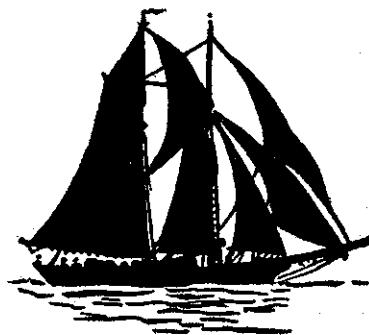


The Handicrafter



APRIL :: MAY

1929

Volume I

Price 40 cents

Number 4

Special Announcement to Hand-Loom Weavers

THE SHUTTLE-CRAFT COMPANY, INC., are pleased to announce through the pages of the *HANDICRAFTER*, a new type of loom recently added to their list of hand-loom.

The new loom—the “Mackay” loom—built exclusively for us, is operated by means of “jacks,” weaves 36” wide, and can be had in either four, six or eight harnesses.

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School of Weaving and Crafts

Edith Huntington Snow, *Director*

*The handicraft of weaving taught
in many variations*

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and Oriental Rug Weaves

also

Wood Carving Jewelry Basketry

Block Printing Clay Modeling
Rug Hooking

Orders Taken for Hand Weaving

Table Linen a Specialty
Looms and Loom Supplies

April
May
1929
Vol. I No. 4

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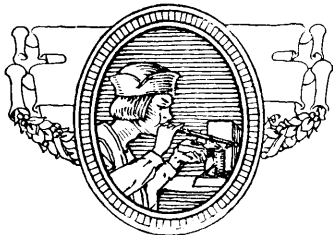


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Editorials



FAD, style, period, or age—which will Modernism be?

To understand the significance of these appellations we must delve into our cultural history in order to ascertain how the terms have been used and what has been classified under them.

First, let us regard “fads”—a recent one was the use of artificial boutonnières, fashioned of colored worsteds, as a decoration on dresses and coats. The flowers were an ornamental accessory, usually unartistic, and the rage for them passed within a few months. They have affected our social consciousness in no degree and will soon be forgotten except as one of the crudities of the past.

Second, there is “style”—to secure an example in this category it is wisest to go backwards in history. An excellent example is Chinoiserie as used in speaking of many eighteenth century things and in this group can be included Chippendale’s Chinese style, lacquer furniture of the Queen Anne period, tapestry of the Louis XV epoch, and so on. There is one fact noticeable in all these groupings—the addition of another name that is the appellation of the “period” involved. Throughout the eighteenth century, Europe was influenced by the importations from China. Their novelty and beauty impressed European designers, who were quick to take advantage and incorporated a Chinese influence in the main trend of their work. The prevalence of the style was intermittent, in no sense dominating, and consequently Chinoiserie cannot be classified as one of the powerful influences in our history.

Third, there is the classification “period” which signified a trend that is more vital and more apt to permeate the general cultural structure of the time that is labelled by it. The very word presupposes the lapse of a considerable number of years, makes us think of a growth and flowering, and a general unity in the cultural structure. We

speak of the period of Louis XIV and rightly, for this period is vastly different in its distinguishing marks than a style like Chinoiserie. All the arts struck a lighter, yet more glorious vein during the reign of Louis XIV. Decorative lines were changed, design became freer, new materials and methods were employed in furniture; literature took a new note, and all of Europe imitated the glories of the Versailles court. The period stretches over fifty years or so and drifted of itself into the Regence and Louis XV epochs which are but projections on an inferior scale of the brilliance and grandeur in the reign of Louis XIV.

Last, we come to the classification “age.” The word itself brings to mind images that cover centuries in their scope, that are replete with major upheavals, covered with cross movements, and reaching down in to the fundamentals of our lives. Few “ages” exist in history; amongst them are included “The Machine Age” and the Renaissance. Both of these have encompassed centuries, spread their influence throughout the world, and have reached down in to the very roots of man’s existence. To illustrate further the significance of an “age” the Renaissance can be used. Its first glimmerings were evinced during the 12th century in the Sicilian court of Frederick II, the most famous of the Hohenstaufen line and one of history’s outstanding characters. Throughout his life he fostered the arts, always possessed an open, experimentive mind, and he shines out as a beacon midst the superstition and blackness of his era. The veil again covered Europe with his death but was lifted anew in the late 13th and 14th centuries through the efforts of a great group of Italian Humanists and artists including amongst the number, Petrarch, Dante, Boccaccio, and Giotto. These men are the forerunners of the Renaissance—they were great in every respect and they set the pace which culminated in the glories of the late 15th and early 16th centuries and retained suffi-

Continued on page 30

A Modern Presentation of Hand-Weaving

By Katherine Woods

A NOTABLY beautiful exhibition of hand-weaving held in New York recently was especially interesting in showing the enduring place of hand-work in what is universally known as the "machine age." This was the exhibition arranged by the Snow Looms, of which Miss Edith Huntington Snow is Director, at the Art Center in the month of January. It was an exhibition which the visitor, struck upon entering by the array of lovely color and the variety of beautiful design, could not leave without a thoughtful sense of the *value* of this exquisite hand-work — hand-weaving for the most part, but also hand-dyeing, and even hand-spinning, along with which, too, was shown handmade pottery and furniture and hand-wrought silver tableware. The room was picturesquely and attractively set forth with lovely things, and the eye went first to one piece of hand-work and then to another, and soon through all the varied collection till one could not fail to realize the *unique* quality of such work.

It is customary to speak of the advantages of hand-weaving from the point of view of the weaver, to attest the satisfaction which lies in the creation of a beautiful fabric with one's own hands and according to one's own ideas and taste; and that is a valid argument, of course. It is especially forceful in a machine age, too, just because the invention of one labor-saving device after another has relieved the woman in the household of the drudgery of old household tasks and set her free,

as one weaver has said, to use her hands not to clean kerosene lamps, but to satisfy the timeless urge for the individual creation of beauty. But it is possible, by dwelling subjectively upon these satisfactions of hand-work, to slight, and thus to minimize, the importance of the handmade article itself; unwittingly, therefore, to give force to the assumption that in an era when machines have been so perfected as to produce a well-nigh perfect output, the value of hand-woven fabrics is



SPINNING FLAX FOR HAND-WEAVING
Courtesy The Snow Looms
Photograph by Ira Wright Martin

outmoded and only the value of the "joy of the working" remains. In laying the ghost of this mistaken assumption, the exhibition of the Snow Looms was of importance to everyone interested in any kind of handcraft. In spite of, and alongside, and in many instances together with, most noteworthy improvements in the product of the machine in this day when the machine seems to be both servant and master of our civilization, hand-work remains unique. . . . The most significant implication of the present broad and growing interest in hand-weaving is the fact that there is, and will continue to be, a distinct place for beautiful, fine, and individual hand-work with the public which prizes the qualities of beauty, fineness and individuality.

It was evident in the first place, at this exhibition in the Art Center, that these exquisite fabrics of silk, wool, linen, and cotton had a texture quite different from the texture of machine-woven things. This is not to pose the question of whether one is better than the other: it is simply to state the fact of an existing difference which gives the hand-woven fabric a distinct character of its own. Then, too, the materials for the hand-woven articles are usually hand-dyed, sometimes hand-spun, points which have a part in the achievement of texture.

Several beautiful examples of modern tapestry weaving had their part in this exhibition. And one has only to look at machine tapestry and then at the "real" kind to be assured of the inherent distinction of the hand-work. Just as there is never any question of recognizing the difference between a rug knotted and woven by hand and a machine-made product (though the machines be set down in the Orient itself!), so there is no question of the difference between hand-woven and machine-woven tapestry. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that Miss Snow has personally studied

the work of the great tapestry centers of France, visiting the Gobelin *ateliers*, the Government workshops at Beauvais, and the private hand-loom "manufactories" at Aubusson, and watching the processes of the looms in the work now being done at all these places and also in smaller modern studios in Paris.

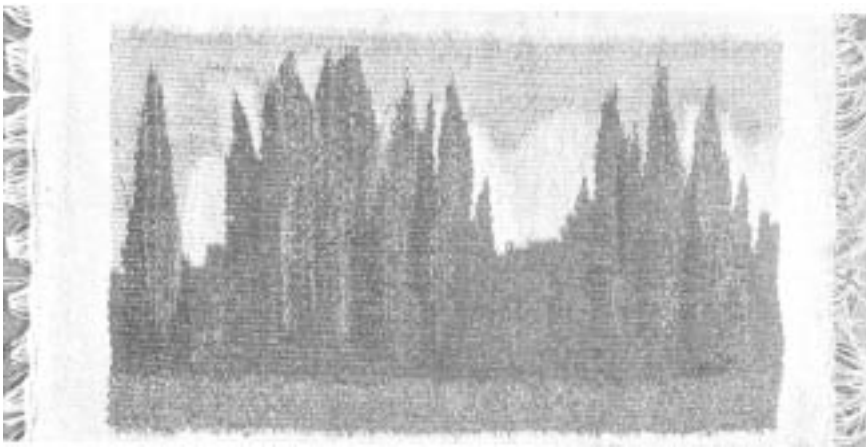
Another significant little point in the showing of the place of hand-weaving among us was evident in the presence of a number of charming, "smart," and much admired hand-bags, semi-circular purses made of wool and finished with solid frames. These are among the articles which can be made only by hand. They are woven on looms of cardboard, thread by thread. They cannot be made in any other way.

But perhaps the most generally appealing "count" in the case for the continued popularity of hand-woven fabrics lies in the simple, abiding, and all-inclusive fact of the *individuality* of hand-work. And in witness to this individuality the Art Center exhibition was rich. It is most unlikely that any visitor who saw this varied array of beautiful things will ever have to be reminded of the preponderant importance of "exactly the right thing for the right place," the thing that could not be turned out by the thousand in "quantity production," the thing that is irresistibly charming because it is *just so*, and, thus, just as it should be.

