



warp and weft

Vol. XXXI, No. 4

April, 1978

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Published monthly (except July and August) by
Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 North Adams Street,
McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Subscription: \$8.00 per year
Back Issues 85¢ each plus 13¢ postage
Editor: Russell E. Groff

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A Word From The Editor

We have two most interesting samples that we think you will enjoy this month and next month. And there is a great difference in the two. Hope that you will enjoy what I did with them.

Again, a busy time here in the Robin and Russ shop. A few more yarns came in during this past month from Switzerland. We had a shipment of about 1500 lbs. of assorted colors in Ramie come in. And now, because of the devaluation of the American dollar in Europe, our ramie cost has gone up about \$2.00 per lb. We can keep our current prices until our next shipment comes in, in about three to four months.

We are concerned about the drop in the dollar, as so many threads used in the hand-weaving world are imported, and this can mean nothing but increased prices.

For instance, we ordered some linen in Switzerland last September. Because of two things; the dollar devaluation and the regular inflation, the company there has written us that the price of producing these linens has gone up some \$1350 in cost. And, as I was to pay for the linens when they were produced and dyed, it looks as though I'll have to pay this increased cost.

And, last year, we had some linen dyed to order in Scotland. In one year's time, the dyeing charges on this yarn have gone from \$1.00 per pound to \$2.50 per lb. to obtain the best fast color dyes available. It is downright frightening sometimes when I get the invoices on these yarns I've ordered, and I see the tremendous costs involved. And yet, most of these yarns in this country are almost twice as expensive, and very, very hard to find. This is beginning to sound like a lesson on economics, and it isn't what I want it to be.

This past month, we took one of our looms to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and had one of our former employees, Gillian Riley, demonstrate on it every day at the museum, and the fabric in this month's sample is what she wove there.

And looking at some samples that we had woven in the past, we were inspired to try some variations of one of the linen weaves, and it was from this, that we worked out this exciting drapery of linen and ramie that will follow next month.

And, during this time, we've been trying to sell our home, so that we can obtain some money to start building a new house on top of a hill, outside of McMinnville, Oregon. And, we believe that we have finally sold it, and we hope to have it settled, so that we can have our new house built this coming summer.

My vow to myself, is that I want to weave all of the drapes for our new home myself, and I'm sure that you will be seeing some of the results in future issues, perhaps later this fall.

It surely does sound like a busy summer though, with a conference in San Jose, California at the end of April. Then I will deliver four looms to Southern California in the first week in May, and then June is a trip to Convergence in Fort Collins, Colorado. Then, July will see our workshop taking place with Jack Womersley for the 2nd and 3rd weeks of July. And finally, in August, I hope to lead that weaving tour to England, Scotland, and Switzerland. And if you can include in with this the building of a new house, and perhaps moving out and renting an apartment and moving out into a new home, it doesn't sound as though there will be many spare moments.

And, still there are monthly magazines to get out, and bills to pay, and yarns to order, etc.

With Gillian Riley gone, the designing is back with your editor, and I've been enjoying myself, experimenting and working out different samples. I'm lucky that I do have two men to weave the finished yardages for us, after weaving the samples, and I really do appreciate Phil Wilson, and Andy Anderson doing this weaving for us.

And during all of this, Robin helps out when we need her, and Janice continues to do her usual good job of getting the orders out for shipment, stocking the shelves, putting yarns away, etc. When the 1500 pounds of ramie came in, Janice opened the 26 boxes and carried the yarns up on the balcony and put them away in one morning and one afternoon. It makes me tired just thinking of doing this, let alone the actual physical effort of doing it.

Well, enough chatter for this month, and back to the sample.

Russell E. Groff, Editor

This Month's Book Review

We are pleased to review for you this month, a book that has just reached us from England. This is an expensive, but very beautiful book entitled WEST AFRICAN WEAVING, by Venice Lamb. What is interesting is that this book was written by a weaver, who became so interested in her work that she traveled all over this portion of the world, and became acquainted with the weavers and weaving described in this book, as much as anyone person could do this.

Her aim in this book is to examine in great detail, two of the main weaving traditions to be found in Ghana, those of the Asante and of the Ewe and Adangbe weavers of the Volta Region. She wants and does describe this completely and outstandingly with words and with pictures. However, she points out that this narrow strip weaving complex does cover more than 2,000,000 square miles and involves hundreds of tribes and subtribes, so she states that a book of this size could not cover every weaving

tradition of every tribe and village, so this book is a general study of the weaving of this area.

She goes into great detail in this study, showing the looms, tools, and yarns used in this type of weaving, and explains the characteristics of each area very clearly.

This is an exciting study. I started to write this review about 3 hours ago, but have been looking at this book ever since.

