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Excerpts from:

FROM FIBER TO CLOTH

Textile Tools and Their Usage in Norwegian Tradition

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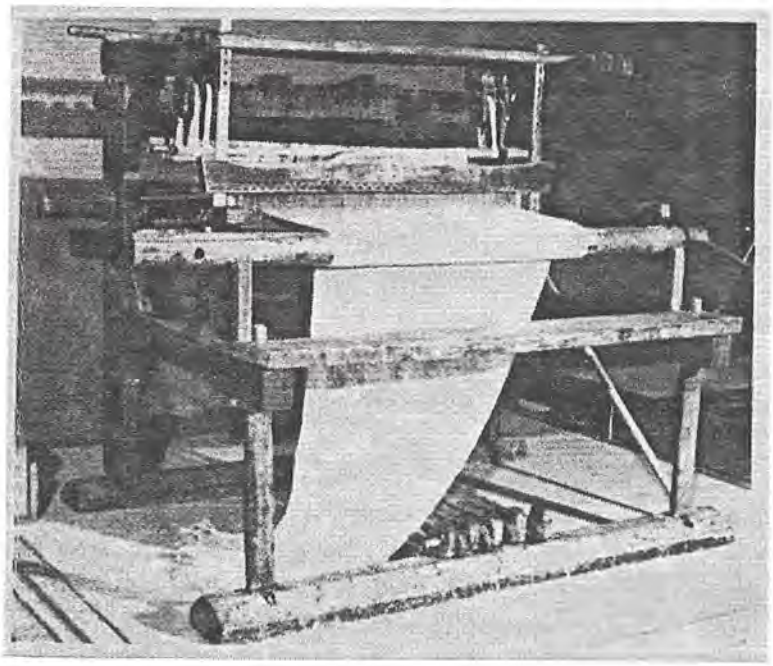
HORIZONTAL LOOMS: "FLAT LOOMS"
Text, pp. 124-138

Looms with horizontally stretched warps, commonly called "flat looms", have been the common type of loom in Norway for several hundred years. We do not know when it arrived; the oldest known such loom has the date of 1668 carved into the beater. The horizontal loom was used for all kinds of utilitarian weaving and could be found on most farms. The loom was simply enough constructed so handy farmers could make them from models, otherwise each valley usually had a carpenter/woodworker who could make one. The local production provided subtle variations of details around the country.

The most important feature of the loom is that the warp is stretched horizontally between two rotating beams, the warp beam and the cloth beam. These are placed in the loom which consists of two solid side uprights ("leiner") or ("store") with arms connected to each other and to the loom's short front horizontal legs by solid, horizontal planks. The weaver sits on a raised seat in front of the breast beam, an attached board over which the warp is stretched from the warp beam to the cloth beam. The weaver changes shed by using treadles, which are connected to hanging headle horses and pulleys. The sheds are raised or lowered by the action of the horses and the pulleys. The pulleys hang from a stick, the pulley stick, which rests horizontally on the arms of the cross planks, or they are threaded on the stick. The beater with reed is hung the same way; its height can be regulated. The treadles are often fastened to a flat board under the warp beam, or they can be attached directly to the crossbeam. In more rare



Loom from Setesdal, Aust-Agder, dated 1668

cases it can be positioned under the seat. Willow branches are often used for tying treadles.

The warping beam is on the back of the crossbeam's vertical posts in an extension of a knave, or fastened by holes through the horizontal beams. Sometimes it is placed on the inside of the horizontal beams, like the cloth beam, This is arranged under the side uprights under the stretched warp threads or the finished cloth, which has passed the breast beam. The cloth beam is usually attached to the short, vertically positioned side posts or fastened to a hoop on the inside of these.

There are only small variations in the construction of older Norwegian looms. One does not find looms with the large framing horizontal uprights placed by the seat and arms turned towards the warp beam. Talking about looms with horizontal framing pieces which represent a closed frame, as is common in West-Europe, I am only familiar with one in Norway, in the Historical Museum at the University in Bergen (BD. 104. 35) and one in the Nordic Museum, Stockholm, from Strandebarm in Hordaland. No information about the origin of the one in Bergen is available, unfortunately, but it is dated 1785. As far as we can tell, the one in Bergen is a typical piece of work done by a farmer; it is relatively small and not elaborately finished. Looms with this construction are usually found in professional studios. In our country they are mostly associated with handcrafts in connection with larger, more complicated looms for weaving damask or dreiel, and they are in common usage for these purposes.

