

- blue
- yellow
- rosy tan
- rose
- rosy tan
- blue & yellow
- rosy tan
- rose
- rosy tan
- blue & yellow
- rosy tan
- rose
- rosy tan
- yellow
- blue

Fig. 1A

Draperies Woven on a Loom

by ELEANOR BONTECOU

My small house on a Virginia Hillside was built, the old maple and mahogany furniture had been moved in, and now came the problem of draperies for the living room; draperies that would not tax unduly the pocket-book so flattened by the processes of building and moving yet would harmonize with and be worthy companions for the big Oriental rug of the Mosul type that by its warm tones and bold geometric design dominated and largely determined the decorative scheme of the room. The room itself was simple and informal with plain oyster-white woodwork and sand-float plaster walls of a soft rosy tan. Sunshine streamed in through small-paned windows in South and West walls and on the East side wide French doors framed a view of sky and land over the tree tops and across the plain to the river and the gleaming city beyond. Color was needed in the room, color to tone with the light terra-cotta, the deep blue and the sulphur-yellow of the rug, but simplicity of pattern and design was es-

sential in the draperies that were to frame that natural mural. No suitable moderate-priced material could be found in the shops so the only solution seemed to be to weave the draperies on my Structo loom.

To save time and labor I decided to use a simple threading, a wide setting and fairly heavy materials, and, if possible to select these materials from a miscellaneous stock already on hand. Previous experiments had shown me that interesting effects, rather Oriental in spirit could be obtained on the twill threadings, so for my curtains I selected the "8 Leaf Dornick" threading, the draft of which is to be found on page 270 of Mrs. Atwater's *Shuttlecraft Book of American Handweaving*. For the warp 40/3 linen, natural, ready wound on the Structo spools was threaded double and set at twelve to the inch for the double strands (2 threads through each dent of a 12 dent reed). Among an assortment of rough silks were colors corresponding closely to those of Bernat's Oriental

rug wools, that promised to tone well with the unusual colors of the living-room rug. The yarn was rather fine grist so I wound three strands at a time on the shuttle, and for all but the saffron-yellow used three different shades at once, thus getting more richness and subtlety of tone as well as a better match for the varying shades of the rug.

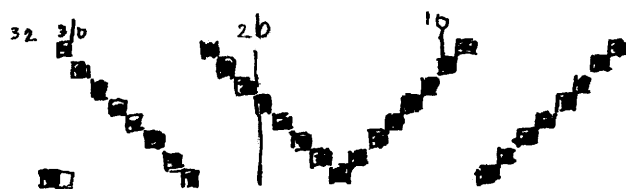
The curtains were woven in bands of the Dornick pattern in the colors of the rug on a background of a modified tabby weave in a rosy tan shade similar to but far more intense than the color of the walls. At the bottom of the curtain, to give weight, the full Dornick pattern (see treadling as given below) was first woven in the background color, then after about an inch and one half of the modified tabby in the same color a heavy border was woven in three wide stripes of a blended rose and terra-cotta edged and separated by narrow bands of the blue and yellow woven in Dornick sequence. (See detail photograph Plate A) For the rest of the curtain the back-

ground color and weave was used broken three times at distances determined by the intersections of the small window panes by a group of three narrow stripes in blue and yellow. For the narrow stripes no uniform weaving was used, each being an improvisation in the Dornick sequence carried out to the required width. In the modified tabby background a self-stripe was obtained by using alternately levers 1-3-5-8 and 2-4-6-7 instead of the regulation tabby levers. This not only made a more interesting texture than the plain tabby but by its vertical 1 lines counteracted the shortening effect of the horizontal stripes on the small windows. The curtains were finished at the bottom with a fringe of the linen warp knotted once.

To get the desired colors I used for the background material one thread of a variegated terra-cotta and tan, one of plain tan and one of dew color; for the wide bands in the border one old rose thread, one light terra-cotta, and one terra-cotta and tan, variegated; for the blue stripes one Dark Chinese blue, one Ispahan blue and one blue-green. The yellow bands were made for the most part of three strands of a sulphur yellow which exactly matched the yellow of the rug, but occasionally a strand of gold was substituted for one of the yellow threads.

The final result was a set of draperies soft enough to push well back from the windows to let in all possible sunlight, heavy enough to draw across the glass at night in lieu of window shades; draperies as informal as the room itself, in tune with the big rug both in colors and in general character, but equally charming in the room when some other floor covering was used. (See plate A for illustration). These curtains had been obtained with the minimum expenditure of time and money.

When the living room curtains were hung it seemed desirable to weave a harmonizing fabric to hang at the windows of a small study that opened into the living room. Using the same warp, threading and setting but with a heavy natural spun silk for weft I wove a one-toned fabric in alternating bands of the Dornick pattern and the same modified tabby. The result was an unexpectedly lovely offwhite material very modern in spirit, depending for its effect primarily on texture. (Plate B)



“EIGHT LEAF DORNICK”

Treadling directions (on the Structo Loom) Pattern

Lever 5-6-8-1		4-5-7-8	
6-7-1-2		3-4-6-7	
7-8-2-3		2-3-5-6	
8-1-3-4	Repeat	1-2-4-5	Repeat
1-2-4-5	3 times	8-1-3-4	3 times
2-3-5-6		7-8-2-3	
3-4-6-7		6-7-1-2	
4-5-7-8		5-6-8-1	
5-6-8-1			

Lever 1-3-5-8
2-4-6-7

Tabby
alternately

