

Scandinavian Spetsvav

by ELMER WALLACE HICKMAN

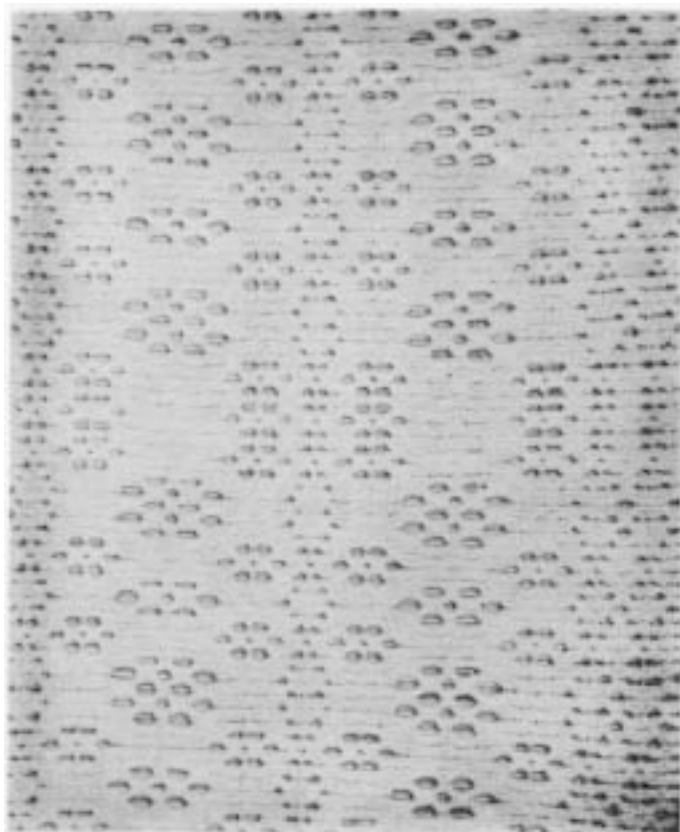


ILLUSTRATION No. 1—Showing detail of weave.

The reader who is acquainted with the "Honey Comb" weave will immediately recognize a similarity in the photographic illustrations accompanying this article.

There is a similarity, for they are of the same technique. The weave which is, in all probability, Scandinavian in origin is known in Sweden, Norway and Denmark by the names of "Spetsvav", "Halkrus", "Gagnefkrus", "Svaert Piket", etc. "Spetsvav" is conveniently translated "Lacey-weave". Such terms as "Halkrus" and "Gagnefkrus" may be literally translated into such amusing names as "ruffle-holes" or "dimples" and "useful holes". Let us rather call the weave "Lacey-weave". This will distinguish it somewhat from a weave known in this country as "lace-weave". The name "Lacey-weave" is quite appropriate for this weave as the technique really produces a fabric that simulates lace, except that there are no openings as in actual lace; a material with deep set depressions backed by a ground work of weft and warp threads is the resultant fabric.

Because of the usability of this interesting technique and because it is so often neglected by our American weavers, this article may act as a stimulus to some weavers for experimental work in this weave.

My first acquaintance with "Lacey-weave" was about nine years ago when I became interested in the books by Alexander Berger, a man who is considered one of Sweden's weaving experts (vavexperten). In his book, "En Enkel Vavbok", the name "Spetsvav" is given this type of textile.

At first the treadling was a puzzle to decipher in order to get the correct arrangement of his designs, but the task was finally accomplished and one result may be seen represented photographically in Illustration No. 1.

The bag shown in Illustration No. 2 is a varied treadling from the original arrangement in Illustration No. 1.

In Illustration No. 3 the weave of this fabric is designated in Sigrid Palmgren's Vavbok, Volume II, as "Halkdus"; but, regardless, by whatever name this weave is known, the working process is the same. Other pattern drafts than those illustrated are given which have proven successful as well as extremely pleasing.