The variations in the older looms consist mostly of the workings of brake mechanisms; the placement of the warp beam; the attachments for the breast beams; the board to sit on, which can be a loose plank as wide as the loom; or only a "shelf" in front of half the loom. The looms might be heavy and massive or made from lighter boards; the latter are often stabilized by more cross beams through the side posts. The side pieces might be carefully carved; they often have a short supportive piece in the angle between the vertical piece and the arms. The arms are often shaped with a strongly profiled piece closest to the vertical part of the uprights; the arms are then narrowed towards the front. And we also have examples of uprights used the way they have grown naturally. The brake is often a long stick from the warp beam's head towards a hook on the side plank. Some looms in Trøndelag have a vertical piece of wood fastened between the arms of the uprights and the carved side plank on the right side, which acts as a brake. The brake for the cloth beam, also in part the warp beam, is a cogwheel made of wood or with teeth of iron.

The back beam, a solidly attached beam which lies above the warp beam and over which the warp passes on the way to the breast beam, does not occur on all looms. Then the warp passes directly from the warping beam to the breast beam. The warp beam usually is situated somewhat higher than the breast beam, but the opposite might also be the case. Weaving books claim that the warping beam should be higher than the breast beam when weaving tight cloth; for looser textiles it ought to be the same height as the breast beam. The Swedish author Johan Tornsten from the 1700's says approximately the same in connection with weaving linens in Angermanland.

So there is no standard placement of the warp beam, but there are also looms with two positions for the warp beam. Circular pieces of wood are also used to keep the yarn from sliding out of position; however, they are not common and probably not of old date in this country. Switches (veksel?) are often found on the left side of the loom and also decorations (?) occur on looms from the 1800's in the countryside.

Looms commonly used in the countryside were made for the weaving of useful textiles with up to four harnesses; two harnesses and balanced twill were also common. Three shafts were also used, even if that technique was considered somewhat cumbersome. But it offered advantages for the housewife who had to use

every last scrap of yarn, including wool of both good and poor quality. From Trøndelag it is reported that by using three shafts one could use a yarn of less quality in the weft, for example, since it was more or less covered by the warp on the right side of the textile where it would get the most wear. From the same part of the country it is reported that three shafts were not used for finer weaving. But the threading was known already during the Middle Ages. We have a sample of a somewhat primitive three-shafted shirt from Skjølehamm in Nordland. Another piece of clothing from this important grave dig, which is dated to the 1200's, is a balanced twill, which must have been woven on the old "oppstadvev", since it has an edge of known type. The three shaft weaving reveals no indication of what kind of looms that have been used for weaving.

Loom dated 1713 *photo courtesy of J. Meany*

Actually it is perfectly possible to weave with three shafts on a variety of looms, as well as on the "Oppstad loom", but it is probably not likely that this threading is invented for the "Oppstad loom". The "Oppstad loom" is primarily a loom with a system of balances or weights where the two rows of stones were balancing each other. According to my opinion it is less likely the origin of asymmetrical drafts than other known looms.

Asymmetrical drafts in complicated weavings are common in the Old East, where they had different looms, and it is tempting to think that this might be the origin of three shafted patterns.

photo courtesy of J. Meany
Detail of year on 1713 loom

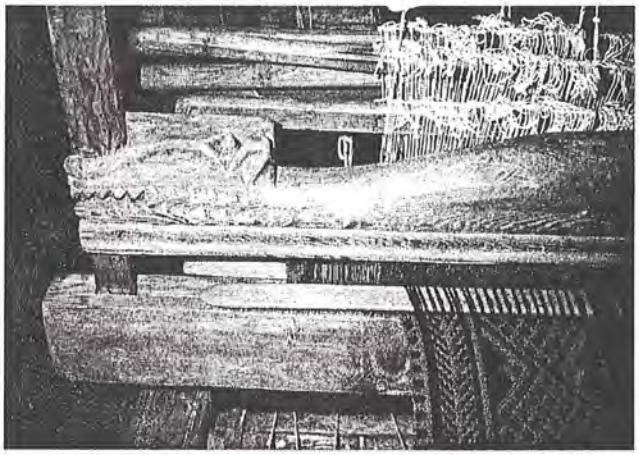


photo courtesy of J.Meany
Loom dated 1713. On both side of the batten dragon heads have been carved.

But when an asymmetrical technique was invented, it could, of course, be copied on another type of tool; everything is possible for those who have time and fantasy.

