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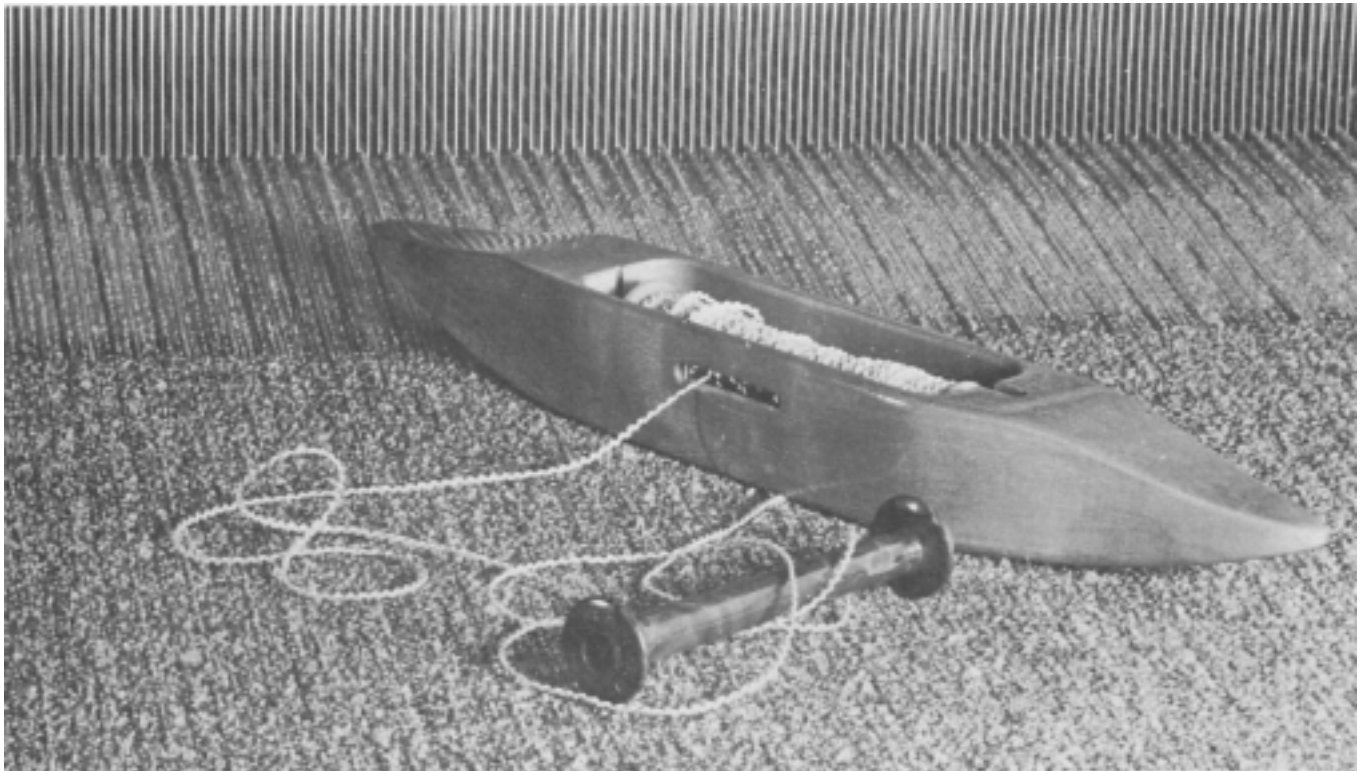
Shuttle Craft Guild

HANDWEAVERS BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 1962



Summer over and weavers return to their looms. The photograph "Idle Loom" by Mabel Moran of Great Falls, Montana, signifies the spirit of the month --- the shuttle waiting for a practiced hand, the reed waiting for the rhythmic beat, a new textile to be completed, a new plan to be evolved. The fashion world is bringing all kinds of new stimulation to the handweaver this year through its use of unusual surface-interest and backed fabrics and of luxurious, smooth textiles. The former were taken up in Monograph Number 2, SURFACE INTEREST: TEXTILES OF TODAY, and the latter will appear in the October Monograph, Number 7, CONTEMPORARY SATIN. Greater areas for handloom expression are developing in the decorating field with the fashion turn to area rugs and smooth, firm upholsteries accented by colorful cushions. The Collingwood classes in October, under the instruction of the world's most noted rug designer and weaver, Peter Collingwood of England, will give many Shuttle Craft Guild members a new outlook on rug design. This will be shared through the long-promised Collingwood Monograph in either January or April, 1963. There are also plans for something special in tapestries, which TIME magazine says are having their greatest revival since the fifteenth century. The Shuttle Craft Guild has a vigorous year ahead, and one to supply inspiration and instruction to hundreds --- we hope thousands of handweavers. We hope all current members, and many new ones, will be with us in 1963.





