Knotting Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE

INTERNATIONAL

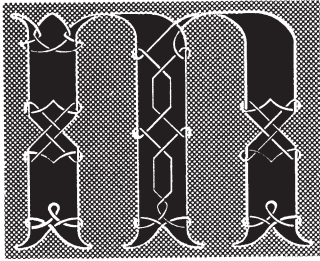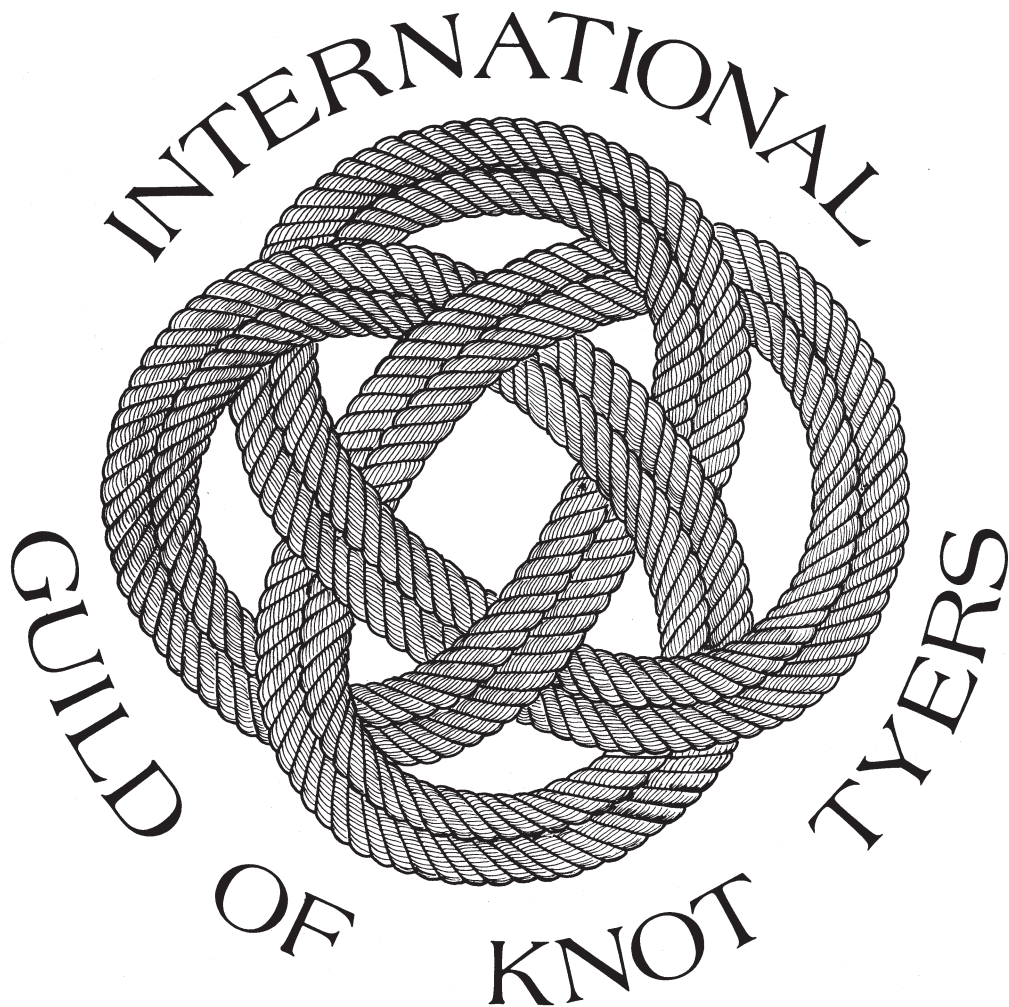GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

"KNOTTING MATTERS"

THE QUARTERLEY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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Issue No . 17
October (Autumn), 1986

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Editorial

A letter in this issue claims that the British Stickmakers' Guild Just 2 years old, has 600 members. Extraordinary. I mean, have you ever met a stickmaker? I would have thought they were rarer than knot tyers.

My wife enjoys membership of the Crystal Palace Foundation: but we only live 3/4-mile from the 50-year-old ruins and a Sunday walkabout with knowledgeable guides is easily arranged. What can be the attraction for the thousands of people worldwide who - the organisers proudly insist - have joined in the 7 years it's been going.

Perhaps these organisations sign up anyone who'll pay the price of a year's subscription. Maybe they count each individual in a group affiliation. I still believe that our steady but more modest accumulation of 75 new members each year will not stop before we total thousands. Better still, each one has first heard about the Guild, then made an effort to find out more, and eventually joined to be active in it.

A few members expressed surprise that we didn't grab all casual enquirers at the 'Knotting Extravaganza', relieve them of their cash and sign them up on the spot. Why bother? They went away with all the literature. Don't you think that, like us, the keen ones will soon follow it up? Bet your fid they will! So...who wants those whose interest had expired by the time they reached home?

I'm convinced there are tens of hundreds of knot tyers scattered around the world, either practising or yet to be awakened. The sole obstacle to speedier Guild growth is finding one another. We can't guess where they might be, so they need to hear about us.

A week or two ago I chatted by 'phone for a few minutes live with the presenter of some Australian radio station. "Why," he asked me, "should people know knots?" What do you say? "Frankly, you're a dunce if you can't tie knots - and a liability to those who can. Get smart.
Be self-sufficient. Save money . . . . . and have fun."

Naval Slang

SNOWBALL HITCH'

A badly made knot that will not hold.

Double Constrictor

tied in the bight by

Brion _TOSS_

(drawings or Robert Shetterly)

This series of drawings (from an article entitled "The Binds That Tie" which will appear in the September-October 'Wooden Boat' magazine) shows a method of forming a Double Constrictor in-the-bight.

I have tried to write the captions so that they will apply to left or right-handed tying, with the moving end above or below the hand. This way, anyone can make the knot regardless of how they habitually form the Clove Hitch.

(Haven't yet bee able to work up a Turk's Head   from this knot after the style of the Single Constrictor   . . . . but suspect it can be done)

Fig. 1 - Begin with a Clove Hitch. Shift the palm end towards your fingertips. Depending on how you make the Clove Hitch, this end may be on the top or bottom.
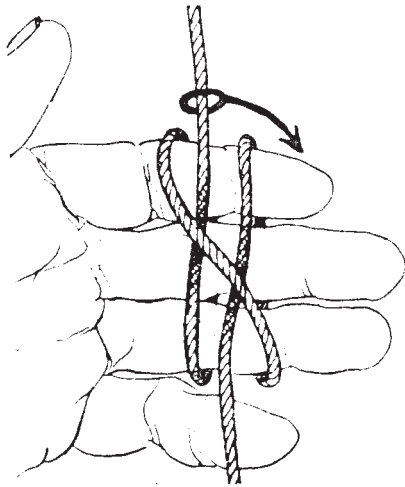
Fig. 1A - Shows the knot started with the palmside end on the bottom.

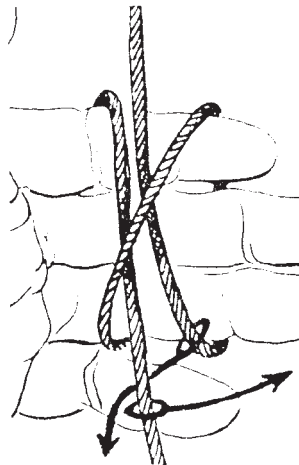Fig. 2 - Pull some slack into the fingertip-side turn.
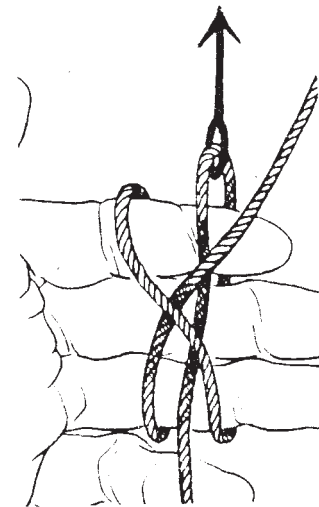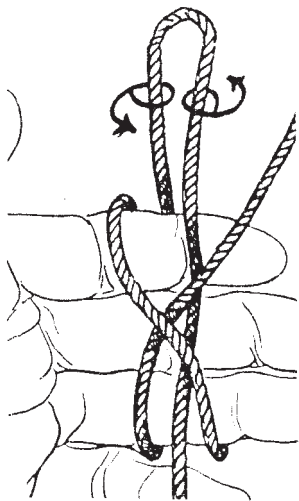

Fig. 1

Fig. 1A

Fig. 2

Fig. 3 - Twist the resulting bight so
that its front swings past the
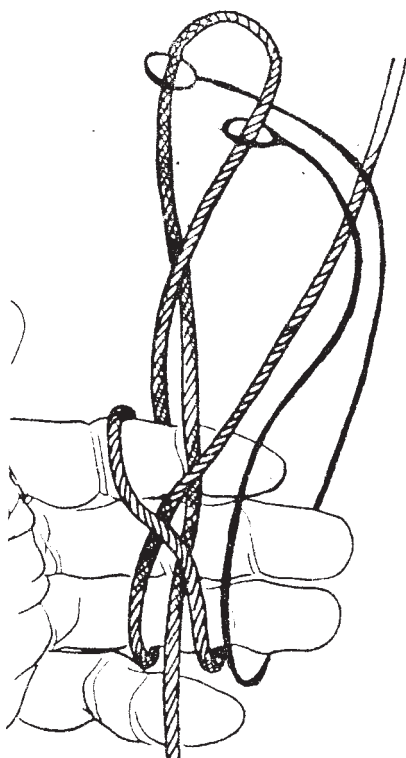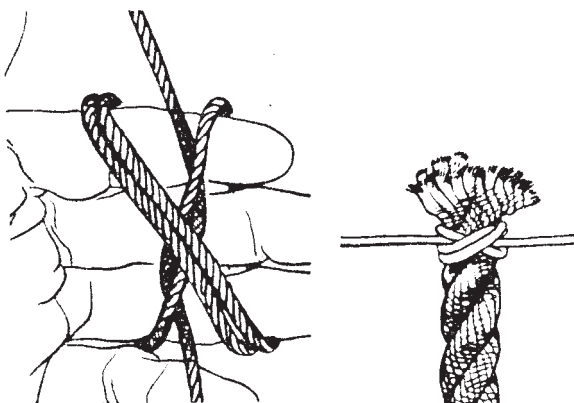finger-tips towards the back of
the hand, 1/2 a turn.