The *variety* evidenced in this achievement of individuality through hand-work was, naturally enough, one of the interesting features of the exhibition, and it showed itself in two ways—in the collection of finished articles and fabrics found in the exhibition room, and in the work which could be seen in process in the Snow Looms' own studio upstairs. All kinds and types of hand-woven things were on display, from the primitive and colonial work on through to modern treatments in line

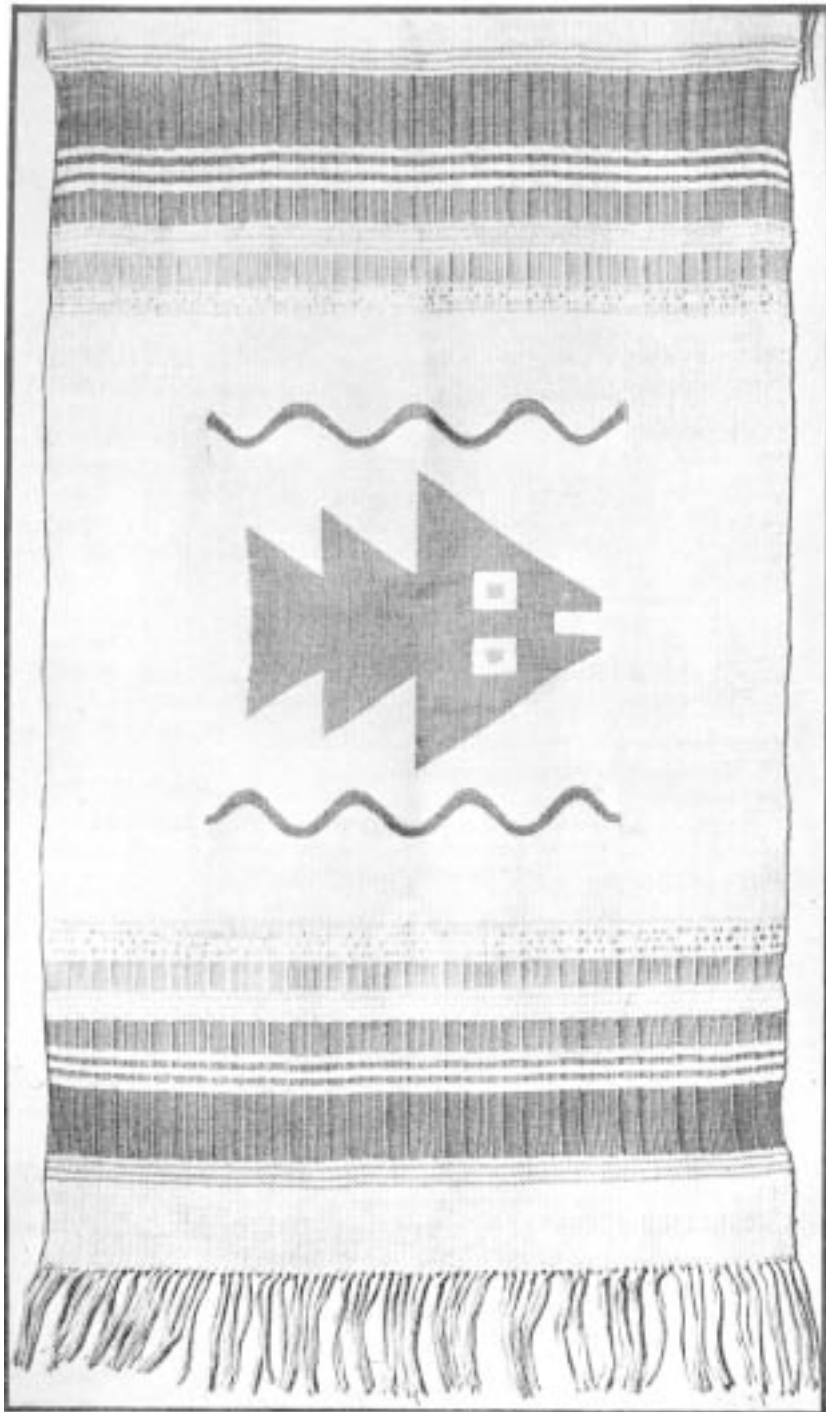
color, and arrangement. Fifteen other craftsmen added their handiwork to that of the Snow Looms for the exhibition, and the result was a vigorous showing of different ways in which hand-weaving is worked out by individual weavers.

In the Snow Looms' studio many visitors took advantage of the opportunity to see what really amounted to an annex to the main exhibition. For here on the looms the processes of work



TAPESTRY TREES

by Mrs. M. B. Streeter under the direction of The Snow Looms
Courtesy of Woman's Home Companion



PERUVIAN DESIGN. MODERN IN FEELING AND COLORING
Woven by Dorothy Cook Hambridge
Courtesy of Woman's Home Companion



TABLE SET WITH HAND WOVEN LINEN MADE BY THE SNOW LOOMS
AND ARRANGED WITH HAND-WROUGHT SILVER AND POTTERY
by Miss Margaret Thompson of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Courtesy of the Art Center Bulletin

could be examined most illuminatingly. On an eight-harness loom an interesting pattern, more complicated than that seen on the table downstairs, was being developed in linen in three tones. A pattern of "Summer and Winter" weave in silk had its place on a six-harness loom. Work was being done on four-harness and two-harness equipment and also on the simpler appliances that included a plain wooden frame on which a primitive form of tapestry was being woven, and cardboard looms for square and semi-circular bags.

While this broader variety of fabrics-in-the-making was to be seen in the studio, the exhibition itself included demonstrations of processes of unusual interest. On a modern four-harness loom a weaver was at work during each afternoon of the exhibition, in the production of a modern piece of hand-woven linen. In another corner of the exhibition room an expert in the almost forgotten craft of spinning (Miss Catharine Ames of Foxcroft, Virginia, who may bear the official title of "registered spinster" in recognition of her skill in this time-honored hand-work) was busy with her flax on a Colonial spinning-wheel, an antique flax-basket at her side. Although the actual work of hand-dyeing could not practicably be shown at such an exhibition, a display of hand-dyed materials—

silk, wool and cotton — added its own rich note of color to the colorful beauty of the room as a whole.

As a critic of the decorative arts has pointed out in an article on this exhibition and its significance (Walter Rendell Storey, in the *New York Times*, January 20, 1929), one realized upon looking at these many fabrics that weaving was "not a simple process but one that has many forms." Here, again, variety was an outstanding feature of the display. In a sense, the articles shown were grouped about the table laid with the Snow Looms' linen which had been set with hand-made pottery and hand-wrought silver by Miss Margaret Thompson of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. And the far reach, so to speak, of hand-

work in general and hand-weaving in particular, was suggested at once in the wall piece which formed the table's background. This was a wide woven coverlet, of hand-dyed spun silk in which pale yellow was the prevailing color, intended to serve as the cover for a day-bed, and of uncommon and beautiful texture and design; it was one of the "Pippa silks" woven under the direction of Mrs. John Beach in Asolo, Italy. A number of these soft and lovely silk fabrics were displayed at the Snow Looms' exhibition; they are designed by an American after old Venetian and Moorish motives, and include curtains, furniture coverings, and hangings in different sizes. The table, set with the hand-woven linen and showing the wall-piece behind it, appears in one of our illustrations.

Five wall panels designed and woven by Mrs. Dorothy Cook Hambridge were especially noticed for their originality as well as for the charm of their modern work. One of the illustrations shows one of the most arresting of these hangings, a fish motif which is of primitive Peruvian origin but is quite modern in its color treatment.

The silk tapestry piece illustrated, a group of trees against a sunset sky, was designed by Miss Snow and woven by Mrs. M. B. Streeter on a 20-inch four-harness table loom. In this piece of weav-

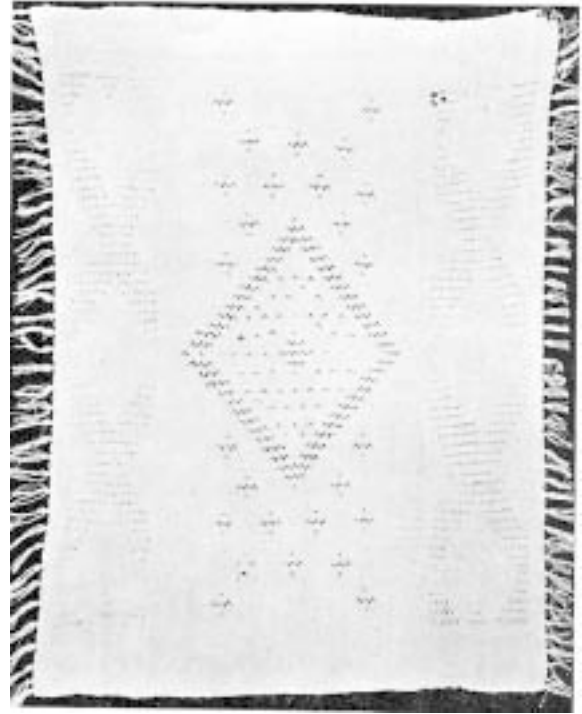
ing the weft threads were carried over and under two warp threads after the manner of Coptic weaving. Another charming silk tapestry piece was the design, in soft colors, of birds over water, the work of Miss Mabel Garrett.

The loom flung its threads far over time and space, again, in the piece of weaving done by Mrs. Gertrude Howells, which, as shown in the exhibition, is pictured in another one of our illustrations. This was a piece of heavy white linen woven according to a method used in Spain, Greece, and the islands of the Mediterranean 250 years ago, and still practised in the Greek islands; it is quite unlike any weaving generally known here, and has the appearance of being perforated. The work was Mrs. Howells' own adaptation.

A very different type of weaving, also shown in one of the photographs, was to be seen in the antique colonial bed-spread which formed a picturesque and fitting background for the spinning-wheel. This was a good example of "double weaving," with the pattern developed in black wool, relieved by occasional blue stripes, on a white ground. It was an unusually well-preserved piece, from the North Carolina mountains, and is a noteworthy illustration of the older types shown.

In marked contrast to this example of Colonial handicraft was a thoroughly modern design for a tapestry rug, the work of Miss Helen Phelps and Miss Mina Meyers. The rug was planned to be woven in sections, one of which was exhibited, while a cartoon of the entire floor-covering showed the arrangement of the sections making up the whole. The colors were soft—greys, tans and mauves—with interesting lines of white and black, and the effect of the whole was striking and exceedingly attractive. A quite different kind of rug and a new note in the American rug crafts was introduced in the collection of tufted rugs from the Tenafly Weavers, knotted and woven after the manner of Norwegian floor-coverings, but in a new adaptation of which this was the first showing.

Another interesting piece of work shown by a group of weavers was the long table-cloth of heavy linen, with a colored border in flat tapestry, contributed to the exhibition by the Elizabeth Fiske Guild. This organization carries on the traditional type of weaving begun and perfected by Mrs. Fiske many years ago in a little town in Vermont.



A LINEN IN OLD SPANISH EMBROIDERY WEAVE
by Mrs. Gertrude Howells
Photograph by Ira Wright Martin

The temptation, naturally, is to go on and on with an enumeration of the charming, individual, and representative pieces of hand-weaving displayed. One must, of course, content oneself with just those few examples which serve to make clear something of the exhibition's variety, and thus to show the wide range of creative accomplishment and the individuality of the product offered by hand-weaving today. It is interesting to note, too, that on the walls of the Snow Looms' studio upstairs were hung panels of Norwegian weaving and of French tapestry, lent for the occasion of the exhibition by craftsmen who had imported them. One ran the scale of hand-weaving at this exhibition, in time through centuries of weaving history, in distance across three continents, in what tradition and modernity alike have to give us in variety of color and design. And one knew the place of hand-weaving to be secure.