After fifteen weeks of thrilling travel in fifteen countries, in the pleasant company of Alec and Alice Macdonald of Iowa, I find myself still bewildered by a confusion of impressions and knew knowledge of old things. As packages of textiles continue to arrive almost daily from such far off points of origin as Japan, Thailand, Ceylon, India, Iran and the Mediterranean region, the problems of organizing and storing magnify, but the identification of styles and cultures clarifies. My mind worried around the problem of selecting just one good weaver's project for this Bulletin from all this wealth. But the problem disappeared immediately with the arrival of a package from far-off Nepal. The Tibetan Snow Jacket which emerged, along with the faint odor of incense and wood smoke from the cloth wrappings of the package, hits the spirit of the current winter-sport fashions with such insistent urgency that I bring you the design without delay. To the contemporary eye looking for something both unusual and handsome, this snow jacket will also be practical for the skiing and snow-frolicking members of your family.

Not many American tourists arrive in the beautiful, high, mountain-encircled valley of Kathmandu, capital of Nepal which lies in the shadow of the world's highest mountains. But there are other tourists, looking for new homes,

who press into the valley on foot, carrying a few portable belongings --- the sturdy, industrious Tibetans fleeing from the destruction of communist rule in their mysterious country. We visited the Tibetan refugee camp sprawling in the sun on the edge of the city, a camp operated by the International Red Cross and staffed by capable, realistic, charming Swiss women. In the camp everyone was working and weaving was the most important activity. A carpentry shop was busy shaping simple spindles for spinning wool, turning out the strange A-shaped treadle looms on which Tibetan women weave, and the simple sticks and beating swords required for the weaving of gay inkles for belts and trimmings. The older people of the community could be seen in the shady lee of every building, quietly sitting on the ground carding and spinning wool by the most primitive methods, while small children played happily and without confusion around them. Young men were busy over large vats, turning wool in dyebaths and then hanging the skeins on a great frame to dry. Green was the color the day we called. Young women sat at treadle looms on the porches of buildings; older women sat in a row on the ground under a long, thatch awning, weaving inkles on circular warps held around a smooth log-pole secured a few inches above the ground along one side of the shaded area, and tensioned by belts around their hips. Young boys sorted yarns and wound skeins and bobbins, and young girls with flying fingers sat at vertical frame looms tying the endless knots which form the deep, lustrous pile of the typically Chinese rugs. Everyone was busy and an air of courage and quiet good humor pervaded the crowded but orderly compound where a people who might be miserable but instead accepted their hard lot with an apparent fortitude and industry, sustained themselves with their ancient arts.

Two women I watched were weaving, with vigorous beat, very heavy twill fabrics of undyed wool blended with soft goat hair. The fabrics from these looms, about thirteen inches wide and later fullled to about ten inches, was that used for the Snot Jackets. Firmly woven, with the weft crowded into the 2-2 twill sheds to give a diagonal of about 30 degrees, the fabrics after fulling were thick, fairly stiff, with a soft surface and completely impervious to wind, wet and weather. They appropriately develop the thick, heavy texture which we try so hard to avoid for most woolen clothing fabrics. The fulling is so severe that the twill interlacement and the diagonal twill line are almost obliterated in the napping and felting.

While the white twill cloth is woven of fine handspun yarn, the gay bands which add the style to the Tibetan Snow Jacket are inkle woven of heavy woolen yarn. Colors used, in addition to black and white, are scarlet, crimson, bright yellow, vibrant sky-blue and a mossy green, colors not unlike those of the traditional Scotch tartans. Eighty to ninety threads wide, the