Fig. 4 - Drop the twisted
bight over the
fingertips, in
front of the end.

Fig's 5A & B -
The completed knot.

Pretty Simple Stuff

by
Amund KARNER

NEW KNOTS FOR OLD

In knotting I have so far not seen much information on how
you can modify one knot to give you another. It is possible
to modify crossings to give you a new knot. This requires
that you develop the knot on paper and then make it from the
drawing.

One very simple change which can be made to any flat knot is
to extend the loops at the edge, twist and interlock them.
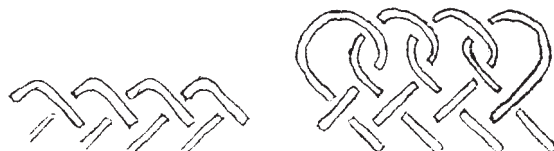
You can also replace one type of crossing with another, eg:-

are all equivalent crossings which can readily replace each
other and do not take any more space.

If you want to introduce a carrick bend or a reef knot you
will have to modify several crossings due to the space
involved.

Not only can you modify individual crossings or groups of
crossings, as above, but you can change so many crossings
that a pattern is formed, giving you knots within knots.

(Use squared layout paper)
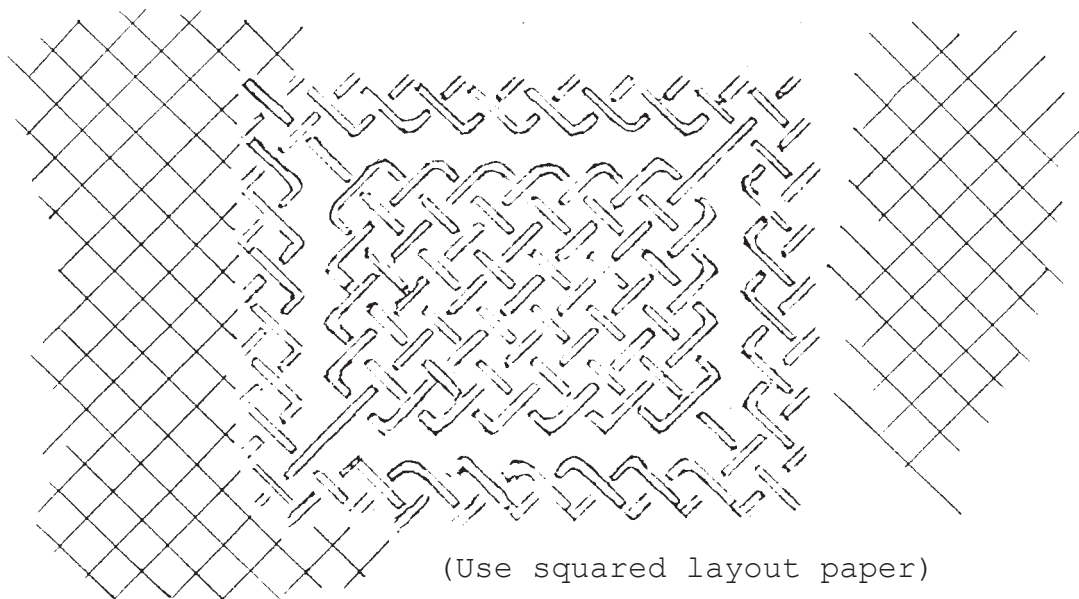
This technique raises, however, the question how many leads
do I need? The answer can change every time you modify one
crossing so a simple system needs to be available.

Simplifying, knots
only to make them complicated again

Have you ever wondered how you could make a complicated knot? or have you wanted to tie a complicated knot and not been able to follow the lead to discern the number of parts.

It possible top cut a knot into many smaller pieces, follow the lead in each of them and then to join all the smaller pieces together to make the whole again? Fortunately it is; imagine you cut the knot along lines of crossings and then separate each piece. At each line of separation, or boundary, note the crossings and draw lines joining the crossings of the boundary to each other. Let us call the pieces elements and the combined pieces superelements. In this way a large number of crossings can be omitted and

becomes
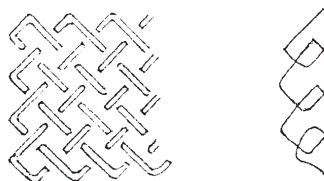
You have to note the crossings and be sure that they are in order when you join the pieces together but once this is done you should have no problems using them as building bricks, in a manner of speaking.

An alternative approach is to use elements to ring the changes in a standard knot, or to turn a multilead knot into a single lead knot. One example is the enclosed table with letters of the alphabet as elements which can he joined to a standard outside.

Using this approach, the knot described by George Bain in "Celtic Knotting", or one of Albrecht Durer's Six Knots Namely

becomes
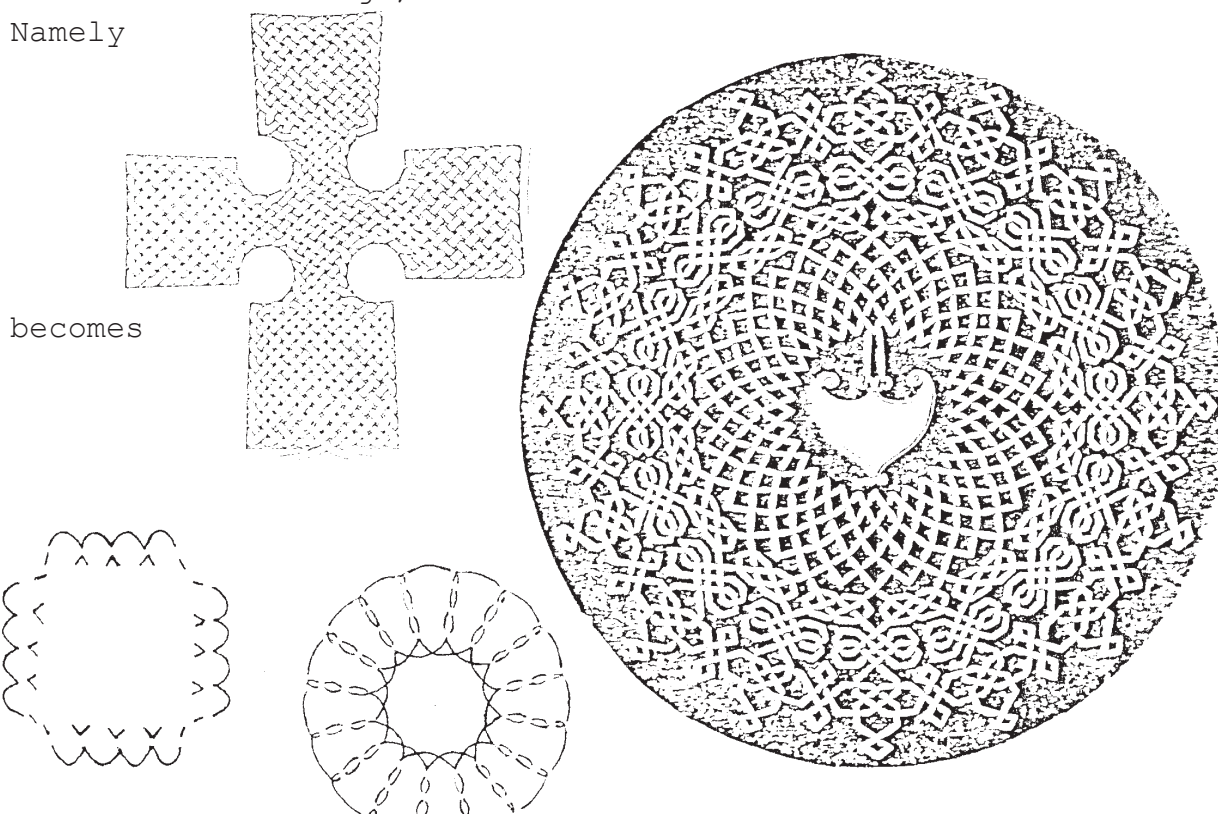
WORKING WITH SUPERELEMENTS

When you have a knot and you have decided where to have the edges you set up a table so you know which point is linked to which point. Each crossing can be considered as having 2 nodes, one 'over' and one 'under', e.g

1	2	3	4	5	6	from node
4	5	6	1	2	3	to node

You have to do the same with any other superelement to which this one is to be joined.

The next task is to 'join' the two pieces of the knot together. You may have given each node of each superelement an internal number, i.e. internal to that superelement, so you need a number system common to both superelements. Thus

SUPERELEMENT ONE

EXTERNAL	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	
INTERNAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Fig.1
	4	11	6	1	8	3	10	5	12	7	2	9	

SUPERELEMENT TWO

INTERNAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Fig. 2
	2	1	12	7	6	5	4	11	10	9	8	3	

To count the number of leads you start at one point and go from the one element to the other. E.g.

```
I    1   4   IV  4   7   VII 7   10  X    10   9    IX   9    12   XII
     12  3   III 3   6   VI  6   5   V    5    8    VIII 8    11   XI
     11  2   II  2   1   I
```

However this is a bit confusing as you do not know in which superelement you are. Let us therefore add the superelement number, e.g. 3.2 meaning in superelement three node two.

With the same basic knot, sel. 1, but with a different location of the inner sel.

