

# THE WOVEN SHEAF STITCH

By CLARA M. YOUSE

**I**N the Dictionary of Embroidery Stitches by Mary B. Thomas, there is a very interesting stitch described as a filling stitch, and consists of three vertical satin stitches tied horizontally around the middle with two overcasting stitches.

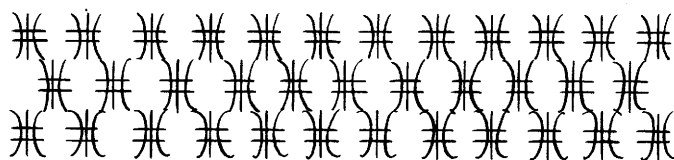
After working the three satin stitches the thread emerges from beneath them on the left and the needle makes two overcast stitches over the "sheaf" without entering the material at all until it is required to pass to the next "sheaf." The little tied sheaves may be set in alternate rows as in diagram, or in close horizontal rows beneath each other.

After giving this stitch careful study I decided that it is similar in construction and character to the little blocks that compose the Bronson weave and which is best described as a plain fabric patterned with blocks composed of short weft skips on one side of fabric and warp skips on reverse side forming small detached figures similar to the Scandinavian lace weave.

While the Bronson weave is very handsome when woven on harness looms of 4-6-8 harnesses it also has many possibilities, and by experimenting on our looms, some delightful surprises are in store for us.

Some weavers have found a less laborious way to emulate this ancient weave by the use of only two harnesses or by using a non harness loom that has only a heddle frame to carry the threads.

When threaded on two harnesses 1-2; 1-2, woven in plain tabby and using a design that has been blocked out on graph paper, a modified Bronson weave will result and the little sheaves that are so effective when embroidered can be woven into the fabric. After examining the blocks in Bronson weave I found that each block consists of six warp threads and six weft threads and resembles the embroidered sheaf stitch on right side of fabric. On the reverse side the little "tied sheaves" assume a different position; instead of being horizontally tied



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they are vertically tied. These little "tied sheaves" are woven into the plain tabby material by following the formula given here and which should be memorized.

Pick up first thread on upper shed.

Miss two threads and continue to pick up one thread and miss 2 threads across web.

Tabby from left—repeat first row.

Tabby from left—tabby from right—tabby from left. These last three shots complete the row of blocks.

From this formula we need only to remember at this stage of the work that an X represents a block and a space represents a skip.

When planning a piece of weaving select design, block out on graph paper. There is freedom for original design in this weave but the most satisfactory results are obtained by using modern designs that are simple in construction.

Warp and weft of the same material but in contrasting colors makes up very well. Egyptian cotton for warp in natural color and a dyed Egyptian cotton for weft in green or blue brings out the design most effectively.

To find out how a design will fit into a given number of threads on loom,—count threads on upper shed, count blocks and spaces on first row of design. For each X the shuttle goes over a pair of warp threads and for each block that is to be missed the shuttle goes under three warp threads plus one extra thread.

After allowing a certain number of threads for margin count blocks and spaces across web, count same number of threads for margin as on other side and you will know just how large a design to use.

In the designs here illustrated some all over effects are shown that would work up well for pillow tops, coverlets, table linen, etc. Some of the designs could be used for corners, borders and stripes.

Illustration No. 6 shows a design for a bureau scarf nineteen inches wide and fifty-six inches long made of Egyptian cotton warp and green linen weaver for weft, threaded sixteen threads to the inch on a warp of three hundred and six threads. Directions for weaving are given below. When starting to weave this piece, weave about four inches in plain tabby, then start the design.

Remember that after each second row of blocks finish with tabby from left, tabby from right, tabby from left.

## ROW 1

On upper shed count 12 threads for selvage then—(2 blocks, skip 5 blocks and repeat 5 times) 2 blocks—under 12 selvage threads.

## ROW 2

Under selvage—(2 blocks, skip 4 bl—4 bl, skip 4 bl, repeat twice) 2 blocks—under selvage.

## ROW 3

Under selvage—(2 blocks, skip 3 bl—6 bl skip 3, repeat twice) 2 blocks—under selvage.

## ROW 4

Under selvage—(2 blocks, skip 2 bl—8 bl, skip 2 bl, repeat twice)—under selvage.