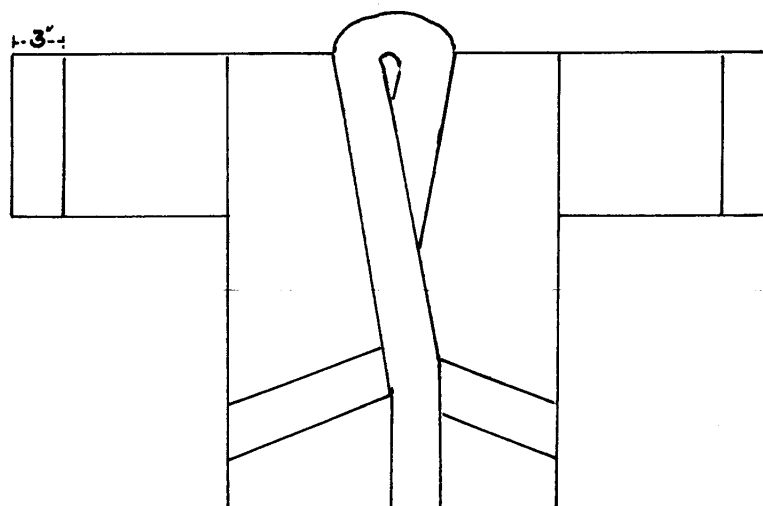
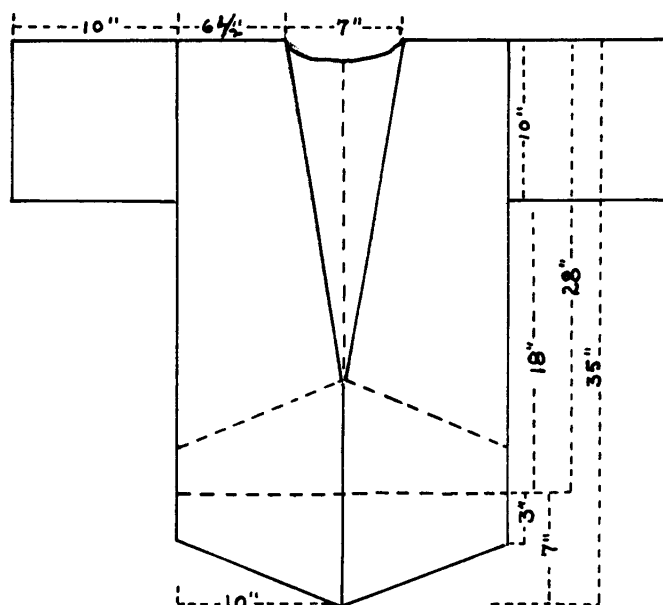
warp face bands are about three and a half inches wide in the making, three inches after a vigorous washing. Although natural dyes are used in the mountains, chemical dyes which duplicate the natural colors are used in the refugee camp, and these are completely fast. Here are the color plans for two bands I purchased:

4 black	4 black
4 scarlet	4 scarlet
4 crimson	4 crimson
4 scarlet	1 crimson, 1 white
4 blue	alternated 4 times
4 black	4 blue
4 green	4 green
4 yellow	6 yellow
4 crimson	4 scarlet
1 black, 1 white,	1 blue, 1 scarlet,
alternated 8 times	alternated 4 times
1 black	3 scarlet
4 crimson	6 yellow
4 yellow	4 green
4 green	4 blue
4 black	1 scarlet, 1 white,
4 blue	alternated 4 times
4 scarlet	4 crimson
4 crimson	4 scarlet
4 scarlet	<u>4 black</u>
<u>4 black</u>	83 ends.
89 ends.	

The weft yarn is two dark strands of about the same weight twisted together, but both the original spinning and the doubling have loose twists so this yarn is soft. The beat is firm, giving about seven shots per inch, and the selvages are perfectly smooth. (For directions for inkle weaving see *THE INKLE WEAVE* by Tidball, Craft and Hobby Book Service, Big Sur, Calif, \$2.50.)

The jacket requires about five yards of ten inch wide, heavy, white or natural, twilled woolen (finished dimensions), and about four yards of heavy, woolen inkle bands, three inches wide. The American handweaver will probably prefer to weave a double width fabric, about twenty-five inches wide on the loom, twenty inches after fulling, requiring but two and a half yards.

The method for making up the jacket may be seen from the two diagrams, the first one showing the white fabric, the second one with the inkle bands added. Only the underarm seams are of the conventional flat-fell style. All other joinings are made by butting the selvages and whipping them together very firmly with wool. If the jacket is sewn together before the fabric is fulling, these selvaige joinings almost disappear in the napped woolen texture. The front edges are cut as indicated, on a slight diagonal (after the jacket is fulling) and bound continuously with the curved neck back. There are three ways for making the diagonal pockets. Allow greater length on the two front pieces, cut them diagonally as shown, and turn them up, whipping the selvages firmly in place. A neater method is to



allow three inches more and seam the Inkle bands to the tops so the cut edge need not be bound before attaching the inkle band as an extension. The third method is to cut the pockets as separate pieces. The decorative bands serve the function of extending the sleeve length and of forming a pliable neck-band which fits smoothly and comfortably at the back and over the shoulders. The diagonal inkles on the pockets are purely decorative, but they supply the "style" to the garment.