The weave is really a vertical contradiction of our own overshot weave. The skips seem to form in the warp rather than in the weft and what actually makes the design are two tabby shots of a heavier yarn than that used for the pattern shots. Therefore, that which would make the figure in the overshot (the pattern treadles) forms the ground work (botteninslag) in this weave, and what makes plain or tabby weave in the overshot weave really forms the design in "Lacey-weave". This is accomplished by the tabby shots pushing down compactly the weft that was put in on the pattern treadled sheds. In Sigrid Palmgren's book the tabby shots weft is truly called "pattern weft" (figurinslag) and the pattern shots weft is called "tabby weft" (botteninslag).

This weave is applicable to a great many uses: pillow tops, knitting bags, evening purses and bags, coverlets, table covers, runners, etc. The wrong side of the material shows a vast amount of loose weft threads; consequently, the fabric should not be used when a fabric of both sides is desirable.



ILLUSTRATION No. 2—Bag woven in Saxony white wool with variegated Rayon Floss for the background.

This weave has been used for furniture covering material (mobeltyg), but I doubt the practicability of its use for this purpose. I have seen rugs woven in this technique—even rag rugs (Trasmatta)—, but unless the pattern draft is a simple one, it is rather inadvisable (to my way of thinking) to adopt this weave for such textiles.

For coverlets, a pattern draft should be selected such as Draft No. 4 so that the long skips on the wrong and right sides are not too troublesome, and the fabric should be woven with fine weft in order that the web can be beaten down closely to form a more firm material than is ordinarily desired in this weave.

The entire process is a shuttle-weave, requiring at least two shuttles to accomplish the proper result.

The weft for the ground work necessitates that a finer thread than the tabby thread be used—a reversal of what is customarily used for our regular overshot weaves. For warp, almost any good warp yarn may be chosen; although, because a great deal of the warp shows, the choice of warp must be left to the discretion of the weaver. Cottons, linens and wools for wefts are easily adaptable—according to the warp yarns selected.

Different combinations of yarns are here suggested: for table covers and runners, 40/2 for the ground pattern shots with a heavy cotton weft such as 16/2 doubled, three-fold or four-fold for the tabby shots. A 20/2 or 24/3 cotton for the warp. The Swedish people seem to admire a white tabby with Turkey red for the finer pattern shots. However, any colors of yarns may be used; that must be decided by each individual weaver.

Evening bags: Bernat's Art Silk (Raytone) or Sennah for the ground weft and a soft yarn like Germantown or Glorine for the tabby shots. Either a wool, mercerized, Perle or silk warp would be in good taste. Bernat's Afghan and Saxony also make a good combination for the weft yarns.

Knitting bags: two thicknesses of linen yarns for warp and weft; wool yarns such as Bernat's Lady Helen or Weaving Special for the pattern shots and Knitting Worsted or French Tapestry for the tabby shots. If one strand of the heavier yarn is not thick enough, use two strands for the tabby shots.

Pillow tops: Fabri wool yarn for the ground or pattern shots with Zephyr or Knitting Worsted for the tabby shots. Summer porch pillows in brilliant linen yarns for warp and weft would prove strikingly beautiful.

The weaver himself or herself can quickly see the possibilities and practical applications of this weave to many useful articles for the home and for sale.

There are no required number of pattern treadled shots for the ground work which makes the bottom or background of the depressions. The number will have to be decided by the weaver with respect to the fineness or the coarseness of yarns chosen for the weaving. Ordinarily four, six or eight shots on the so-called pattern sheds—between each two tabby shots—are usually satisfactory. If the material is to be of a solid construction, less pattern shots will be needed between the tabby shots than when the material is of a looser texture. The main principle of this weave is not to have the depressions too large as the warp skips on the right side of the material will be too long, which is undesirable. One can readily see this as one weaves.

