

warp and weft

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September, 1970

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Editor: Russell E. Groff,

Assistant Editor: Robin Groff

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A word from the Editor:

Your editor had an excellent business trip to Europe this summer, looking for threads, I visited England, Ireland, Switzerland, Holland and Norway, and tending strictly to business, tried to find as many yarns and weaving accessories as possible.

There were some delightful discoveries on this trip, but the most interesting of all was discovering a factory in Ireland which was devoted strictly to the weaving of hand-woven rugs from 3 feet to 10 feet wide.

And visits to two of the largest novelty yarn manufacturing companies in the world, one in England, and one in Holland, made the trip a success, as far as business is concerned.

Besides this, there were many, many interesting highlights such as finding many heavy threads for Macrame; visiting a factory that specialized in making ropes; visiting the factory that makes the beautiful wooden necklaces that we sell in our shop, exploring the Norwegian House of Home Handcrafts; these and many others, were just a few of the highlights of this trip.

Robin and Janice also had a wonderful trip before I did, exploring America. They went over 10,000 miles in a complete circle around America. Visiting many of the National Parks and Monuments, and visiting Washington, D. C., made it a pleasure for the two of them.

Activity in the shop was somewhat quiet this summer, which, according to Janice and Robin, was just fine; as they had more to take care of than they could handle, with my absence.

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Have any of you known a time when there was such a great interest in Weaving, in Macrame, in Bobbin Lace, and in Stitchery, as there is now in this great country of ours. The interest in these crafts is certainly on the upswing, and because of this, we three at the Robin and Russ Studio, are considering enlarging our shop, to have more room for displays, etc. We will talk with the architect who designed our shop in early September, and make our final decision at that time. Meanwhile, we are writing down all the ideas that we can to present to the architect when we meet with him in September. Perhaps those of you who have visited our shop might have a suggestion, and so if you do, we invite you to write to us and tell us your thoughts on the matter.

Enough for this time, and we will hope that we might hear from you.

Russell E. Groff, *Editor*

This Month's Cover Photograph

We do not know who wove this OWL, which was on display at the Northern California Handweavers Conference in Monterey, California this year, but we do know that it was one of the most popular items in the show. We saw many, many photographers taking snapshots of this beautifully woven item.

We hope that someone who knows who wove this might perhaps drop us a line and tell us about it so that we might give details to you about it in next month's issue.

Remember The Pacific Northwest Weaving Conference in Portland in 1971.

It will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Portland, Oregon on the days of Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 30, May 1st and 2nd, 1971. If you would like more details, send your

name and address to our corresponding secretary, and she will see that you get more details about the conference as it develops. Write to: Mrs. Mildred Marshall, 3425 N. E. Ainsworth, Portland, Oregon 97211.

This Month's Book Review

If you are interested in any type of natural dyes, you will be greatly intrigued by *NAVAJO NATIVE DYES, THEIR PREPARATION AND USE*. This book has been out of print for a year or more and has just been reprinted, and we are delighted to find it available once again. The recipes were formulated by Nonabah G. Bryan, a Navajo, who was the weaving instructor at one of the Navajo schools at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, and then all of the work was compiled by Stella Young, who was head of the Home Economics Department at Wingate Vocational High School. And last, but not least, drawings of all the plants used in the dyeing were drawn by Charles Keetsie Shirley, also a Navajo.

Actually, I feel that this book is very pleasant reading, and you should enjoy it very much.

There are actually 85 recipes for dyeing that have been formulated and are given in this book.

There are 36 different plants used in formulating these 85 recipes, and all 36 of them are illustrated by line drawings. What is interesting is that many of these plants you will find in all parts of the country, so this booklet should be useful in almost any part of the United States. It is true, that most of these are desert plants, but they are also found in other areas than desert areas.

The introduction is most interesting reading, and then it tells how Mrs. Bryan has planned to dye yarns to weave a rug. She tells how the wool is prepared, how to whiten wool, how to mix natural colors, what mordants to use, and then goes into the actual dyeing of the yarns. Some of the plants used in the dyeing are Alder, Beeplant, Cactus, Chokeycherry, Oregon Grape, Ironwood, Juniper, Larkspur, Ground

Lichens, Lupine, Mountain Mahogany, different kinds of Oak, Indian Paintbrush, Wild Plum, Rabbitbrush, Sagebrush, Russian Thistle, Morman Tea, Sumac, Walnut and others.

I'm sure that all of the persons who are interested in Natural Dyes will enjoy this publication.