The Story of a Potter

By Arthur E. Baggs

In 1925, Mr. Arthur E. Baggs, received the Medal of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston. During the winter of 1926 and '27, Mr. Baggs assisted Mr. R. Guy Cowan, of the Cowan Pottery, Rocky River, Ohio, in making experiments out of which grew the pieces of Egyptian blue and Persian green as seen in the "Adoring Peacocks". Mr. R. Guy Cowan is best known in the field of pottery sculpture and is responsible for the "Madonna" which won the first prize at the annual Spring show of the Chicago Art Institute. This is of terra cotta with a creamy, translucent glaze giving a soft neutral pink. At the present time, Mr. Baggs is full professor of Ceramics at the University of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, where he installed the department which was a new venture at the University.

We have received the illustrations through the courtesy of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, where the pottery described may always be seen.

I FEAR there is nothing very startling about me or my work. I don't have a habit of burning the family antiques to give the last touch of fire-magic to the kiln. Nor do I compound glazes from the dust of moth's wings dissolved in a brew of autumn tinted sumac plumes and dew. I read a good story once in Harper's about an old Japanese potter who used just about that sort of glaze composition. It was perfectly impossible from a scientific point of view but very satisfying as a tale. It seemed as if that was the way beautiful glazes ought to be made.

As a matter of fact what luck one has with glazes comes from an endless number of experiments with very prosaic materials, tried out in varying combinations under different heat treatments with an eye constantly alert for even a hint of unusually good color or quality of surface. Perhaps one test in fifty shows a result that seems worth following up. But there is always something in a bunch of tests that leads on. There is no game more fascinating, I believe, than playing with glazes and fire! Once bitten by the experimental bug it is very difficult not to give all one's time to exploring the different fields that open out. And that is not the way to develop the more or less standard quantity production which seems to be the only way it is possible to make a living these days even in craft work. Experimenting is a luxury with me. I do more of it than I should, perhaps, but it is my chief fun and once in a while something interesting turns up to brighten the monotony of routine production.

I am not a potter through heredity but through environment. I happened to live in the little college town of Alford, New York, when New York State established in 1900 a school of ceramics in connec-

tion with Alford University. I was interested in drawing and design. The best instruction along those lines to be had in Alford was in the Ceramic School. So I entered to study art without any thought of becoming a potter. In the general course of things I made a few pots and got the bug which has been spreading its infection through my system ever since. Prof. Charles F. Binns who has been at the head of the Alford Ceramic School since its foundation has the faculty of inspiring his artistically inclined students with a real respect for and desire to make good pottery. It is interesting to note that a large proportion of the workers in artistic pottery in America today have been at some time under Prof. Binns' sound instruction and criticism.

At the end of my sophomore year in Alford, Prof. Binns sent me to Marblehead on a vacation job. I was to help Dr. H. J. Hall of Marblehead in establishing a pottery department in his Handicraft Shops. Dr. Hall was, as you doubtless know, one of the pioneers in occupational therapy. In his workshops nervous individuals gained health through carefully supervised work at several crafts. I was to develop pottery making. There was not much equipment, the kiln was a small china painter's furnace. I didn't know very much. We did not get any very startling results that first summer. In fact I felt that so far I had failed to demonstrate any claim to being anything resembling a potter. I didn't want to leave my first job in that state of mind so I proposed to give up returning to college and keep at it till I could show some decent results. Dr. Hall, being the kindest and most encouraging of men, decided to let the kid stay. And he has stayed ever since. By that I mean that I have had continuous work at Marble-



PLATE BY ARTHUR E. BAGGS

head giving at least a part of each year to resident work here, although I spent many winters away from Marblehead in studying and teaching. I returned to Alford for a year and a half and also studied in New York at the Art Student's League and in the Museums. For six years I was connected with the Ethical Culture School of New York City doing glazing and firing and some teaching in elementary pottery during a part of each winter.

Experimental work at Marblehead developed a line of pottery which seemed interesting enough to pursue on a regular production basis and after the first few years Dr. Hall allowed me to give all my time to its development unhampered by the complication of teaching pottery in the medical workshops. In 1915 Dr. Hall sold the pottery to me but it was always a child of his and he continued his hearty and helpful interest in it until his death. While I have been in charge of the technical and artistic direction of the work from the beginning, it is to Dr. Hall that Marblehead Pottery owes its existence. He founded it, believed in it, financed it through lean experimental years and was ever its firm friend, and mine.

The type of ware by which Marblehead Pottery is best known is of course the matt glazed pottery. In developing it we have tried to keep to simple good forms and quiet colors. There is nothing striking about it but as receptacles for flowers the pieces seem to be very satisfactory—the sort of pottery one can live with without tiring of it. Simple decoration in flat colors has been used on some pieces but most is in plain colors depending on form and texture of glaze for its charm.

In addition to the standard matt glazed ware we have from time to time turned out a few experimental pieces in many different styles. In this

way I have had the fun of playing with the technique of the tin-enameled majolica of the early Italian potters and of attempting the most interesting process of applying lustre as used by them as well as by the Persians and the Moors of Spain. Like all modern potters I have had a fling at the beautiful blues obtained from copper in an alkaline glaze as the Egyptians and Persians did it. Bright reds have always been a goal for potters. Recently a few good pieces of an exceptionally brilliant red have rewarded my experiments with selenium as a coloring agent.

An interesting line of experiment sometime ago was in the working out of a very thin translucent clay body at a low temperature. It looks like porcelain but instead of being fired at the very high heat required for porcelain this body becomes translucent at a comparatively low heat. The way this came to be worked out is perhaps interesting as an illustration of the way ideas come from unlooked for sources. I was trying to make a white clay coating or engobe with which to cover the surface of a dark colored clay body before applying a light colored glaze. I made a mixture which I thought might work and applied a thin coat of clay. When the piece was burned the engobe failed to stick to the clay at all but peeled off in great pieces. But the pieces were white and translucent like porcelain. All right, if it was a failure as an engobe why not try it as a body by itself? So I cast some thin bowls of the mixture and after some changes



PLATE AND BOWL

Designed and executed by Arthur E. Baggs
On exhibition at Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston.

developed a body which made possible some quite charming eggshell thin bowls into some of which I introduced perforations filled with glaze something like the rice pattern china of the Chinese. This of course was not pottery exactly, nor porcelain either. But it was rather fun to do, just as a stunt.

Recently I have been greatly interested in working along somewhat different lines than I have attempted before. I have become fascinated by

"the mark of the potter's thumb." By that I mean not literally thumb marks, although they can be used effectively as a decoration but the live, vigorous, plastic appearance given by the hand to the surface of a piece as it is formed on the wheel in the wet clay, left as it stands without subsequent turning and finishing. Pieces of this sort must be more skilfully made than those in which later turning may be relied on to correct faulty line or too heavy construction. It seems to me that the wheel is the potter's best tool. I want to learn how to make the most of its possibilities. What I am trying to do now in my experimental work is to bring out and emphasize two things; clay's fundamental characteristic, plasticity, and the beautiful qualities of surface texture which the wheel and the hand alone can produce.

I am trying to finish my pieces completely on the wheel with no after turning except perhaps on the bottom. In decoration I have been trying simple patterns scratched or indented in the wet clay, applied as directly, freely and quickly as possible. By the subsequent application of slips and glazes these incised patterns may be interestingly brought out in contrasting colors by the process called "Mishima" by the Japanese.

I am just feeling my way in decorative treatment. I don't know yet just what sort of design is best. I shall probably have to make several

hundred pieces before I get one or two really satisfactory ones. But I have a feeling that the method is a sound one which ought to be capable of bringing out the real pottery qualities I want to get—plasticity, vigor and directness of attack and a certain structural unity of form and decoration. Of course the matter of color treatment for this ware has many possibilities too. So far I have used mostly warm grays and browns breaking through a soft ivory. I have been most concerned with the handling and decoration of the clay itself. Glaze treatment of various sorts will be another interesting study.

In brief, the design is wiped into the clay while still very soft, the slip often applied just as the pot is removed from the wheel.

When partly dry we add another color over the entire surface which sinks into the lines of the incised pattern. Then wipe the whole surface, taking off much or little as I prefer to get a sharply outlined pattern, or one that will be delicate and shadow-like.

To sum up we have a red clay body, a white slip and a semi-transparent glaze. I like the simple directness of soft clay in which the decoration becomes part of the piece, a simple, almost crude incised scratching, slip filled or not, scrafito, and slip painting like old Thomas Taft.



ADORING PEACOCKS. By Arthur E. Baggs
 MADONNA AND CHILD. By R. Guy Cowan,
 winner of First Prize at Annual Spring Show of Chicago Art Institute.
On exhibition at Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston.

An Adaptation of the Honeysuckle Pattern

By Florence D. Bratten



ALTHOUGH a very large number of patterns have been made from this old draft there are still possibilities in it as the accompanying design will show.

This pattern consists of two elements; the first of four harness changes is to be repeated several times, using a dark green at first, and changing to a lighter tone at each repeat, in all four or five tones: this is to be followed by the flower motif which consists of three harness changes, one and three being alike.

The result as seen from the photograph of a bag is a very tasteful floral pattern that is delicate enough for many uses.

Use the regular tie-up. Treadling

Harness 2 & 1—3 times

Harness 4 & 1—3 times

Harness 3 & 4—3 times

Harness 2 & 3—once

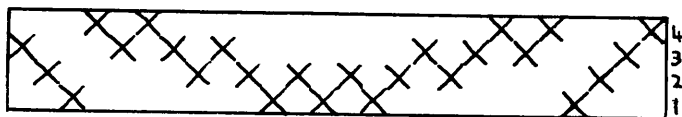
Repeat using four or five shades of green, darkest first.

Flower

Harness 2 & 1—2 times

Harness 4 & 1—4 times

Harness 2 & 1—2 times



Linen

By Mary M. Atwater



IN collections of ancient household equipment—I am thinking particularly of the interesting and complete collection of Colonial relics in the Pennsylvania Museum at Philadelphia—one finds, naturally enough, many implements used in the important household craft of cloth-making. Looms of all sizes—from huge affairs as big as a modern bungalow down to little garter looms or lap-loom—spinning wheels large and small, click reels for skeining, niddy-noddies, bobbin winders, warping frames, shuttles—all these things are more or less familiar. One may, however, be doubtful as to the use of some other pieces of equipment—a stout table, for instance, made of a very thick plank or slab of wood with a long slot through the center, the whole mounted on short legs and furnished with a heavy wooden beater that is hinged to the table at one end. This is a “scutch” or breaking table for flax. Also used in the preparation of flax-fibres are certain heavy blocks of wood thickly set with long iron spikes. These are the heckles or hackles through which the bunches of fibre were combed to free them of straw and of the broken fibres called “tow.”