3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	FIG. 3
4	3	6	5	8	7	10	9	12	11	2	1	

```
I 1.1  1.4  IV  2.6  2.5  III  1.3  1.6  VI  2.8  2.7  V    1.5  1.8  VIII
  2.10 2.9  VII 1.7  1.10  X   2.12 2.11 IX  1.11 1.12 XII  2.2  2.1  XI
  1.11 1.2  II  2.4  2.3
```
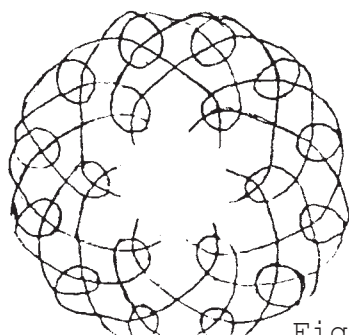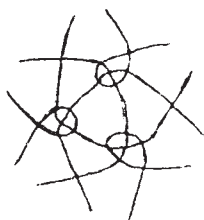

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

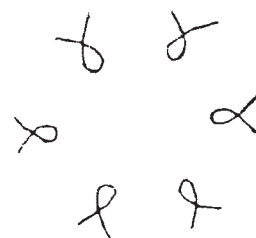
Fig. 3

With five superelements the situation is   bit more complex, fig. 4:-

```
1.1   1.18  4.2   4.1   1.17  1.13  3.5   3.6   1.14  1.7   2.7   2.8   2.8   1.26
5.2   5.1   1.25  1.6   2.6   2.5   1.5   1.16  3.8   3.7   1.15  1.3   2.3   2.4
1.4   1.27  5.3   5.4   1.28  1.12  3.4   3.3   1.11  1.20  4.4   4.3   1.19  1.31
5.7   5.8   1.32  1.21  4.5   4.6   1.22  1.9   3.1   3.2   1.10  1.24  4.8   4.7
1.23  1.9   3.1   3.2   1.10  1.24  4.8   4.7   1.23  1.30  5.6   5.5   1.29  1.2
2.2   2.1   1.1
```

This seems to be very complicated but when you have tried it
a couple of times it becomes manageable. It helps, too, if
you use lists in the form of the to/from tables above.

SEL 2

SEL 5

SEL 1

SEL 3
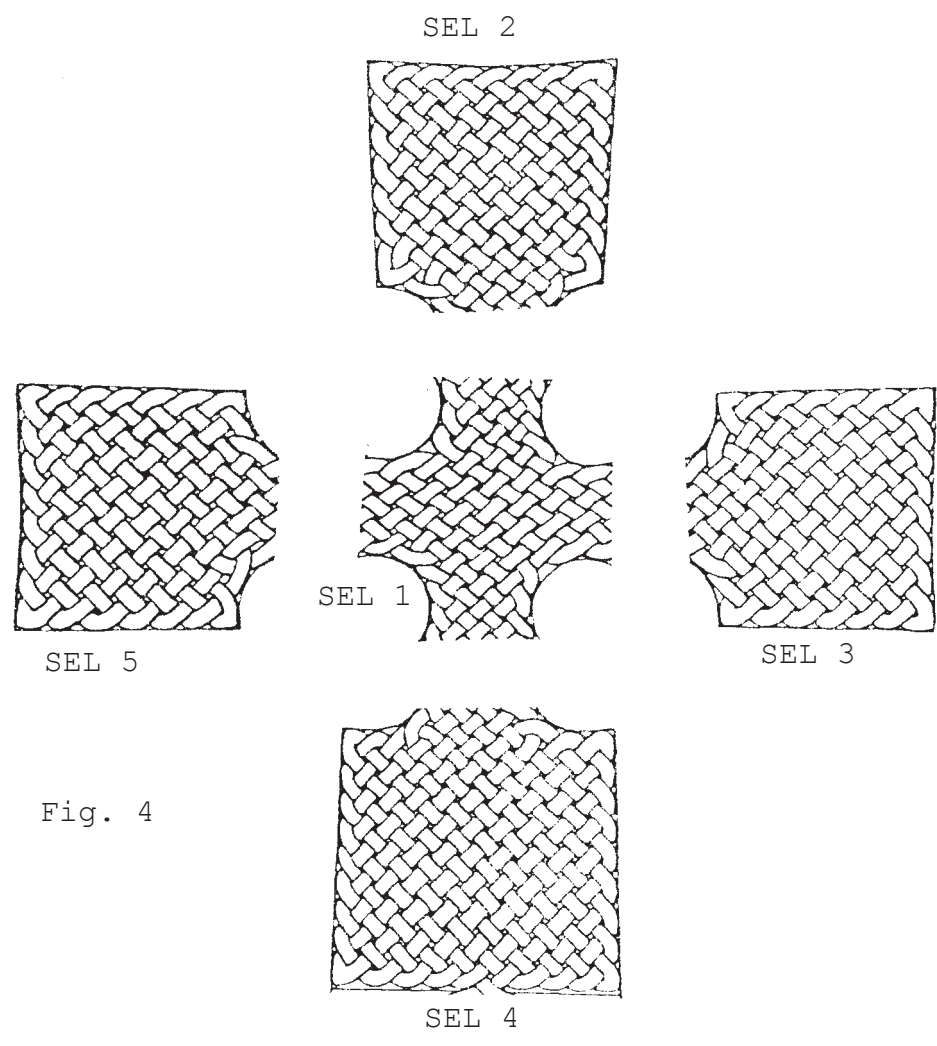
Fig. 4

SEL 4

Quotation

"You must learn to use the gate net, the long net...the purse
net and many other devices...The gate net - sometimes it is
also used for partridges - is a thing designed for a hare. It
is a little bigger in area than a five-bar gate, big enough to
drape over the top bar and billow a little below the bottom
one . . . . . When you want a gate net, learn the knots and
make one yourself. I doubt whether you will buy one easily
nowadays..."
'THE POACHER'S HANDBOOK' by Ian Niall, pub. Wm Heinemann Ltd
(1950)

Long Turk's Heads

Simple Ways to Make Them ◇

and remember How!

by Capt. C. Allan McDowall Master Mariner
No. 4 - 'CRUCIFIX' & 'T'- TURK'S HEADS
(by the Origami method)

Out here in the Persian Gulf, I cannot pop up to my study to take a quick peek at Ashley. So, in all these articles, we use the method to design a pattern to make an intertwined knot out of imagination, without recourse to any book.

I'd never seen a Crucifix Turk's Head before the enjoyable and stimulating I.G.K.T. Greenwich Symposium. The well-crafted example there by the late Jim Nicoll set me thinking how to do it, and that's when the 'Origami' method came to me. At college they called such activities "re-invention", a profitless exercise professionally but still fun in one's hobby.
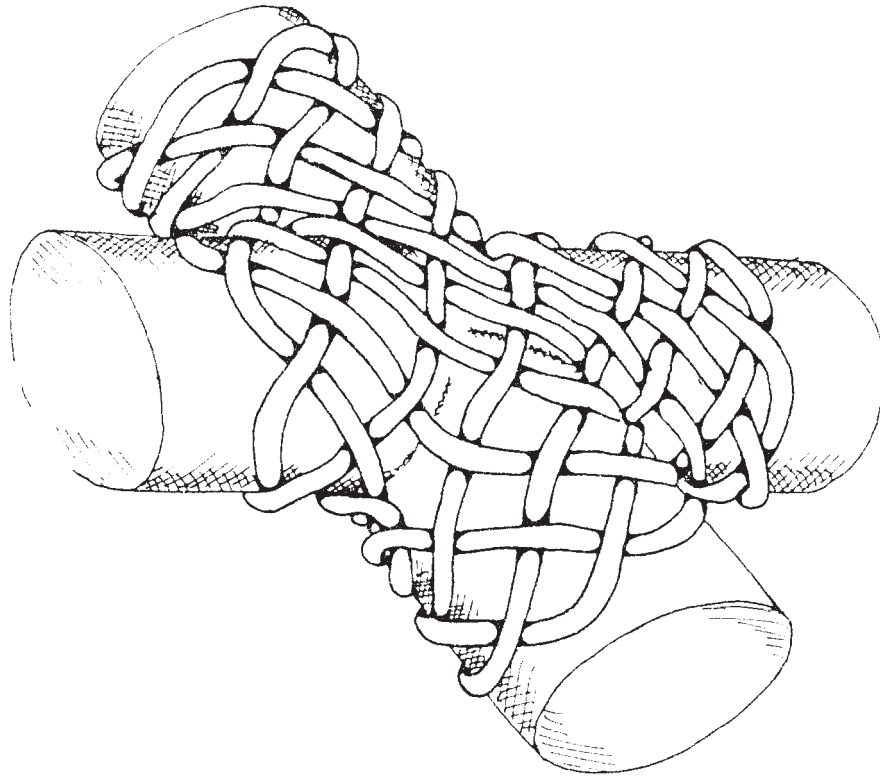
Some knots can only be made by intertwining two knots, because the form is of inter-laced loops rather than the continuous snake of the pure Turk's Head. To make such a loop-knot with one continuous strand requires concealment of the change of cord direction (as in the Monkey's Fist). The Crucifix Turk's Head is such a knot.

I suppose there must be many variations of this fascinating ropework covering for a meeting of wheel spoke and rim or the appropriate junction on a gangway stanchion. Two kinds showed themselves to me after a bit of doodling. One is made with 2 strands, the other with 4. By concealment they can be made with one; and to make this sort without concealment results in asymmetry.

The 4-strand knot results in a perfect piece, but with a crossover in the crook of the elbow and so needs to be tied in fairly thin cord. If a very sharp corner is desired, then the type with 2-strands is better because the corner is covered with a hole which does not show.

THE METHOD is exactly as in previous articles, so I will simply draw the finished knots alongside what each pattern looks like. By now you should be able to cope. Note - you need TWO patterns for each knot you tie, glued over the object to be covered so that where the patterns meet the strands coincide. Draw in the 'bridges' for yourself.

- - - - - = FOLD ALONG DOTTED LINE

————— = CUT ALONG THIN LINE

Photo-copy two of these patterns and glue over the object to be covered. Mark in the 'bridges' to suit the hand of your choice, i.e. Left-hand or right-hand knot.

CRUCIFIX KNOT – 1 STRAND

FIGURE 2

CRUCIFIX KNOT – 1 STRAND

Note the asymmetry – the top arm has one fewer parts than the other three and so is the opposite hand. The four hexagonal holes at the crooks tighten to slits closed up, to give a sharp corner.