TITLE: *NAVAJO NATIVE DYES, THEIR PREPARATION AND USE*.

AUTHOR: Bryan, Young, & Shirley

COST: \$1.50 plus 12¢ postage.

AVAILABLE: Robin & Russ Handweavers

A VISIT TO A BRITISH ROPE WORKS

One of the highlights of my recent trip to England was a visit to John Holmes & Sons, Ltd., a member of the British Rope Combine.

I was met at the rope works by one of the directors of the company, who told me the history of the company and then gave me a tour of the plant.

This company was founded by his great-grandfather in 1840, and used to be a hand-weaving business. They had 105 handlooms, and used to weave rugs with the scraps of fabrics collected from all the tailor shops in the area. They used to dye many of these rags to specific colors and Mr. Holmes discovered in the dyeing, a process of recovering indigo from the dye bath after the rags had been dyed, and he was awarded £900. With this reward money, he took it and built a new building and started making rope.

In his hand-weaving business, of weaving the rag rugs, he found it hard to obtain good carpet warp of different weights, so he started this new business of making ropes with the idea in mind of selling his products to the handweavers throughout England. And this was evidently the basis of his business while he was getting it established in rope production.

Today, 130 years later, it is part of the British Rope Combine, and is now actually four factories all combined in one site.

Continued on Page 6 **Page 3**

THE BEAUTY OF SILK

The fabric was woven of smooth, rich, glossy, spun silk imported from Switzerland. It was planned for a tailored suit or skirt and coat combination.

THREADING DRAFT:

4	O	O	X	O	O	O	X	O	
3		O	O	X	O				
2		X	X		O	X		X	
1		X		O	X	X		X	X

Two repeats of the threading draft, 16 threads each repeat.

KEY TO COLORS IN THE THREADING DRAFT:

O — LIGHT PURPLE, 8 ply spun silk
X — LIGHT FUCHSIA, 8 ply spun silk

WARP THREAD:

Two colors of the 8 ply spun silk were used in the warp. They are:

O — Light Fuchsia, 8 ply spun silk
X — Light Purple, 8 ply spun silk

WEFT THREADS:

In the weft, we used the same two colors of spun silk as in the warp. However, we did create more interest in this fabric, by doubling about 1/2 of the weft threads on the bobbin. We actually used four shuttles in the weaving of this silk fabric. Two of these shuttles had the Light Fuchsia and Light Purple singly on the bobbins, and the other two shuttles had the colors doubled on the bobbins.

REED USED:

A 15 dent reed was used, and it was double-sleyed, 2 ends per dent, or 30 threads per inch.

WIDTH OF FABRIC, set up on the loom

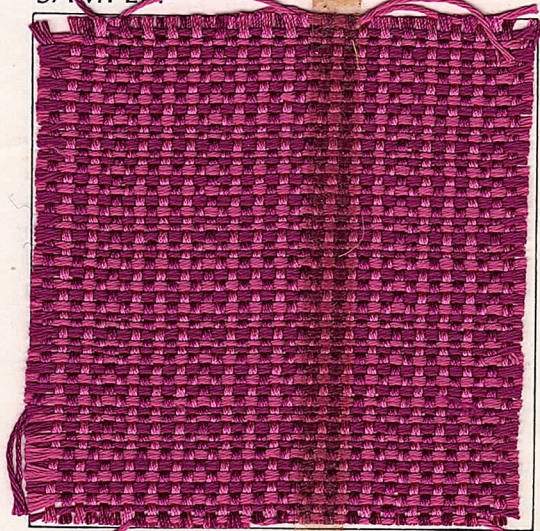
We had our loom set-up 42" wide, and after weaving it on the loom, it was 39" wide. This wove down much narrower than we had anticipated. And, after taken off the loom, and rolled up on a tube, we measured again, and found that the fabric came down to 38" width.

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TIE-UP DRAFT:

4		X		X
3		X	X	
2	X			X
1	X		X	
	1	2	3	4
			A	B

SAMPLE:



Tie-Up Draft:

In this particular pattern, we used only two (2) treadles in the weaving. However, we will give a tabby or plain tie-up also on treadles three and four.

Treadling Sequence:

There are ten threads in one complete repeat of the pattern.

