

Shuttle-Craft Bulletin: Weaving for Pleasure

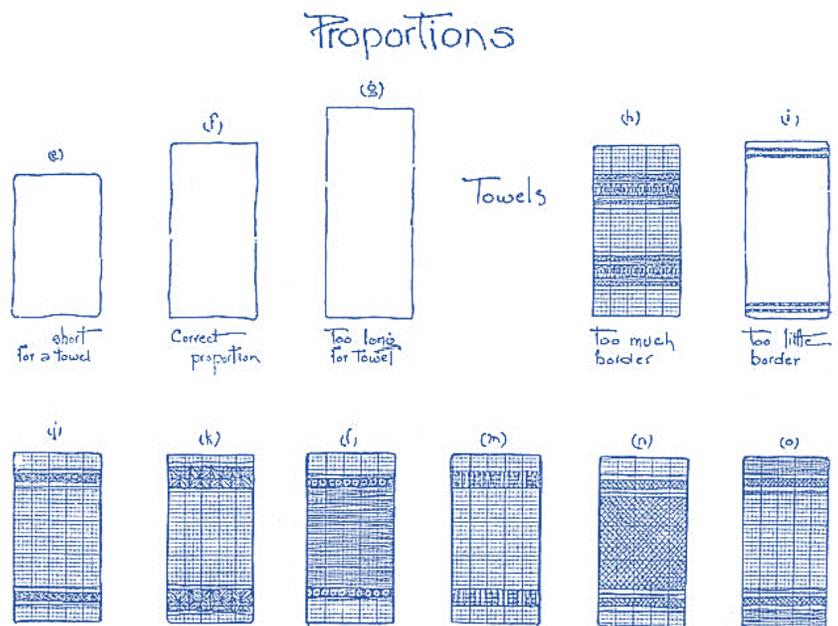
In the November 1929, Mary wrote about weaving for pleasure rather than profit. Of course, she said, a weaver may weave for both profit and pleasure, but in this Bulletin, she addressed weaving when pleasure is the more important consideration. I found her discussion to be interesting and thought-provoking.

A uniquely beautiful thing does not always find a ready buyer. And we all know that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. But in weaving for pleasure, Mary said, the thing made should be far more beautiful than a thing made for sale. And one should not count the time and labor expended, in fact the reverse is often the case. Think of the hours of weaving pleasure obtained when working with two shuttles, for example, rather than the fact that it takes longer than a one shuttle weave. She considered those who weave purely for pleasure as taking an artistic approach to the craft and when a piece is criticized, the weaver would “thrill” to the criticism and see through the faulty work to something much finer to strive for rather than finding the criticism discouraging or having hurt feelings.

Mary emphasized the dangers to be avoided and the special satisfactions in weaving purely for pleasure. The standard is higher, according to Mary. The proof of success is in the artistic excellence of the product and in the enrichment of the craftsman’s life through the joy of creative work. Her analysis of the approach to weaving gives a lot of food for thought that any nonprofessional, indeed, any weaver should consider.

If you weave for pleasure, according to Mary, you have a responsibility toward the craft. The craft is in your hands, for you to carry along to new achievement. The standard of work and beauty that you establish will be followed by those who weave for profit. You are the leader.

A beautiful textile fabric may be achieved in three ways, and I’ve heard other weavers refer to these three considerations, that is: color, texture and design. Mary wrote about design specifically in this Bulletin issue, in the arrangement of the decoration and proportion of the article. She wrote about the proportion of towels and the size and placement of the borders on them – see the figure here. At that time, towels were usually made twice as long as they are wide.



Mary recommended that you make a scale sketch of the article you are going to weave, allowing width and arrangement of decoration. Her sketches in the figure represent towels 20" wide and 40" long.

Mary wrote: Beauty is no matter of an ancient and fixed law but is dependent on our emotional response. It is a very personal and present thing and to see beauty means to work and to observe with an open mind and heart." So, as you plan your next project, think about your approach to the weaving, the three elements: color, texture and design, and enjoy!