If you are going to analyze and speculate what kinds of looms three shafted weaving first originated with, it is apparent that this pattern mostly occurs later in Norway than the two and four shafted weaving which is known way back in prehistoric times. The oldest examples of three shafted wool textiles in archeological finds up in the north country are extremely finely executed, and must be seen as the products of a highly developed, professional craft. They

appear in graves from the Viking times/Middle Ages that also contain expensive imported goods. The textiles are characterized by very thin, evenly spun yarn and are closely woven, with up to 60 ends or more in warp or weft. There is currently a discussion about which weaving technique creates the tightest weaving. In Scandinavia during this time there existed no crafts environment where textiles of such standards were created during an extended period of time. Neither is there reason to believe that textile production of such quality existed in Western Europe. However, a much older three shafted weaving of wool textiles of such high quality or higher is known from outside Europe. We do not know what kinds of looms were used, but there is no reason to doubt, for example, that in the Near East, where you can find twill cloth in (turned ?) twill resembling those we are familiar with from the North, they used different looms than the "Oppstad loom" documented here. But as we have previously said, it is perfectly possible to copy techniques on almost any kind of loom, even if it was not originally intended for that technique. And that appears to be the case with three harness weaving in the North. During the last years we have seen the emergence of such textiles in both Sweden and Norway, dating back to the Middle Ages, with an edge which we interpret as indication that the "Oppstad loom" is used. Ends per cm. are around 15x8, which we consider to be typical of good quality home weaving.

The question about the origin of the fine three shaft weavings we find in Norwegian burial sites are frequently discussed among professionals in the field, as are the looms used for weaving.

We find that horses and pulleys on our common horizontal looms were best suited for a symmetrical pattern, but they could easily be adjusted to the asymmetrical. In addition to the weaving with three shafts there has in certain areas been used a triangular piece of wood with a hole in the middle to fasten to the pulley block, with a hole in each comer to be fastened to the harnesses. We do not know how old this device is; neither do we know how common it was. In Upper Halandsdal in Hordaland we find on the farm Tveita a stick for pulleys with the two triangular pieces of wood fastened to turned arms with wooden screws on top. These triangular pieces are 27 cm. long. In the middle of the piece is a cramp iron fastened to an equivalent cramp iron in the pulley stick. In the three corner holes is a solid cord with a loop on the bottom to fasten it to the shaft. The object does not look old.

There are some smaller triangular pieces of wood on a loom from the same area, now in the Nordic Museum in Stockholm. (inv. Number 6195) The triangles can also be found in Sweden, in the west of Varmland, Västergøtland, Dalrna, Halland and Småland.

This terminology (harness horses, from Norwegian havald, headles) is a result of the western movement as it influenced Norway. A couple of preserved pieces from Dalarna in Sweden are dated 1785, and triangles for weaving date at least that far back in time. According to Nyberg they are not discussed in international literature, and one must still be tentative about the origin and dissemination of this particular weaving tool. Maybe it is a local Norwegian or Nordic invention tied to craft production?

We do not know any looms used for trained weavers from the older times in Norway, but it is likely that there is a relationship between a simple, professional German loom from the 1600's and the contemporary loom from Setesdal. The Norwegian looms are smaller, usually meant for weavings 70- 80 cm. wide, 5 quart 1.143 in. The reach across the loom is perfect for a weaver when she inserts the shuttle from side to side. For some textiles intended for practical use this is too narrow, for example for coverlets, (kvitler?) and tablecloths for wide tables. Two pieces of weaving must then be sewn together. But there have been looms of double width, where one could weave up to 120-130 cm. wide pieces. We have heard told of occasions where they had two sets of beams and other necessary parts on the farm, but used the

same uprights. (For example Dvergsdal and Saegrov in Joelster) We do not know whether this dates far back in time, or beyond a specific locale where weavings were produced for sale.

We have heard that they started using looms of double width around 1900 when the interest for weaving "national" coverlets grew and commercial production was started in several areas on the West Coast. This occurred earlier, as well, but bloomed at that time because of increased requests for coverlet woven in one piece. Earlier these were woven on vertical looms, which were very wide.

The oldest reeds were made from thin sticks of wood and were usually made by special toolmakers, not at home on the farm. Voss, for example, was known for the craftsmen who produced reeds, but it is also known that other areas in the country featured traveling sales men who sold reeds, many of whom were Swedish. When local crafts people no longer produced the shuttles, they were often made of brass or iron.

Ends per inch varied in different weavings, and the reed would have to be adjusted. Therefore people owned several reeds. For weaving wool, one would have reeds with 16-20 ends, and regular intervals were marked with a piece of yarn in the reed. A "number" was a unit of measurement, 20 or 30 threads (with two threads per dent - 40 or 60 ends).