The processes of preparing flax in Colonial times were probably not very different—except for the use of metal hackles—from the processes used for the same purpose by the Lake-Dwellers of Switzerland who lived and wove at a very remote period, toward the end of the stone age. Among the relics of this far distant human life have been found hanks of prepared flax fibre and pieces of coarse linen cloth—probably the oldest fragments of textile fabric in the world. But it seems likely that the use of linen goes centuries further back than the lake-dwellers, to still more remote weavers whose art has perished. Probably flax has been cultivated, retted, hackled, spun and woven for six thousand years, and how much longer, who can say.

The “lint” or flax plant has been cultivated so long and so widely that it is impossible to say to what country it is native. It is an annual plant

with a straight stem, delicate leaves and a small flower, growing about three feet high—an insignificant little plant of incalculable importance in the life of the human race.

The plant requires very careful husbandry. After the seeds come up and the shoots are an inch or two high, a flax field must be very carefully weeded by hand, and every vestige of weed growth must be removed. The crop requires a good deal of moisture, and it must be harvested at just the right moment—when the stems are yellow for three quarters of their length. When harvested it is not mowed like hay but is plucked, root and all, and tied in bundles, care being taken to have all the stalks in one bundle of approximately the same length. Removing the seed-pods—a process called “rippling”—is ordinarily performed by hand, as no very effective way of doing it by machinery has been found. The seeds—the well-known linseed—is valuable for its oil and its medicinal properties as well as for planting, and must be carefully gathered.

But the most trying process in the preparation of flax-fibre is the maceration, or “retting” of the stalks. This is usually carried on in the open air, in shallow ponds or in gently flowing streams, and sometimes on the open ground in a shady place where dew and rain fall plentifully. The water for the retting of flax must be very pure and soft—entirely free of minerals such as iron, and also free of lime. A trace of iron in the water stains and spoils the flax, and lime is highly injurious.

The flax-plants, tied in small bundles, are immersed in the water and weighted so that they will not float away, and are allowed to remain till fermentation is set up and until maceration has proceeded just far enough. This may take from three days to a month, depending on the temperature and constitution of the water, and there is no way of determining it except constant attention and the taking of frequent samples. If macerated too long, the fibres will be weakened, and if not

allowed to ferment long enough it will later be impossible to free the fibres completely from the straw and pith of the stems, and the resulting flax will be of poor quality. A few hours of carelessness, or a lack of experience, may result in the loss of an entire crop.

Modern industry has experimented with a number of methods of conducting this process in a more positive manner, but so far nothing has been found as good as the ancient method, and the finest flax of today is still prepared in the old way.

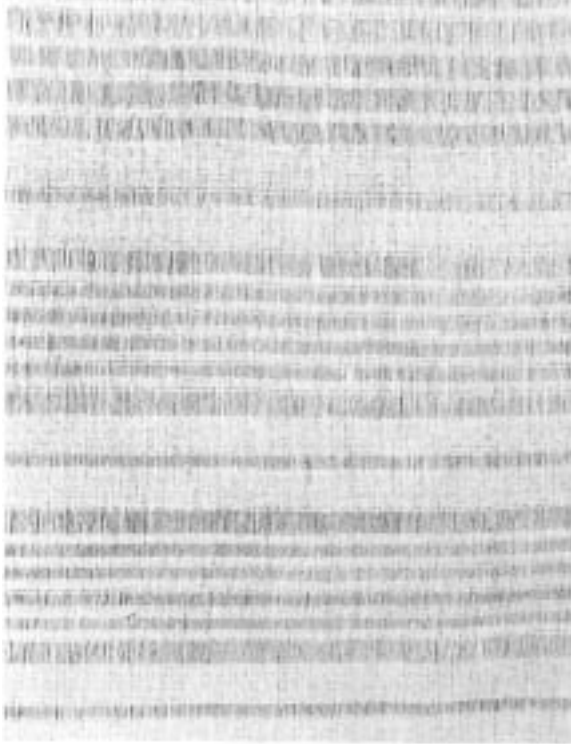


ILLUSTRATION 1

It is easy to see one reason why linen is more expensive than cotton—which lends itself readily to machine methods of treatment and handling.

After retting, the flax must be thoroughly and evenly dried, and is then ready for the breaking table. Scutching breaks up the pith and straw, much of which is immediately removed by blowing. Short fibres, broken fibres, and what remains of the straw is removed by the hackling process. On care and thoroughness in the hackling depends much of the beauty of the future linen fabric.

Hackling by hand in the ancient manner is heavy labor. When we think of this, and examine the fine linens woven by our Colonial forebears we must admire the conscientious craftsmanship. No wonder our great grandmothers loved and treasured their lovely linens, and laid them carefully away in lavender! They knew the life-history of

every shining thread, from the flat, round seed scattered in spring across the plowed field, through all the processes of retting, hackling, spinning and weaving, up to the smooth and lustrous product. The modern housekeeper spends her money for what her chosen shop chooses to sell her, and knows as a rule very little about what she is buying.

There are a number of fibrous plants whose fibres are prepared much as flax is prepared and that are more or less used in the textile arts. Of these hemp is perhaps the oldest and the most widely grown. "Hemp" is a rather general name, used for a whole tribe of plants that differ a good deal among themselves. The hemp fibre is coarser and harsher than flax, though some qualities approach in fineness the coarser grades of flax. In ancient Egypt, hemp and flax were sometimes mixed in the same fabric, and to distinguish one from the other is not always easy.

Hemp and jute are not the same thing, though many people confuse them because both are now used chiefly for the making of rope and cords. Jute, very widely used today, is a plant requiring special conditions of soil and climate, and is grown almost exclusively in India. Besides its use in the making of ropes, it is woven into burlap sacking and is even used for the backing of cheap floor-coverings and sometimes in handicraft. It is a lustrous fibre, takes dye readily, but is stiff and quite coarse.

The fibre that most closely approaches flax in beauty is ramie. The plant comes originally from China and is sometimes called China Grass; it can, however, be grown in many climates and has been introduced into the United States with success. A good deal of ramie is now grown in California. The fibre is very soft and silky, rather more lustrous than flax but not perhaps quite as strong. Though it has been known and used from very ancient times, it is still in its infancy as far as the industrial arts are concerned. This is because it is even more difficult to prepare than flax, and no special process has yet been devised that seems satisfactory.

The spinning of flax is now rarely done by hand, though spinning is an agreeable occupation for the fingers, and the handspun threads are delightful to use in weaving.

The linen threads available to a modern weaver come in a wide variety of kinds, qualities and "grists." Not long ago linens for weaving were to be had only in very large, troublesome skeins, but most linens in common use can now be had spooled. This is a great convenience.

Linen threads are reckoned on an ancient scale entirely different from the scale for cotton or wool. A "cut" of linen is three hundred yards, and the grist of the yarn is reckoned from the number of

cuts to the pound. A "twenties" linen is a thread that runs twenty cuts—or 6000 yards—to the pound. A "40/2" linen is a two-ply thread made of two forties threads twisted together, and will have the same yardage as a twenties single. With the grist of the thread indicated it is therefore easy to figure the yardage to the pound of any particular thread. To know this is useful when calculating the amount of material required for a piece of weaving.

What thread to choose for a particular purpose is largely a matter of taste. Some people prefer coarse linens, that are certainly very handsome by

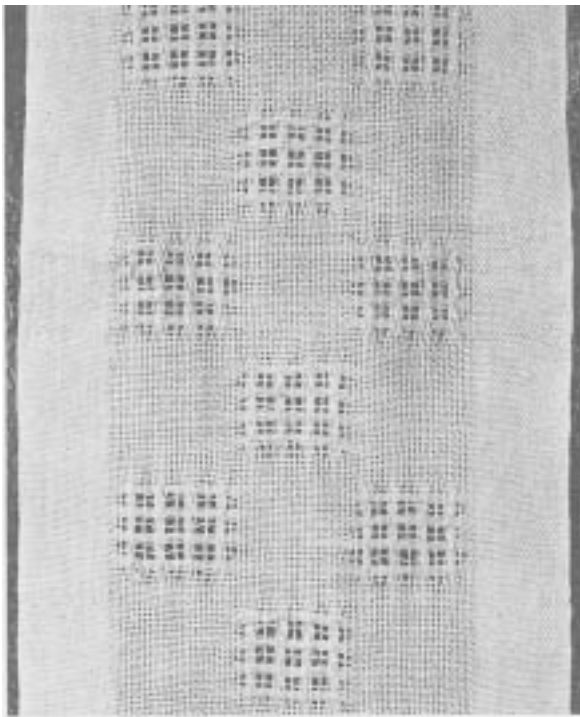


ILLUSTRATION 2

their weight and sturdiness, while others prefer fine and delicate effects, that are very lovely too. The success or failure of a particular piece of weaving in linen depends very much on the spacing of the warp and on the balance between warp and weft materials. There is no rule. The thing is a matter of experience, experiment, or rule-of-thumb directions.

There are two main kinds of linen thread,—flat or "line" linen and round linen. Round linen is smoother and stronger than flat linen, but if used both as warp and weft produces a wiry fabric, for many purposes not so beautiful as the more supple fabric made of line linen. And too, the slight irregularities of line linen add a great deal to the character of the fabric.

There is a very great difference in price, and also

in strength, between what are sold as warp linens and what are sold as weft linens. No one should be tempted by the lower price to try warping with weft linen. Such an attempt will result in failure—much loss of time, many broken threads, and an unsatisfactory result. One may, however, use warp linen as weft, and in fact it is usually advisable to do so in hand-weaving, as the result is a handsomer and stronger fabric. The ordinary weft linen, however, makes very attractive and inexpensive towels when woven on a fine white cotton warp, and is good enough for the purpose.