There are maps in this book showing the main hand-weaving areas of Ghana. There is a tracing of the history of weaving in this area, as well as an explanation of the current weaving that is transpiring in this area at this time. They do differ and this is also explained.

And there are pictures galore in this book showing the looms, the weavers, the tools of the weaver's trade, the preparing of the warps, the handspinning processes of the area, and most important of all, 22 bright, glossy, and beautiful, full page 8½x11 photographs of many pieces of weaving from this area.

The materials used in the weaving of these narrow cloths were hand-spun cotton and wools, and imported silk. The silk was usually in the form of cloths which were unravelled and then rewoven.

The dyes used in the dyeing of these bright and colorful fabrics were usually natural dyes, but due to industrial progress, these are gradually being supplanted with dyes from Germany and Japan.

The only color they could not seem to dye naturally, was a bright red, and they prized an English dye red fabric, which they imported to obtain the red for weaving.

There are many, many pictures of the designs used in the various areas in these narrow woven cloth, which are sometimes as narrow as 4", and the average of the widest seems to be about 11" width, with an occasional 15" width fabric being found.

One of the author's speculations is that the narrow loom evolved because these tribes were at one time nomadic tribes, traveling from place to place, and they took their native crafts with them. It is thought that they could not have taken larger model looms with them, but they could take these narrow width looms, and that this is what they did. This, they believe, evolved over a period of hundreds of years.

Continued on page 6

Combo

A COMBINATION OF TWO MINIATURE PATTERNS, BLENDED TOGETHER.

I've always wanted to experiment and put together 2 miniature patterns, and see what happened when you tried different treadlings than that as drawn in. Our sample this month is just that.

THREADING DRAFT:

4	o	o		o	o	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x
3	o	o		o	o	x			x	x	x		x	x	x		x
2	o	o	o	o	o	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x
1	o	o	o	o	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x

KEY TO COLORS IN THE WARP:

- O — 20/2 Egyptian Cotton, color #1273, Tan
- X — 20/2 Egyptian Cotton, color #1234, Golden Brown

WARP THREADS USED:

Our warp threads are two colors of the 20/2 Egyptian Cotton. Those with the (O) represent one of the miniature patterns and those with the (X) represent the 2nd miniature pattern. The colors used were O — representing 20/2, color #1273, Tan. X — representing 20/2, color #1234, Golden Brown.

WEFT THREADS USED:

You will note in the tabby that we used the same two colors of thread in the warp for tabby, having 13 shots of each. And in the pattern thread, we used the new 3 ply 50% silk, 50% polyester for the pattern thread, and it worked out very well. The tabby threads were the Tan and the Golden Brown, and the pattern thread of silk and polyester is called GINGER BROWN. This silk and polyester has 2400 yards per lb., and comes on cones of 14 to 18 oz. each. The Egyptian cotton, size 20/2 has 8400 yards per lb. and comes on 1/2 lb. tubes, and is \$9.00 per pound. Sorry to say so, but we were told it goes up \$1.00 per lb. in about a month.

TIE-UP DRAFT

4	X	X	O	O	X	O
3	X	O	O	X	O	X
2	O	O	X	X	X	O
1	O	X	X	O	O	X
	1	2	3	4	5	6
					A	B

- X — tie-up for counter-balanced looms.
- O — tie-up for Jack-type looms.

Sample



REED USED:

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

MORE ABOUT THE SAMPLE

When I was weaving this sample, we did not thread any special selvage, but then I had one of the girls in the shop do a portion of the weaving, and the balance was woven at the OMSI museum as a demonstration, and these two weavers found that they had to put a heavier

selvage on, because the edges frayed on them. I was so puzzled about this that I decided to see if there was any difference in our weaving, and I sat down at the loom again, and wove at the end of the warp, and I found my weaving was $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" wider than that of the other two persons who wove on it. So, you can see that every person's weaving does vary.

In any event, I used 8 threads of an 18/3 nylon stitching twine for selvages on both sides and threaded one side, 4,3,2,1,4,3,2,1, and then the other 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4. Then we added a fishing weight of about 6 oz. each on each side, to keep these nylon threads taut, and it worked well this way.

And, in the weaving of this, I find that a firm, even, double beat is best when weaving this overshot. We found the pattern was easy to remember and easy to follow. While Gillian Riley was weaving this at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, we had a compliment from the director of the museum who watched her weave and talk to interested persons, and his comment was, "She is the only person I've seen who can carry on 3 different conversations with 3 different people at the same time, and still continue to weave."

I also decided to keep track of the time it took to weave this all over overshot pattern with tabby, and I found that I could weave one yard in about 2 hours, and the newcomer to the weaving took slightly over 3 hours per yard to weave it.

There were other interesting treadlings that we worked out on these two patterns, and they seemed very exciting.

