

Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

Knotting Matters

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

President:GEOFFREY BUDWORTH

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***NOTE, your editor's telephone number
at work has changed since last issue.

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Editorial

I thought I would just have a gossip this time. Australian Len FAIRCLOUGH in Wollongong has been busy, I hear, decorating a sea-food restaurant, talking knots and rope on local T.V., and completing his Department of Labour and Industry Rigger's Theory Course with a Class One ticket (the highest grade).

A nasty little bicycle accident last December put Eric DAHLIN out of action for a while. He is now swimming his way back to fitness in nice old Santa Barbara, up the coast from Los Angeles.

Mancunian Bill SIMPSON, 73 years old, went out to Botswana last year and made a bellrope while he was there that is now prominently displayed in the Gaborone Yacht Club.

In a remote corner of Western Australia, Neil HOOD has a new typewriter! He lost the sight of an eye recently - frightening - when a blood vessel burst. Happily, he is improving by the day. He tells us there is a facsimile edition (1979) of 'Nares Seamanship 1862' by Gresham Books, Unwin Bro's Ltd., Old Woking, Surrey, England. Would one of the Surrey Branch find out if it can still be had ... and, maybe, take our orders?

Finally, Rob CHISNALL in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, is handling a lot more cases involving knots and crimes (averaging one a week) than his Mentor, Geoff BUDWORTH. He appears in court giving evidence, and is cleverly researching, writing and lecturing this nascent forensic subject.

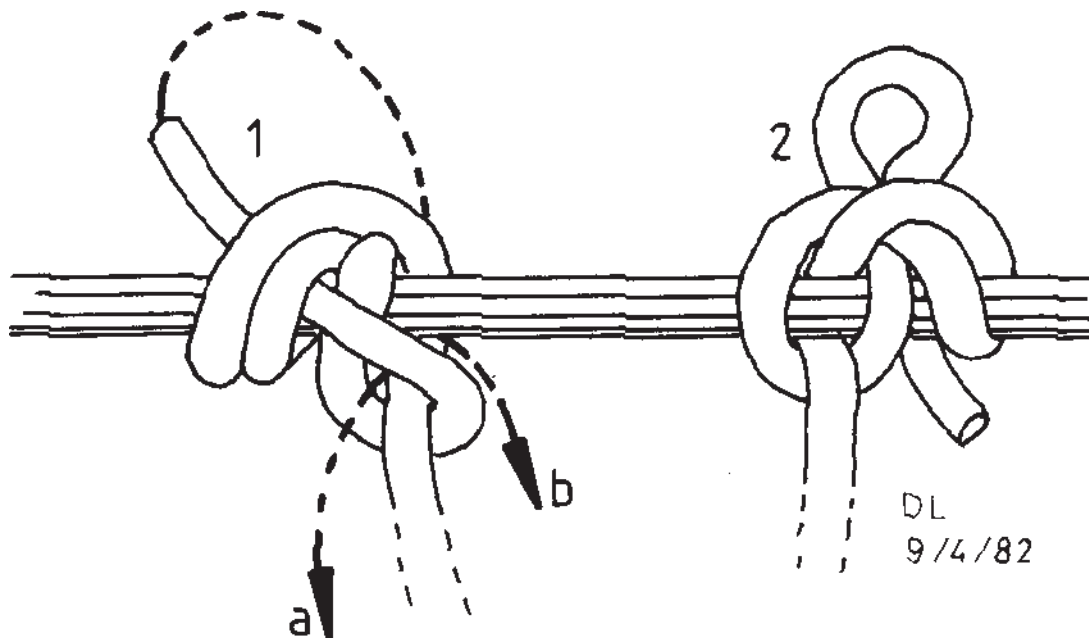
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Meet Dan Lehman of McLean, VA., U.S.A.

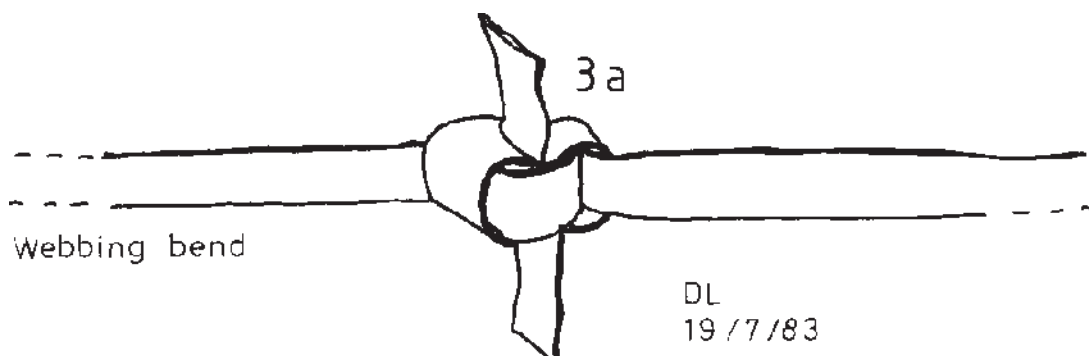
(A few of your editor's correspondents have such fertile minds, are so inventive in their knotting, that they can overwhelm one. It is sometimes difficult to know just how to feature them here in 'Knotting Matters'. Such a one is American R. Danford LEHMAN. We have been corresponding since 1984 and I have a rich store of his sketches and notes; still nothing of his has appeared in 'K.M.' ... until now. Ladies & gentlemen, meet Dan Lehman. We will be seeing more of him in future issues.)

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Figures 1 & 2 (below) are ring hitches. No. 2 is harder to tie than No. 1. Neither is secure when slack but both are easy to unite (Are these two attributes synonymous?).