"Basme" or "pasma" are words borrowed from the Slavic language, and you can find "basme" counting in Sweden, Finland and Slavic countries, while in Western Europe one normally uses the decimal system. But there also are instances with counting systems of 12 and 24.

Hanna Winsnes says in her "Weaving Book" from 1850 that as far as she know, most places in the country count by the "basme" method, one "basme" was 2x30 ends (2 ends per dent in the reed), and that means that a "basme" reed is equivalent to 16x60 threads. Answers on a questionnaire from 1954 (NEG subject number 7) showed that counting was most commonly done in units of 30 and 60 in the east part of the country and from Trøndelag and north it was called "basme" or "pass", while in the west part of the country it was more common to count in groups of 20 or "score", which in some places was called "basme".

Therefore placing an order for a reed at the Craft Store in Oslo could be confusing, where the reeds where divided into 20, but were sold after order on so and so many "basme" to districts where a "basme" would mean 30 ends, as recently happened in Malangen. They felt cheated because the "basme" in Oslo was reduced to 20.

HORIZONTAL LOOMS IN SETESDAL

Setesdal is a part of Norway where the structure of the looms differs in an important way from the other looms we have talked about so far. This valley was, until about 100 years ago, quite isolated from the rest of the country, without a connecting high-way. That is one reason why old traditions have been kept alive there more than in any other part of the country until our own century. This applies to language, as well as to customs and life styles, including material culture. The most common loom in Setesdal has been like the oldest loom found in Norway, also the one from Setesdal, dated 1668 on the beater. There are also other dated looms in Norway, but I am not aware of any with dates prior to the early 1700's, and none of them are of the same type as those from Setesdal. Today this type only occurs in local areas, but what makes it so interesting is its relationship to looms in pictures from the Middle Ages in West Europe and looms in and outside of museums in countries where hand weaving remained a tradition even up to our century. This was the case, for example, in Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Ukraine and Greece.

WEAVING ON HORIZONTAL LOOM IN BYKLE IN 1969.

The State Film Production Company made a film in 1969 of a special variant of the horizontal

loom in order to document textile work in Setesdal. Two women in Bykle were willing to warp up a wadmal project, even if they had not practiced for a long time. As one could expect, the result was a mixture of old and new. Time does not stand still. In some cases the weavers had learned new techniques which were handy, and in other cases, they went back to techniques and equipment they had learned to use during their youth.

The two weavers had different backgrounds and experiences, which affected their attitudes towards change in a handcraft steeped in tradition. Sigrid Holen, in whose home the weaving took place, had had a father who had been very clever with his hands. He had made the loom, which was used in 1969, after the pattern of an old loom, but had added several new details, as for example metal teeth brakes on both beams and a pretzel shaped wheel on the warp beam. The support posts, the "uppstoun", had an extra support on the arms by the warping beam. Both weavers had learned weaving at home; no weaving courses had been offered in the valley since after 1945.

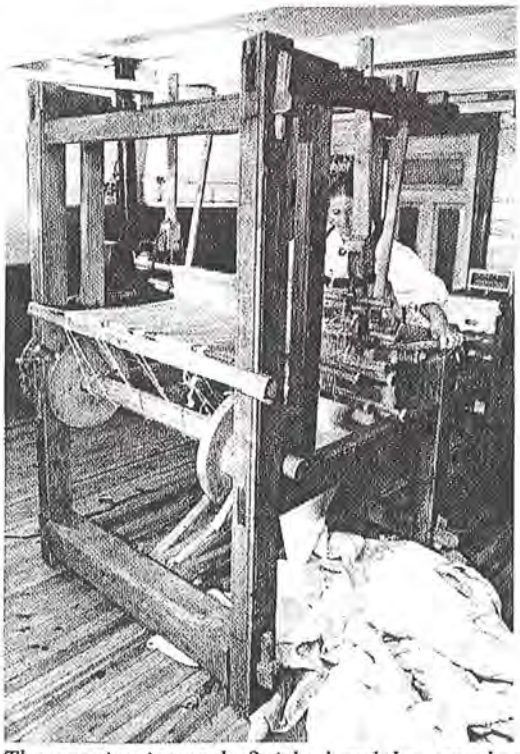
The loom has neither a knee beam nor a cloth beam. The breast beam "framryven" was a round, rotating beam with a slit through which the cloth was pulled when the shed became too tight. This was usual on all the old looms in the valley.