TREADLING FOR THIS PATTERN.

You might find the treadling sort of long and involved the first two or three times you weave it, but once you establish a rhythm to your weaving, it should be very easy to follow and use the correct color of tabby in the right place.

1. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
2. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2
3. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
4. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
5. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.

6. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
7. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
8. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
9. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
10. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
11. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
12. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
13. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
14. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
15. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
16. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
17. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
18. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
19. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
20. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
21. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
22. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
23. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
24. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
25. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
26. Treadle # A, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
27. Treadle # 1, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
28. Treadle # B, Tan 20/2 Egy. cotton.
29. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
30. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
31. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
32. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
33. Treadle # 3, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
34. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
35. Treadle # 3, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
36. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
37. Treadle # 4, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
38. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
39. Treadle # 4, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
40. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
41. Treadle # 4, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
42. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
43. Treadle # 4, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
44. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
45. Treadle # 3, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
46. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
47. Treadle # 3, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
48. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
49. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
50. Treadle # A, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.
51. Treadle # 2, Ginger Brown Silk & Poly.
52. Treadle # B, Golden Brown 20/2 Egy.

End of one complete pattern repeat. Repeat over and over as desired.

Notice in this treadling sequence, because the tabby color changes, I put down 26 pattern treadles and 26 tabby treadles. Normally, tabby is understood, and not listed in the treadling as it is taken for granted, but with a change in color of the tabby, then we have to list it accordingly.

Also, once you get the tabby down and in the right place with the right color, you can get used to working with the treadling in this sequence 1,1,2,2,1,1,2,2,1,1,2,2,1,1,2,2,3,3,4,4,4,3,3,2,2, and start over. This particular treadling refers to the pattern thread only and does not give the tabby, and tell when a color change is made in the tabby.

This Month's Cover Photograph:

I was intrigued with this photograph at this time, as it ties in with the book review of this month, the book on West African Weaving.

The West African weaving consists of weaving narrow strips from 4" to 11" wide usually, and cutting them up and sewing them together in squares to make a fabric.

This also leads to a new source of design, and I somehow wonder if this cover wasn't inspired by some of the West African weaving.

I'm sorry that I do not know more about the cover on this month's issue, but it looks to me as though it were a long, narrow strip with different patterns being woven in different portions of the strip. Then the strip was cut apart about every seven squares of weaving, and then sewed together to form this fabric. It is very effective in West African clothing, and once again it is effective here.

In the assembly of this piece, it looks as though the strips were cut apart, and some turned around and sewed together, and others keeping the same original direction and being sewed together.

This piece was on exhibit at the Northern California Conference in 1977, and I have the facts that it is from the Silerado Weavers, and I have the name as being woven by Maurice Wood.

If I'm wrong in any of these facts, or if the weaver sees this and recognizes it, I hope that they will take a few minutes to drop us a line and tell us more about it, and how this came about.

This Month's Book Review

Continued from Page 3

There are some pages of color gamps of these narrow fabrics, and some of the more common designs that were used in this narrow band weaving. Besides these, there are many black and white photos of these, and the author also made some charts of Asanta patterns while she was visiting the villages where they were woven, and where she studied their weaving.

The author spent some 4 years of research in various places in Africa studying all of the items that she has presented in this book.

She started out as a student of art, and later as a skilled weaver, she supervised an occupational therapy department which was in Malaysia and specialized in some weaving as a form of therapy. She also, besides travelling in these villages in Africa to study their weaving, has visited all of the museums which have any collections of African Weaving, and has studied all of them. She visited museums in England, Germany, Holland, and the U.S.A.

Together, she and her husband have made a collection called the Lamb Collection of Narrow Strip Weaving, which was exhibited in Washington D. C. in 1975. She is now a lecturer in textiles at Farnham College of Art in England.

She also points out that there are many other types of weaving in many areas of Africa which should be thoroughly studied and put in print as she has this one. She points out that if this is not done soon, because of modern technology in the current years, and years to come, that probably this art will die out, and not be carried on as it has been in the past. Already, the inroads of civilization are cutting down the amounts of weavers, the amount of native dyes, the amounts of hand-spun yarns that were originally used in this craft.

This is really a most exciting study, and one that I can recommend highly.

TITLE: West African Weaving

AUTHOR: Venice Lamb

COST: \$60.00 plus shipping

PUBLISHER: Gerald Duckworth & CO., Ltd.

