

# Shawls

by ELMER WALLACE HICKMAN



How many of our weavers have thought of weaving large shawls of heavy woolen yarns for a lucrative source of income? It can be done.

In the Scandinavian books . . . weaving books and catalogues of textile exhibits, etc. . . one can find diverse photographs of heavy shawls in all patterns and colors. In the Scandinavian countries the climate is such in winter as to welcome a heavy covering for indoors as well as outdoors.

There are a great many people who are enchanted by these soft, fluffy handwoven fabrics, and will pay well in order to be the owner of one. True the "young sweet thing" will not be inordinately enthralled by one of these luxurious textiles, but the grand old lady, or the appreciative convalescent, or the resort inhabitant who knows what lightweight warmth means on a chilly evening . . . these and many more . . . will appreciate the possession of one. I have found it so. At one time, several years ago, I wove all sorts . . . brightly colored shawls, somber ones, plain colored ones and those of several color combinations. It all began by being asked if I could weave a textile (to be used for a shawl) that was of an openwork texture rather than the fabric that usually comes from a loom, the solidly woven material. The first one was a gift. Soon came the demand for many more and were readily saleable. The most beautiful of all, I thought, were the ones woven of natural color rayon and worsted yarns. A few of these shawls were woven of finer yarns about the thickness of Saxony yarn; some were made from yarns that go by such trade names as Miro and Pompadour. But the most engaging ones were the shawls

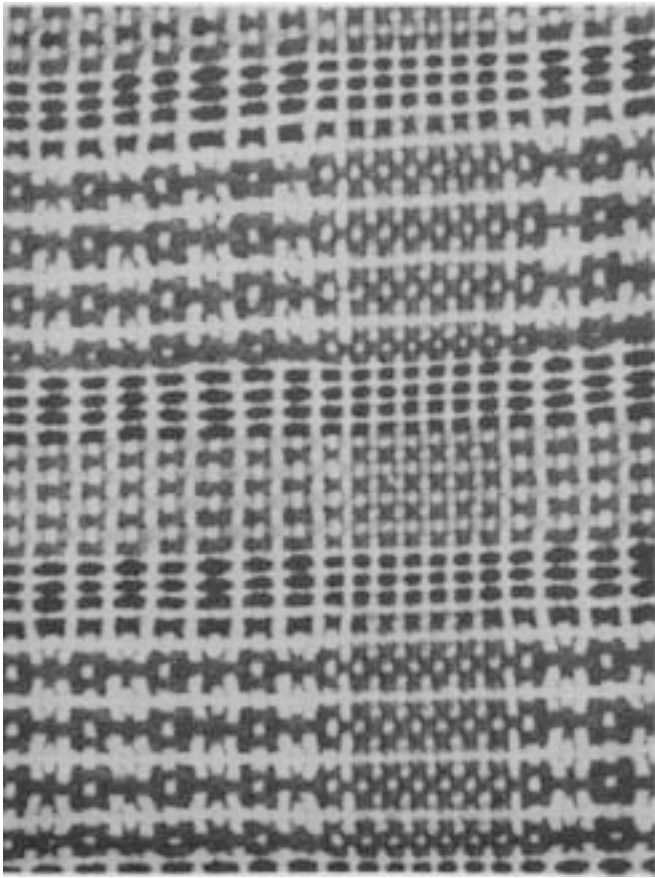
woven of the heavier yarns such as Knitting Wool and Bernat's Glorine.

And what a pleasure one gets working with these heavy wools. The thick wool warp is easily handled and the weaving of the material progresses rapidly.

Since an openwork texture was necessary to accomplish the result desired, a pattern was chosen that is familiar to many weavers. The pattern was a draft for curtain material, a sample of which may be found in the packet accompanying the text called "Vaevebog for Hjemmene" by Jenny laCour and Johanne Siegumfeldt, a valuable Danish publication (Albert Bonnier, 561 Third Avenue, New York City, New York).

Because of the openness of the weave . . . the group of little "windows" framed by a stripe of close weave . . . this pattern suited admirably for the experiment. Such is the weave pictured in the illustrations, with a close-up of the weave in detail in Illustration No. 3.