Since most of us weavers are anxious to add books to our weaving library, I am listing below several Scandinavian books that contain pattern drafts and "set-ups" for "Lacey-

weave". Any of these books—all are inexpensive—may be obtained from Albert Bonnier Publishing Company, 561 Third Avenue, New York City, New York.

"Jamtlandsdrall" by Maria Moden-Olsson

"En Enkel Vavbok" by Alexander Berger

"Vara Hemvavnader" by Maria Collin

"Praktisk Vavbok", Volume II by Sigrid Palmgren

"Vavbok" by Hulda Peters

"Ostgotavavnader" by Eva Odlund

"Hemmets Vavbok" by Elisabeth Waern-Bugge

The "set-ups" for the several pattern drafts are given below:

Draft No. 1 "Honey Comb"

Warp: Cotton 20/2 or 20/3

Weft: Cotton, Turkey red 20/2 for pattern shots

White cotton No. 10/2 for tabby shots (double if necessary)

Reed: 15 dent

Threading: 1 warp thread in each heddle; 2 in each dent of reed. Repeat threading draft as needed.

Treadling: Treadle 1; then 2 for about six shots each; tabby 1 & 3, and 2 & 4 (each once). Next treadle 3; then 4 (six times); tabby 1 & 3, and 2 & 4. Repeat this process for entire length of web.

Draft No. 2 "Spetsvav" from "En Enkel Vavbok"

Warp: Perle cotton No. 20

Weft: Pattern shots—same as warp

Tabby shots—Perle cotton No. 3 or No. 5

Reed: 15 dent

Threading: 1 warp thread in each heddle, 2 in each dent

Treadling: Treadle 2; then 3—eight times—tabby 1 & 3; 2 & 4 once

Treadling: Treadle 1; then 4—eight times—tabby

" 1; " 2— " " "

" 3; " 4— " " "

" 1; " 2— " " "

" 1; " 4— " " "

" 2; " 3— " " "

This makes the larger group of "small holes" in the design

Treadle 1; then 2—eight times—tabby

" 3; " 4— " " "

" 1; " 2— " " "

" 3; " 4— " " "

" 1; " 2— " " "

This combination is for the larger group of "large holes"

Treadle 1; then 2—eight times—tabby

" 3; " 4— " " "

" 1; " 2— " " "

This is for the smaller group of "large holes"

Treadle 1; then 4—eight times—tabby

" 2; " 3— " " "

" 1; " 4— " " "

This is for the smaller group of "small holes"

For Table Looms the treadling would be: 1—2-3-4; 2—1-3-4; 3—1-2-4; 4—1-2-3. Any color combinations of yarns, of course, may be selected. Repeat the threading of the draft for the desired width of the fabric.

Draft No. 3 "Spetsvav"