Treadle:

Treadle No. 2 — Lt. Purple, doubled silk
Treadle No. 1 — Lt. Fuchsia, doubled silk
Treadle No. 2 — Lt. Purple, single silk
Treadle No. 1 — Lt. Fuchsia, single silk
Treadle No. 2 — Lt. Purple, doubled silk
Treadle No. 1 — Lt. Fuchsia, single silk

Treadle No. 2 — Lt. Purple, single silk
Treadle No. 1 — Lt. Fuchsia, doubled silk
Treadle No. 2 — Lt. Purple, doubled silk
Treadle No. 1 — Lt. Fuchsia, doubled silk

END OF ONE COMPLETE PATTERN REPEAT. Repeat over and over as desired.

ALSO PLEASE NOTE THE EXACT SEQUENCE IN WHICH WE USED A DOUBLED SILK THREAD OR A SINGLE SILK THREAD IN THE WEFT. This is most important, and helps to make it much more interesting than if you used a single weft thread on each bobbin in the weaving.

More About This Fabric

First of all, let me tell you about the spun silk used in this fabric. We purchased about 1,000 lbs. of this from a company in Switzerland. The silk like this is now selling normally at about \$20.00 to \$24.00 per pound, plus shipping and duty to this country. However, we visited every silk factory we could find, hoping to buy some spun silk which might be at a good price and the right size for handweaving. We found this lot of spun silk, and had to send it out and pay \$1.00 per lb. more to have it 4 plied, and then we had the right size for handweaving. *HOWEVER, we have from only 2 lbs. to about 8 lbs. of some colors in this spun silk, and we have about 150 different colors.* Because of this, it is almost impossible to sell this by advertising on sample sheets, so we have decided to show you how it works out by doing an occasional fabric in the spun silk. This spun silk is almost entirely off the market in the United States now, so we did feel lucky that we were able to purchase this lot of silk. So, if ever you are interested in spun silk say in blues, write us, and we will try to send you samples of some of the shades available in blue for you to see.

This silk is an 8 ply spun silk actually, so we had no problems with breakage in the weaving of this sample. And, if you are careful in doubling your weft threads, you will not have one loose and one tight thread, and as a result will have easy and enjoyable weaving.

We have been most intrigued with our

threading draft, and the pattern possibilities from this plain twill threading, and depending upon pattern creating by the use of color, and by use of different twill treadling variations on this threading.

We did one like this last year in red and white wool, and this was most intriguing, and as a result, we have been working with such threadings to see what we can do with them.

Notice also, that this fabric looks very much like a basket weave, but it is not a true basket weave, as we did use a single thread in some instances in the weft, and used a doubled silk thread the rest of the time. We felt that if we did alternate some of the weft in single and double weft threads, that we would have a more interesting fabric than if every weft thread was doubled.

Of course, if you want to make it easier for yourself to weave this, you can use all your weft threads doubled, or singly if you wish. If you do this, then you can use only 2 shuttles in the weft, instead of 4 as we had to do in this fabric.

I don't know whether we will get a chance to wash and press this fabric before we cut it up for samples, but I feel you will like it much better if you do wash it in lukewarm water, allow it to drip dry, and then steam press it with an iron that is not too hot.

Cost of the Threads Used:

This 8 ply spun silk has approximately 5200 yards per pound, a little finer than a 10/2 cotton. It can be used at 20 or 24 or 30 threads per inch. And, I do feel that perhaps 24, 26 or 28 inch is more satisfactory than 30 per inch.

PRICE IS \$8.00 per pound, and it comes on small cones varying from 3 to 7 oz. per cone. And *WE HAVE ABOUT 150 COLORS*, and from 2 to about 8 pounds of some of the different colors.

Cost of the Fabric:

Our warp was 42" wide, and sett at 30 per inch, and we had a 10 yard warp. It took 1 lb. 11 oz. of each of the two colors in the warp.

Thus, our total warp cost was \$27.00 or the cost per yard is \$2.70 per yard.

From this 10 yard warp, we had 9½ yards of finished fabric. In this we used 1 lb. 1 oz. of each of the Light Fuchsia and Light Purple. So, our total weft cost was \$17.00 for 9½ yards of fabric, or the weft cost per yard was \$1.79.

WARP COST PER YARD, 42" WIDE	\$2.70
WEFT COST PER YARD,	\$1.79
<hr/>	
FABRIC COST PER YARD	\$4.49

British Rope Works — Continued

They make ropes of linen, jute, cotton, rayon, and plastic, and ship all over the world except for America. They do not ship much here, because the duty is too high, and so they cannot compete pricewise with American Manufacturers.