One can weave the entire shawl with the warp and weft of one color, but a more elaborate color scheme was more frequently used. The single thread between the group of three threads (in the "windows") was, say, white; the three threads were deep rose. The "framing" of all the little "windows" was a stripe of several values of the rose color. Sometimes the weft was woven in several values to form plaids; while, at other times, just the white weft was used. I found that combining a white yarn for the weft with colors in the warp gave a chalky appearance to the finished product, killing, to a great extent, the richness that I originally saw in the skeins before making the warp.



A color, other than white, used in the warp is better to choose for the weft yarn . . . if only one color of *weft* is used. That is, if your warp is composed of light yellow, medium yellow, orange, and white . . . rather than choose white for the weft . . . use one of the other three colors for the weft. The choice of the color being, of course, whether one wishes the shawl light or dark in appearance. Two of the colors might be used as one through the "windows" area and the other through the plain tabby stripe. Also one color of weft could be used through the "windows" section and the plain stripe woven with the other two colors. Of course, the more colors of weft yarns one weaves into the fabric the more work one makes for oneself by having the ends to place in the work at the selvages.

The weft is laid-in with the batten but never beaten hard. In fact, the weft shots have to be really *placed* by the weaver so that the fabric is not too closely packed. When the single weft shot is put into the weaving on the 1, 2, 3 shed, it is laid-in more lightly than the shots that are laid-in on the 1 & 3 and the 2 & 4 sheds, as the single weft strand must remain isolated in the warp. The 1, 2, 3, weft shot is the isolated bar of the "windows" and the 1 & 3 and the 2 & 4 form the divisions between these openwork spaces. The three weft shots in the openwork on the 1 & 3 and the 2 & 4 sheds have to be pressed together tightly so that they remain closely associated. The plain stripe *between* the group of small "windows" is made on the 1 & 3 and 2 & 4 sheds and these weft shots are pressed firmly into the warp. If heavy beating were used the fabric would be too compact which would spoil the pattern design completely, and the loose texture desired in the fabric.

The same size yarn is used for both the weft and the warp.

The plain stripe is ended with the eleventh weft shot on shed 1 & 3 so that the first "frame" division of the "windows" group can be started on the 2 & 4 shed.

The warp yarn must not be stretched but lie loosely as possible on the loom . . . but, of course, sufficiently tight so that the sheds can be made conveniently. If the warp is too tight the openwork will be drawn together when the fabric is removed from the loom.

Long flat shuttles seem best for laying-in the weft. These shuttles . . . or any used . . . must be wound so that the weft yarn is as loose as it lies in the original skein

If the warp on the loom gets entangled bring the beater back easily to the finished work and this action will separate the warp threads.

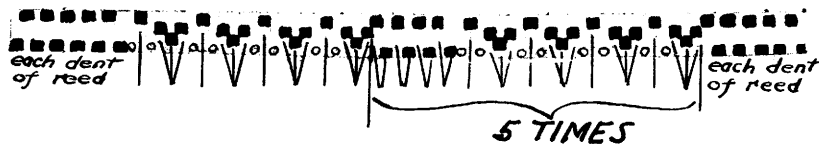
At the selvages have the *weft* yarn tight and hold the turn into the next shed with the thumb and finger. But let the weft yarn in the shed lie in the usual diagonal line as one does in overshot weaving.

When a strand of weft yarn is finished . . . or if the weft runs out . . . turn the remaining end into the work in the same shed in which the last weft shot was put. And it is well to have such an end run out within a certain area rather than at the end of that section, that is; have the end in the plain stripe turned in on any of the weft shots except the last weft shot. In case the end should or must come on the last weft shot, turn the end into the shed in back of your last weft shot. These suggestions will help to keep the work neat, compact, and save loose ends showing in the fabric.