The pulley cord was made of leather, and the pulleys were arranged in a wooden block. Headles were tied in the old fashioned manner, even though they more recently had used metal headles. First Gunhild Lyntveit took a board to measure the length of the headle thread, afterwards she tied it on a headle frame. The round harnesses had bottons at the ends to prevent the headles from slipping off. Attachment to the front of the loom was done as is most commonly practiced.

Weavers most commonly used balanced twill for wadmal. The weft was wound into spools on a spool winder made from an old sewing machine belonging to Sigrid's father. They used an old shuttle, which was 46 cm. long. When they had woven enough so that the shed became too narrow, the cloth was released from the stick which had attached the warp to the warping beam, and the cloth pulled out so far that with a turn could be fastened again to the beam. The brake supported the attachment. This was repeated during the weaving as often as necessary.

The old looms in Setesdal had a flat board with two rows of holes as brakes for the cloth beam, which moved the cloth forwards. This was poked through a slit in a stick in the head of the beam and fastened to the loom with a wooden dowel. A small dowel in a hole in the board stopped the beam. The loom at Holen had a new brake, a wheel with teeth, but the weaving happened as before.

As the amount of cloth grew, the cloth had to go from the lap of the weaver down to the floor, on the left side of the weaver and the treadles. There it lay until the weaving was completed. They made the most out of the warp, weaving until there was no more to pull through.



The weaving is nearly finished and the warp has been lifted up and fastened to the back beam. Notice the finished cloth has accumulated on the floor to th left of the weaver.

In order to make the most use of the warp so they wouldn't have many thrums; they used to tie on the warp twice. First they tied the lath once with long loops to the warping beam, later they moved it up to the stretch beam. During the weaving Sigrid snipped the threads on the side of the cloth which faced up. The other side was snipped when the cloth was finished. She used hemstitching (?) to secure the last rows of weaving before stopping. It was not usual to tie on to wadmal warp. After it was made into a thick roll, it was usual to sew a few loose stitches to prevent it from unrolling.

HORIZONTAL DAMASK LOOMS

Judging from written sources, there seems to be as early as in the 1700's more complicated looms in the countryside than the ones we have looked at with four harnesses and four treadles. The list of award winners from the associations promoting cottage crafts and the Royal Scientific Company in Trondheim tell about countrywomen who earned prizes for weaving dreiel and damask. One assumes that the spread of tools and techniques happened via the ministerial farms and other farms belonging to professionals and people employed by the government. We see examples of this both from the 1700's and the 1800's.

Unfortunately we know too little about the tools used during this period. They must have come from an environment of professional crafts. They could have been introduced through patriotic companies, which were active in improving the standards of both farming and handcrafts. In 1780, for example, the Company for Housekeeping in Inderøi in North Trøndelag announced that "those who might desire to acquire a better and more comfortable loom than the ordinary kind may view a model at the President's of the Company, brought here from Ireland for the use of the Company." That is all we know.

The 1800's saw a new wave from abroad bringing tools and weaving patterns, and we know a great deal about that from Astrid Bugges' and Signe Haugstøgås' book about damask weaving on country farms. This spread of new impulses has been documented in a district where they preserved looms, products and living tradition. That was the case in Gausdal in Oppland. In 1834 Gustafva Beckvall, born Ekenmark, a Swedish weaver who belonged to a family of professional weavers, gave her first course in damask weaving at the Eugenie Foundation in Christiania (Oslo). This was a charitable foundation for "girls of both the citizenry and the humble classes" for their education and livelihood. In addition to the "girls" they also taught "ladies" from Christiania and environs. The assumption is that the course was primarily aimed at the latter, meaning women from the upper and professional classes, but reached beyond this circle.

The printed instructions from Mrs. Beckvall were translated to Norwegian in 1835 with drawings of her loom. Other members of the Ekenmark family gave courses during the years following, both in their home country and in Norway. Gustaf Ekenmark wrote books of instruction with design drawings and instructions on how to improve upon Mrs. Beckvall's methods and to adjust regular looms so they could be used to weave simplified dreiel and damask. The latter must have been important for the spread of weaving. By using the two methods of threading described in the directions, the threads in the warp could be lifted in small groups so the design could be built freely.

Professional tools and methods of working characterized the family Ekenmark's approach to looms for weaving dreiel and damask. Ekenmark himself says that his instructions are based on the English method, and that the book which was the basis for his inspiration, John Duncan's "Practical and Descriptive Essays on the Art of Weaving" was published around 1807-08.

