

Shuttle-Craft Bulletin: Warp Sett and Loom Adjustment

This month's article is from 2 issues of the Shuttlecraft Bulletin (December 1932 and 1934) on the topic of adjusting the warp sett and loom. As Mary wrote, it was a consideration of the "vagaries of the tools of our craft."

In 1932, Mary wrote that the problem in weaving causing most trouble and responsible for most failures is setting of the warp. She provided recommended setts for most yarns in use in the day, by use, as shown below:

Purpose	Yarn	Sett ends/inch
Coverlets, overshot in general	Egyptian Cotton 24/3, no longer available	30 - 32
	Egyptian cotton 16/3, no longer available	24
	20/2 cotton	30 - 32
	10/2 cotton	24
Rugs	Carpet warp	15 Overshot
		12 Crackle, Summer & Winter or Plain weave
	Perle cotton 3/2	8
Woolen fabrics	Bernat Fabri, like a 20/2 wool yarn such as Jagerspun Maine line.	30; firm fabric
		24, lightweight fabrics
	Harris tweed	15 for coats, jackets
	Shetland yarn	15 or 24
	4 ply Germantown, like a worsted weight knitting yarn	8 for baby blankets
Linens	Line linen 18	30
	Line linen 20	36
	Round linen 36/2	30
	Round 40/3	26
	Round linen 18/3	18
	Heavy linen floss or 10/2 equivalent	15

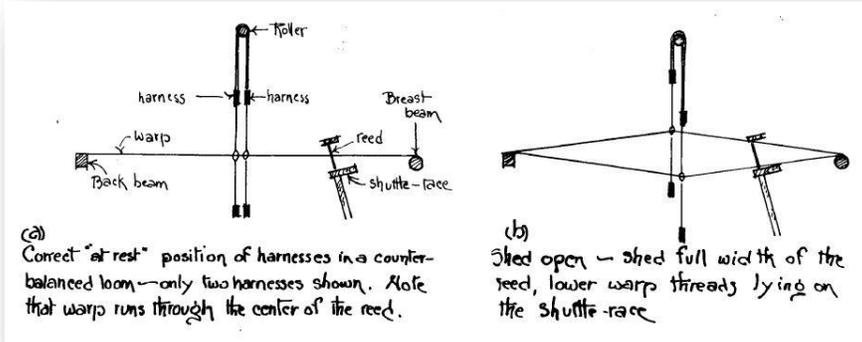
Mary suggested dressing line linen warps. Some of these yarns are no longer commercially available, so a good comparison may be made using the master yarn chart by Handwoven, still available at this link: <https://handwovenmagazine.com/master-yarn-chart/>. This chart gives recommended warp setts for lace, plain weave and twill. It is a great resource.

In both Bulletins she addressed adjusting the loom to produce good weaving. She wrote that the loom is supposed to do two essential things: keep the warp stretched and properly spaced and to open wide clear sheds for the shuttle passage. She wrote that before starting on a new warp, the weaver should be sure that the harnesses hang at the right level, that the rollers, pulleys, horses, jacks and what not work easily, lamms are level and that all treadle cords pull evenly. She was

"There are, I am sorry to say, a few hand-loomes on the market that cannot be persuaded to function properly. For these there is no cure but the axe." Mary M. Atwater

addressing mainly counterbalance looms, working from the top of the loom down, but the principle is

the same. The loom should be working well in order for the weaving to progress well. She wrote about a jack loom with 2 sets of lamms, which I think is what we would call a counter-march loom.



She preferred sectional warping. And gave a full page diagram of what a warp should look like "at rest" and with an open shed. I've included a portion of it.

There are many online resources today for loom adjustment, such as

<http://www.glimakrausa.com/shop/wpimages/intro-cb.pdf> for counterbalance, or Peggy Osterkamp's book, *Warping Your Loom & Tying on New Warps*, 4th edition.

Mary went into detail on how one could convert a counterbalance loom to a counter-march setup.

She wrote about options for repairing a broken warp thread, with weaver's knots, a fisherman's knot, raveling the broken ends and splicing with some glue, or attaching a repair thread to the back of the loom, bringing it forward through the heddle, securing it to the fabric with a straight pin and weaving it in.

She finished the 1934 issue with a paragraph on the rule for weaving 4 harness patterns in the "Italian Manner" that is overshoot or crackle without a tabby. This is the best write up I've seen on this and worth a read if you want to explore this weave. She recommended it more for crackle and best for overshoot weaves without long floats. It produces a thicker, softer fabric, good for cotton towels. There are several patterns in the Recipe book, see Series III no. 16 or Series VI, No. 4.