It is well to join a new weft thread in about the middle of shed or at a point in the shed where the warp color corresponds with the weft color that is being used (if more than one color is used in the warp). Join the new weft strand thus: take the old weft thread, now in the

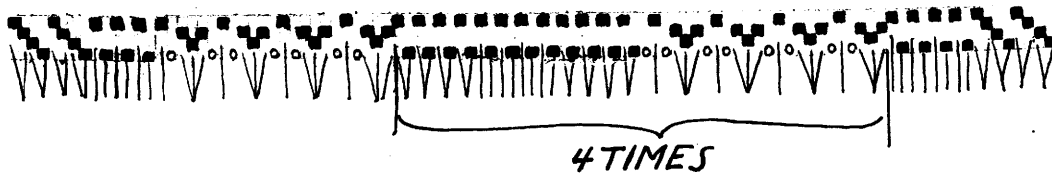
# SHAWLS

DRAFT  
A



3 2 1  
\* \* \*  
\* \* \*  
\* \* \*  
TIE-UP

DRAFT  
B



THREAD HEDDLES AND REED AS EXPLAINED IN TEXT

TREADLING DIRECTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

TREADLE LOOM

3, 2, 1, 2, 3

2, 1, 2, 3

HAND LEVER TABLE LOOMS

SAME AS TREADLE LOOM TREADLING,

OR TRANSPOSE AS USUAL

EWY

weaving, up through the warp and unravel about two inches of the yarn; clip off two strands of four-ply yarn. The same must be done with the new weft thread that is to be introduced into the shed. Put the new weft bobbin through the shed; pull out the end of the new weft thread at the point where the old weft thread was pulled up through the weaving; unravel it and clip off about two inches of this new end; roll the two ends (the old one and the new) together so that you will have a four-ply strand similar in thickness to the weft yarn being used. This will save having a lump in the weaving, which is extremely undesirable in this type of textile.

An explanation of the pattern draft might be advisable. One warp thread is threaded through each heddle. The "circle" on the pattern draft should be disregarded when threading the heddles; but in threading the reed this "circle" means that a dent in the reed is skipped. The lines drawn down to meet each other on the pattern draft mean that the group of three, for instance, is threaded through *one* dent in the reed. Then a dent is skipped and a single warp thread is drawn through the next dent in the reed; the next dent is skipped, and so on. When two lines meet, that means that both warp ends are drawn through a dent; and when a single line is drawn down, that indicates that only one warp end is threaded through a dent.

Description of Shawls.

Illustration No. 1 Arranged for use on a 20 inch table loom.

Warp: 4-ply Knitting Wool, 2½ yards long of different values of yellow.

Weft: 4-ply Knitting Wool in light yellow.

Reed: 8 dents to the inch.

Pattern Draft: "A".

Reel 160 ends of warp as follows: (Border; 3 orange, 7 medium yellow, 2 orange)—(Main part; 1 med. yellow, 3 lt. yellow, 1m.y., 3 lt.y., 1 m.y., 3 lt.y., 1 m.y., 3 lt.y., 2 orange, 4 m.y., 2 orange.) Repeat Main part five times. Then 1 m.y., 3 lt.y., 1 m.y., 3 lt.y., 1 m.y., 3 lt.y., 1 m.y., 3 lt.y. (Border; 2 orange, 7 medium yellow, 3 orange).

Illustration No. 2.

Warp: 4-ply Knitting Wool, white and different values of rose.

Weft: 4-ply Knitting Wool of lightest color in warp.

Reed: 8 dents to the inch.

Pattern Draft: "B"

Reel 208 warp ends as follows:

8 dark rose; 8 light rose;—"A"—4 times (1 dark rose, 1 white); "B"—4 times (1 med. rose, 1 light rose); "C"—4 times (1 dark rose, 1 white); "D"—4 times (3 medium rose, 1 white). Repeat "A", "B", "C", "D" four times. Then repeat once each "B" and "A"; then the other sel-vage with 8 light rose and 8 dark rose.

Illustration No. 4.

Warp: White Glorine (Bernat's).

Weft: White Glorine.

Reed: 8 dents to the inch.

Draft: "B".

Reel repeats of Draft "B" to suit your needs.

The shawls should measure about 60 inches long after taken from the loom. This does not include the fringe which should be about 5 inches in length.

After removing the textile from the loom washing and pressing will greatly improve the softness of the material.

Should one wish to use the thinner yarn, such as Barnat's Miro or Pompadour, set the warp at 12 to the inch, using the draft and threading in the same manner as described for the shawls done in the heavier wools.