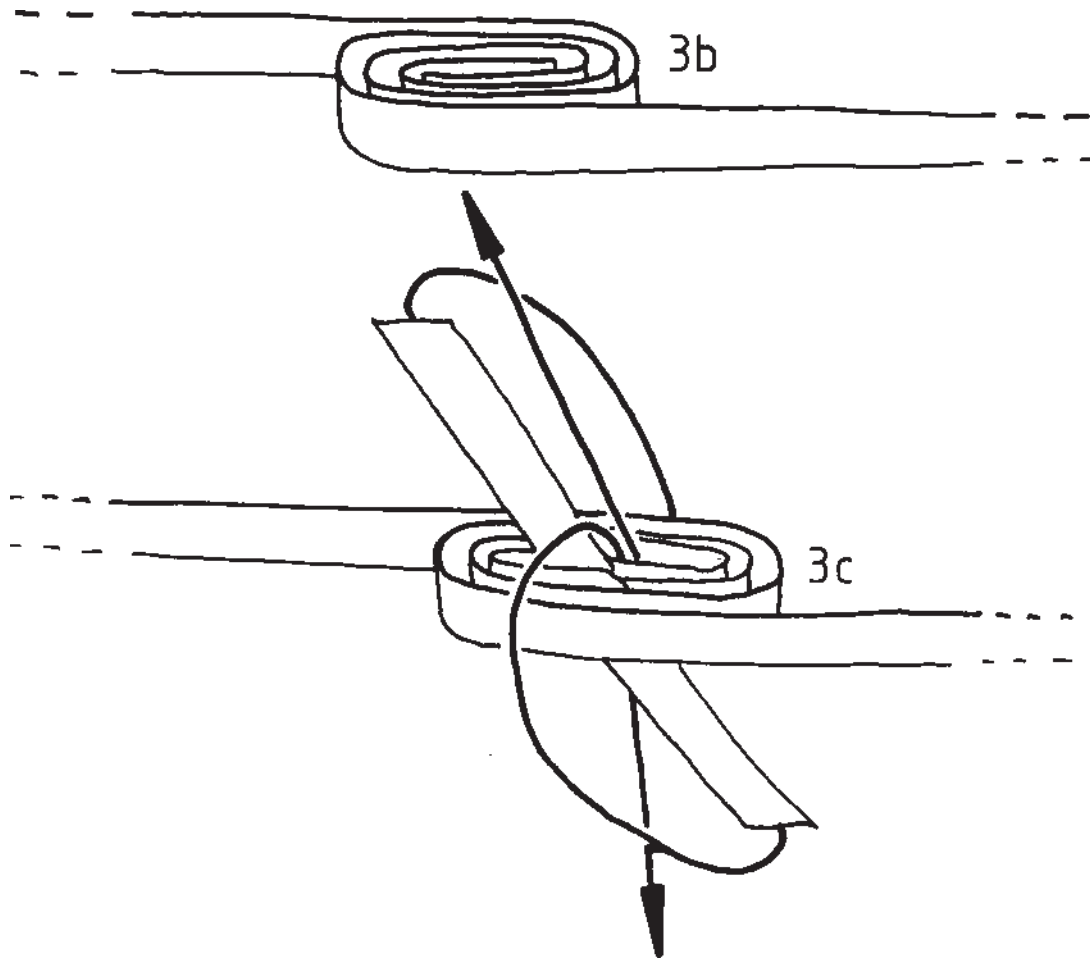


In both these hitches the diameter of the ring or spar is in effect increased. The lead in No. 1 bends gently around the 2 initial turns. This bend is further softened by being at an angle (other than a right-angle) to the foundation. No. 2 has similar advantages, the lead passing around in what almost a figure-of-eight couple of large curves.



Meet Dan Lehman (continued)

Having found a 5' length of $\frac{3}{4}$ " tubular webbing on a rock ledge, I set about producing a strong and secure bend in it. This is how it came out (Fig. 3a above).



The leads wrap flat around each other in an inward spiral (3b). The ends are twisted to exit from the spiral (3c). They go around a lead (in each case, their own) and are tucked back - up and down - through the centre of the spiral to exit again from opposite sides. This bend is naturally a candidate for climbers' use.

Nets

King John wrote to the men of Bridport, England, in 1215, pleading for increased net output. Over 600 years later, powered looms made nets at the rate of 8,000 knots a minute, but machine-made nets still had to be finished and mended by hand. Menders trained for 4 years and at the end of that time the women could work faster than the eye could follow their hands. It was said that no outsider ever learnt to work as fast as a native. In factory or outwork they carried on to a great age. In 1951 one man retired from the work aged 81.

Coiling & Kinking

by Harry ASHER

(illustrated by Phil VERNON)

A rope that is repeatedly coiled incorrectly can become badly tangled and kinked, and can even reach the extreme state where the only way to clear it is to tow it astern. I have yet to read a complete and clear account of how this trouble arises, and the following experiments have been designed to reveal the processes involved.

Experiment No. 1 - TO MAKE A PERFECT COIL

Lay out a foot or so of right-laid rope dead straight on a flat surface. With a felt pen make a straight line of marks along the top (Fig. 1), and push a nail through the end of the rope.

Hold the rope firmly with the left hand at the nail end, and, with the right hand at the free end, apply one 360° rotation with the lay (clockwise). The applied twist will loosen the lay, and the line of marks now makes one complete spiral turn. Next, while keeping the nail upright, slowly bring the two hands together. Although you did not deliberately make a turn, you will in fact have produced one.

Now examine the marked line once more and note - possibly to your surprise - that it no longer forms a spiral but lies accurately on the circumference of a circle. The two separate actions, the twist and the approach of the hands, have combined to reproduce the simple curl of an elephant's trunk coiled to put food into the mouth.

The conclusion sounds contradictory: for the coil to be un-twisted, one full 360° twist with-the lay must be applied for every turn would on.

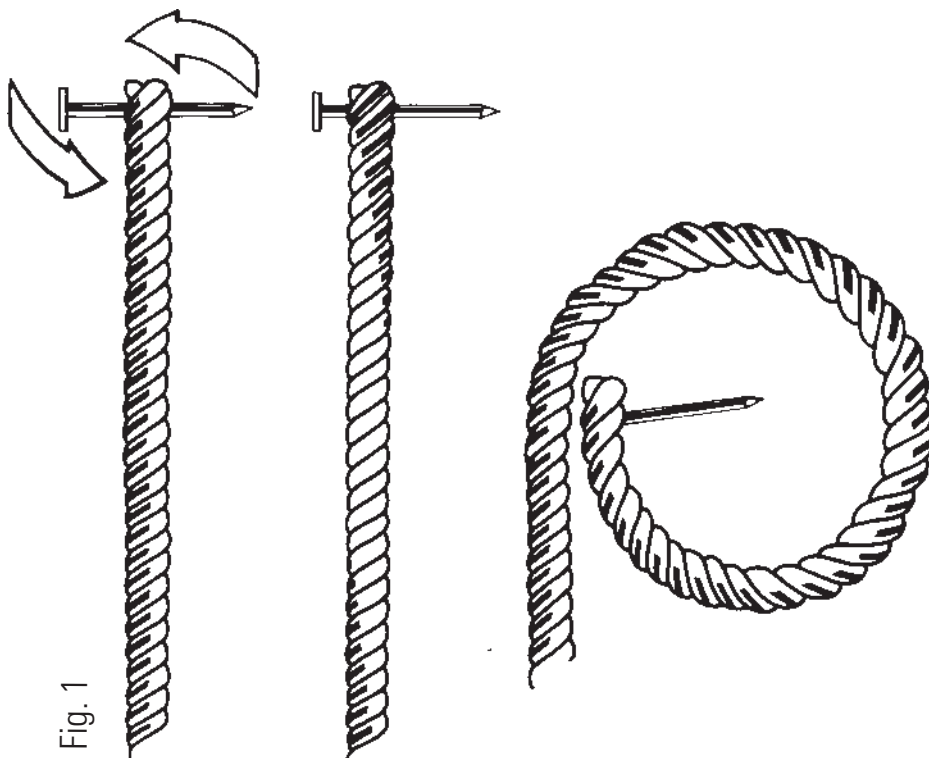


Fig. 1

Coiling & Kinking (continued)

Experiment No. 2 - THE PERFECT COIL YIELDS TWISTED ROPE

Starting from the position reached at the end of Experiment No. 1, separate the two hands to straighten the rope. From what we now know it is no surprise to find that the spiral has been reformed, and all the original twist has been restored.

