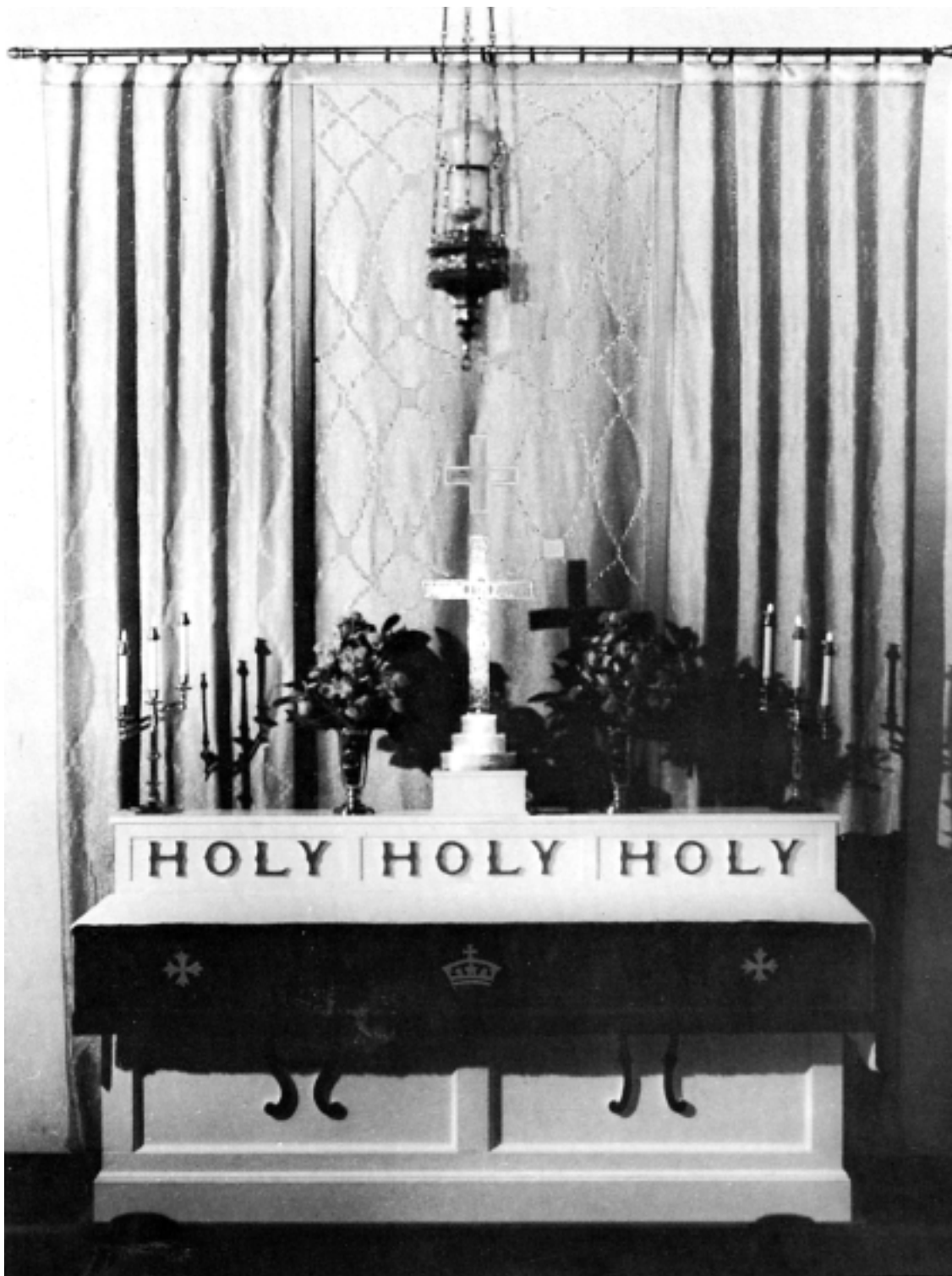


PRACTICAL WEAVING SUGGESTIONS

VOL. 2-63



Ecclesiastical Weaving



Dossal Curtain Woven by Colonel John Fishback for St. Mark's Episcopal Church,
Venice, Florida

The Dossal Curtain

Colonel John Fishback

It is doubtful if any type of weaving is more demanding, or more rewarding, than the designing and production of ecclesiastic pieces. They may vary from a few small pieces in some churches to many elaborate items in others. A study of one or more of the books on ecclesiastical symbols and vestments soon makes it clear that you are dealing with a very big subject with certain well defined rules. Any weaver planning to design and weave for a church should have some knowledge of this subject, and consult the minister, priest or rabbi before beginning.