Some of the interesting things that I saw, I must tell you about.

They take a beautiful glossy rayon, and treat it to remove the gloss, and make it look like cotton, and they glue fine strands of this together to make bands. And they take this same strand rayon and ply it and twist it, and make heavy rope of it.

They make much twine and string for the meat industry; polyproethelene for garden twine; they use cotton waste to make mop heads; they make rope for boats and nets; clothesline for use in the home and industry, etc. They make cut packs of fine cord, about 20" in length, and they wrap about 200 or 300 cords of cotton twine together, and cut them off to length on a band saw.

They dye many of their ropes in huge stainless steel vats, and all they have to do to start a new color, is to rinse out these vats, and they are then perfectly clean again and ready for the next color.

They make waxed and glazed twine for where waterproof rope is needed. They make special ropes for use in plumbing, and many, many other special products.

They make narrow, flat tapes for use in

wrapping packages, by glueing together 8 or 10 strands of fine cotton or rayon into one flat band. The room where this glueing is done was so warm that the girls who work there wear as few clothes as possible because of the extreme heat. Another important use of these flat tapes they make was to wind electrical wiring, because it does not conduct electricity.

They were making ropes of all sizes from the finest to about two or more inches in diameter. These heavy ropes were used in shipping, for winches, and many, many other uses.

In their shipping rooms were huge boxes all packed and ready to ship to countries in Africa, in Asia and South America. They used a special machine for wrapping these huge boxes and then this machine would put a plastic band around the box and heat fuse the plastic together instead of strapping or tying knots, and this eliminated so much labor.

These two men who were evidently the directors of the company were so pleasant and showed me everything they could.

The man who took me on the tour impressed me so much with his knowledge of every phase of the business and told me of some of their business problems.

He stated that many of their employees had worked for them for 30 to 40 years, and that it was very hard to get new employees to stay and work with them, as the new generation seemed so restless and was always looking for something better. He told me that the best workers that they got were those who had just served in the army under army discipline, and he felt they were more stable and reliable.

And one thing more that I forgot to mention was that at almost every machine in the plant along the way, Mr. Bywood would stop a machine and explain how it worked and then start it again, so it was a most comprehensive tour.

And, to my great delight and pleasure, I have just received in the mail from the company, a set of samples of the various items I requested, along with prices, and eventually, we hope to stock some of these for use in Macrame.

You can see from my enthusiasm, how much I enjoyed my visit to a rope works, and I hope that I've imparted some of my interest to you.

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150 COLORS IN 8 PLY SPUN SILK

Yes, this spun silk is a beautiful silk, and it has about 5200 yards per lb., and is reasonably priced at \$8.00 per lb. The only catch is that we have anywhere from 2 to 8 lbs., of these about 150 colors. If interested in a certain color, write for samples. It is excellent for warp and weft. ROBIN & RUSS, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

10/2 BLEACHED IRISH LINEN & 10/2 NATURAL

This is a very nice quality linen, on 1 lb. tubes. It has 1500 yards per lb., and is \$5.25 per lb. for the natural and \$4.50 per lb. for bleached white. Good for warp at 15 to 20 threads per inch. Postage extra. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

COLORLED JUTE ONCE AGAIN IN STOCK

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NAVAJO NATIVE DYES

is once again back in print. This interesting dyeing pamphlet was out of print and has just been reprinted. Price is \$1.50 plus 12¢ postage. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

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VEGETABLE DYEING, by Emma Conley

has also just been reprinted. It has always been about the most popular of the natural dyeing pamphlets, and was out of print for over a year. Still the same price of \$1.25 plus 12¢ postage. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

SALISH WEAVING

is an interesting and well illustrated booklet on the weaving of the Salish Indians in Canada. It is the story of this craft, and how it has been revived. Price is \$2.95 plus 12¢ postage. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

THE HANDBOOK OF KNOTS, by Raoul Graumont

is an excellent little manual for the Macrame worker. It has 428 different knots illustrated, and sells at just \$1.75 plus 12¢ postage. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Ore. 97128.

REDUCED PRICE ON CASTLE TYPE SPINNING WHEELS.

On our recent trip to Europe, we were able to order these direct from the manufacturer in England, instead of a middle-man in England, so we have been able to reduce this outstanding spinning wheel from \$110.00 to just \$95.00 each. Also, there is no packing charge now that we can get a box the right size, free of charge, so take advantage of this price reduction while you can. It is \$95.00 plus shipping. Robin & Russ, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

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