Trivial though this experiment may seem, it does demonstrate that a perfect coil made to contain no twists would prove far from perfect in use, and would produce one 360° twist for every turn run out from it.

Experiment No. 3 - THE TWISTED COIL YIELDS PERFECT ROPE

Starting with the rope straight, while keeping the nail upright, try to make a single small clockwise turn. The rope resists strongly and must be forced. Notice that the lay has been tightened, and, although the nail did not rotate or deviate from its vertical setting, the dots now once more form one complete spiral turn.

Still keep the nail vertical, pull the rope out straight, and notice that no trace of twist remains. For rope to come off untwisted there must be one 360° twist per turn in the coil!

THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM

It is clear that there must be twists somewhere, either one per turn in the coil and none in the rope run out from it; or none in the coil and one per turn in the rope run out from it; or a compromise with a smaller amount in each.

At first it would seem that to live with this problem all we have to do is to make the coils sufficiently large, because with coils of the normal size of a metre or so in diameter the effects produced by the experiments above are so small as to be quite hard to demonstrate. Why then is there ever a serious practical problem? The explanation must be that if one combined coiling and uncoiling can leave a small residual twist, frequent repetitions will produce a cumulative effect which can leave a rope in a sorry state. When a rope is coiled it is usual to apply a certain amount of deliberate twist to each turn put on. However there is no calculated action to remove this twist when rope is taken from the coil, and the extent to which twist will be removed will depend upon the use to which the rope is put.

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American Scene by Fred BROWNE

(The "Anglo-American Knot Fair '89" is now to be held in 1990, the I.G.K.T. committee being unsure that the U.S. side of things could be arranged in the time otherwise remaining to us.)

I have good news and bad news. Bad news first. It is my considered opinion that a knot tying exhibition held in Boston would

New hangman's noose wanted

A HANGMAN'S noose that hung for centuries outside the Chequers Inn, Tonbridge, disappeared in last year's great storm and now the licensees are hunting for a new one.

The grisly relic of a bygone justice system had been fully functional in its time and in later years remained as a feature of local history.

High winds on October 16 last year blew it off the gibbet that is built into the pub's outside wall. Now the licensees are trying to find out the name of the company that traditionally made the robust rope nooses so the feature can be restored.

Mrs Maureen Evans, who runs the pub with her husband, said a framed letter from the company that had hung inside the pub was stolen some years ago and she cannot remember the name.

Mrs Evans said: "The noose had been used in the past and I gather there's always been one out

there. Apparently a room upstairs was used by circuit judges, and the noose is where you ended up if you weren't careful. There were also stocks and whipping posts out there.

"The noose used to upset some people, so we weren't sure whether to replace it or not. We never really thought about it," she said.

But now Tonbridge residents are questioning the noose's disappearance, Mr and Mrs Evans are on the look out for a new one.

"We haven't got a clue what happened to the company - we don't know who it was. When we first came here there was a framed letter from them which was stolen. The noose itself was blown away and I assume it landed in someone's garden," said Mrs Evans.

While no noose is bad news for the Chequers Inn, any good news of a manufacturer would be welcomed.

NEWS - CUTTING
from the Kent and
Sussex 'Courier',
Friday, Sept. 16, 1988

American Scene (continued)

be a dismal failure. Practically nobody would attend. It would be worse ("super-dismal"?) in a city such as Chicago. Since the I.G.K.T. does not have tens of thousands to squander (like the current competition promoting by means of T.V. and radio ad's a 'Ramesses the Great' exhibition at Boston's Museum of Science), I cannot support the plan for a 5-day exhibition in the U.S.A. in 1989.

Back in 1982, you will recall, there was talk of filling a ship in London with knots for a proposed 1983 show. I made what may well be two of the world's largest manrope knots for the occasion, the rope being 3" diameter manila. When that show did not come to pass, I decided to carry my manrope knots, and other knots too, around with me as I walked the Boston area. By January 1988 I had walked over 7,500 miles through the streets of Cambridge, Boston, etc. with ropes and knots draped over my shoulders. My goal was to let any potential knot tyers know beyond doubt that a fellow knot tyer was available.

American Scene (continued)

Hundreds of people commented about my knots but not even one ever asked me about learning to tie knots himself. In 5 years (and tens of thousands of spectators), not a single desire to learn to tie knots. I made a point of walking right onto the campus of Harvard University and near Massachusetts Institute of Technology ... but absolutely nobody wanted to learn more about knots.

Back last March I decided that carrying a sign around might help round up some knot tyers. I had a nice one made for me ('International Guild of Knot Tyers, London, England') (it cost \$180.00) and took delivery of it on May 7, 1988. On May 8th. I went down to Boston Harbour to take some pictures with the sign so that you could see it. Even 15 years ago many freighters tied up at Commonwealth Pier. Today only the Q.E.2 was at the pier, chartered by a company sponsoring a computer show. I doubt if the subject of knots came up. The adjacent railroad has been left to rot. Nearby, Logan Airport's control tower is now a restaurant.

Boston once surpassed New York in maritime matters. The harbour is now a ghost. The U.S. Navy base at Charlestown closed years ago and the ropewalk was scrapped. Incidentally, New Bedford, Massachusetts, once a great whaling port (and home of Clifford Ashley) has luxury hotels and residences creeping in on the harbour there, and at Gloucester too.

For many years, James Bliss Marine Supply House was on Atlantic Avenue, right on the Boston Harbour. I often bought rope and other supplies at Bliss. Alas, Bliss was torn down and a luxury resident and hotel is on the site. One of the oldest historic wharfs, Rowes Wharf, Boston, is now just a place for wealthy people who are not likely to care much about knots.