The material which may be handwoven for the church should be considered in two groups: the many items used in the sanctuary, and the vestments worn by those who conduct the services. As some vestments are very elaborate it is suggested that the less difficult pieces of weaving used in the sanctuary be tried first. These would be bookmarks (generally in pairs) a pulpit and lectern fall and so on. If the church for which you are weaving uses the seasonal colors of the church year each item must be done in each of these colors, white, red, purple and green.

A dossal, sometimes called dorsal, has become an exception to this rule for changing the seasonal colors. In the older books it is pictured and described as a short curtain attached to back of the altar, and just its width. This small dossal was provided in the seasonal colors and changed with the other woven pieces as required by the church calendar. In later years a hanging suspended from the wall back of the altar has been frequently used. It might be eight to twelve feet high, wide enough to extend slightly beyond the altar at each side, and hung to just clear the floor. This is generally spoken of as a dossal curtain.

Such a curtain is the subject of this article and a brief story of the project will serve to illustrate the opening sentence above. At the time the project was first considered I was a member of the vestry at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Venice, Florida and a large expanse of plaster wall back of the altar had been bothering me. Because of the high peaked roof nothing small would do, so a rather large dossal curtain appeared to be the answer if the color and pattern were subdued.

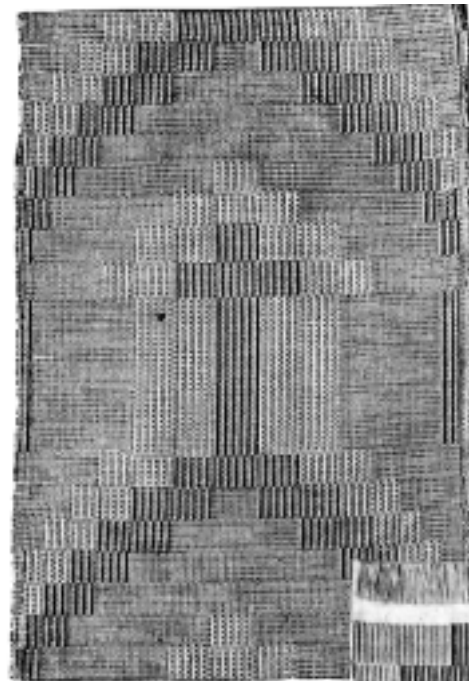
Between this decision and the actual hanging of the dossal curtain many sheets of cross section paper were tossed in the wastebasket, various colors were tried and discarded, and several 48 inch samples were woven and held against the wall back of the altar. The final decision was for a 16 thread Summer & Winter unit to be warped on the 16 harness loom and to use all 18 treadles. The first 3 frames would carry the warp ends that made the background and the remaining 13 would be for the pattern. The center panel, which was to hang flat, consisted of large circles with a cross in the middle. For the two side panels, which were to hang in folds, the draft was changed to make an all over design that would match the pattern along the edges of the center panel. All three panels were made 48 inches wide with 24 ends to the inch and woven 12 feet long. The warp and tabby was **Lily Art. 114 Mercerized Cotton** in Linen Color using 10/2 for the warp and 20/2 for the tabby. The pattern weft was **Lily Art. 305 Gold Guimpe**. This seems a good place to mention that the grist of warp, tabby and pattern weft together with sett in the reed must be so balanced that the units will be square. When the three panels were put together a band of gold and scarlet was used to cover the two seams, and also to cover the hem across the top. All of