The Ekenmark method became popular both on farms owned by professional people as well as by farmers who were well off in Norway, at least in certain areas. Preserved table clothes, napkins

and other weavings with designs from Ekenmark's books, coupled with independently constructed designs by students taking the courses, witness about the family's activities in Norway.

The farm Jørås in Skogn in Trøndelag has a loom so well preserved that it could be used in 1950 at the Norwegian Folk Museum for weaving damask after one of Ekenmark's designs. Another damask loom, on display at the museum, is from Øyer in Oppland. It is somewhat lighter than the Jørås loom, and is painted in a grayed white with grayblue decorations. It is of a type introduced by another Swedish weaver, Lovisa Nylander. She traveled to the same area in the East part of the country in the 1870's as did members of the Ekenmark family, and several copies of her textbook in weaving, published in 1872, have been displayed at contemporary textile exhibits. The loom and method of working are based entirely upon Ekenmark's methods, (although his name is never mentioned) and the Nylander loom is different from the older Ekenmark loom only in insignificant details. The cords which raise the harnesses which are attached via a board to the horses, is on the Ekenmark looms fastened on the right side, while the Nylander looms feature them in the middle of the loom. The painted loom at the Folk Museum is not an altered old loom; it is made like a damask loom. It bears witness about a high standard of living in a farming environment, which allowed women to work on a luxury craft with the acquisition of a large specialized tool.

That is probably the reason why damask weaving did not spread widely in the countryside outside of Gudbrandsdalen, even if we still don't know the whole story since research about this issue still remains to be undertaken. Technique and tools demanded too much from both time and place. One can therefore assume that the simple loom presented by the minister's wife Hanna Winsnes in her 1850's weaving textbook "Weaving or Instruction in Dreiel and Pattern Weaving with a Simple Loom" would reach a larger public. The book is addressed to competent housewives who already mastered ordinary practical weaving. The author was familiar with the Ekenmark loom. In her preface she says that damask weaving is not for everyone, "since it requires much time and expense", while the weaving of dreiel can be done by all, with simple changes to the loom. Mrs. Winsnes provides drawings of the extra equipment needed, and hopes that housewives who have knowledge of "simple plain weave" will teach their daughters (or servants) according to the instructions of the book. So far we know very little about the spread and effect of this textbook.

WARPING A HORIZONTAL LOOM IN BYKLE IN SETESDAL, EAST AGDER, 1969

Text, pp. 151-156.

In contrast to the vertical looms with short warps, the textiles produced on the horizontal looms were long, and the warping was done differently. In Bykle in Setesdal in 1969 the method used for warping was not very different from the methods commonly used today.

The two women who demonstrated warping and weaving of wadmal on the farm Holen, used a rotating warping mill, the only kind of warping mill with which they were familiar. They carried the mill into the living room and placed it on a block on the floor and in a ring attached to a ceiling beam. They carefully ensured it would be standing straight, and lined it up with a door or window. The warping yarn was readied ahead of time, and large bundles of balls with holes through the middle, made on ball winders (sticks) were threaded on a string and hung on the wall. They were weighed on "bismer" to ensure the (steelyards) proper length needed for the warp. The textiles produced were usually wadmal, the width was 5/4 "alen" (one alen = 2 feet) and the length was usually 30 "alen". (60 feet; one "alen" about 50-60 cm. originally the distance between the elbow and the tip of the little finger).

The original intent was to use handspun, but it proved impossible to find anyone who would spin the warp. The decision was then made to use machine made yarn for both warp and weft. All the yarn from the factory was spun in the same direction, in contrast to handspun yarn produced with both an S and a Z twist. When they first started buying factory-produced yarn, someone suggested it was better with yarn spun in the same direction. Even so, there was a slight difference between yarns; the weft was spun somewhat looser than the warp.

The warp was single plied, with a width of 5/4 "alen" with 1200 ends. A warp of 2 "alen" needed yarn weighing one "mark" (250 grams). When they spun the yarn themselves they used one skein per ball. Both weavers were familiar with the concept of preparing the warp by keeping it submerged in cold water for three days. They also knew that the weft should be buried in warm sheep dung. The balls were then kept in a sack made of burlap. This was not done with the factory yarn in 1969, but it had been demonstrated at Rysstad in Valle earlier.

The unit of counting was 20. They measure a thread of 15 "alen", bag of the planned warp, tied on a dyed thread, (half way count) and then measured the last 15 "alen". The measured thread was then wound back up.