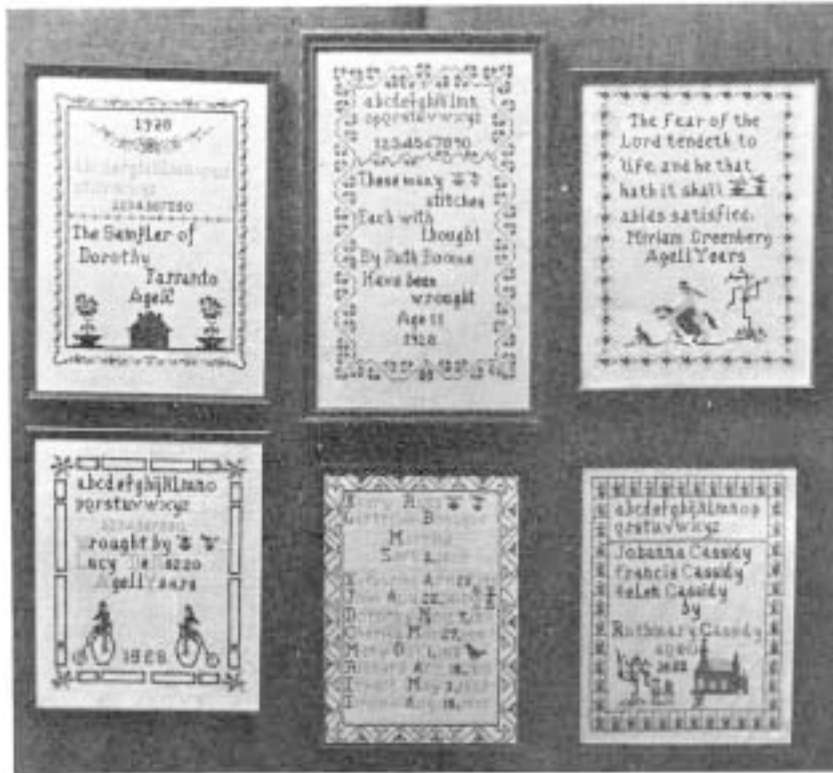
Colored linens are very much more expensive than natural or bleached linens, and for good reason. Linen is extremely refractory to dye-stuffs, absorbing an enormous quantity of dye—as much as pound for pound for some strong colors—and requiring more time and trouble in the handling than wool or cotton. People who have not tried their hand at dyeing linen rarely know this, and the cost of colored linen sometimes seems to them excessive.

No doubt it is to the difficulty in dyeing that we owe some of the beautiful weaves evolved for the decoration of linen. A rude and simple weave will be interesting and beautiful if woven of carefully arranged colors, but to produce patterns without color, simply by subtle differences in weave, is a much more difficult type of art. Weaving in linen requires a special technique, as different from the technique of weaving in wool and cotton as drawing in pen and ink differs from oil painting.

The ordinary four-harness overshot weave, so handsome when woven in wool or silk, often looks stringy and "poor" in linen,—especially if the pattern selected has any very long skips. Linen threads do not fluff up and cling together like wool; they have no elasticity.

The most beautiful weave for linen is undoubtedly the damask weave. This is a weave in which the pattern consists of figures in sateen on a satin ground, the difference in texture being depended on to produce the decorative effect. The lowest terms of the satin tie is the four-harness tie, and the five-harness tie is much handsomer. This means that on an ordinary loom four or five harnesses will be required for each block of the pattern. The effect can be produced on a smaller number of harnesses by using two sets of harnesses, one set with ordinary heddles and the other with long-eyed heddles, and drawing each warp-thread through a heddle of each set. The looms on which the earliest weaves of this sort were made in this country were looms of a large number of harnesses, as many as forty having been used. Most damask is, however, woven on Jacquard looms. And all of this is beyond the reach of most modern hand-looms and hand-weavers.

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SAMPLERS MADE BY SCHOOL CHILDREN

The A B C of the Coverlet

By Roger Millen



OUR American coverlets may, for purposes of identification, be separated into five classes: the "Four-harness Overshot," the "Double-woven," the "Reverse Twill," the "Summer and Winter," and the "Jacquard." The patterns are, to some extent, common to at least four of these, but the weaving technic is so distinctive in each case that no confusion need exist. The classification is my own and is based on examples which I have found to be most typical in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania. No claim is made that it is all-inclusive. The territory covered in research is limited, and it is quite possible that coverlets developed in weaves wholly unknown therein are well known elsewhere. If such there be, go, mark them well—and tell us about it.

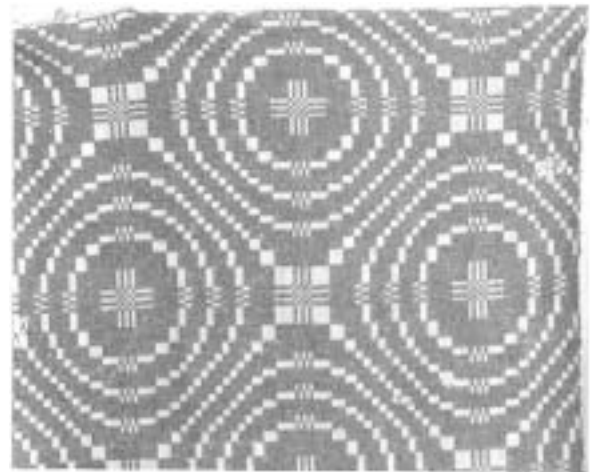
Everyone, it would seem, in this "antique conscious" day, knows his Phyfes, Stiegles, and Reveres, but the coverlets remain, for very many of us—just coverlets. That they differ from each other in inspiration, period, and technic quite as sharply as a Tudor chair differs from one typical of the Fifteenth Louis, is a fact not generally observed.

We have always had cabinet-makers, potters, silversmiths and other craftsmen who were able to carry on the traditions of the great creative masters. The coming of the machine age played havoc in their ranks, to be sure, but the weavers—where were they? With the introduction of the steam-driven loom, the craft of hand loom weaving was swiftly reduced to little more than a tradition in the United States. The housewife found herself relieved of a task which must often have been arduous and exacting, and able to replace her slowly wrought fabrics with the novel factory-made goods. For the professional weavers, whose livelihood depended upon a knowledge and dexterity gained through a long apprenticeship, the change was disastrous, indeed. Forced into other occupations, their skill died with them, and the working knowledge of the craft as practiced in their day was virtually lost.

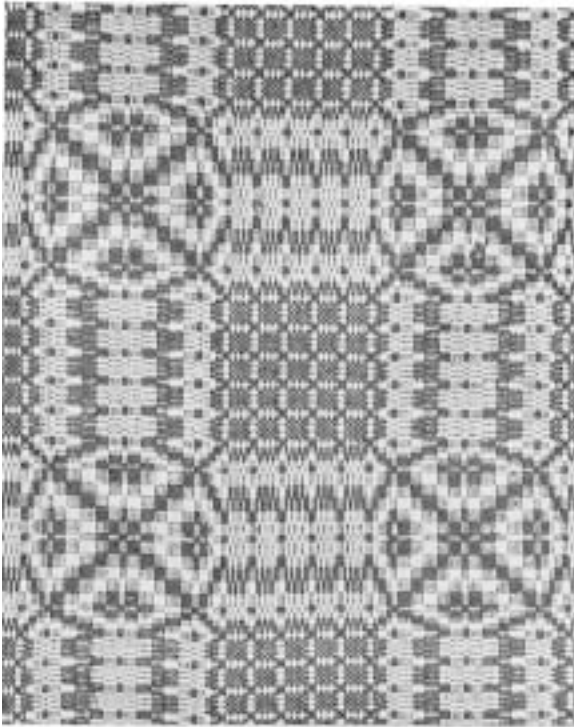
While a knowledge of the history of the craft is very essential to the modern weaver, it must re-

main a dead language to most of us. Today, if one aspired to the competence in the preparation of cotton, linen, and wool, which was common knowledge a century ago, a very considerable amount of research and years spent in experimenting would be necessary. In this time-driven age we shall do well indeed, if we strive at our looms to achieve a craftsmanship worthy of our heritage. And what resources at our command! Yarns in cotton, linen, silk, and wool, of the highest grade and in a range of colors undreamed of in Colonial days. Looms ranging in size from tiny table models to the most complicated types equipped with many harnesses and embodying the best working principles. Three or four of these of varying capacity may easily be housed in the space required by one of the ponderous Colonial looms with its accessories.

Of the old weaving, little remains save the coverlets, but what a rich store of these! Always an object of pride to the weaver or original owner, most of them that survived the reign of terror in home decoration and furnishing, did so because of sentiment. "We've never used it but kept it laid away because Grandma was always so choice of it. No, I guess we wouldn't care to sell it," and then, with a genuine, but quite mistaken, tribute to



SUMMER AND WINTER WEAVE
Courtesy The Newark Museum, Newark, N. J.



1. FOUR-HARNES OVERTSHOT

Grandma's foresight, "But they do say they fetch a good price nowadays."

Anyone who has followed the lure of the coverlet must have heard this almost word for word, again and again. So here we are with the loom of our choice, an almost bewildering variety of materials, and the weaving traditions of the entire world at our command. Quite naturally and properly, the resources of our own land will be the first to claim our attention, and here it is that colonial weaving ceases to be a dead language, and the old coverlets become an inexhaustible mine of example and suggestion.

We must cultivate a really knowing eye; we must learn to read a piece of weaving as a musician reads his music; and we must, above all, be able to visualize, and transpose, and adapt, so that a scrap of an old coverlet rescued from a corner of a woodshed may, perhaps, resolve into a sumptuous winter coat, a handsome rug, a pair of portieres, or a hand bag! This, as perhaps most of us know, is not at all difficult, yet there are weavers who are accepting all of their patterns "second hand," and missing altogether this thrill of discovery, the delight at finding and applying something which comes to one like a fraternal gesture from the original weaver. "There ye have it! 'Twas my own notion!"

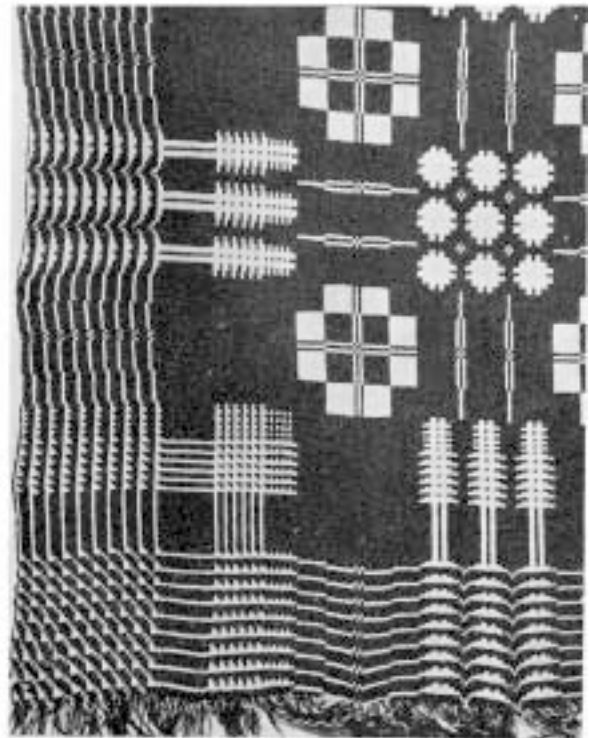
Before weaving analysis and draught writing are attempted, one should be prepared to distinguish almost at a glance the nature of any cov-

erlet examined. Otherwise we may find in the course of our earlier adventures that we have "bitten off more than we can chew"—an unnecessarily discouraging experience. Let us look, then, in order at the "Four-harness Overshot," the "Double-woven," the "Reverse Twill," the "Summer and Winter," and the "Jacquard."