Church Hangings

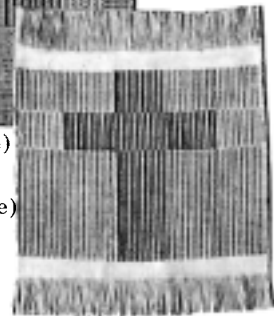
Lela Gordon

Ecclesiastical weaving is very challenging to a weaver. When I started making Church Hangings I quickly discovered that you cannot use specific instructions, as different Churches, even in the same denomination, may have quite different needs. In my case, two sets were for Methodist Churches, yet one altar was 44" x 20" with a step arrangement which only allowed for a 4" drop on which to weave symbols, while the other Church had an altar 72" x 30" with no limitation on the depth of the front drop. Also the pulpits were entirely different. One had a flat desk top so that the hanging, or antependium, had to be long enough to cover the pulpit top, while the other one had a 2" drop to the pulpit top and the hanging needed only go over this drop. In the latter case, to hold the hanging firmly in place, I used an ordinary dime store round curtain rod but turned the hooks down (rather than up as normal). The rod, of course, was not visible. In the first instance, I used, in my own Church, double face Scotch tape on the flat pulpit top surface to hold the hanging. This tape is colorless but sticks to the top and the hanging sticks to it. As I change hangings, according to the dictates of the Christian Year, occasionally this Scotch tape is replaced, but I have found it to be most practical.

The first step to be taken in weaving for a particular Church is to consult the Minister or Priest to determine the requirements of that Church, as the colors needed according to the Christian Year, type of cross or other symbol and whether a sheer, medium or heavyweight material would be most suitable. One minister objected to the Greek Cross and wanted only the Latin Cross. In one set I wove a small Greek Cross in the four corners with the large Latin Cross in the center of the pulpit hanging. Naturally these two crosses are the easiest to execute in hand weaving, as they can be loom controlled. However, if you have sufficient harnesses, you can do a cross that is more ornamental, as the Crusader's or Graded, or you can use the laid-in technique for others as St. Andrew's or Budded.

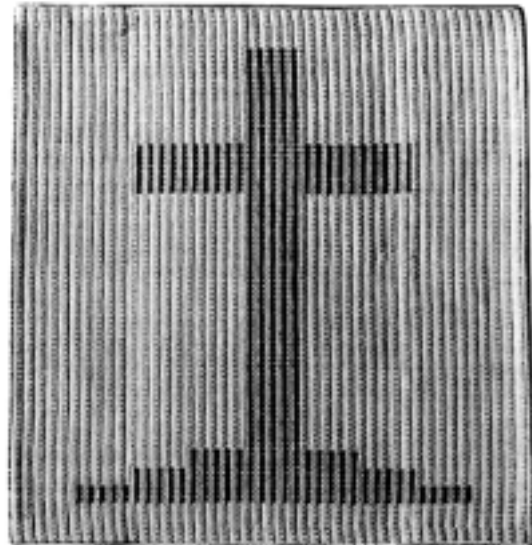


Seven Step Graded Cross (Crackle)



4 Harness Cross (Crackle)

Graded Cross

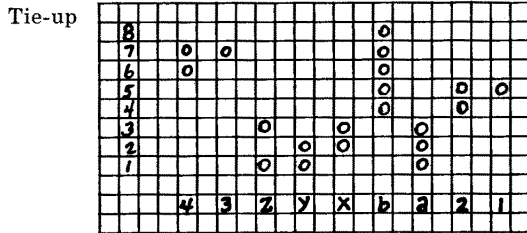
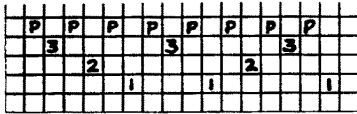


3 PIECE ALTAR, PULPIT AND LECTERN SET

Illustrated on Cover

Warp Lily Art. 114, Pearl Cotton, Size 10/2, Bottle Green 562
Tabby Lily Art. 114, Pearl Cotton, Size 20/2, Bottle Green 562
Weft Pattern Lily Art. 305, Gold Guimpe
Reed 12 dent — 2 threads per dent
Threading Bergman Technique

Each unit of this pattern is represented by one square of draft containing 16 ends, threaded as follows:



The pattern thread comes on the harness required to form the pattern desired — for instance — the first three harnesses are tie-down threads. Harness 8 makes the plain areas; Harnesses 5 and 4 form the small cross; with a plain area on Harness 8 between the small and large crosses; then 7 and 6 form the large cross. See diagram below.

For the diamond background treadle as follows — x y y z z x x y y x x z z y y x

For the pattern-treadle the background sequence above with the necessary pattern treadle. Always start units with the single X from the LEFT. Tabby between each pattern pick.

To square the background you will note that the tabby is half the size of the warp. (Warp 10/2, tabby weft 20/2).