Now for the good news! Back in 1985 you published ('K.M.' issue No. 13, page 4) some material I sent you about knot DNA. I have been randomly sending copies of the electron micrograph to various people who might have an interest in knots. Now it seems that Professor Dobkin of Princeton University has established contact with the molecular biologists Cozzarelli and Wasserman. After decades of negligible interest, the scientific world is paying very serious attention to knots. Once a few Nobel prize winners speak well of the need to study and preserve knotting lore, it should be far easier to raise funds. I have been looking for a wealthy benefactor for 5 years to finance a knot museum somewhere in the U.S.A. ('K.M.' No. 11, p. 15) and I sent a letter to every American I.G.K.T. member asking for suggestions to find wealthy people to sponsor knot tying projects. Only one person answered. He said he had no money to give, but wished me well. Once a little more work has been done by the leading topologists (Dobkins, Millett, Lickorish and the like) I think it would be appropriate to put together a brief appeal and mail it to many of the people listed by Forbes Magazine in their annual publication, 'The 500 Richest People in the World'.

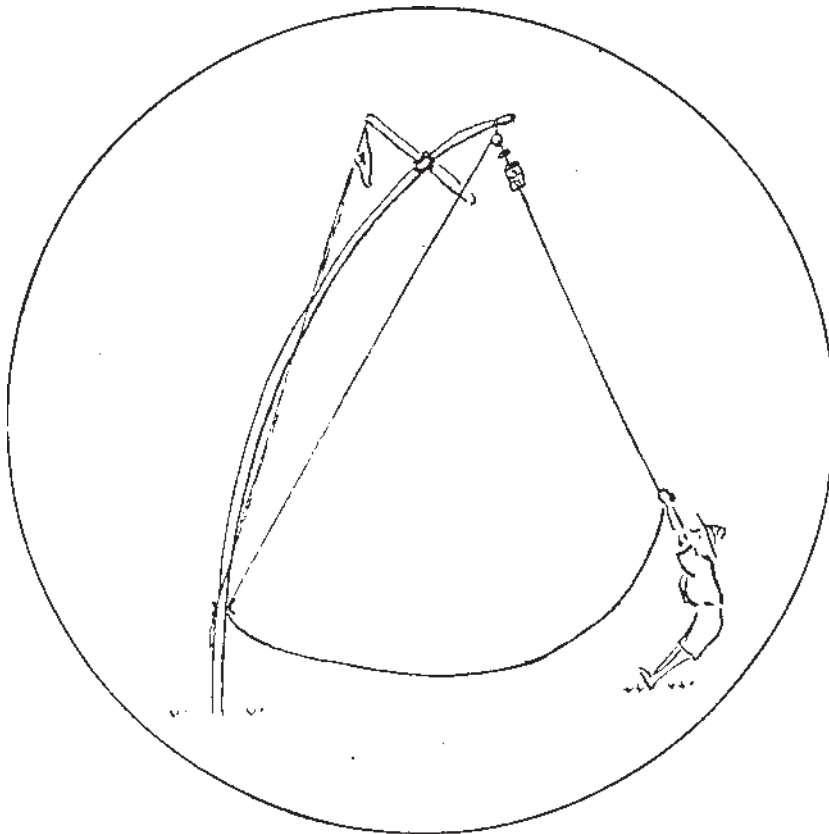
In America, the National Science Foundation, a body composed of prominent scientists, advises President Reagan and congressional leaders on the scientific aspects of budgets and policy proposals.

American scene (continued)

There must be something similar in England and other countries. In a few years, with the backing of national governments, I believe the Guild will be able to build several knot museums.

Meantime, have the young people in England gone "hog wild" about computers, as here in America they have been computer fanatics for some 10 years now? Fortunately computers are proving to have a deep involvement with knots and that is most important if we hope to reach young people here (and presumably elsewhere). Since the Guild now has many knots from Ashley's book, plus all the knot lore in the pages of Knotting Matters, I suggest a 30-60 minute presentation be prepared on videotape. Copies could be sent to Guild members in remote places. The B.B.C. might agree to air it on a non-profit basis; and I believe that if a member in (say) Boise, Idaho, walked into a local T.V. station with a complete presentation ready to go, the station might air it as a public service. At any rate, 10 hours tying knots seems far less useful than 10 hours meeting with TV officials to show an I.G.K.T. presentation. I, personally, would be happy to visit TV stations in the Boston area and try to persuade their executives to show our stuff. So, first things first, let's get such a presentation together.

Cartoon



From 'SCOUTER', August 1954

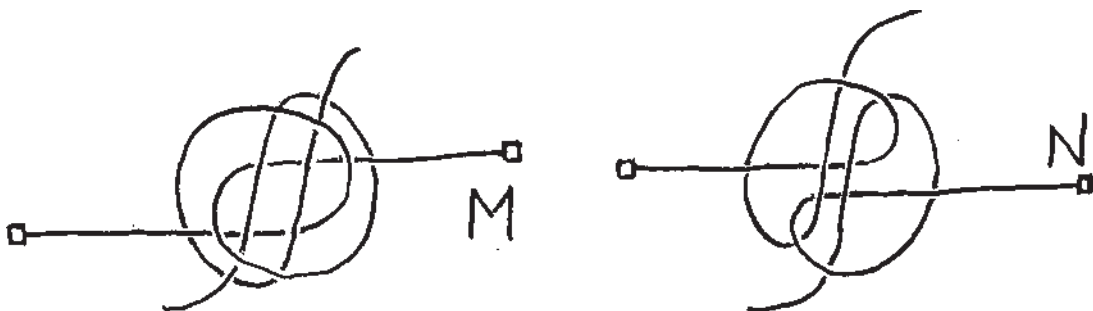
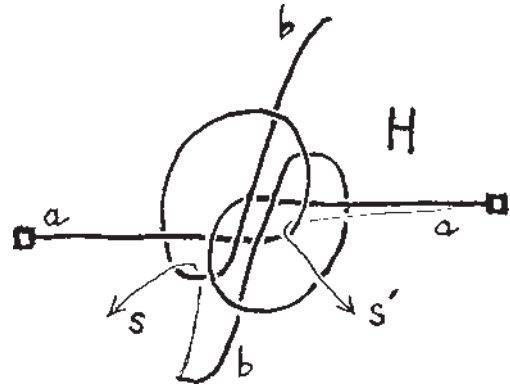
Annex to Hunter's Shunts

PART II

SHUNTING EXPLAINED

by Desmond MANDEVILLE

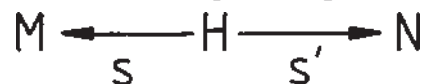
A feature of Dr. Hunter's Bend H (illustrated, right) is that the ends emerge parallel and opposed. This is true both of the standing ends (the "STANDS" a-a) and the working ends (the "WENDS" b-b). But the order in which they do so is important. Seen from above, as here, both pairs of emerging ends follow the drive-on-the-left rule. Threaded differently they would, of course, constitute different bends. Just cause the "wends" (for instance) to change sides on emerging from the bend - to drive on the right, as it were - and you get the Matthew Walker Bend M; or let the "stands" change sides, and we have the Neat & New Bend N. The three are shown diagrammatically, proving their close links with each other. When properly drawn up in cordage, the resemblance is rather less.



