

NOTES ON WEAVING TERMINOLOGY

## MASTER WEAVERS

Who is a Master in our trade?

Who has the right to use this title?

I have been discussing this subject with quite a few outstanding weavers of our continent, and they all declined to apply this distinction to themselves. Who then is a Master?

The misunderstanding arises from the fact that we have adopted some two centuries old terminology to our present circumstances, and assumed unconsciously that a Master Weaver must obviously know everything about weaving.

The 18 century weavers were not so ambitious. In these times every weaver, not only master, specialised in one particular branch of weaving, usually in one medium only, be it wool or cotton, or linen - and in a very limited number of weaves. Thus they achieved by years of studies and experiments a perfection, which seems to us difficult to attain. But not only were they so highly specialised - they were professionals working at nothing else but weaving at least twelve hours a day. To match their education in nothing else but in the time involved we would have to live several times longer than we usually do.

Knowing "all about weaving" theoretically as well as practically is an absolutely hopeless proposition. It takes weeks to get acquainted with a new weave in all its aspects. It may take years with some pattern weaves. Now, there are hundreds of weaves, which can be divided into several groups, and each group asks for a special equipment. This equipment alone would take more space than most of us can afford. How then can we aspire ever to learn all about weaving?

In my opinion everybody who knows his line of weaving is a master. If you know just one thing so well that you do not fear competition in this particular field, you are a master. If you know all patterns of the Colonial period, you are a master. If you can weave tweeds as well as anybody else, you are a master. If your linen towels are as good as the 19-th century Dutch, or Irish ones - you are a master. If you can set up a loom better than most people, if you can throw the shuttle faster, if you can teach others more efficiently, if you know all there is to be known about colour or texture - even if you never heard about honeysuckle - you are still a master. A master in your own line.

S. A. Zielinski

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**CAPE** - part of the loom frame. It is not however one of the vertical beams supporting the top-castle. Capes are horizontal beams on both sides of the upper part of the frame. Only looms with hanging battens have Capes, on which rests the Rocking Shaft of the batten. The cover of the Raddle, and the Hand-tree of a batten (the grooved part which rests on the reed) are also called Capes, or Caps

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