Warp: 30/2 white cotton

Weft: Pattern shots—same as warp

Tabby shots—heavy cotton

Wools may be substituted for cottons

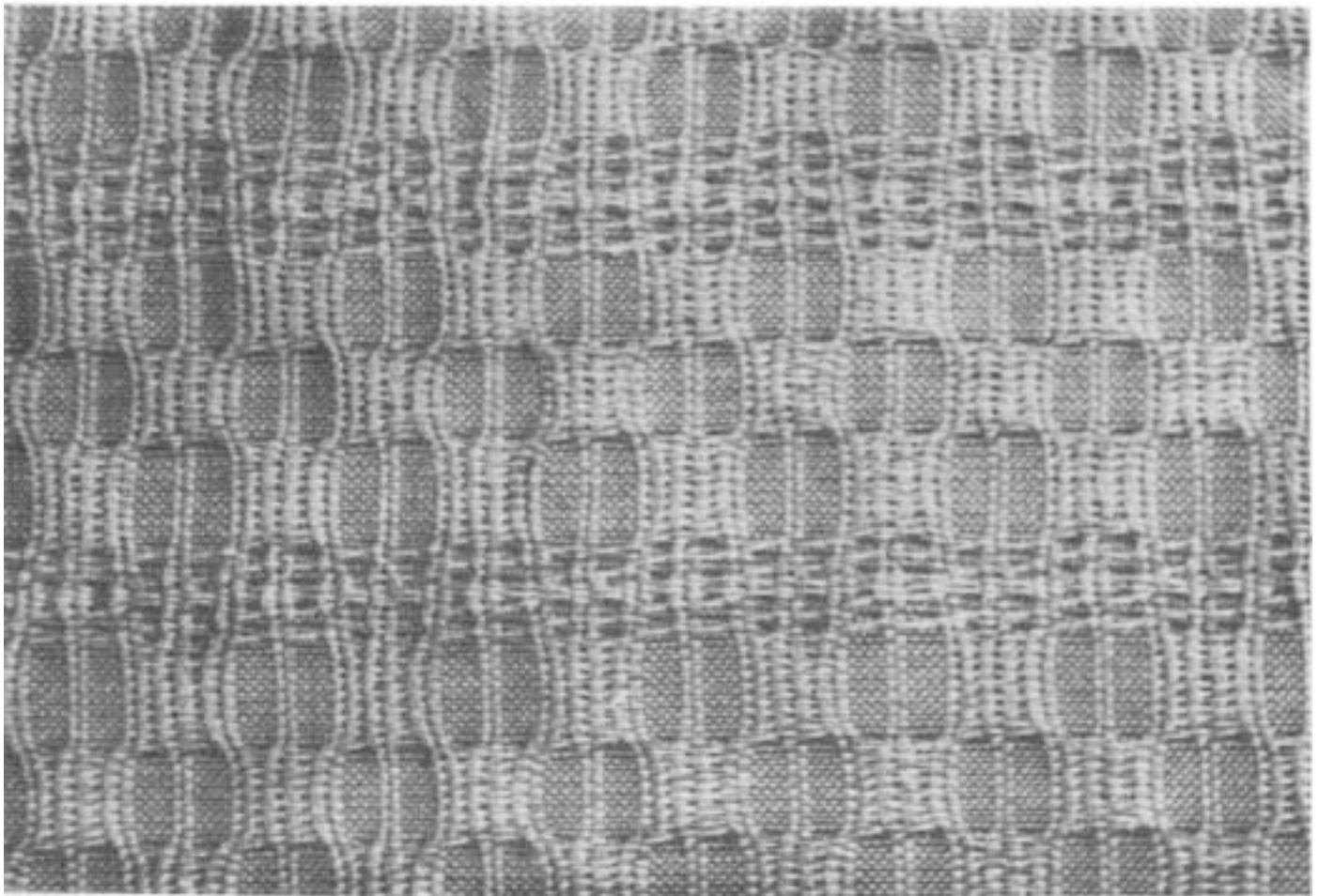


ILLUSTRATION No. 3—Showing detail of weave.

Reed: 12 dent

Threading: 1 in each heddle, 2 in each dent

Treadling: Treadle 4; then 1—six times—tabby 1 & 3;
2 & 4, each once

Treadling: Treadle 4; then 3—six times—tabby
" 2; " 3—" " "
" 2; " 1—" " "

This draft can be used for a coarser textile than No. 2.
Transpose treadling for Table Looms.

Draft No. 4 Table-cloth in "Gagnefkrus" from "Hem-
mets Vavbok"

Warp: Cotton 20/2 or linen 40/2

Weft: Pattern shots—same as warp

Tabby shots—16/3 or 16/4 cotton or No. 10
Linen or Linen Floss

Reed: 15 dent

Threading: 1 in each heddle; 2 in each dent

Treadling: For Table Looms

Lever 1,2,3; then 1,2,4—four times—tabby 1 & 3,
and 2 & 4

" 1,3,4; " 2,3,4— " " "

" 1,2,4; " 1,3,4—once "

" 1,2,3; " 2,3,4—once "

" 1,2,3; " 1,2,4—four times "

Lever 1,2,3; then 2,3,4—once—tabby 1 & 3,

and 2 & 4

" 1,2,4; " 1,3,4— " "

The square part of the design is made with 6 times A
alternating with 5 times B.