FIGURE 1

10

- - - - - = FOLD ALONG DOTTED LINE
———— = CUT ALONG THIN LINE

This knot results in a pentagonal pattern around the centre. The knot is symmetrical.

FIGURE 3

CRUCIFIX KNOT - 2 STRANDS

CRICIFIX KNOT - 2 STRANDS

Photo-copy two of these patterns and glue over object to be covered. Mark in the 'bridges' to suit the hand of your choice.

FIGURE 4

CRUCIFIX KNOT - 4 STRANDS

- - - - = FOLD ALONG DOTTED LINE
_____ = CUT ALONG THIN LINE

CRUCIFIX KNOT - 4
STRANDS

Photo-copy two of these patterns and glue over object to be covered.
Mark in the 'bridges' to suit the hand of your choice.

FIGURE 6

CRUCIFIX KNOT - 4 STRANDS

CRUCIFIX KNOT - 4 STRANDS
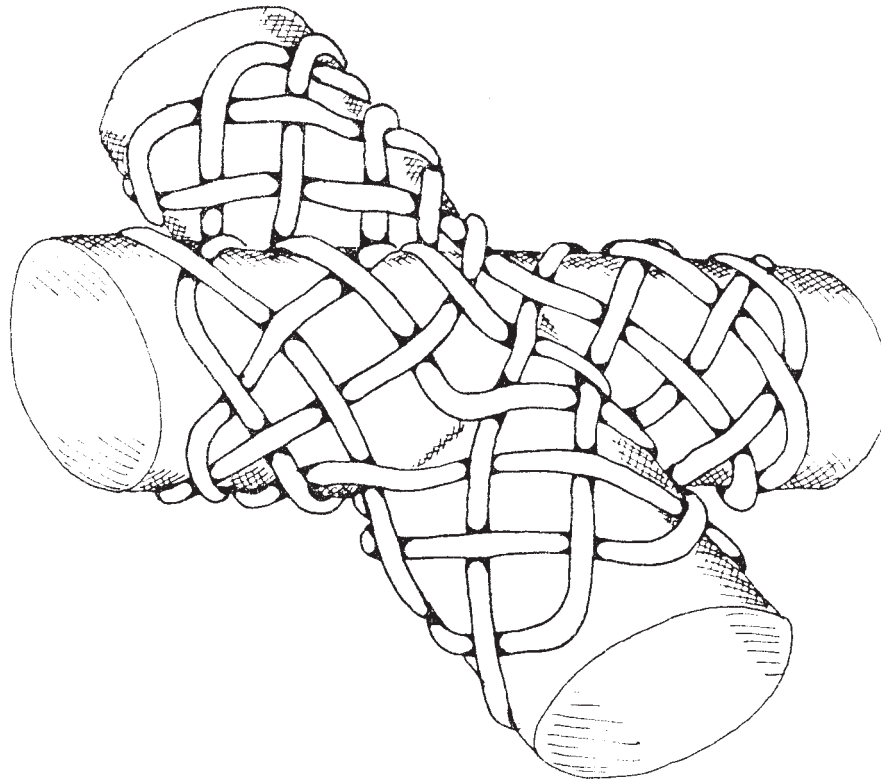
This knot is symmetrical, but is more suitable for a
stanchion with a bulb joint because the crook is not sharp.

FIGURE 5

All Crucifix knots can be extended by adding parts – Warning! Adding parts changes the number of strands, up and then down.
All knots shown are 6 bight.

CRUCIFIX KNOT
'T'–FORM
1 STRAND

This knot is assymetric, but this does not matter because the odd leg goes on the spoke.

FIGURE 7
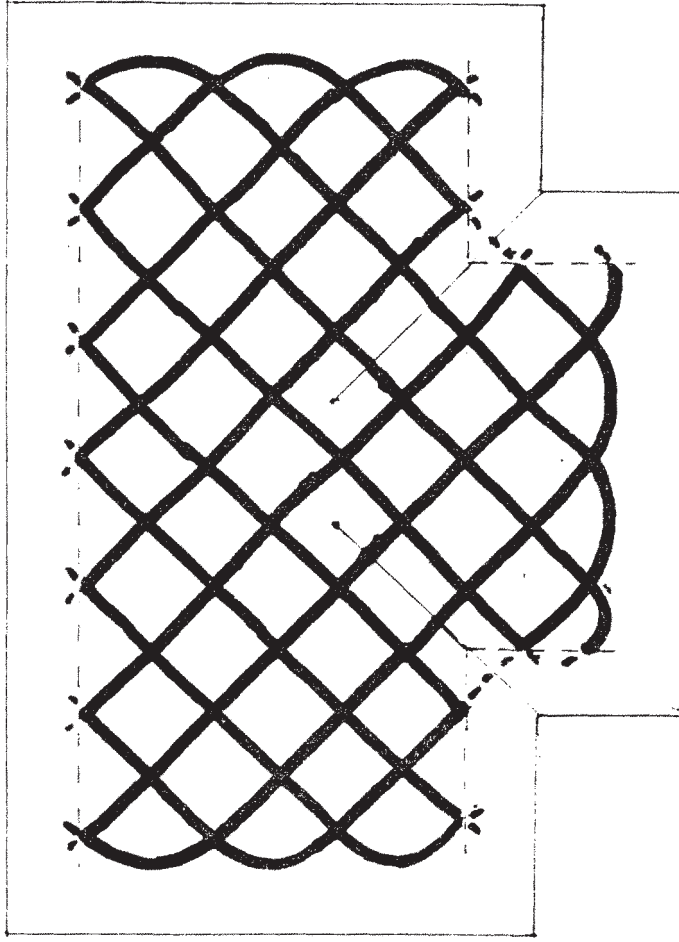
– – – – – – = FOLD ALONG DOTTED LINE
——————— = CUT ALONG THIN LINE
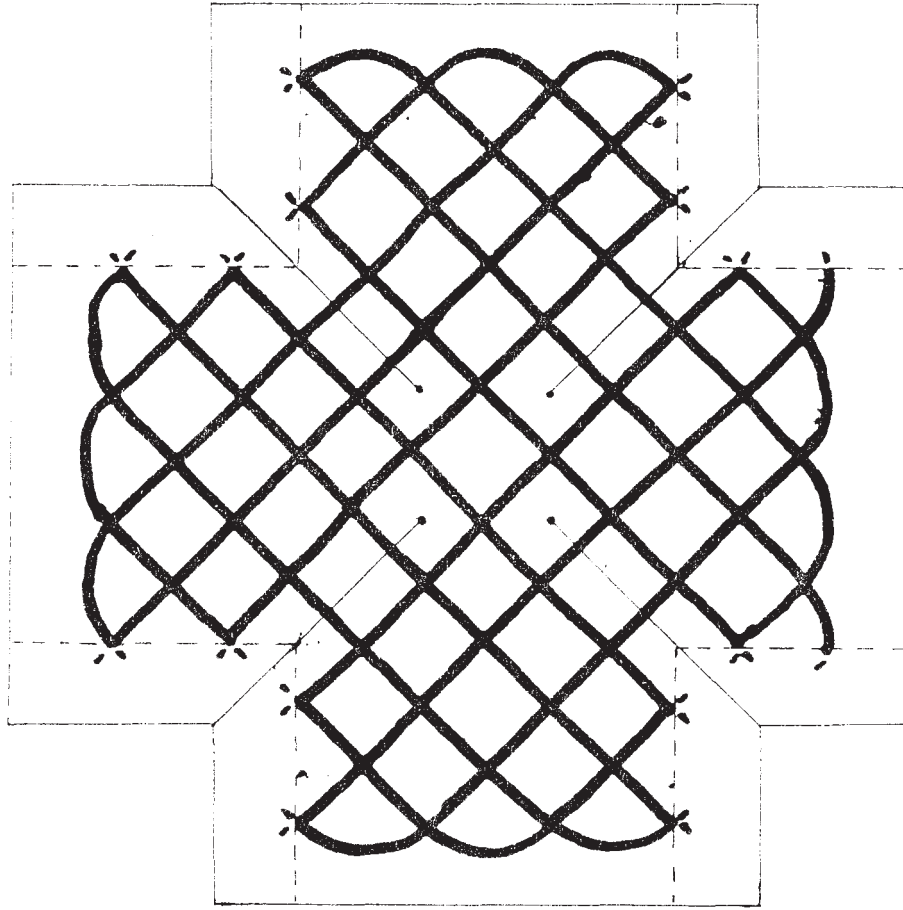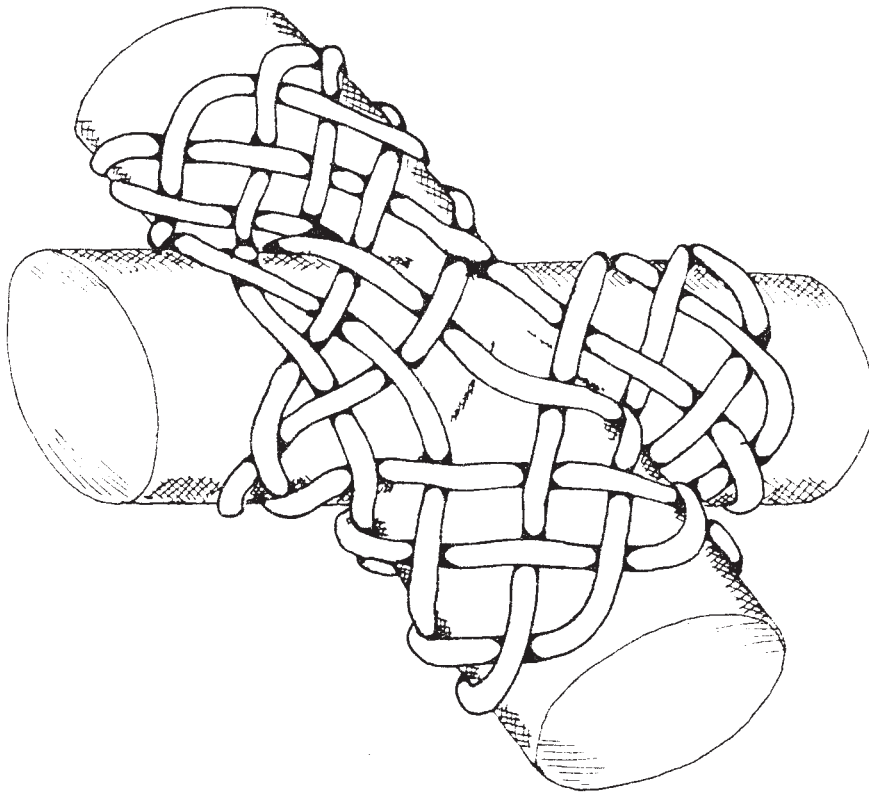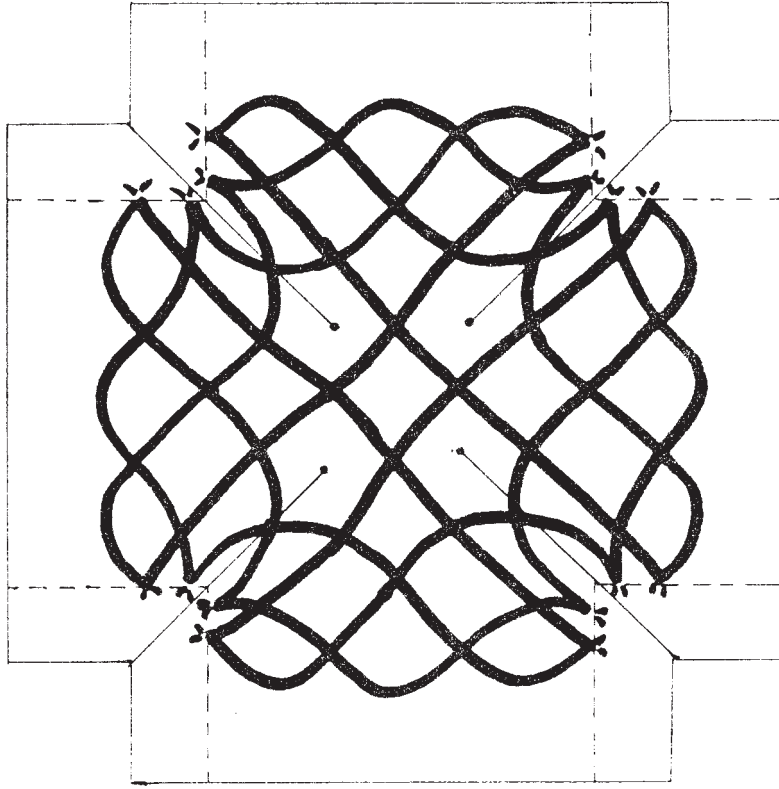

