland, one-half inch tabby in yellow Perle mercerized cotton.

Some of the bags were made using blue as the predominating color, but these proved the least attractive when finished.

All material, when taken from the loom, should be pressed with a damp cloth laid over the face down fabric.

The above weaving may be applied to materials for many other uses, also, such as: pillow tops, runners, drapes, etc. I am sure that anyone who experiments with "on opposites" treadling with brilliantly colored wools, wisely chosen, will feel more than repaid for the effort given.