London, England

AVAILABLE: Directly from the publisher or from Robin & Russ Handweavers

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50% SILK, 50% POLYESTER, IN 11 COLORS

This is the pattern thread used in this month's miniature overshot pattern. It has approximately 2400 yards per pound, and comes on about 1 lb. cones. The white is \$6.80 per lb., and the colors are \$8.80 per lb. Free sample sheet upon request. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

FROSTY, FLUFFY, NATURAL WHITE HEAVY WOOL BOUCLE FROM PHOENIX YARNS OF IRELAND

This yarn has the appearance of being slightly brushed. It is 95% wool and 5% binder thread which looks as though it may be cotton. It has 640 yards per lb., came on about 1½ to 2 lb. cones, and is \$9.60 per lb. We can wind off for you ½ lb. tubes if you desire it. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

SAPPHIRE, LARGE LOOP WOOL FROM PHOENIX

A beautiful color, this heavy wool boucle yarn has approximately 450 yards per pound. It came to us on about 2 to 3 lb. cones, but we can wind off 1/2 lb. tubes for you. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

THE TECHNIQUE OF WOVEN TAPESTRY IS OUT OF PRINT, BUT WE HAVE 100 COPIES ENROUTE TO US FROM ENGLAND

Always my favorite tapestry book, as it takes you through the planning and making of a tapestry in step by step stages, we're pleased that I located these. Price will be the same at \$11.95 plus shipping. We will take orders for this, and they should be here in about 4 weeks. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

RAMIE TOPS FOR HANDSPINNING

We were able to get 2 new shipments of this beautiful fiber for handspinning. It is so beautifully white in it's natural state. Available on about 1 lb. pkgs., it is \$6.80 per lb. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

20/2, 30/2, 40/2, 50/2, 60/2, 70/2, 80/2, 90/2, 100/2, 110/2, and 120/2 BLEACHED AND MERCERIZED LINEN FOR BOBBIN LACE FROM BELGIUM

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We had this very nice brass reed hook made to order for us. It is about twice the size of the Swedish Plastic reed hook, and is easy to use on either end. Ideal for reeds up to 20 dents. We suggest that you do smooth the edges with steel wool or a file of some kind as they are stamped pressed into shape, and sometimes have a slightly rough edge on one side. Price is \$1.50 each plus postage. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

10 COLORS IN WOOL TOPS FOR HANDSPINNING

Just in a short time age from England, this is a top quality of botany. Beautiful colors in about 1 lb. packages. Price is \$6.00 per lb. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 North Adams St., McMinnville, Ore. 97128.

100/2 WHITE, 120/2 NATURAL, 150/2 NATURAL COTTON FOR BOBBIN LACE

In from Belgium, this is on 3,000 meter tubes, and it is \$4.00 per spool for the 100/2 white, and 150/2 Natural. Several local bobbin lacers have tried it and said it was outstanding. Robin & Russ Handweavers, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER ON A TAILOR'S PATTERN BOOK FROM SPAIN IN 1500s

We figure this book we are co-publishing with a firm in England will sell for \$35.00. We are taking pre-publication orders for \$30.00 each. This will be a cloth bound book of 250 pages, and will contain some 163 patterns from Spanish Fashions of 1589. This book was first printed in Spain in 1589 and only 2 known copies are available in the world. The person I will co-publish with has worked for 2 years on a facsimile edition with an excellent translation. This is the first known tailoring book ever printed, and the title is "Libro De Geometria," by Ivan de Alcega. ROBIN & RUSS, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

WEAVES AND PATTERN DRAFTING

I highly recommend this basic introduction to understanding weaves and drafts. A clear, concise text is accompanied by line drawings and photographs of finished fabric. Sections include: plain weaves, twills, overshot weaves, color and weave, and a very useful explanation and table of counts and suggested sets for typical fabrics. A very good book to have around your studio. By an English designer and teacher, John Tovey, this book sells for \$11.95. ROBIN & RUSS HANDWEAVERS, 533 N. Adams Street, McMinnville, Oregon 97128/

4 BABY COLORS IN A FINE COTTON BOUCLE

We have this fine cotton boucle with a finer rayon twist in white, baby blue, baby pink, and yellow. This can be used for lightweight blankets or crib covers, and is very washable. Comes in 1/2 lb. tubes, and the price is \$2.00 per tube, or \$4.00 per lb. Just limited amounts of these threads are available. It has about 4,000 yards per lb. Robin & Russ, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

COTTON AND WOOL NUB BLEND

This yarn is available in 5 colors. It is a dark blue with natural nub, yellow with natural nub, white with natural nub, and red with a natural nub. It has a sort of salt and peppery feeling on all 4 colors, except for the natural and white. Price is \$4.80 per lb. It has approximately 2500 yards per lb. Robin & Russ, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

STITCHERS AND EMBROIDERERS ATTENTION

We have available, some nice novelty yarns in small 50 yard skeins for use as accents in weaving, embroidery, or stitchery. Most reasonable price also at 25¢ per skein. Try an assortment of colors or textures for \$3.00 plus postage. Robin & Russ, 533 N. Adams St., McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

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