A. Lever 1,2,4; then 1,3,4—twice—tabby

B. " 1,2,3; " 2,3,4— " "

The number of times that each combination of pattern
shots is made may be changed to suit the weaver's needs.
Transpose treadling for Floor Looms.

Draft No. 5 "Gagnefkrus" from Palmgren's "Vavbok",
Volume II

Warp: colored cotton No. 30/2

Weft: Pattern shots—same as warp

Tabby shots—heavy cotton thread or four strands
of the warp

Reed: 12 dent

Threading: 1 thread in each heddle; 2 in dents of reed

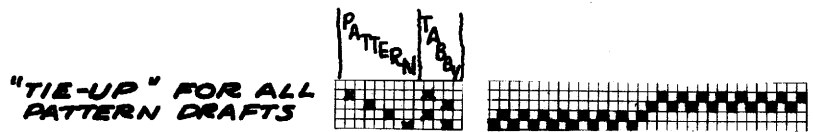
Treadling: For Table Looms

Lever 1,2,3; then 1,2,4—eight times—tabby

" 1,3,4; " 2,3,4— " " "

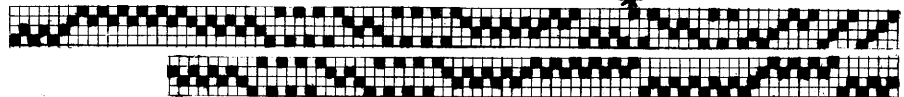
From the suggestions above it will be possible to arrange
desirable "set-ups" for the other drafts that are given or that
one wishes to use. Many combinations of colors and yarns
that will be agreeable to the eye can be worked out, so that
the "Lacey-weave" technique will make a thoroughly enjoy-
able weave to carry out at the loom.

SCANDINAVIAN SPETSVÄV OR LACEY - WEAVE



DRAFT NO.1 HONEYCOMB

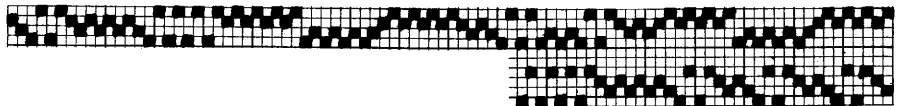
ON LAST REPEAT OF PATTERN THREAD TO STAR (*)



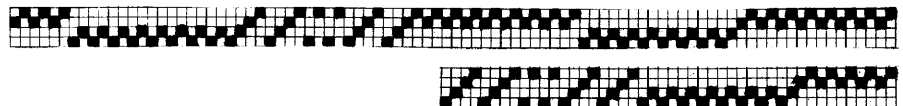
"EN ENKEL VÄVBOK" DRAFT NO.2 SPETSVÄV



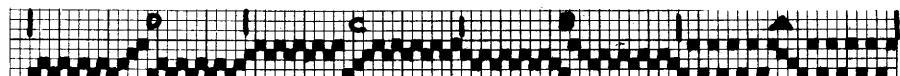
"EN ENKEL VÄVBOK" DRAFT NO.3 SPETSVÄV



"HEMMET'S VÄVBOK" DRAFT NO.4 GAGNEFKRUS



"PRAKTISK VÄVBOK" DRAFT NO.5 GAGNEFKRUS



THREADING - A,B,A,B - C,D,C,D OR B,A,C,B - D,C,A,C,D

"JÄMTLANDSDRÄLL" DRAFT NO.6 SPETSVÄV



PETER'S "VÄVBOK" DRAFT NO.7 HÅLKRUS

EACH DRAFT SHOWS ONE REPEAT OF PATTERN. USE AS MANY REPEATS NECESSARY FOR DESIRED WIDTH OF FABRIC

EWI