

Shuttle-Craft Bulletin: Scandinavian Weaving

In the September 1929, and briefly, in the October 1937 Shuttlecraft Bulletins, Mary Meigs Atwater continued with the topic of Scandinavian weaving. This same topic, conveniently, is covered in the latest edition (March/April 2017) of *Handwoven* magazine. Mary included two weaving drafts as Scandinavian weaves: Rosengang, or Rose Path and Monk's Belt. She stated that "American weavers are in construction, more similar minded to Scandinavian weaving than to the work of any other country"

That said, Mary wrote that rose path is a structure that is both a surprise and disappointment to most American weavers when first put on the loom, appearing insignificant and uninteresting. She attributed this lack of interest to the fact that most weavers have not learned how to use it.

One of the Shuttle-Craft Guild members wove a beautiful woolen scarf on one rose path threading: 1,2,3,4,3,1,4 and continue, on opposites and in several colors. A portion of the drawdown that Mary described is shown here (Figure 1).

Looking through a few of my weaving references, I could not find an example of this threading and found that Marguerite Davidson's *A*

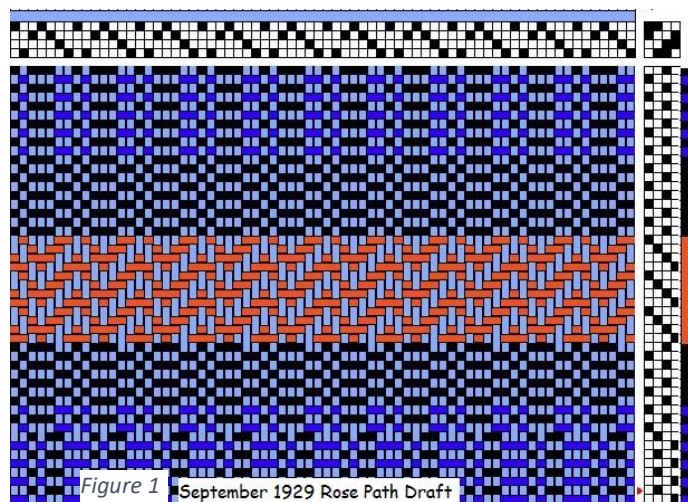


Figure 1 September 1929 Rose Path Draft

Handweaver's Pattern Book includes in Chapter II several drafts called rose path. Marguerite wrote in the chapter introduction that rose path has no one traditional treadling but has always held first place in treadle manipulation, forming the basic design for weavings in certain parts of the Scandinavian countries for hundreds of years. She included a Rose Path Project No. 1,

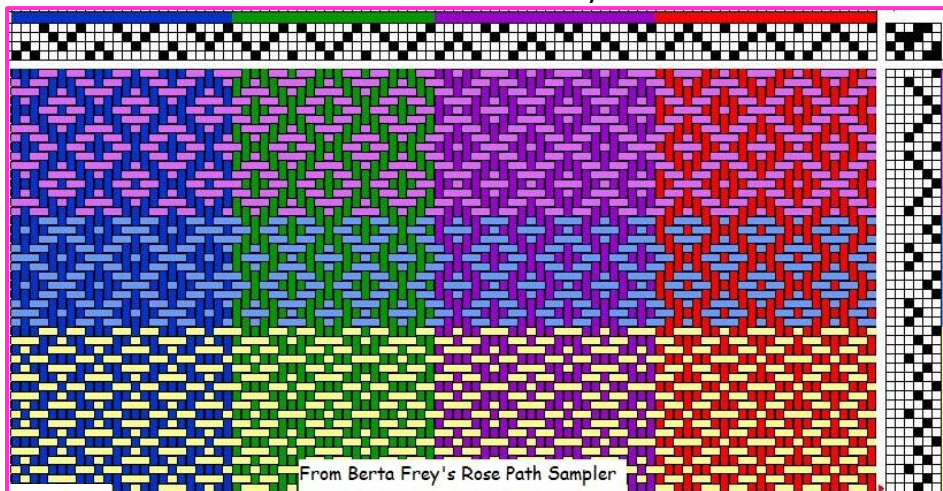


Figure 2

From Berta Frey's Rose Path Sampler

(sampler) by Berta Frey with 4 different threadings (see Figure 2 for a sample) and 16 treadlings.

Karen Isenhower, of the blog, *Warped for Good* has a beautiful Swedish rose path rag rug project in the March/April

Handwoven with yet another rose path threading variation.



Figure 3 Scandinavian Weavers Study Group Rose Path

There is a different effect on the same threading woven in a fine yarn over a warp set far apart. Much like the boundweave example shown here from the Minnesota Weavers Guild Scandinavian Study Group (<https://scandinavianweaversmn.wordpress.com/>). I'd recommend their website if you are interested in delving further into Scandinavian weaving, they have some beautiful examples.

Mary called this a suitable fabric for chair seats and large bags. A similar weave may be done on three shafts, threaded 1,2,3,2.

The other weave structure Mary wrote about is Monk's Belt. Marguerite Davidson refers to Monk's Belt as the "beginning of the overshot patterns, being the simplest form of that truly handweaver's technique." Mary referred to a hanging illustrated in a book on ancient Swedish weaving, probably done by what she calls an "embroidery process." She described it as having pattern stripes in Monks Belt, tabby stripes and stripes consisting of rose-figures on a solid background. The rose as made up of 4 large blocks and one small central block. Unfortunately, there is no diagram for reference. Based on her discussion of the weave, done by the embroidery process, on a warp set far apart and the weft beaten so that the warp is completely covered, it reminds me of the Swedish Art Weaves we did with Joanne Hall, using the *krabba* and *halvkrabba* techniques.

In the 1937 Bulletin, Mary described a bag that may be woven in spun silk, set at 30 epi, and a coarse tabby weft, using a Scandinavian weave (See Figure 4). The resulting fabric has a lacy appearance but is firm and solid.

Mary also discussed Finnweave in the 1937 issue, a topic for another time.

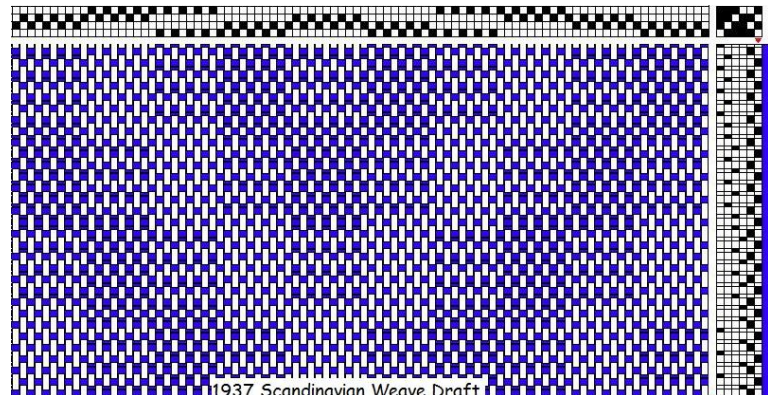


Figure 4

The March/April 2017 *Handwoven* issue covers several more weave structures as Scandinavian weaves that Mary did not, such as: half Dukagang, art weaves, rya, doubleweave, lace (as in Swedish), band weaving and crackle (*Jamtlandsvaev*). I recommend the issue for further study.