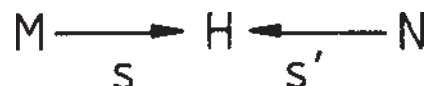
Changing sides, for ends that emerge parallel and opposed, is called "SHUNTING". To shunt the WENDS of Hunter's Bend it might seem to be necessary to withdraw one of them and then insert it afresh, on the other side. This is not so. We only need to tuck one wend up through the adjacent loop of the other wend lead (this is shown at s in the top illustration). Then, if the strands of the knot are loosened slightly, the wend leads will readily change sides and we get Bend M.

A very similar operation can be undertaken with the STANDS (shown at s' in the top illustration). Shunting the stands of Hunter's Bend thus, one gets - as expected - Bend N.

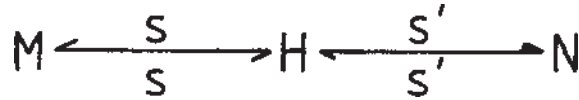
What we have done so far may be represented in symbols:-



These operations may, however, very readily be reversed ... the wends (or stands, as the case may be) can change sides once more, in each case yielding Bend H again: symbolically:-



These two statements may be put together:-



(Here the symbols s-s' above the line relate to the arrow barbs shown above the line, i.e. those proceeding from H outwards. The same symbols below the line relate to the arrow barbs below the line.)

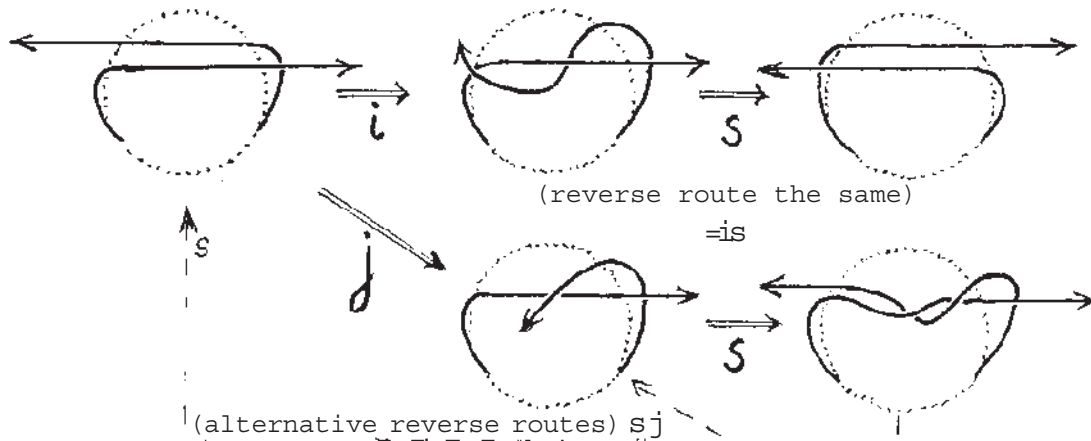
It most often happens that the tucks needed for transforming one bend into another, and those for reversing this change, are quite different, and so must be written down separately. Here in fact we have the simplest possible case.

I-Shunts and J-Shunts

Shunting the wends of Hunter's Bend was effected in the preceding section by bringing one wend UP through the adjacent loop of the other. This description may cause confusion, however, since it depends on the knot being oriented in a particular way. More generally expressed, it is the action of bringing one wend through the adjacent loop of the other wend lead on the inside (of the bend). So it is an "Insider-Shunt" or "I-Shunt", and the related symbols are is for wends and is' for stands. These symbols should therefore take the place of the simple s and s' used hitherto.

The opposite operation on Bend H would be to bring a wend DOWN through the adjacent loop of its fellow (or rival) wend lead. To do this, it must first jut out and jump over its rival before it can reach the loop to pass through it. It is thus a "Jut/Jump-Shunt" or "J-Shunt". The symbols are js for wends and js' for stands.

Both forms of shunt are illustrated below for a single pair of ends. (The margin of the bend to which they belong is shown by a dotted circle.)



The effect of an I-Shunt is that the ends change sides within the bend. That of a J-Shunt, on the other hand, is that the end leads engage in a half-knot (also within the bend). Furthermore, whereas an I-Shunt may be reversed by another I-Shunt, a J-Shunt followed by another J-Shunt just gives twice the twist to the half-knot!

To reverse a J-Shunt, and so restore the original parallel-and-opposed alignment of the ends, all that is needed is to withdraw one end (it does not matter which) from the half-knot; and symbols for this are simply s for wends and s' for stands.

(NOTE - s is defined (see K.M. No. 19, page 16) as meaning "re-tuck a wend to other side of rival lead". It includes untucking, but from that lead only.)

There are also occasions when one wishes to un-tuck a J-Shunt and NOT to restore the original alignment, but - rather - to leave the un-tucked end still jutting out jumping over its rival preparatory to some further move. An example is the move M-to-F shown on the left of the Hunter's Shunt triangle (see K.M. No. 24, page 12). The symbols for doing so are sj for wends and sj' for stands.

The reader who has mastered both types of shunt, the I-Shunt and the J-Shunt, and how to reverse them, may care to tackle two questions:-

1. Does it make a difference which of the two wends or stands you choose to work from?
2. Two I-Shunts in succession return you to the starting point. What happens if you attempt two I-Shunts simultaneously, working from both opposing ends at once?

Rope Tent of Archaos

visited by
THE EDITOR

For a fortnight this August, England's London South Bank Festival Gardens was the site of "new circus"; a new generation, more akin to street entertainers, who use live pop music and special effects to revolutionise what goes on in the tented ring.

I went to see the phenomenal French troupe Archaos who perform inside, outside, and on the surface of, a specially created "tent" of white rope. In fact, it is a hemispherical rope domed network which mirrors the construction of the canvas big top but is constructed inside its walls and separated from it by a gap of a few metres. 40 radial 3-strand ropes spread out from a big ring at the highest point, angling around and down to be anchored at ground level. 10 concentric circles of rope cross these spokes at right-angles, simply seized to them (it seemed to me). The result is a grid, something like a spider's web, of 400 x 1.5 metre truncated pyramidal quadrilaterals. Other 4-strand climbing ropes, trapezes and rope swings complicated this rig.

The 32-strong group of performers, when not on the ground, swarm up and over this "Chapiteau de Cordes" (rope tent), attacking their dare-devilry dressed and equipped like characters from Mad Max films. A violinist is lowered head-first from the heights on a rope tied to his ankles. He is attacked by a man armed with a chain saw, who - when he rev's the tool - is yanked at breakneck speed up to the tent top. A girl stilt-walker, like some long-legged insect, suffers the same fate, to be snarled in the highest rigging. One acrobat dives head first at the ground on the end of elastic ropes. Another even drives a motor-bike vertically downwards, unreeling a sheath-&-core rope (Kevlar?) off the back wheel, stopping abruptly with his face only inches from the hard ground.