## ROW 5

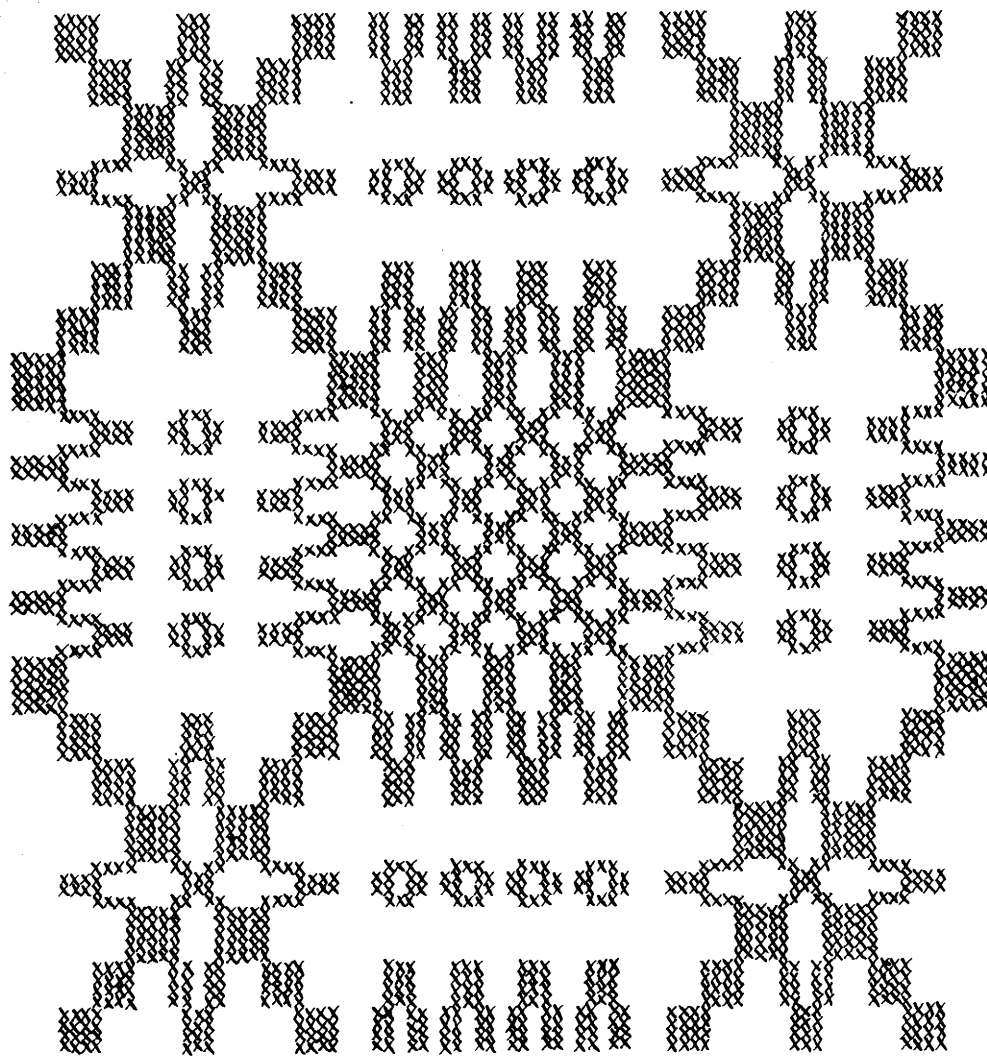
Under selvage—(2 blocks, skip 1—10 bl—skip 1, repeat twice) 2 blocks—skip 1, under selvage.

## ROW 6

Under selvage—one row blocks—under selvage.

## ROW 7

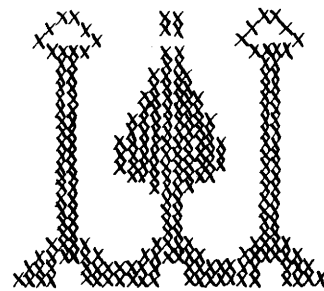
Under selvage—6 blocks, (skip 1—2 bl—skip 1—10 bl, repeat once) skip 1—2 bl, skip 1—6 bl, under selvage.