The "Four-harness Overshot," shown in Figure 1, vastly out-numbers all of the other weaves. This is readily explained by the fact that, as the name implies, a loom of only four harnesses is required to produce any one of the several hundred known patterns. These looms, which were also used for weaving every other fabric required in the early American household, were as typical as the great fireplaces, and quite as indispensable as they together provided the three prime necessities—heat, food, and clothing.

The weaving of the overshot patterns is extremely simple, and the old threading draughts were handed down from mother to daughter and copied and circulated among the neighbors. No doubt, too, the number and variety of blue and white "kivers" which a housewife could display was a matter of pardonable pride to her, and the source of considerable prestige in her own neck of the woods. As coverlets of this type were typically "home made," they were the first to be produced in the colonies, and the last to succumb to the invasion of the power looms.

The indigo plant from which the deathless and

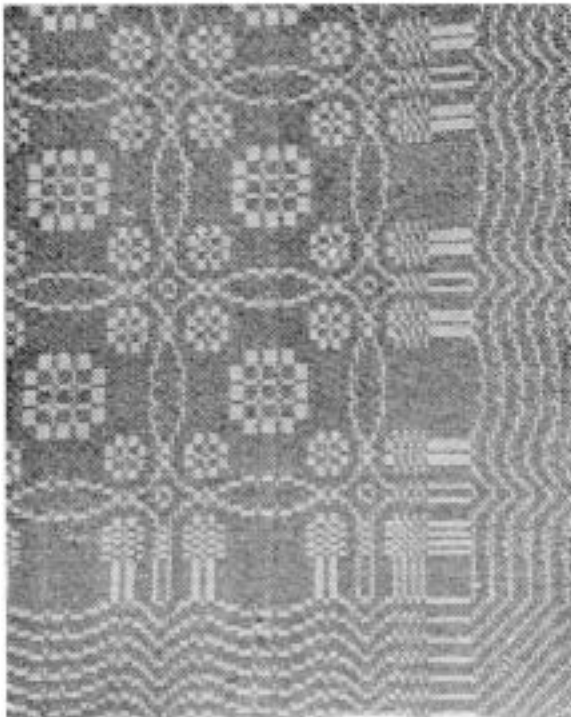


2. DOUBLE-WOVEN

unmistakable "coverlet blue" dye was made, was plentiful everywhere, and its use so simplified by means of the perennial dye pot, that the majority of the coverlets were made in this color. Red, green, brown, and some yellow were also used, and combinations of two or more shades are frequently found, some very lovely, and some very deplorable! White cotton or linen was used for the warp and "tabby" or "binder."

These features of material and color apply somewhat to all classes of coverlets, but the unique feature which sets apart the group here considered appears in the name, "overshot." The pattern threads, wherever they appear, are raised over the white foundation in "skips" or "floats." The wool pattern is "overshot" above the cotton or linen base. This is most noticeable in the largest of the "blocks" which compose the design, as the pattern threads skip over eight, ten, or even twelve, of the warp threads. The whole design is slightly raised above the white base, and this feature, while very striking and attractive, also spelled the doom of the coverlets that met with continuous use. These overshot pattern threads had to take the brunt of the wear and tear, and how the moths loved them! I know a very old and finely woven example so worn that the pattern is indistinguishable.

Overshot patterns were sometimes developed with more than four harnesses, but these are very rare and not particularly desirable; just the old



3 REVERSE TWILL



4 JACQUARD
Collection of Dr. G. Wyckoff Cummins

weave trying to be high hat.

"Double-woven" is a name no less descriptive than "Four-harness Overshot." The coverlets in this class are precisely that. Two warp beams were used, one for the white cotton base or background and one for the wool pattern, and two interlacing fabrics were woven. Coverlets of this type may be identified very readily. The pattern and background appear in fields of pure color without any of the half-tone effect characteristic of the overshot weave. A typical example is shown in Figure 2. They are usually much heavier than the other types, and if one selects a large pattern block, it will be found that the fabric composing it may be separated from the white block on the reverse side. Red was frequently combined with the blue and white with fine effect.

With the "Double-woven" coverlet, and the more complicated looms involved, we leave the scene of the pioneer cabin and enter the realm of the more pretentious colonial home, or the field of the journey-man weaver who sometimes travelled about with his loom mounted upon an ox-drawn cart, weaving from yarns prepared in anticipation of his coming. There is about these double-woven coverlets an air of dignity and solid well-being which bespeaks a day of comparative security and prosperity—less of hardship and more of ease. They enjoyed their greatest popularity during the last half of the eighteenth century.

The "Reverse Twill" coverlet was contemporary with the double-woven, and the patterns employed are very closely related, but there the resemblance ceases. Wool was used, as a rule, for both warp and weft. The single exception known to the writer is developed in linen and wool and appears to be very old. A detail of this coverlet is used for Figure 3, and serves the purpose in illustrating the weave much better than the color combinations more commonly found.

Beautiful shades of madder red seem to have been favored for the warp; a deep blue for the weft. The distinguishing feature of the weave is the "twill," which runs in one diagonal through the pattern and the opposite way through the background. As no tabby thread is used, the fabric is delightfully soft and yielding. A fine specimen recently examined showed a variation of rather light blue stripes running through the rose warp. The effect, with the dark blue weft, was very unusual and handsome.

The "Summer and Winter" coverlet appears almost as a "sport" among the better known varieties, but it is difficult to understand why this should be. The technic is simplicity itself and requires a loom only slightly more elaborate than the overshot weaving. The fabric is distinctive, very durable, economical in the material required, and strikingly handsome. Examples of it are very rarely found in the territory known to the writer. The Museum of the City of Newark, New Jersey, has a fine coverlet in this weave, a detail of which is illustrated. A careful study of this cut will prove a better aid to identification than any suggestions that I may offer. The fabric is smooth and closely woven, somewhat lighter in weight than the other types described. The pattern thread is "tied in" by every fourth warp thread, the whole surface presents a subtle blend of color. A little white appears in the blue pattern, a little blue in the white ground. As in the other weaves discussed, a white linen or cotton warp was used with a blue wool pattern yarn.

The "Jacquard" coverlets have their name from the loom upon which they were woven. This loom differed radically from every type previously used. It was exceedingly complicated, but permitted a freedom in design which was altogether new, and human nature being what it is, the results, in many instances, betray an amusing lack of restraint. Spread eagles were a favorite motif, with "E Pluribus Unum" inscribed on the streamers which they flaunted, as eagles will. Fruits and flowers in elaborate profusion were characteristic, as well as public buildings and public men.

The colors were often atrocious. Riotous shades of red, green and blue were thrown together with no apparent thought of keeping the peace. Very

often the weaver's name, town and the date of weaving appeared on a corner, with the customer's name opposite. This was a nice touch as it adds greatly to the value of such coverlets today. Occasionally, however, an intelligent effort was made toward restraint in design and color, and some of these coverlets are really magnificent. As the first Jacquard loom was brought to America in 1825, most of the coverlets in this class were produced during the thirties and forties.

In addition to the foregoing classes, many isolated examples may be found which refuse to be classified. Odd star-shaped patterns made with a perfect swarm of harnesses; more curious ribbed patterns with a Scandinavian air; others in red and blue squares which surely do not justify the labor expended upon them; all these and many more have come to light, but very few have proved either attractive in themselves or adaptable to modern uses.

How regrettable that anything need be said about cheap, machine-made imitations of the hand-woven coverlet! The weaving of honest reproductions, to be treasured or marketed for what they are, merits every encouragement; but to offer machine-made coverlets as reproductions is a palpable fraud, and this is being done in at least one widely advertised instance. The old patterns are copied with diabolical accuracy, and the coverlets turned out on power looms at prices with which the hand-loom weaver cannot hope to compete. A cleverly composed catalog is sent to the inquiring, and while the statement is nowhere made that the material is hand-woven, this impression is adroitly built up. We are assured, however, that the coverlets are made without a seam, and here we have a sure means of detection! The Jacquard coverlets are the only type which were sometimes made without a seam through the center. This was due, of course, to the limitation of a weaver's "reach" in passing the shuttle to and fro. The coverlets were therefore made in two strips and sewn together. Since the machine-made article may be produced more cheaply in one piece, this "improvement" is offered as a mark of superiority!

"MOUNTAIN LIFE & WORK"

At Berea, Kentucky, and under the sponsorship of Berea College is published a quarterly magazine "Mountain Life and Work" which is of great value to anybody interested in the problems of the Southern Mountain region. It contains articles on the social, economic, and educational phases of life in those sections, is well illustrated, and excellent reading.

The Art of Quilting and Patchwork

By Eleanor Hagan



AFTER all the blocks of a quilt are made the next step is setting them together. The manner in which this is done requires careful thought and consideration as the effect produced in the completed quilt depends largely upon the way it is put together. The use of plain blocks to alternate with pieced ones is the commonest and perhaps most popular arrangement. Bands of white or plain color are also combined with the pieced blocks and produce a nice contrast and pleasing effect. The larger blocks having an applique design are usually placed together without any additional pieces, the corners supplying the white that is needed. Experiments may be made, and the desired effect arrived at by arranging the finished blocks in a square, on the floor or any large surface in various ways. This will show the effect of the blocks in different settings, and will help in selecting the most effective way of putting a quilt together.

After all the blocks are made and evenly joined, the quilt top is ready for the lining and interlining. This interlining is usually of outing flannel, sheet wadding or cotton batting, the latter being preferred by the experienced quilter. Its soft texture brings out the lines of the quilting and the fine stitches of which every quilter is justly proud. The muslin which forms the lining of the quilt is cut larger than the top, about one and one-half inches being allowed on all four sides for a finish. This margin is then turned over to the top and hemmed down, making a neat finish resembling a narrow binding.

Next, the top, lining and interlining are placed one on top of the other, perfectly smooth and without a pucker or wrinkle. They are then basted together and are ready to be placed in the quilting frames. Now the design is marked on, either free-hand using a hard pencil, or by means of a perforated pattern, and the actual quilting takes place. On fine quilts this is always done entirely by small, running stitches.