They laid four balls of yarn in a chest with four compartments and threaded each piece of yarn through a hole in the handle of the chest before they tied the threads together. Lease sticks were used in the warping mill and the warping proceeded the normal way. Gunhild Lyntveit, who did the warping, used a warping stick, a device not familiar to Sigrid Holen. At the half way mark, they put a dowel into the warping mill and turned. After four balls of yarn they counted the turns on the warping mill to see how many balls they would need. They counted where they turned the warping on the mill and used a woven hair band as a marker for every 20 threads. Four balls became 100 ends, which meant they would need 48 balls. Sigrid watched that they wouldn't miss a turn.

They used a belt in the shed when they marked the shed for taking the warp off the mill. The finished warp was chained the normal way, and then they could proceed with the warping.

Lease sticks were used in the shed and the band or the belt removed. A coarse reed was used as a raddle. It had to be compatible with the reed and should ideally be twice as coarse. In the old loom from Setesdal at the Norwegian Folk Museum with the beater dated 1668, there was a raddle permanently fastened to the loom. This is common trait among several older looms both in this country and in Sweden.

With a "crooked" threading hook Gunhild pulled four threads between every other slit in the reed. She had, as usual, exactly figured out everything ahead of time, and to make it all fit, there had to be several slots between the threads. A band tied to the reed was gradually threaded into the shed of the threads pulled through the reed. Finally a long stick was inserted to take the place of the band, and the transition to the loom could begin.

The stick with the warp was laid in a track in the yarn beam, "the back beam" and fastened with a couple of sticks. The two wheel beams were a new invention to enter the scene between 1910 and 1920. Sigrid did not use either sticks or paper during the warping after she had acquired a rotating beam, but Gunhild, who did not have a rotating beam, still used either.

A stretching beam was placed over the yarn beam in a? (utsparing av leinene); the warp was lifted over this and the lease sticks were tied to it. The warping occurred as usual. Here they got some help from Gunhild's husband, Knut, who had done this many times. He sat on a chair at a good distance from the breast beam and held the warping braid while the two weavers rolled the yarn up on the yarn beam. After a while they pulled both man and chair towards themselves on the floor, but Knut resisted, and let go one chain at a time.

They did not necessarily use specific tools for warping in the old days. Living folk tradition

NOTES FROM LILA

NBClub member Nancy Jackson of Vallejo, CA, has two tapestries in FIBERARTS DESIGN BOOK SIX (ed. Nancy Orban) published by Lark Books, Asheville, NC in 1999. "City/Country III' (pg. 205) is described as a Gobelin/Aubusson tapestry; cotton warp, wool weft: 18 x 28". "Trev's Blues I/III" (pg. 215) is a Gobelin/Aubusson tapestry; cotton warp, wool and silk weft; 36 x 48". Nancy also incorporates billedvev techniques into some of her creations, and she teaches tapestry in Vallejo.

I appreciated the editors' delightful honesty on the subjectivity of the selection process in their comments on how the FIBERARTS staff chose the 550 pieces in the sixth design book: "Although we've maintained the same vague criteria for judging works ... (artistic prowess, technical acumen, and 'I don't know why, but I really want that piece in the book'), the process is more and more difficult--and wonderful."

Oslo, Norway, is represented with two pieces (entries are international): "Autumn and Spring, Hvaler, Norway" by Bente Odner, in embroidery and knitting, and "Totally Coconut" by Gidsken Braadlie in mixed techniques utilizing coconut fiber.

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The Scandinavian Study Group of the Minnesota Weavers Guild (which boasts a dozen or more NBClub members) has been focusing on traditional band weaving, inspired in part by the Sami band weaving class on Lofoten last summer. Jan Mostrom has been investigating the use of rigid heddles with the standard slots and holes augmented with elongated holes for added pattern possibilities, and she shared her findings at the last meeting. Anna Smits, a professional weaver who studied in her homeland of Latvia before coming to the Twin Cities after World War II, has also given the group lessons in the Latvian way of producing patterns by warping around a tube. The study group also has a tapestry "auxiliary" which meets with portable tapestry looms in hand; they work, share information and problems, offer advice and encouragement, and of course show their finished products. The entire Study Group exhibits at Minnesota's yearly federation meetings and in the Minnesota Guild's headquarters.

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I feel that there is an upsurge of interest throughout the country in crafts in general and textile arts in particular. Betty Johannesen's filled weaving classes at the South Bend Regional Museum of Art would tend to bear me out; she has 19 students at present. In fact, she has been working extra hours in order to accommodate six people who want to focus on specific traditional Norwegian weaving techniques: two on krokbragd, two on danskbrogd, and two on Merakervev. She will also be doing a guild program for the Niles Handweavers Guild of Buchanan, Michigan, on February 2 entitled "Hannah Ryggen: Her Life and Work."