Dimensions given on the diagram are for finished measurements, medium size. Allow about an inch for the underarm seam in this bulky material, and an inch and a half for the bottom hem. The inkle band around the front is turned up about two inches on the inside of the jacket to give a firm finish at the bottom. Use only wool for the sewing. The jacket I purchased was a worn rather than a new one, and it required several vigorous washings and a steaming, all of which it withstood perfectly, emerging with a softer texture than it originally had.

Any natural color, fairly fine, tweed yarn is suitable --- for instance, 12-cut with 3,600 yards per pound, or finer. Set the warp at the normal number of ends per inch (whatever will make shedding easy) but beat much more firmly than for a normal tweed so that the weft is packed. Then wash the fabric (for fulling methods see Monograph Four, WOOLENS AND TWEEDS) considerably longer than for tweeds, until it becomes thick, opaque and napped. Brushing it while still damp with a wool brush, a handful of teasels which the primitives use, or even with a nylon hair brush, will increase the nap and give a more pleasing texture. Since the fabric's "shrinkage" in both warp and weft directions varies with the type of yarn, the sett of both warp and weft and the degree of fulling, it is necessary to make a generous sample, preferably on the actual jacket warp. Measure the sample exactly in both directions before and after washing, to determine the exact amount of shrinkage desirable for the finished fabric. The warp may then be adjusted by adding or subtracting threads if necessary.

The inkle bands may be threaded on two harnesses and woven on a loom, set up on an improvised primitive loom (see pages 8 to 11 of Monograph Six, MEXICAN MOTIFS) or woven on an inkle loom. A very heavy tweed yarn in various bright colors may be used, or double or triple ends twisted on a spindle, or untwisted, may be adapted.

WEAVER'S TALK

Frances Afanasiev who, as all Guild members know, capably handles the correspondence course, write me that she has too many inactive students, people who have sent the fee for criticism of lesson work but who don't send in the work for criticism. I'm writing to encourage her, as this is human nature. We all can't get things done when we plan to, especially if it is a study course which requires a great deal of concentrated effort. But I'm sure the stimulation of the fall will bring Frances, who is very conscientious, a flood of lessons. Everyone who takes the course realizes a need for her help. And I have had many enthusiastic letters from her students about how remarkably preceptive, detailed and helpful her

criticisms have been. So students, don't let this marvelous opportunity you have created for yourselves slip by.

Many weavers are already familiar with the charming ORIGINAL MINIATURE PATTERNS FOR HANDWEAVING by Josephine E Estes. Miss Estes' patterns were very useful to me in my early weaving days when some of them appeared in the old WEAVER magazine, and now they are available, 24 beautiful recipe plates, in each of two portfolios, each costing \$2.50. Miss Estes is now in a home for the aged and a friend is handling the sale of both volumes of ORIGINAL MINIATURE PATTERNS, to help bring her this bit of income that she needs so much. If you do not have these in your library, write to Mrs Dorothy Beck, Bare Cove Weavers, Box 183, Hingham, Mass, with \$5.00 for the pair.

The Craft and Hobby Book services has added two Scandinavian books to their collection for the weaver. Pohja-Ompelua by Sirkka-Lisa Riuska (Helsinki 1955) is an almost encyclopedic presentation of the beautiful linen needle-work in ingenious lace-like patterns which typifies the Finnish peasant craft. It gives graphic step-by-step directions for all of the stitches, along with 98 photographs of different, beautiful patterns, each accompanied by a method-drawing. With the current popularity of open-work hangings, this should be useful to the inventive handweaver looking for new stitches to adapt to sheer textiles. The work may be done on the loom instead of on an embroidery frame. Price, \$3.00.

Rammevaev by Kirsten Gahrn Anderson (Copenhagen 1957) is another of the beautifully illustrated beginner's handweaving books from Scandinavia. It is devoted to two-harness weaving, and the illustrations start with pictures of appropriate, traditional looms of simple construction, show the processes of preparing the loom for weaving, and show many beautiful textiles. Subjects touched on are rag rugs, inlay, tapestry, loops, flossa and plain-weave stripes and plaids. Photographs and drawings are excellent, though the text is not translated to English. \$3.00.