Hand-quilting, while one of the oldest and most useful arts has never been seriously affected by modern machinery, and most of the finer work is still done by hand. Its possibilities are endless and it is here that the artistic side of the quilter has free range. Many individual ideas can be carried out and drawn with rule and compass. Small, continuous designs are very effective; rows of scallops, geometric figures and lines crossing each other diagonally, forming tiny squares or diamonds are all favorites with the old-time quilter.

One may have an ancestral piece which is treasured, from which one may learn about quilting. The fine, old patterns are always there: the Hanging Diamond, the Feather, the Fan, Inch-Square, Wreath of Roses, Sunflower, Pineapple and scores of others known by name to few but the quilters themselves. Some of these, especially the Double Feather, will be found again and again on the old-time quilts and pure white counterpanes. Indeed, one is rare that does not display this pattern of Feather stitchery.

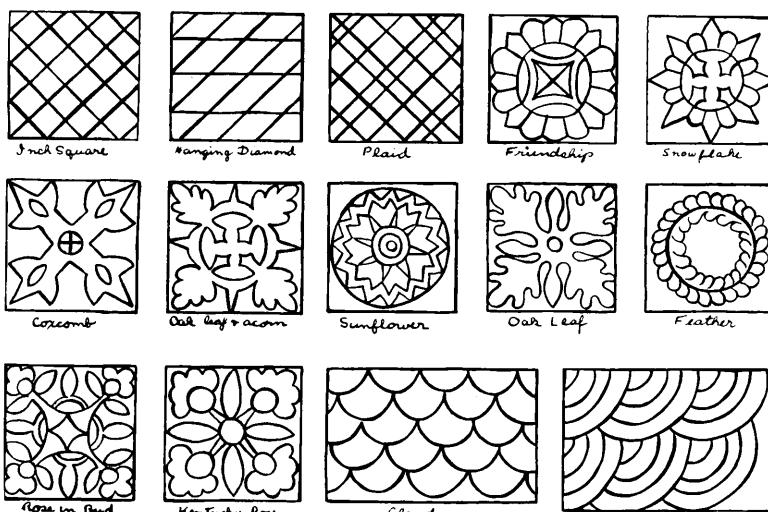
From time immemorial there have been quilters in many parts of the world,—China, Japan, Holland, Italy and Spain, but the art was raised to a high degree in our own country and is regarded as a truly American handicraft. Fine quilters are still quite common in our country districts and hamlets, especially in Iowa, Kentucky, Ohio and Connecticut. Among these are many skilled workers with taste, zeal and art ability, who make each quilt a real work of art. These masterpieces may be found anywhere, in city or country, as well as in museums and private collections.

One wonderful old quilt is the Orange Tree pattern. The design motif consists of one large orange tree laden with fruit and in full leaf. This motif occupies the greater surface of the quilt. The remaining space is quilted in small diamonds. The work is carried out in very brilliant colors and makes a rare and attractive piece which is of English origin.

An exquisite example of the American quilt at its best is one with a basket of roses, said to have been made in New Jersey long ago. Its roses are still fair, though their lovely companions which were the inspiration are faded and gone. It is made of fine white cotton cloth and lined with a coarse linen. No layer of padding was used between, but the design was raised by bits of cotton stuffed under the colored figures from the back. The quilting on this piece was a fine back-stitch, so close and small that it resembles on the right side very fine machine stitching. Its pleasing design, harmonious colors and exquisite workmanship reveal to us the quilter's art in its greatest perfection.

Another type of work, very different from the rose basket quilt, is a counterpane of glazed chintz, sometimes seen in old-rose, sometimes in lemon yellow. Such work belongs to the eighteenth century quilting and was a favorite at that time. The patterns used on glazed chintz were larger and bolder, and because of the homespun linen lining and cotton interlining, the stitching was necessarily of a coarser quality.

In the last of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries came a vogue for the pure white counterpanes, whose only adornment was the quilted design. The few of these beautiful quilts which remain are treasured as relics of past industry by their fortunate owners and deserve special mention. The foundation of such a quilt is fine white muslin or longcloth, with a very thin interlining. The design is drawn upon the surface and quilted with the finest stitches possible. One of these exquisite, all-white quilts has the favorite



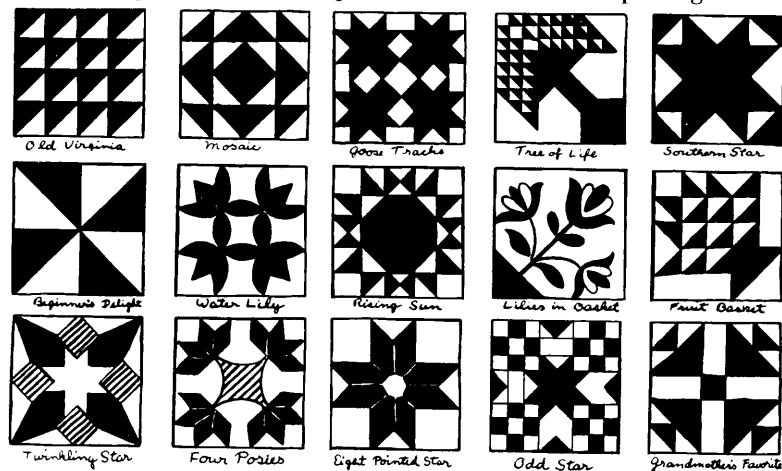
QUILTING PATTERNS Arranged by Eleanor Hagan

Double Feather worked in waving lines, and these comprise the whole design. This gives a striped effect which is most unusual in quilting. In another all-white one the waving line of Double Feather is used as a border. Both counterpanes are said to have been made in Kentucky, and both depend for their beauty upon the design and fine stitches with which the quilting is done. The background is so closely quilted as to resemble a woven fabric, and this smooth, even surface throws the design into low relief which is accentuated by shadows cast upon the lower surfaces.

Another very old variety of quilting was that done in yellow silk thread on fine white linen, and afterward embroidered very tastefully with yellow silk floss. This had great popularity in England in the seventeenth century. Still others were those very lavishly quilted with gold and silver thread. Rare specimens of these are carefully guarded in the museums of England.

At one time, many centuries ago, European quilting was influenced by rich floral designs of the Persians. Hunting scenes, battles, ships at sea and pastoral subjects were also used as quilting patterns. These early specimens of the art were truly marvelous and it is doubtful if they will ever be equaled in excellence.

The grape vine, basket and quaint sprays of flowers are reminiscent of late Colonial days and were carried out in the corded quilting which was characteristic of that period. For this work the design was stamped upon the goods that was to serve as lining of the quilt. Around this



DESIGNS FOR QUILT BLOCKS by Eleanor Hagan

Continued on Page 31

Ships in Miniature

By Margaret Whittemore



CHARLES G. Davis, naval architect, has said, "Ships seem to be inborn into the minds of Americans, and let us hope the love for them and the love for the little ship models will never die out; for ships breed tough, hardy, resourceful men that a nation can depend upon."

A ship model is a form of ornament that appeals to the love of romance and adventure in the heart of almost every person. Most of us have read and heard enough about the mystery of the sea to have a curiosity and inward longing to know more about ships; and those who have been to sea love to sit of an evening and dream of days gone by while studying the little ships on the mantel piece.

The earliest types of ship models were made some 2000 or 3000 B.C. by the Egyptians and have been found in tombs,—one in King Tut's tomb. These were buried with the body in order to provide the departed with a means of transportation across the river separating them from the next world. Many pottery and clay ships have been unearthed in various parts of the world. These may have served as toys in olden days.



VIKING BOAT of the type belonging to Lief Ericsson

It was customary for builders of large ships to hand to the king or Board of Admiralty models of ships which they planned to build. These took the place of drawings and plans such as are used today. Samuel Pepys, English diarist and Secretary of the navy during the seventeenth century, wrote of the

use of such prototypes for construction purposes. The process was far from being accurate, and it was left for a small ship-builder of Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1774 to revolutionize the art of ship-building by sawing his model into horizontal templates and taking off a linear tracing of each one. Detailed plans on paper were not in general use until about 1841, the period of clipper ships.

About the time of the War of 1812 captains and crews of vessels which were defeated in naval encounters were court-martialed and put into prison. Under these circumstances, officers and especially the ship's carpenters utilized their time in making miniature ships. When their food was brought to them they would keep the bones and carve them into appropriate shapes. Human hair was used for rigging. With the lack of tools for this work

available in the prison, it is remarkable that such perfection of workmanship could have been achieved. These are generally known as "bone models." There are several of them in the collection in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City, loaned by Colonel H. H. Rogers of the Standard Oil Company.

Another type of miniature ship consists of the church or votive models, made in imitation of large vessels that had weathered the storms and returned from successful voyages to foreign shores. These little ships were hung by their masts, so that they could turn round and round, in the



"HALF MOON" modeled after ship in which Henry Hudson sailed

seamen's bethels or chapels. Such votive models have been found in England, France, and Brittany. They are, however, becoming more and more scarce, due to the ravages of curio-seekers, who have transplanted them to homes and museums in this and other countries.

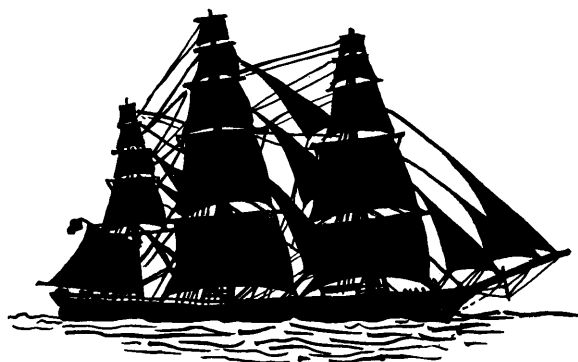
For many years men have been building little vessels for recreation or as a hobby. Bankers, lawyers, and business men of all kinds find in the study and construction of ship models an alluring pastime. Men, who thought they knew ships, often discover, when they come right down to making accurate models, that there is much they do not know. Many books have been written on the subject, and a magazine is now being published called "The Shipmodeler," the official journal of the Ship Model Makers' Club. This club is still quite young, but already includes members from every state in the Union and countries abroad. Gordon Grant is the president, and E. Armitage McCann is Secretary-Treasurer. The members of this organization were given an opportunity to exhibit as a unit at the Marine Exhibition in February. This was held at the Half Moon Hotel, Coney

Island, N. Y., for the benefit of the "Save Old Ironsides Fund." The navy showed thirty-eight models and there were others from various steamship companies. A large mural painting by Griffith Baily Coale was on display, and Gordon Grant lent his collection of sixty-two original drawings of historic ships.