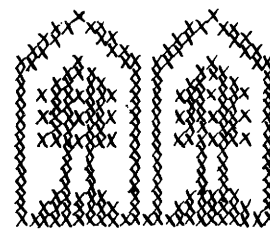
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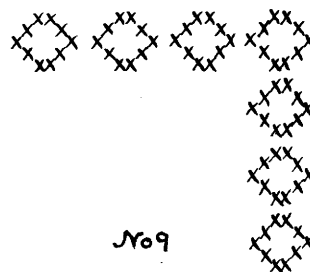
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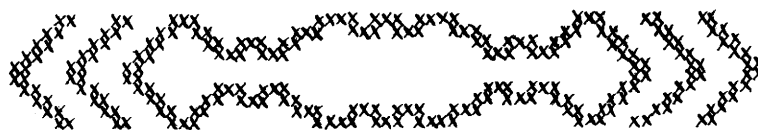
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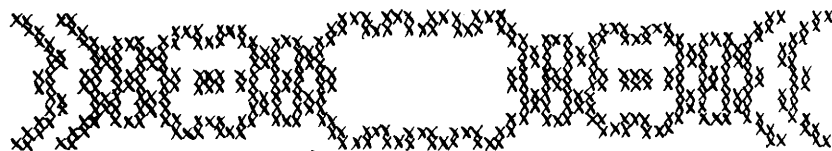
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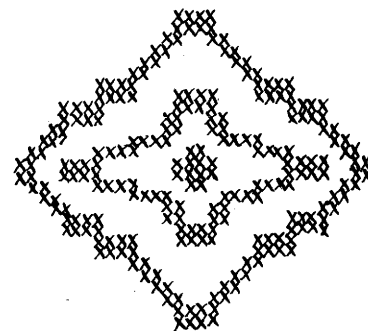
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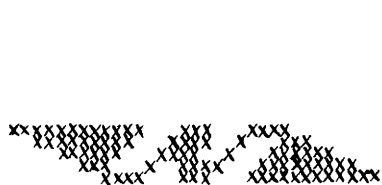
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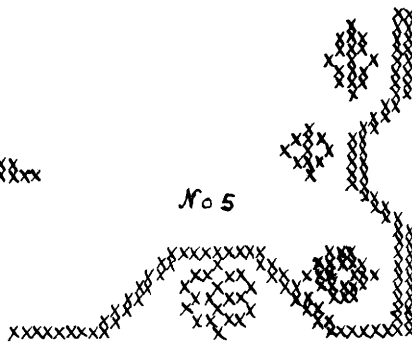
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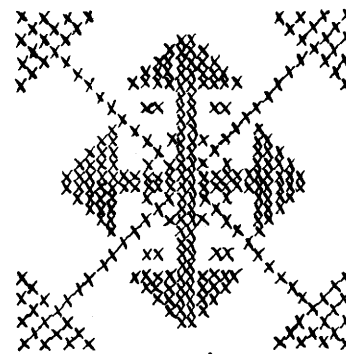
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No 4



No 5



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# GO EXPLORING WITH YOUR LOOM

(Continued from page 3)

were not used, so there are long skips on the under side. My warp was a gold silk and wool mixture, set at thirty to the inch. In the coat of arms the background pattern thread is in tartan red fabri; the lettering and lions are done in an old dull gold silk and wool yarn having a burnished metallic luster; the shield is woven in the same gold as the warp, a lighter shade than that used for the lettering and lions; the stars, or mullets, to use the heraldic term, are of black silk; the Saracen head crest is woven in the same black silk with the hair band of lavender silk; the wreath beneath the head is in gold and lavender. The tabby, used throughout, is of the old gold used in the lions and lettering. The long skips of yarn underneath act as a padding which makes the pattern stand out as if it were embossed. The general effect is one of richness in texture as well as in color.

In weaving the stage coach piece I used the same treadling as I did with the coat of arms. Here the background pattern thread is of the same gold as the warp; the stage coach is of tartan red fabri, with gold and black trimmings; the dogs and one horse are black, while the second horse is bay. The tabby throughout is the same as the warp and the background. For the evening bag I used a metallic gold thread for tabby, with a richly dyed blue novelty silk yarn for the pattern.