Quite a few knots joined bits and pieces of this rigging, many looking like double and treble Sheet Bends; Back Splices abounded, with the tucked ends cut off long and frayed; but more than this I could not analyse from my seat amid the audience. The show was played to a packed and enthusiastic crowd. They even stood filling the aisles. It is frenetic, noisy, thrilling, rough and aggressive, dynamic, nerve-jangling ... but a triumph in its way. If you think you can cope with it, you must track down Archaos and go see for yourself their Chapiteau de Cordes.

Diary Dates

Organisers of Guild knotting displays or demonstrations or other gatherings, no matter how small or modest the meeting planned, please send our devoted Hon. Secretary a written note of the date, time and place. He can include it in any diary of coming events he distributes: also, answer the occasional member who says; "I shall be here (or there) on such-&-such a day. Has the Guild anything happening in the vicinity that I could drop in on?" So, do keep him posted if you can.

ANGLO-AMERICAN KNOT FAIR This ambitious project is going ahead as previously notified, except that THE YEAR WILL NOW BE 1990. All concerned need the extra 12 months. The time will slip by soon enough and we will call upon all willing hands for help in due course.

A Look Ahead with Cy CANUTE

We humble Guild members should be aware that April 1989's annual general meeting will see the departure of several stalwart and long-serving officers who must be replaced promptly.

Our excellent Asst. Hon. Sec. (Supplies) Ivy BLANDFORD can no longer continue to serve us as "shopkeeper"; and I do not suppose that Percy BLANDFORD will then seek re-election. The Hon. Treasurer Robert JACKSON has asked to be released from his post. Geoffrey BUDWORTH (whose 2-year term as Guild President ends with the A.G.M.) wishes to step out of his roles as Hon. Archivist, Publicity Officer and Editor. He has cautioned us for years that it was unsound to have all 3 posts occupied by one person; and he now wishes to pursue his own knotting researches and writings. It occurs to me that he - alone - has never once had the pleasure of opening a new issue of Knotting Matters to see what goodies it contains! I believe that our hard-working Hon. Secretary Frank HARRIS may also like someone to take over from him too.

Fair enough. All these individuals have given us their leisure hours and energies since the Guild was formed in 1982. It really is someone else's turn. We value them, of course, but there is not one job which could not be done as well or better by a newcomer.

Candidates for election to the vacant offices need-not come from within the United Kingdom. Why not have the newsletter put together in another country? (Although, it seems to me, it should still be written in English to reach most readers.)

Anyway, here is a chance for the Guild to take another goodly step forward. Candidates for election should, whether or not they can find proposers and seconders at this stage, write to the Hon. Secretary and let him know what posts they fancy they could fill.

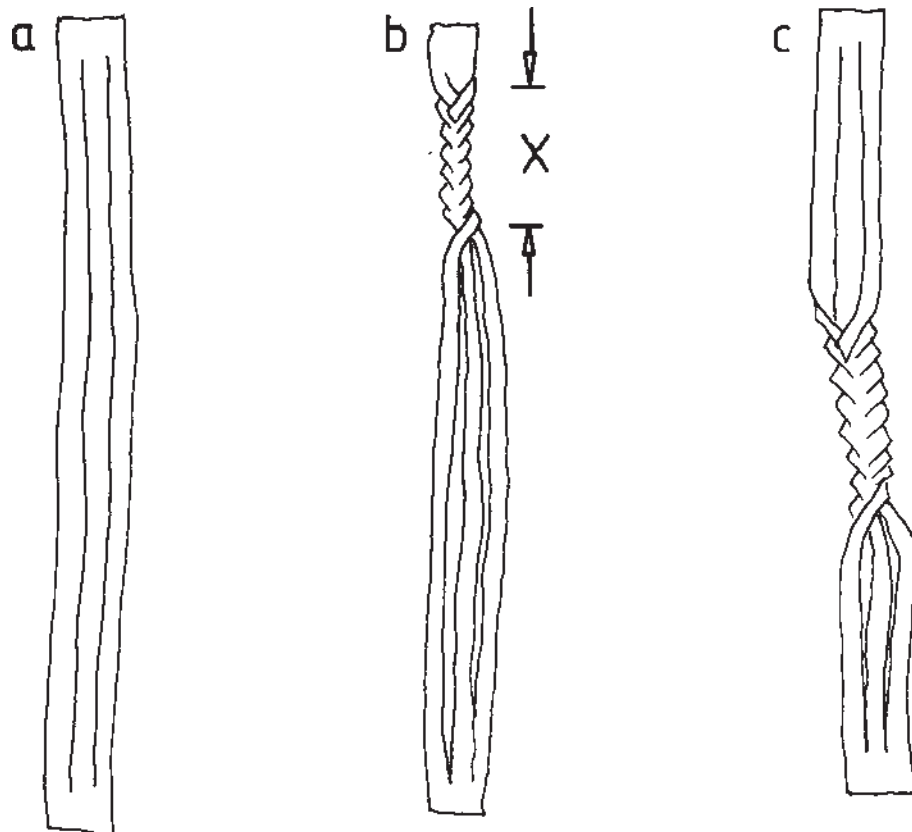
Impossible Loop

from
Walter NORTON, M.D.
Leesville, U.S.A.

Most braiders can do an inside or "secret" braid very easily (as illustrated by Ashley # 2954). I have seen it used in many places; however, I have never seen it done with the handloop in place ... which is strange because it is so logical.

To understand the procedure one must be able to do an inside braid. Braiders very rapidly see how it is done, and it makes a good puzzle for Boy Scouts once they have learnt the braid. I sent a copy of my poor illustrations to Ron Edwards in Australia and he was nice enough to draw it for the whipmakers' journal there.

A question might be asked about this joining is it a knot or is it a splice? Anyway, it makes a good dog leash.



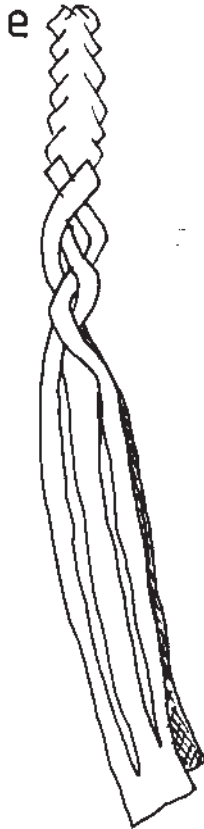
(b)...Plait 3 or more cycles (as at 'X' above).

(c)...Work the braided portion to the center of the item.