Photo-copy two of these patterns and glue over object to be covered. Mark in the 'bridges' to suit the hand of your choice.

FIGURE 8
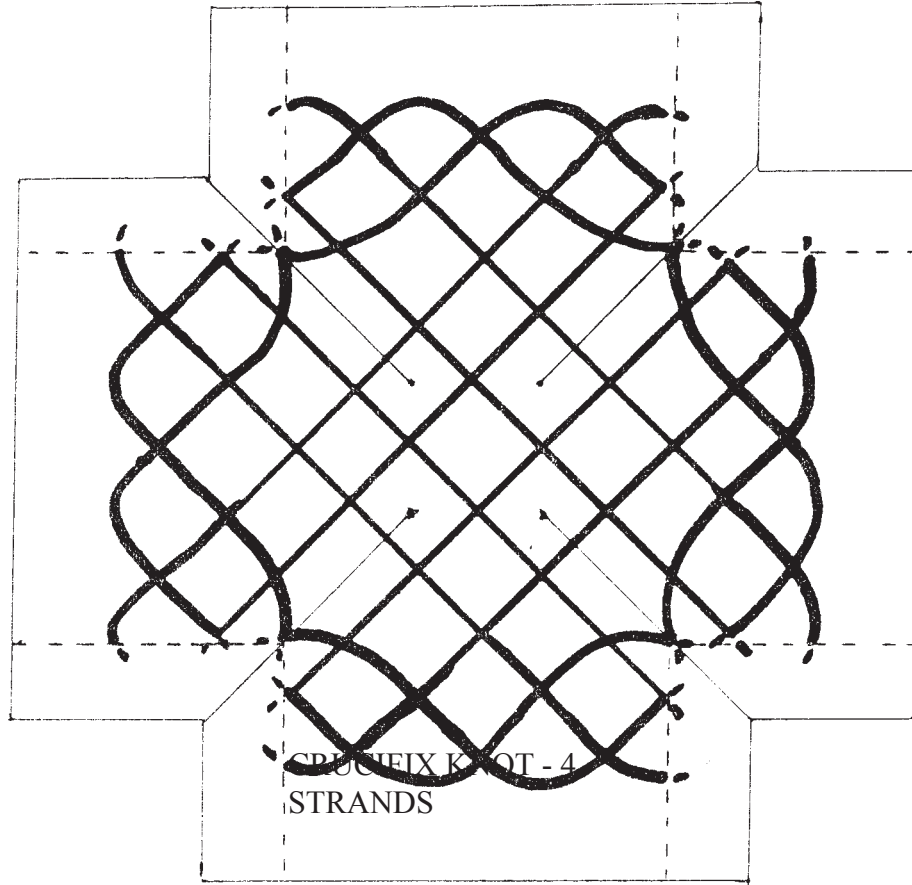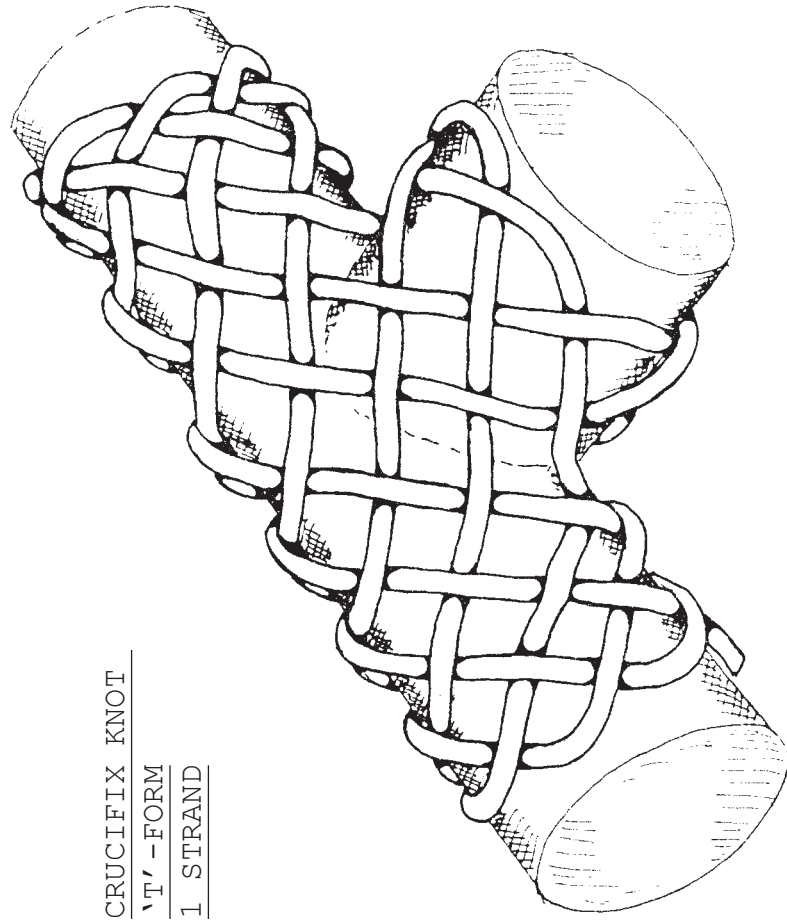
CRUCIFIX KNOT – 'T' FORM – 1 STRAND

HOW TO OBTAIN A PATTERN

(The patterns can be quite a lot bigger than the real thing,
but do not make them smaller)

1.   Make a dummy with a cardboard tube (such as one
     left from a roll of paper towels).

2.   Cover this dummy with clean white paper.

3.   By trial and error, sketch the knot onto the dummy.

4.   When satisfied, draw in the knot with a black felt-
     tipped pen.

5.   Trace the strands around to count them.

6.   Sketch in the bridges, checking there are no double
     'overs' or 'unders'.

6.   Glue loosely into place over the dummy some thin
     copy paper.

7.   Trace the knot through onto the copy paper.

9.   Remove the copy and re-copy the knot onto two clean
     pieces of paper.

     This method can be used for absolutely any shape you
care to think of, and in my next (and final) article you will
see how it was used to reproduce as a super mat the glazed
tile from Samarkand.   What fun the first flyers must have
had; finding out for oneself has a special spice to it that
learning from others does not have, even, if someone else has
thought of them before. I'm sure I shall find all this lot in
Ashley when I get home!)

Strangled Knots   *by Max MILLER*

of Wichita, Kansas
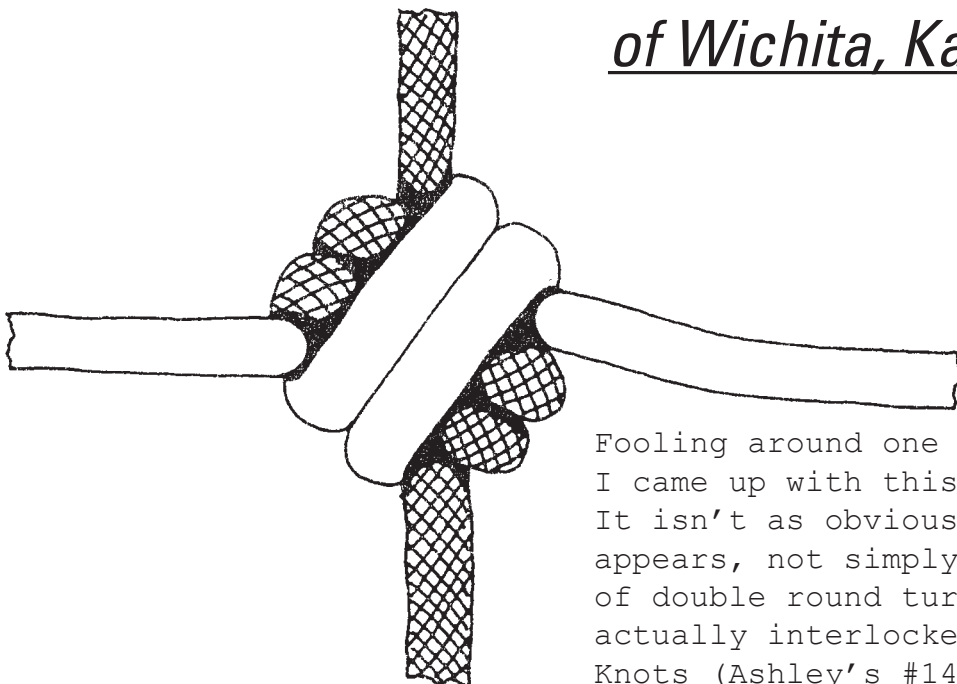
Fooling around one evening,
I came up with this knot.
It isn't as obvious as it
appears, not simply a couple
of double round turns, but
actually interlocked Strangle
Knots (Ashley's #1439).