If you have never gone exploring with your loom I hope you will do so. It is great fun.

## THE WOVEN SHEAF STITCH

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### ROW 8

Under selvage—5 blocks, skip 2—(2 bl—skip 2)—8 bl—skip 2, repeat once) 2 bl—skip 2—5 bl, under selvage.

### ROW 9

Under selvage, 4 blocks—(skip 3—2 bl—skip 3—6 bl, repeat once) skip 3—2 bl—skip 3—4 bl, under selvage.

### ROW 10

Under selvage, 3 blocks—skip 4—(2 bl—skip 4 bl—skip 4 bl, repeat once) 2 bl—skip 4—3 bl, under selvage.

### ROW 11

Repeat row 1.

Illustration 1 shows the Colonial pattern Cambridge Beauty that has been transposed for this type of weaving. The complete design as shown could be used for a tablecloth for a bridge table.

Illustrations 2 and 3 show border designs taken from the gay little "Rosebuds" pattern and "Young Lovers Knot".

Illustration 4 shows a design taken from a modern belt buckle and it could be used effectively in a border as a central figure.

Illustration 5 shows a corner for a table scarf.

Illustration 6 shows the eight harness border design that has been carefully worked out in this article.

Illustration 7 shows the eight harness Bronson weave tree design.

Illustration 8 shows a modified tree design for borders.

Illustration 9 shows a simple corner border.

Illustration 10 shows a star figure suitable for an all over design for a pillow top.

The last design illustrated takes us into the snowflake group of patterns. In the book of Snow Crystals by W. A. Bentley and W. J. Humphreys there are many exquisite pictures of photographed snow crystals. The artist, searching for patterns of graceful form and all to whom the beauties of Nature has a strong appeal will find this handsome book a source of inspiration for design. Many hundreds of forms are shown, all based on a common hexagonal pattern. While the pattern shown here is not a true hexagonal form, it is somewhat modified to meet the proportions of the Woven Sheaf Stitch, and is only the beginning of many delightful forms that can be worked out from the photographs.

## HOW MANY WAYS TO WEAVE HONEYSUCKLE?

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though as in other weaves, variations are limited only by the weaver's individual desires. The warp should cover the weft as nearly as possible. For rugs, carpet warp used two to a heddle and four to a dent on a 12 dent reed is quite satisfactory, though a 14 dent reed is better if one has a sturdy loom and an even sturdier right arm. Perleen covers quite well when used two to a dent on a 16 or 18 dent reed.

The samples shown in Illustrations I and II are intended to show detail of weave or texture. Illustration III shows the relative sizes of the different weaves on Honeysuckle pattern. All of the samples were woven on the same warp, and all used a 16 dent reed, two ends per dent.

Another six harness weave, though not illustrated here, is that weave where colored warp threads make a lengthwise border. Four harnesses carry the colored warp threads for the four blocks of the pattern; two extra harnesses carry the white warp threads for the foundation of the cloth. The effect of this weave is somewhat similar to that obtained by the simple draw-loom method that has no half tone. In the draw-loom method, the pattern is made by colored weft threads; in this six-harness method, the pattern is made by colored warp threads and must run the entire length of the woven piece. An all-over pattern can be set up in this method for especially designed patterns.

The draft for this weaving is given at h on the diagram. The colored warp threads must be soft enough to spread over the foundation cloth. Vittora Strand, if one is a careful warper and weaver, is excellent for this technique; 20/2 cotton warp and a 16 dent reed make a good combination. One colored and two white warp threads (three warp ends) must be sleyed to each dent. This warp method, if carried on to a further step to an eight-harness loom, makes possible border patterns in both warp and weft. Curtains, pillows, scarfs, and what-else can have borders at the four edges. No single weaver will ever live long enough to exhaust all the possibilities of Honeysuckle pattern in all its variations. And even if one could, it probably would be most monotonous, and sooner or later a different pattern would have to be substituted.

Perhaps those who are "fed up on Honeysuckle" will find in these suggestions, some spice to pep up their jaded appetites. However, if Honeysuckle is still despised and abhorred, even as a matter of principle, these variations can yet be applied to any of the old and familiar favorites. And some, perhaps, will respond to reincarnation even more beautifully.