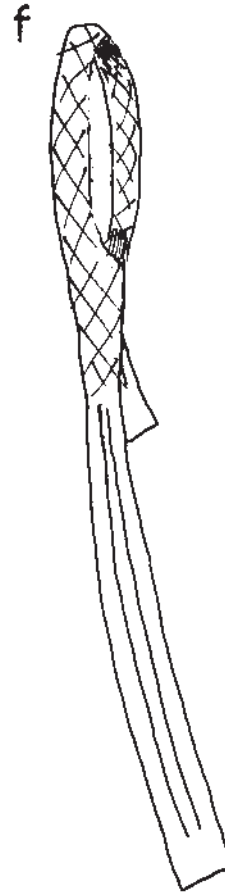
"Impossible" Loop (continued)



(d)...Fold and carefully approximate the unbraided strands.



(e)...Braid 1 cycle.



(f)...Work the back end up tight, then complete braiding to the end.

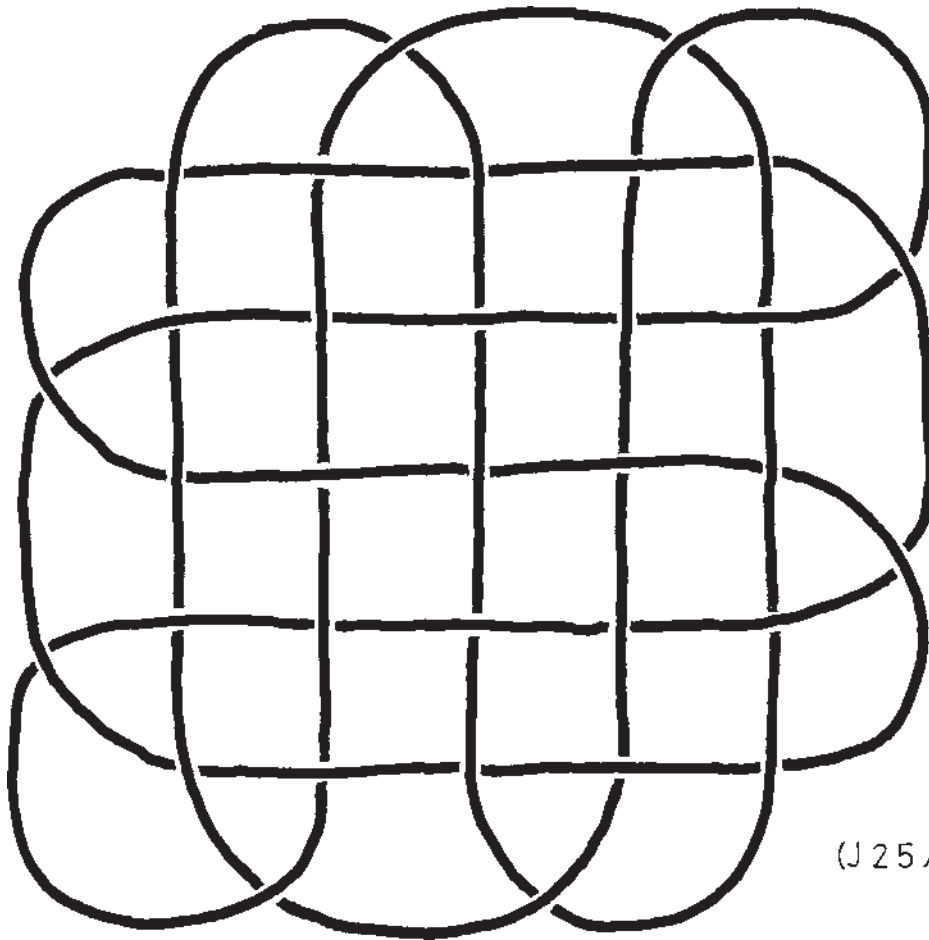
You can easily make the handloop larger by braiding more cycles. It can also be given a half-twist to fit the wrist better. The same basic procedure can be used to make a smaller loop in the end for fastening to a clip or loop. This can be done in any of the numerous inside or "secret" braids.

Tingara Mats

from Charles H.S. THOMASON
of Queensland, Australia

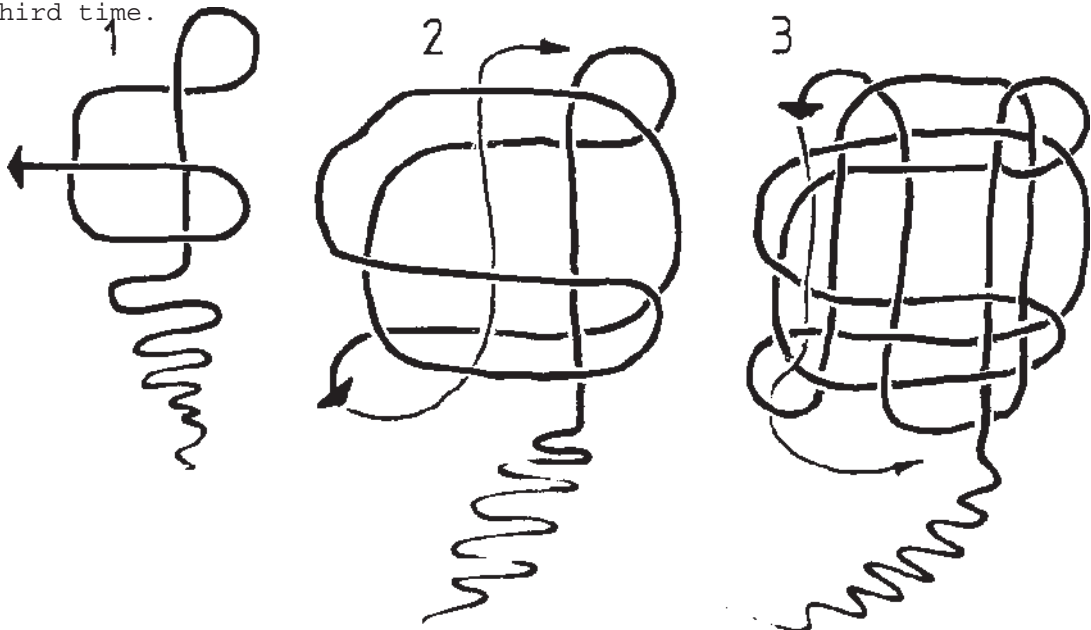
I have been meaning for some time to lay claim to the privilege of naming 2 mat designs, both of which - so far as I can determine - are not in Ashley. The square design (which appears in this issue of 'K.M.') was, and I hope still is, the standard square mat formed by the old hands in the Royal Australian Navy who encouraged me in my younger days. They were from H.M.A.S. 'TINGIRA', the training hulk moored in Rose Bay, Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour). So I would like to name this design, with its capability for expansion to larger sizes, "TINGIRA". They were made from old rope. The old Chiefs rejected synthetic line. But old natural fibre rope was scarce even when I left the Service in 1964, so, unless old examples have been preserved, they would all have rotted away.