Letters

Dear Mr. Budworth,

I don't know whether you know, but we have formed the British Stickmakers Guild just under two years ago and now have approaching 600 members and as founding Chairman, I would express the hope that we can continue a friendly exchange between our two guilds. For example, a cord collar which is sometime seen in silver wire an item which many of our members would like to know how to make (please note I am going to great pains to avoid giving it a name since I do not know the correct term for such an embellishment).

I shall be contacting Mr. Bernard Cutbush initially to ask him whether he is prepared to undertake to make a "Captain's stick" for me.

119, Station Road,   yours sincerely,
Beaconsfield,   Theo FOSSEL
Bucks. HP9 1LG,   Stickmaker   March 20th, 1986
England.

Hello Geoffrey,

My wife and I returned home at the end of May after spending 10 months in Australia. Whilst there I contacted and me knot tyer John Darby and we had a most enjoyable time together.

Also I made a knotboard which I gave to Sail Adventure Ltd. for the 'Alma Doebell', a sailing vessel which is Australia's Historic Maritime Museum and Youth Sailing Ship, on which a very devoted band of volunteers have worked hard during the last 9 years to restore her to her former glory. On board, I saw their work and came away greatly impressed. With the work almost completed, the programme is youth training and sailing to Perth for the "Americas Cup". They were so thrilled with the knotboard that I offered to make them a bellrope. David Wilson, Executive Director, wrote me two "thank you" letters which I will bring to the next meeting.

I've had several letters from knot tyers after what you wrote about my wartime smuggling days. At the moment I am doing a bit of rope work, for local "Friends of the Museum".

Looking forward to our next meeting,
                    Cheers,
King's Lynn,   Tom LONG
Norfolk, England.   15th. June, 1986

Dear Geoffrey,

A short note to let you all know my new address. We are now 1200 miles North of Perth, back in the iron ore country   heat, iron ore, dust and red dirt, and on the edge of a desert (but I still prefer it to the big cities).

My wife and I have registered a business name, 'FANE SPLICING & ROPEWORK', and after all the necessary paperwork has been completed will start operating and offer the following:-
            - wire splicing (up to 20mm diameter),
            - all types of fibre rope splicing,
            - practical and decorative ropework,
            - netmaking and netmending.

Providing we feel our way in and take things one step at a time I think we will probably go okay.

The ron ore carriers that operate the port about 10 miles from here are somewhere in the 150,000 to 200,000 ton range and the tugs that manoeuvre them use 8-strand plait synthetic rope of about 80-100mm diameter and wire rope somewhere in the 40-50mm range. Know a few of the boys on the tugs, from times past and they say they still snap the lines now and then, which gives some idea o the forces that are involved.

With the move up here, there has not been much chance to do any ropework except to finish off a practical assignment in commercial trawl design which was successful despite being finished in a rush. Still hanging on tenterhooks waiting to hear how the 'Knotting Extavaganza' went - hope it was a complete success.

Regards,

4, Hawkins Street,
South Hedland,   *Neil HOOD*   *20th. July, 1986*
Western Australia, 6722.

Safe At L - *infit Loop*
A - *ngel's Wings*
S - *afe At Last*
T - *he Camel's Hump*

(New knots, and new twists to old ones)

by Owen K. NUTTALL, of Huddersfield
Yorkshire

1. LINFIT LOOP: In my opinion this is a better single
                     loop knot than most tied in a bight;
even better than the Linesman's Loop which relies for its
strength on being pulled a certain way, whereas the Linfit
Loop can take the strain from various directions.

(a)

This knot
Won't jam.

(b)

(c)
front
view

(d)
rear
view

Pull over ↓ to loosen

16
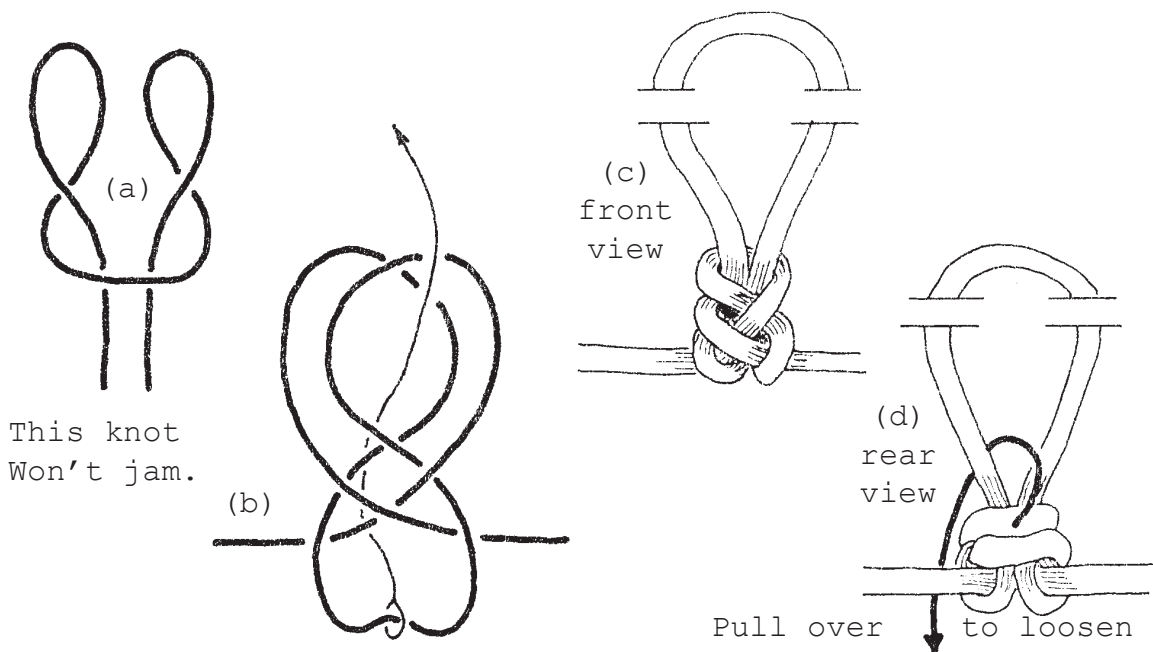
2. <u>ANGEL'S WINGS</u>   How pleasant it is to discover that,
                           just like an angel's wings, the pair or
loops may be opened out flat in use or folded back
together. Unlike the Spanish Bowline and others, these
loops do not slide inconveniently one into the other.

(a)

(b)

(c) 'Wings' opened out

(d) 'Wings'
    folded back

3. <u>SAFE AT LAST</u>   How many times has the Whatknot (Ashley's
                          #1407) been ridiculed during knot-tying
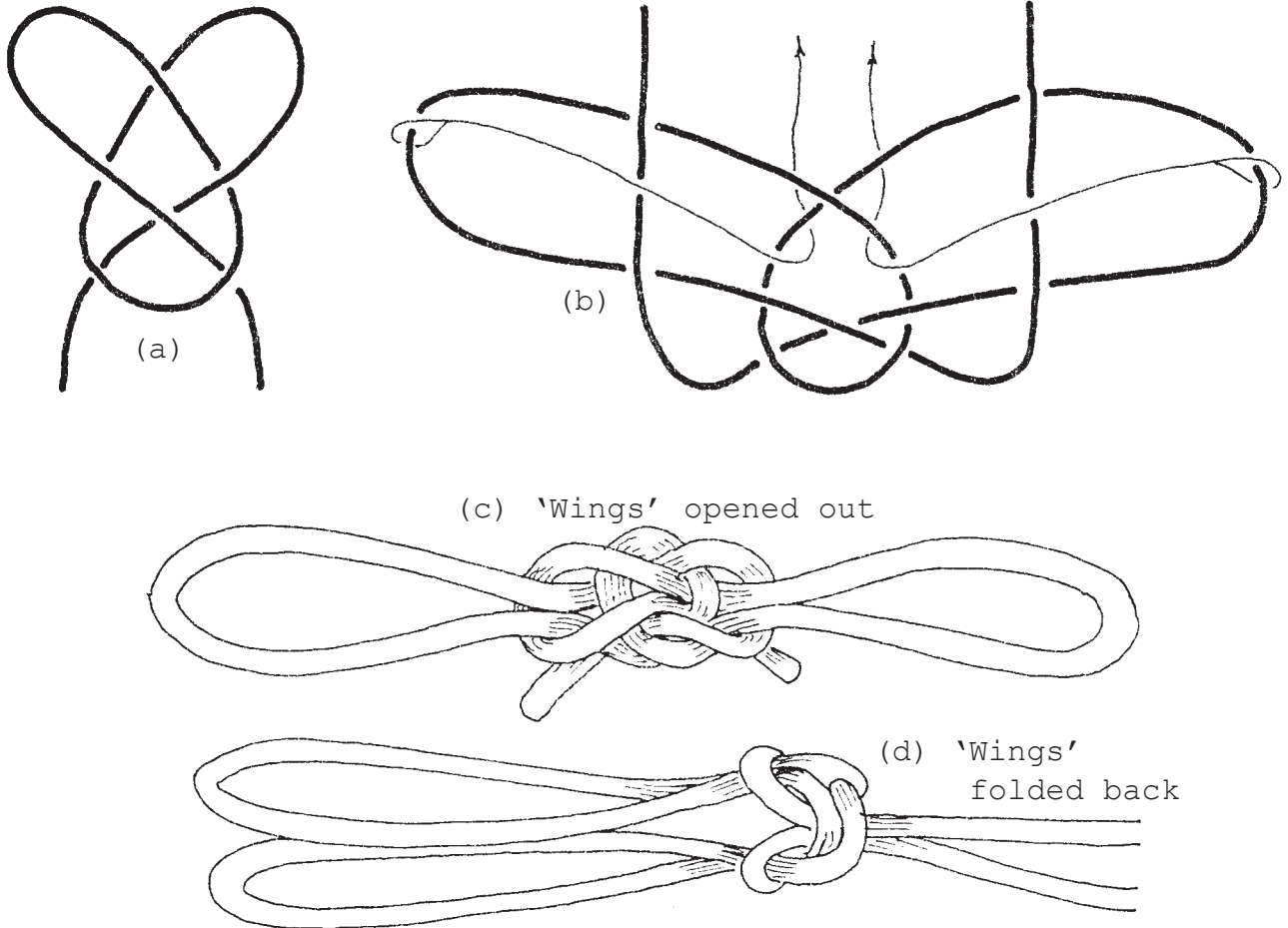demonstrations and made to run up and down on itself to
bring a smile to a captive audience? Now, tied this way,
it is more secure than many a knot. Tuck each working end
through the centre, making sure that each end stays in its
own half until the knot is drawn tight. It's so secure, it
can jam.