Because ships are so foreign to many parts of the United States where models are made, the builders often find it necessary to establish contacts with various sources of information relative to this subject. Data may be secured through the Marine Research Society of Salem, Massachusetts, which issues from time to time reference books and documents along this line. By carefully watching the lists of old book dealers, one may accumulate quite a library on ships and their construction. The Free Public Library in Trenton, New Jersey has on display an excellent model of the famous clipper ship "Sovereign of the Seas," one of the fastest clippers ever built. This library reports a continuous interest in ship modeling as shown by the calls for books on the subject.

For one who is interested primarily in the study of hulls and the shape of the ship there are available collections of models such as those of the New York Yacht Club, the collection at the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, the Webb Academy at Fordham Heights, and many other places. Here the development of ships' hulls can be traced from the little three hundred tonner to the two thousand ton clippers. George B. Douglas of Upper Montclair, New Jersey, has published from one hundred to one hundred and fifty plans for the use of those who make small models.

Aside from making them, many find the collecting of models a fascinating hobby. Booth Tarkington has a choice collection. One well-known attorney has gathered about him a fleet of miniature ships and placed them in the large living room of his home. The room is faced with rock and is open up to the high pointed roof, with a balcony running all around. On the pillars supporting the balcony he has fastened the little ships by brackets,



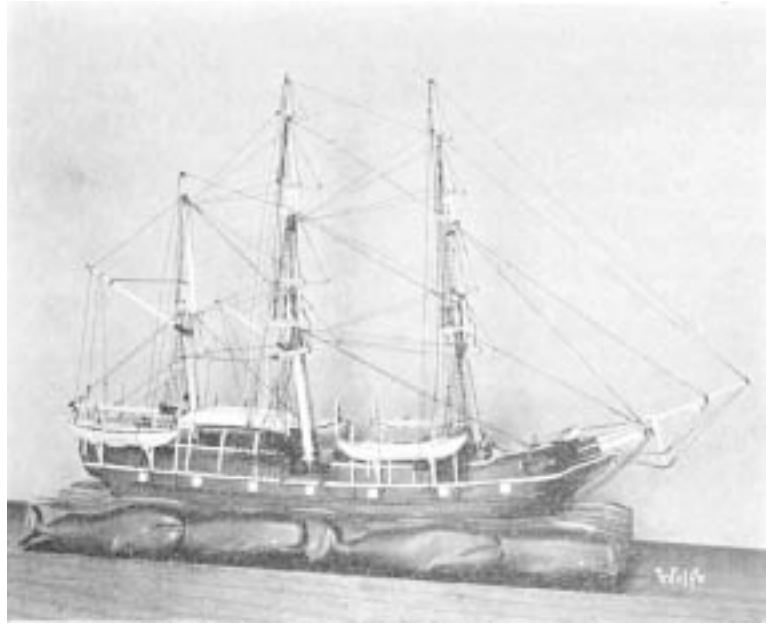
A CLIPPER SHIP

so that the fleet seems to be gayly sailing around the room. In one corner of the balcony is a workshop where a man is busily engaged in making new models.

American Museums of Fine Arts are now including models of ships in their list of treasures, thus following the example of important European museums. In this way an era of courage and romance is kept alive, and memories of the splendid sailing vessels which brought renown and riches to our coast-line states are being awakened.

The Boston Museum of Arts has recently opened a new wing and included there is a room entirely given over to ship models from the collections of prominent Bostonians. There are thirty-two models, all of excellent workmanship, and most of them historic. They are a permanent loan to the museum from Mr. J. Templeman Coolidge. There is a big hull of a seventeenth century French vessel, one of a Dutch East Indian-man of the same period, a naval board model of H.M. "Royal George," the "Flying Cloud" built by Boucher, a British landing barge, and some fine small pieces and models. It is interesting to have examples of early British and French vessels to compare with the American specimens. The foreign models frequently belonged to the reigning sovereign and possess sturdy beauty and perfection of workmanship. The European Admiralties and Dock Yards produced models as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, and employed men whose sole occupation was the making of them. These models were prototypes of the vessels which took their actual shape from them, being built from the model. Several specimens show open sections in order that measurements might be made and enlarged to scale in the actual construction of the ship itself.

Rock-carvings dating back to at least 500 B.C. have been found giving some idea of the kind of vessels used by the Vikings in that very remote age. They represent long rowboats with very high carved prows or sternposts, and were steered, not by a rudder behind, but by an oar at the side; and from this practice is derived our word "starboard" or "steerboard," being the right-hand side of the vessel. The Vikings used a square sail, which could be hoisted when required. The travellers among the fjords of Norway may to this day see those heavy boats with high prows and square sails,



MODEL OF A WHALER

Made by Dr. Arthur D. Gray, Topeka, Kansas

contrasting quaintly with more modern-built craft. Among the coronation gifts to Hirohito, Emperor of Japan, was a silver table model on a black marble base, representing the Gokstad Viking ship which was buried in the ninth century and is now on view in Oslo.

The type of boat used by Lief Ericsson in sailing the uncharted seas toward America has been a favorite pattern for ship model makers. One cannot fail to admire the beauty and grace of this little ship, built for buffeting heavy seas, but so small in comparison to the mammoth vessels which cross the ocean today. The men at the oars or sweeps sat behind large round shields, somewhat like those the Roman soldiers used to carry.

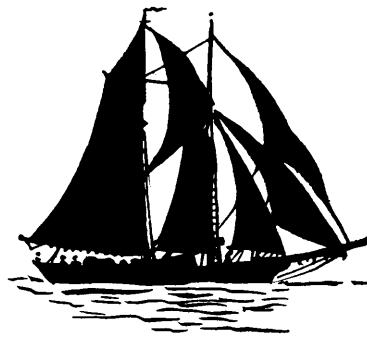
As far as is now known there is only one perfect model of the "Constitution," immortalized in Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem, "Old Ironsides." It was made several years ago by a United States naval officer. It is a three-masted, square-rigged vessel, and the original ship was built in Boston about 1796. In the war of 1812 it showed its possibilities in the way of speed and later in helping to clear the Atlantic of pirates. There is considerable uncertainty about the early figure-heads on this ship. It is supposed that when launched she had a figure-head of Hercules, which was knocked off in her engagement before Tripoli. Later she may have had one representing Neptune, then a billet-head, then for a short while a full length figure of President Jackson, and finally a billet-head again.

There are the ships of Columbus, the Santa

Maria, the Pinta, and the Nina. The Santa Maria, Columbus' flagship, was the largest and finest of the three which set sail under the flag of Spain in 1492 to try to discover a route to India by sailing westward. These ships were of a type developed by the Spaniards, called "caravel." The Santa Maria had three masts and a bowsprit. The original was only 128 feet long and weighed 100 tons.

Other favorites are the Bon Homme Richard that belonged to John Paul Jones; the Claremont,

the first steamboat, and the one in which Robert Fulton sailed up the Hudson; the Vittorio, belonging to Ferdinand Magellan, and the first ship to circle the globe; and the Half Moon in which Hudson discovered the island which is now New York City. There are the sturdy Mayflower of the Pilgrims, Spanish galleons of the type used by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century in carrying treasures from America, and Rose Mahoney, a five-masted schooner which was once the pride of the United States merchant marine.



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Continued from page 2

cient life to influence work into the 17th century in countries like Holland and Spain. At its height there was a galaxy of brilliant minds pervading every phase of life—men like Michel Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci were on the topmost rung in the arts; Leon Baptista Alberti, Pico de Mirandella, Filfelfo, Machiavelli, Poliziano, and Guiccardini were leading the van in humanism, literature, the development of historical study, sciences, and so on. Europe acquired a new spirit through the work and writings of these men; there was a substantial scientific interest; history was viewed in a correct light, the arts progressed, life in general was on raised standards; and the outlook was completely different from that prevailing in the Dark and Middle Ages. Many of man's greatest geniuses were contemporaneous with the Renaissance; in painting and sculpture, their achievements have not been surpassed to this day; in science, Da Vinci was working out theories that have only been broached anew or indicated within the last few decades; in fact no matter from which angle we look at the Renaissance we must admire its greatness and we can only be impressed with its tremendous influence on history and man.

In those four groupings do we place man's progress in his cultural life; there is always change of greater or less duration and once again the wheels are turning. The significance of the turn will some day be encompassed in the term used to catalogue our efforts. We call it "Modernism"—whether posterity will classify it as a fad, style, period, or age remains to be seen. But when we look back and see the years and centuries consumed in erecting the structure of the Renaissance we should not fret at the course pursued by Modernism. There are radical departures, new materials, new methods, strange vistas and we must be given time to accustom ourselves to them, and to search out the fundamental principles governing modernism's unique character.

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Continued from page 25

outline a cord was run in the same manner as our present day braiding is done. The upper material was laid over this and quilted down by rows of stitches run on each side of the cord. The background was quilted in diagonal lines a half-inch apart, which, together with the corded outline, caused the design of grapes and leaves or flowers to stand out handsomely.

With few exceptions our ancestors undoubtedly occupied much of their time in piecing and quilting counterpanes and quilts, but there are other quilted things, equally quaint and beautiful, for household use as well as wearing apparel, to lure the collector and reward his quest. Among these are cushions, window draperies, baby quilts, bureau covers, chair covers and testers for the four post beds. Articles for personal wear which were often quilted in the old days were gowns, bonnets, petticoats, carriage boots, waistcoats, as well as various things for children.

The quilting artists seem to have created their own designs for some of their work, and in other cases to have used suggestions from any available source. This great variety in design and coloring makes these rare old bed coverings suitable for any style of room, and satisfies those who like just the right type of counterpane for their beds.

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Such specimens as those mentioned here are quaint and beautiful indeed, and make one feel that the art of quilting and quilt making, if not lost, is nearly degenerate in these days. But it is encouraging to note that quite a revival of the old art is taking place in various parts of the country, especially in the Southern and Eastern states. The standard set for this work is usually very high, sometimes rivaling the old-time pieces which had twenty stitches to the inch, and in many places competent teachers are employed. This is all very heartening to those interested in the arts and crafts, who can only hope for a steady movement forward and upward, which will enable us sometime to equal the exquisite work of an earlier day.

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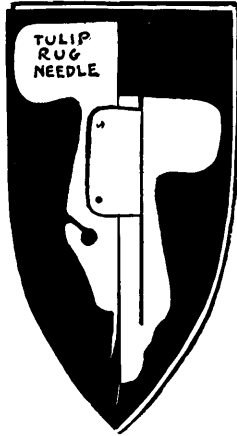
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