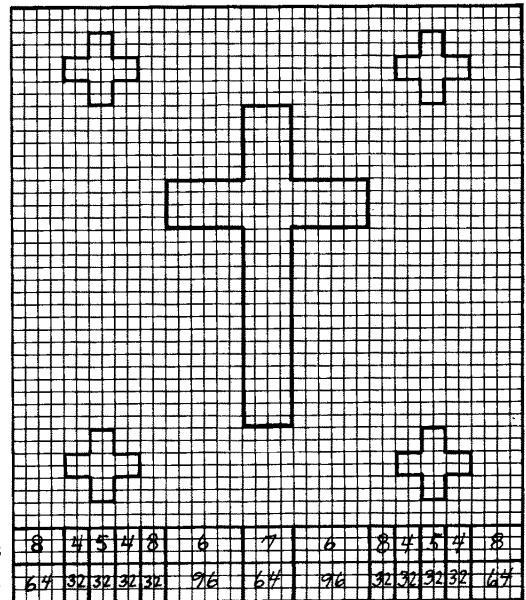
Note the reverse tie-up used to make treadling light. The tabby treadle b is the only heavy one. Also note the a b x y z treadles are in the center to facilitate the use of both feet, and those used the least are on the left.

The fringe used on this set is called BULLION (a metallic gold fringe made in France) which matches the shade of the Lily gold guimpe used as pattern weft. This fringe and many other church designs in fringe, trims and emblems can be purchased from the following firm:

Krieg Bros. Religious Supplies
1414 Farmer Street
Detroit 26, Michigan

Prices for the Bullion are as follows:

1 1/4"	\$3.95 per yard	2 1/2"	\$6.95 per yard
1 5/8"	4.95 " "	3"	7.95 " "
2 1/4"	5.95 " "		

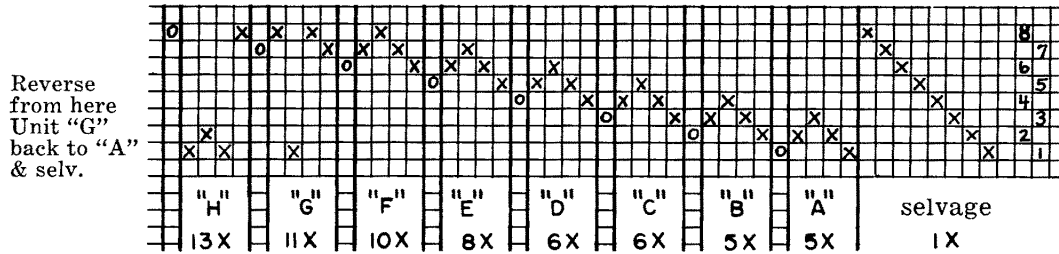


(4 Squares — 16 Threads each Square, etc.)

7 STEP GRADED CROSS (CRACKLE)

Illustrated on Page 5

Warp Lily Art. 214, Mercerized Cotton, Size 20/2, Natural
Weft Tabby Lily Art. 214, Size 20/2, Natural wound with Lily Art. 305, 1/64 Gold
Weft Pattern Lily Art. 114, Mercerized Floss, Old Gold #79



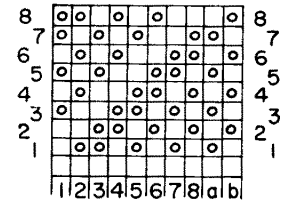
o indicates incidental thread necessary to maintain a twill sequence

Weave Tabby a, b

Treadle 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Repeat each of these blocks 7 x

Treadle 1-28x; 8-7x; 1-7x; 2-7x; 3-7x

Treadle 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 each 7x

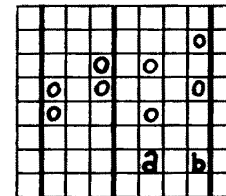
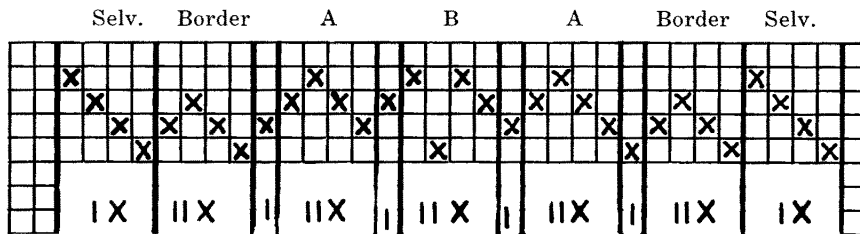


This makes a firm fabric. For a heavier material Lily Art. 107, Linen, 10/2 Oyster could be used for both warp and weft (tabby) using Art. 114, Old Gold Floss #79 for weft pattern.