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We look forward to seeing many of you at Convergence in Cincinnati. As we mentioned before, our meeting will be on Friday, June 23, from 12:00 noon until 2:00 at a place to be announced when we arrive; and it will be a brown bag affair open to all interested. Kay Larsen will bring us up-to-date on the 2001 Seattle conference. Noel Thurner will share with us the history, importance, and use of wool combs. Do bring show and tell if you can find suitcase space (some weaving supplies are noticed by airport security; they took a definite interest in the dismantled copper tubing tapestry loom I brought home from an Archie Brennan workshop at Whidbey Island last September). And you might think about the next workshop in Norway. "Time is fleeting" and 2003 is really not so far away.

MEMORIAM

We mourn the death of friend and member Andrew Staley on January 23, 2000. Andrew and his wife Norma Smayda have both become widely known for their many achievements in the world of weaving. Andrew was active in state and regional guilds, having been past president of the Weavers Guild of Rhode Island and second vice president of the New England Weavers seminar. Until the advent of his illness he was mailing chairman for the distribution of the Boston Weavers Guild Monographs. The Weavers Guild of Boston presented him with their Helen Barrett Award. He enjoyed being in touch with weavers through Convergence and other regional activities.

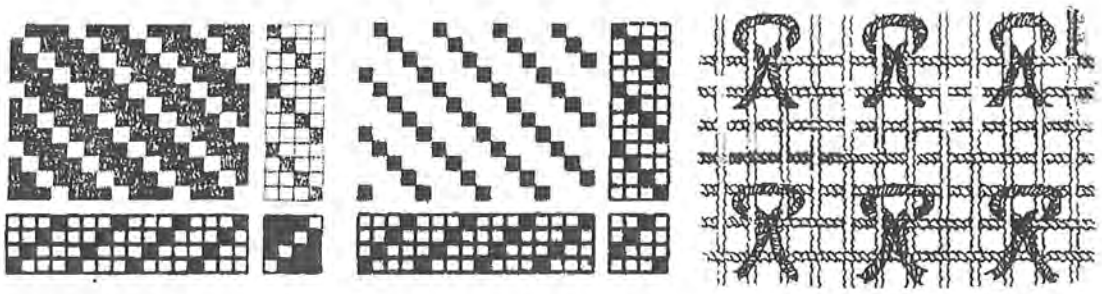
The well-known Saunderstown Weaving School established by Norma and Andrew in 1974 will fortunately continue. It offers three fifteen-week classes each semester as well as individualized arrangements to meet student needs. Thirty-five looms--jack, counter balance, countermarche, tapestry and dobby--give broad possibilities. Emphasis is on traditional weaves, the work of Weaver Rose and Scandinavian techniques, as well as design and weaving theory.

Memorials for Andrew Staley may be sent to Hospice of Rhode Island, 143 Main Street, Wakefield, RI 02879

CLASSIFIEDS:

A SMALL BÅTRYA FROM LOFOTEN

By Janet Meany



Illustrations courtesy ***Båtrya*** *by Ellen Kjellmo*

Warp: 2 ply 100% Spælsau wool, green and beige

Weft: 2 ply Spælsau wool, green

Knots: 2 ply Spælsau wool, green, beige, blue-green, rust and a heavier 100% Spælsau wool in beige.

Sett: 15-17 ends per inch

Width in the reed: 18 inches

Length: 23 inches

Total number of warp ends: 316

Threading: 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4

Knots: Knots are inserted around every other pair of warp ends across the warp. Knots varied in weight. One square had knots with 4 ends in thinner 2 ply, the other square had knots with 3 ends, 2 thinner 2 ply and 1 thicker 2 ply.

Weave: 3/l/ twill plus knots

Preparing the knots: Wind yam around a stick which has a groove in it. Cut along groove. Pieces are about 5 1/8 inches long.

Weaving:

1. Weave 3-4 inches 3/1 twill. With a direct tie-up, (counterbalance loom) 3 shafts must be lowered and I raised. The weft faced twill must be up as this is the surface where the knots must be made.

2. For the body of the rug, put in one row of knots, then weave 8 rows of weft, then the next row of knots. Be sure to pull the knots tightly so that they will not show on the warp faced side of the twill weave.

3. Weave 3-4 inches 3/1 twill.

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