(a)

(b)

4. <u>THE CAMEL'S HUMP</u> This strong knot does not jam, and unties very easily.
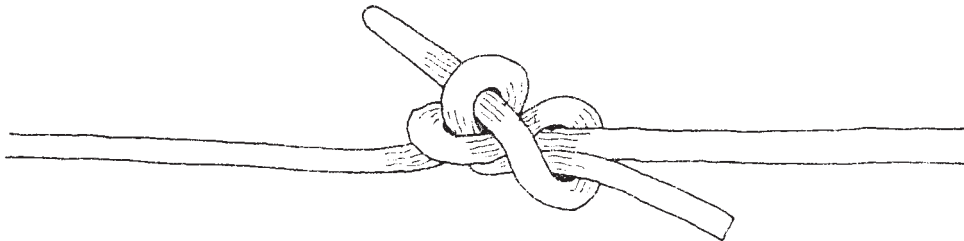
<u>MORE original knotting</u>, from Owen K. NUTTALL will be featured in the next issue of 'Knotting Matters' in January.

Knot for Naught
<u>by the Editor</u>

American Max MILLER (whose 'Strangled Knots appear elsewhere in this issue) had the idea that his contrivance, while interesting, was quite useless. He then wondered if Guild members might get fun from a quarterly feature of other interesting but useless knots. To qualify for inclusion, such knots need have no utility other than arousing our interest. The more interesting - and the more useless - the knots are, the better.

The 'Whatnot' came to his mind. Well, Owen K. NUTTALL (see his 'Safe at last', also in this issue) scotches that notion. So, too, did Canadian Robert J. McG. DAWSON who it is recorded in the Minutes of our Third A.G.M.) was a student at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, when he visited a Liverpool gardening show and spotted there a Whatknot used as a slide-&-lock device to construct Japanese trelliswork.

Max MILLER is a new member of the Guild and his modest assumption that 'strangled Knots' are useless may be wrong. You could make a strong and chunky net that way; start a 4-or-more-strand button knot; or use the method as the heart of a spider lashing for loads.

So, can ANY knot he truly labelled 'useless'? I doubt it. What do you think?

One-handed Bowline

as shown us by Eric FRANKLIN

NOTE : In the drawings, the rope is drawn much thinner than it would be in actual fact. Any rope you had to tie in this manner would probably be at least as thick as your forefinger, probably thicker, but if correctly drawn, it would not be possible to show all the details.)

The drawings only show the hands and the rope immediately adjacent to them. With the full length of rope hanging down in front of you, pass it round the left hand side of the body, across the back and bring the end out on the right hand side so that it comes naturally into the right hand. It you are left-handed, reverse these instructions and look at the drawings in a mirror; they will then be correct for a left hand, but upside down.

Remember that you only have one hand, so, holding the rope about six inches from the end with the second, third and little lingers against the palm and the first finger along the rope, bring it to the standing part in front of the body and grip this with the thumb (Fig. 1). With the forefinger, curl the end down and under the standing part and, as it begins to come up on the inside twist the right thumb upwards and over to the right (Fig. 2). As the thumb moves it carries with it the standing part and the combined action of the forefinger and thumb will easily enable you to arrive at the position shown in Fig. 3. As you reach this position, the rope will have slipped off your thumb and you take your finger out of the turn you have made and once more place it alongside the rope. Holding the turn comfortably with the third and little lingers, push the end behind the standing part with the forefinger and, helped with the third finger, and guiding with the thumb, push it down into the turn, as shown by the arrow in Fig. 4. when you will arrive at position shown in Fig. 5. Pushing down further with the forefinger and aided by the thumb will enable you to get all that is possible of the end through the turn at the same time, the other fingers holding the knot on to the palm, are pulling steadily away from the standing part, so that you gradually haul the whole knot tight without danger of distorting it in so doing.

FIG.1.

FIG.2.

FIG.3.

FIG.4.

FIG.5.

E.F.
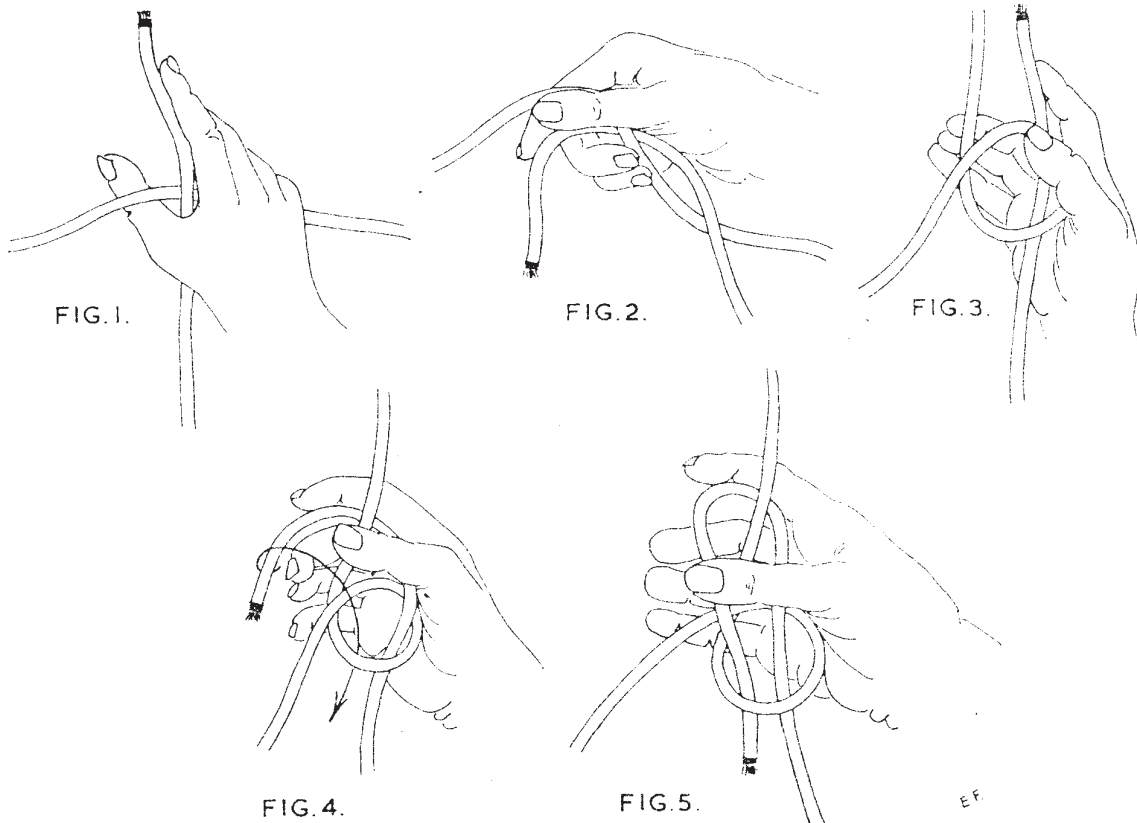
Quotation

"Little by little, as the circumstances of finance allowed, I got together my apparatus; the tackle I should need as a professional bird-catcher, and the most important, nets of every description . . . . The heaviest part of a net is the lines for drawing it over the birds. Our line was always of sisal, never a sash line or a plaited one that would stretch in use. We burned the rough fibre off the sisal, greased it well, then took it outside and pulled out what stretch there was, if any, around posts. Once so stretched and prepared, that line would never give us an anxious moment."

A POACHER'S TALE' told by A.T. Curtis; related by Fred J. Speakman; published by C. bell and Sons Ltd. (1961)

Garden Hint

passed on by <u>John CONSTABLE</u>

    This knot was demonstrated in a gardening talk on T.V. as the way to secure a vine shoot to a strainer wire. The shoot can then be progressively pulled closer to the wire over a period of some days. I can't find any previous trace of it . . . . . but it's ideal for the purpose.