4 HARNESS CROSS (CRACKLE)

Illustrated on Page 5

Warp Lily Art. 215, Fine Weave White
Weft Tabby Same as warp
Weft Pattern Lily Art. 114, Mercerized Floss, Old Gold #79
Pattern Sample Cross in Crackle Weave
Reed 15 dent — 3 ends per dent (45 ends per inch)



Jack Tie-up

A represents arms of the Cross

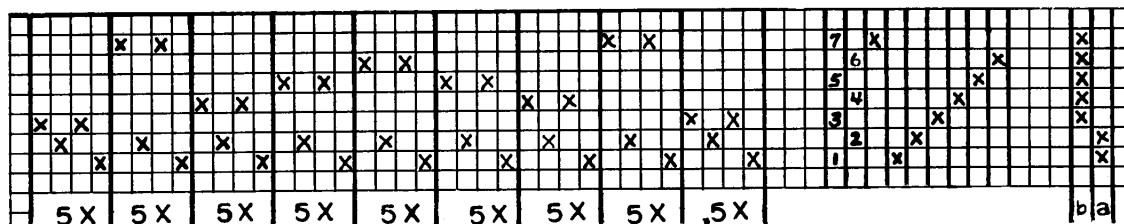
B represents stem of the Cross

It is treadled 2/3 b tabby 2/3 a tabby 42 times
 1/2 b tabby 1/2 a tabby 12 times
 2/3 b tabby 2/3 a tabby 12 times

GRADED CROSS

Illustrated on Page 5

Warp Lily Art. 114, Mercerized Cotton, Size 10/2, White
Weft Tabby Lily Art. 114, Mercerized Cotton, Size 10/2, White
Weft Pattern Lily Art. 114, Mercerized Floss, Old Gold #79
Reed 10 dent — 2 threads per dent
Threaded Summer and Winter

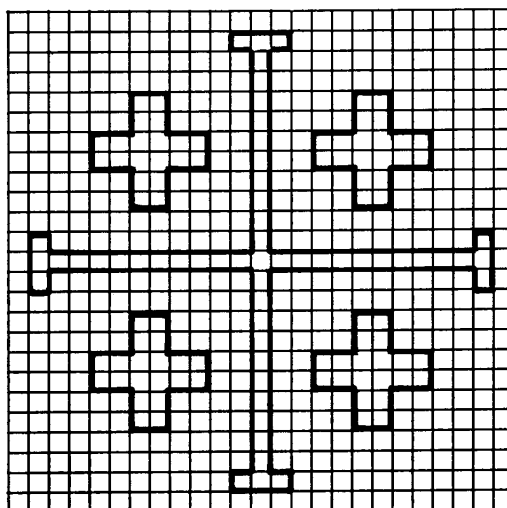
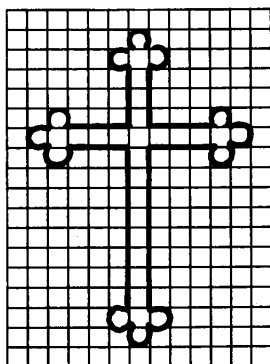


Weave 1½" plain weave with 10/2 white

Pattern area above and below the cross — weave	134567a	134567b	¾ inch
First bottom level of cross — weave	1/3a	1/3b	3x
Second bottom level of cross — weave	137a	137b	3x
Third bottom level of cross — weave	1347a	1347b	3x
Stem of Cross — weave	13457a	13457b	4¼ inches
Arm of Cross — weave	137a	137b	9x
Top Stem of Cross — weave	13457a	13457b	17x
Pattern area	134567a	134567b	¾ inch

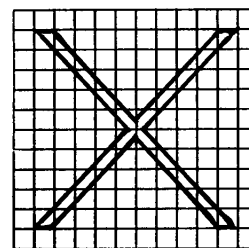
The skeleton tie-up permits weaving by pressing two treadles with each foot as needed. (For instance 7 and 1 with the left foot and 3 and 4 with the right foot.) However, if your loom tie-ups are easily changed, it would facilitate the weaving to make the change for each step in the base of the Cross, etc.

Budded Cross



Crusader's Cross

St. Andrews Cross



Handweavers Headquarters

LILY MILLS COMPANY • Shelby, North Carolina