Shoot

Strainer wire

<u>Running Slip Knot</u>

JC June '86
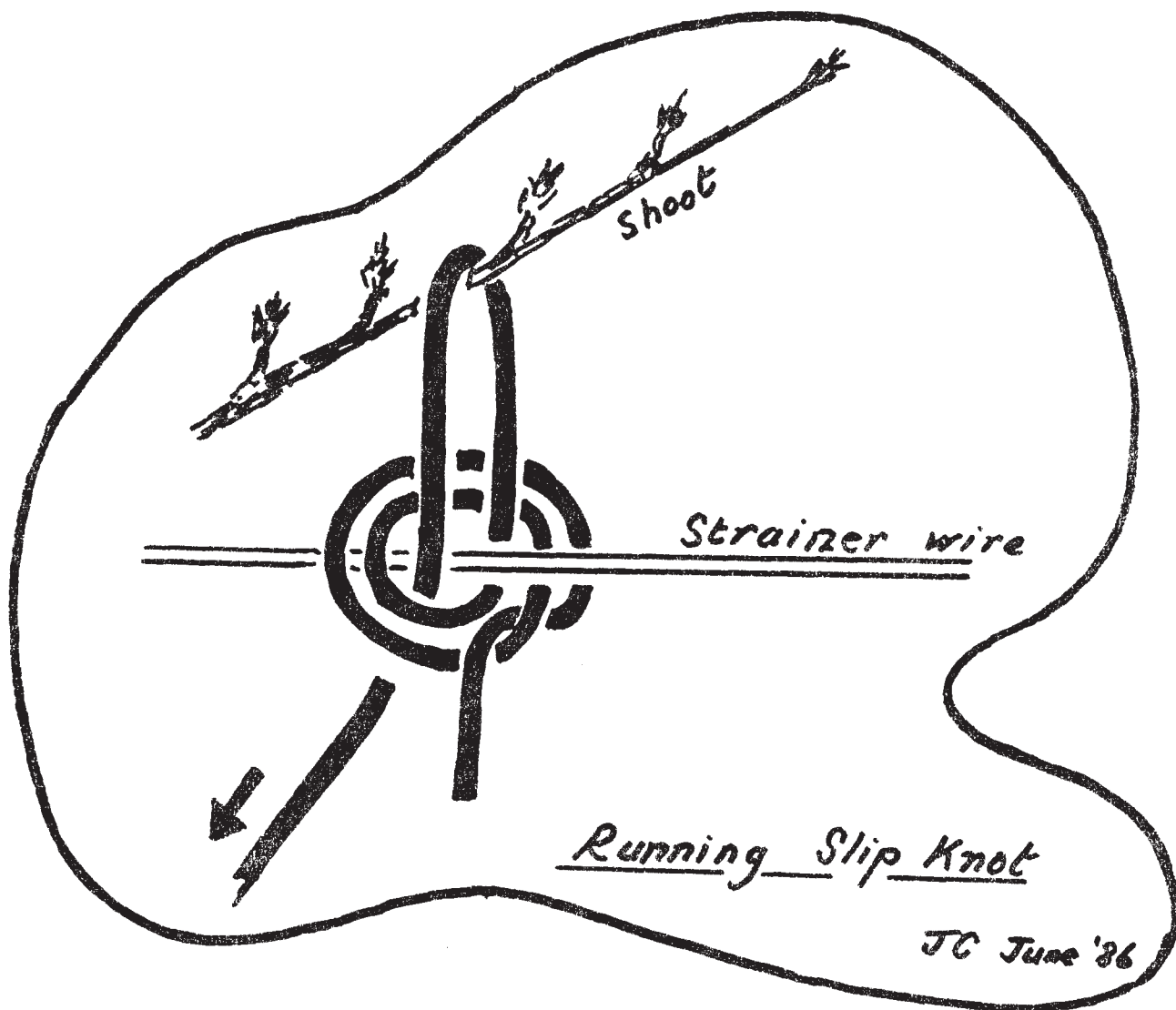
Quotation

"Her hair, a very dark red colour of great lustre, appeared to have been left suddenly while being woven into a knotted structure on the top of her head."

'TITUS GROAN' by Mervyn Peake, published by Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd. (1946)

The Age of String
by Cy Canute

'When the archaeologist finds a flint axe-head, we all know it must once have had a wooden handle and that the two bits were lashed together with string. As wood and cordage rot away to nothing, we call the era of remaining relics "the Stone Age".   It could just as fairly be named the Age or Wood . . . . . or STRING!

That's how the scholarly American knotsman, Cyrus Lawrence Day, reasoned in 1967*   "String implies knots," he wrote, "and knots must therefore be one of man's oldest tools. Just how old, it is impossible to say for string is perishable and archaeological evidence, as a consequence, is lacking."

Well, good news, Cy (my aid namesake although l'm actually a 'Cyril').A 5,000-year-old piece of string has been uncovered in a field outside Peterborough, in Cambridgeshire, England. It's 3 feet long, made of vegetable fibres, and came to light with human bones and pottery when scientists earth-moving machine - they don't dally these days, don't scientists - broke into a prehistoric crematorium.

The string and other things will eventually be displayed at the British Museum.

*QUIPUS AND WITCHES KNOTS' (The Role of the Knot in Primitive and

Ancient Cultures), by Cyrus L. Day, published by University of Kansas Press (1967).

Cartoon

THE SCOUTER
(October 1950)

LUIGI'S
SPECIAL TODAY
Spaghetti Milano

Stu

"... then three frapping turns followed by a clove-hitch on the fork...."

Answers
To Eric FRANKLIN'S quiz (last issue, page 17)

1. Alpine butterfly
2. Cat's paw
3. Crown knot
4. Granny knot
5. Middleman's knot
6. Reef knot
7. Rolling hitch
8. Sheepshank
9. Spanish bowline

10. Timber hitch
11. Sheet bend
12. Wall knot
13. Highwayman's hitch
14. Becket hitch
15. Harvester's hitch
16. Money's fist
17. Turk's head
18. Surgeon's knot

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Sansome Bend

Sasome bend
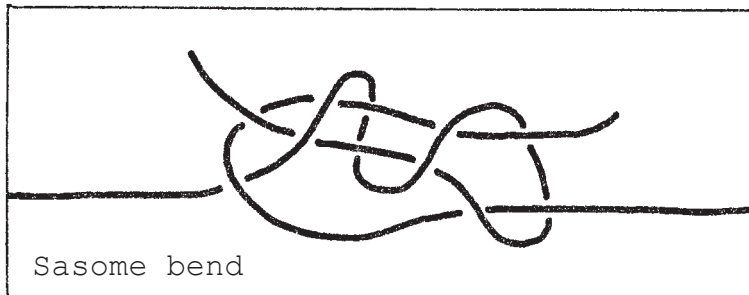
PHILIP SANSOME used this knot to join lengths of elastic, when he was a young man (around 1840-1850) in the Loughborough weaving trade. He didn't stay long, leaving in his early twenties after being "blacked" for trying to form a trade union, but survived to be ninety. His grandson Malcolm Hughes learne the knot from him and showed it to Colin Jones and Robert Jackson at the Soar Boat Club's rally near Nottingham in May 1986. So, there it is . . . . it's 'Sansome', me 'andsome!

But now, compare this Sansome Bend with the bend of unkown origin (see 'K.M.' issue No. 4, page 17) found abandoned in the Bugaboo Mountains by Canadian Rob Chisnall. Not exactly alike - but related? Looks very like it!!

Bend of unknown origin
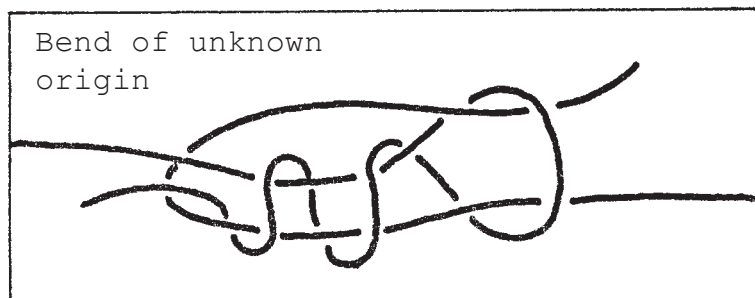
Book Reviews

'Russell's Book of USEFUL KNOTS'

by John Russell, published by Ward Lock Ltd. (1981), price £2.95p

This book is about working knots, those that you tie where and when you want them, using no tools but your hands, and cast off again when their work is done. The selection is sound, 26 reliable knots clearly described and portrayed by black & white photographs. We are not told if the muscular chap with the suntan and white beard is the author; but, as just about every shot is on board a boat or alongside, there is on implicit message (reinforced by the glossary) that knots are almost exclusively for boating types.

Tallulah Bankhead is quoted; "There is less in this than meets the eye" and certainly what research there is appears to stop with Ashley.

Still, it's a competent little work and - if the price hasn't escalated in the 5 years this book has taken to come to my notice - it would he a good buy for the spouse of any weekend sailor feeling the need to keep up with the other half.

G.B.

'The COMPLETE RIGGER Wire and rope'

by Brion Toss, published (in the U.K.) by Stanford Maritime Ltd. (1985), price £12.95p.

Brion Toss is an I.G.K.T. member who runs his own loft in Maine, U.S.A., and has rigged yachts and bigger commercial vessels. He's taught rope and wire work, done fancywork, and made industrial gear for cranes and lifts and logging.

His excellent book is enhanced by the apt, humerous drawings of Robert Shetterly, although the genial, bearded, horny-handed old rigger he portrays is nothing like the quietly charming young American author we met at the Guilds 'Extravaganza'.

Back in the U.S.A. - when originally published by International Marine - this book was titled (I believe) 'The Rigger's Apprentice'; just so, for in it Brion let's us see job after   showing and encouraging us to cope with each one in turn. We serve an apprenticeship with him the master.   All one will ever need to know of traditional marlinespike seamanship is explained to suit needs and materials. Amateur or professional, beginner and expert, there's something for all, from basic beginnings to wire splice strain test results ...even a little relevant math's and physics when it will help.

Brion 's text is delightfully punny, yet all the while teaching and taking a fresh look at techniques you thought you knew, He even reveals what worries a rigger (generally; "Did I measure it right?" "Please let it fit.") and shares the lessons he's learned which stop future fretting.

This book cannot be too highly recommended. If the only rigging you will ever do is inside your head on the living-room sofa, it's a marvellous look at a rare trade. For the determined do-it-yourselfer, it's an investment that'll pay back the first time you use it. This could be the ropework publication of the decade.

G.B.