1-CROSSING 'TINGIRA'



(J25/DR)

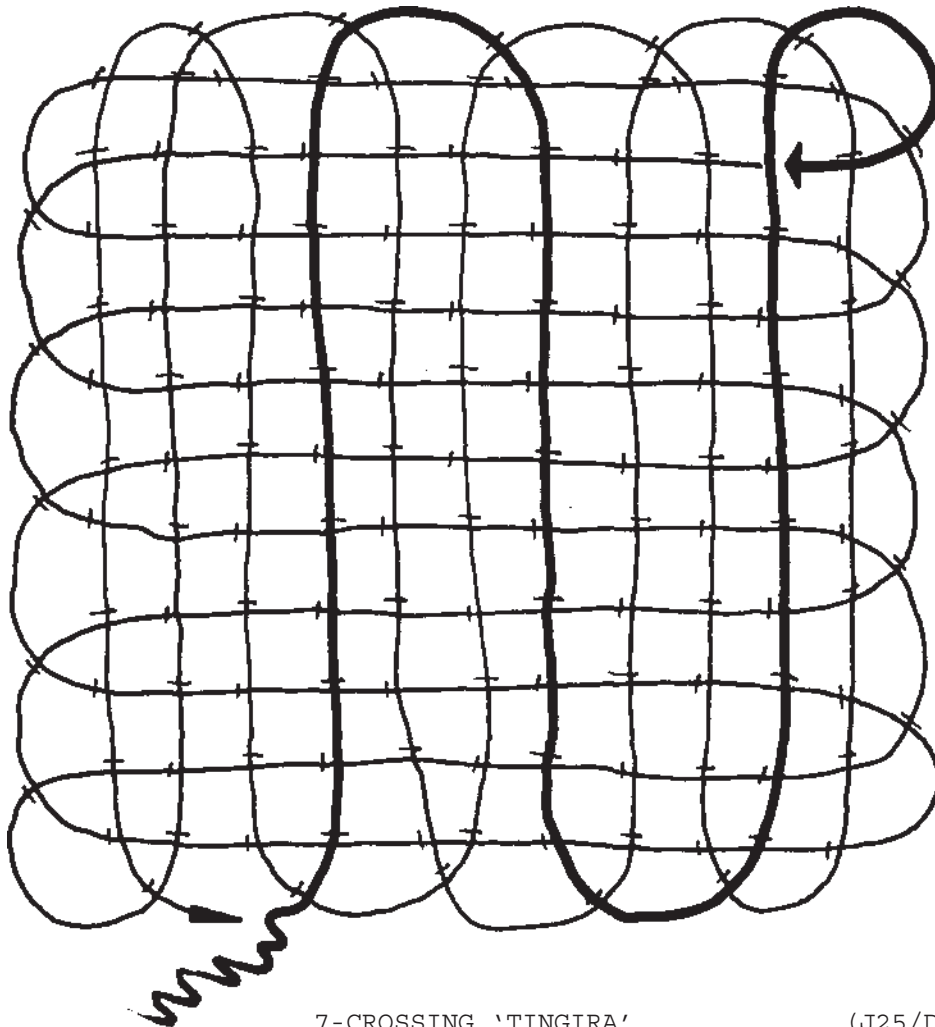
One crossing makes a nice square mat with rope 3" upwards, but 3-4" followed around 3 times would produce the best result for the effort. I always form the initial bight on the right, then reverse direction to the left with sweeping bights. This allows you to have any length of line spare which takes no further part in forming the shape of the mat, but is there for following around a second and third time.



'TINGIRA' MATS continued

The prolong knot (Ashley's #2242) with its simple principle of expansion had always fascinated me. We Cadet Midshipmen at the R.A.N. College tied prolong knots in codline. The old Chief in the College Boat Shed used to intrigue us with his ropework, most of which went over our heads, but the prolong knot we could tie and retie in our own time. I believe the fascination of being only limited by the length of the line took hold then. It has been with me ever since. I attribute my love of knotwork to the prolong knot.

The 'TINGIRA' square mat is similar to Ashley's #2274, but he quite rightly says that 2274 does not appear suited to any enlargement. I persevered with the Tingira basic design until I came up with the 7-crossing design. This then allowed progression to the 13-crossing mat. I do not claim the design of this principle of progression: it was a rediscovery of something which I believe was general knowledge among old hands.



The 7-crossing Tingira, you will see, has an additional up-&-down in the laying out from start to initial underhand loop. The 13-crossing Tingira has another up-&-down.

(IN THE NEXT ISSUE- A RECTANGULAR SHAPED MAT DESIGN)

Book Reviews

L'ALBUM DES NOEUDS by George MENDOZA ISBN 2.215.01095.9
with illustrations by Jean-Paul COLBUS
published by Editions Fleurus (Paris), 1988. Price: 85 Francs

This beautiful slim hard-cover book is perhaps more for the coffee table than the workroom. Still it conveys the simple appeal of knots in use, while showing you clearly how to tie them, by means of superb colour drawings. Anyone would be pleased to own a copy but it is a trifle pricey for youngsters to buy themselves.

The selection of knots is good and original, mixing common ones with others not used so much. Here is a Sheet Bend (Noeud D'Ecoute Simple) and a Turk's Head (Bonnet Turc); a Round Turn & 2 Half-Hitches (Noeud de Tube and a Diamond Hitch ("Français" = Diamond Hitch); a Square Knot (Noeud Chinois) with a Transom Knot (Noeud de Traverse), Ashley's #1693 (Amarre D'Escarpolette), Jar Sling (Courroie de Gourde) and Ashley's #1687 (Amarrage Fantaisie). They are grouped for use by carpenters, cowboys, farmers and foresters, musicians, policemen, sailors, shopkeepers, and so on.

Oh, yes ... and it s all in French. G.B.

WILL ROGER'S ROPE TRICKS by Frank DEAN
published by The Western Horseman (Colorado, U.S.A.), 1969
Still available Price: \$3.00

In this remarkably low-priced collector's item we are shown how cowboys managed the twirling lariat loops they did. The book, a soft-covered 52 pages, is rich in old photo's of legendary fancy rope performers and especially stills from a mid-1920s film 'The Roping Fool' by 20th. Century starring the cowboy comedian/philosopher Will Rogers. There are amazing shots of Will hopping in and out of 2 loops he is spinning simultaneously; lassoing rider-&-horse at full gallop while he stands and throws 3 separate ropes at once; actually lassoing a fleeing mouse with a miniature string lasso; and other nigh impossible feats ... all caught by the camera.

I doubt if a beginner could start rope spinning from the diagrams also included in this book ... but who cares. For an inspiring glimpse at what the old-timers could do, I know of no other book to equal it.

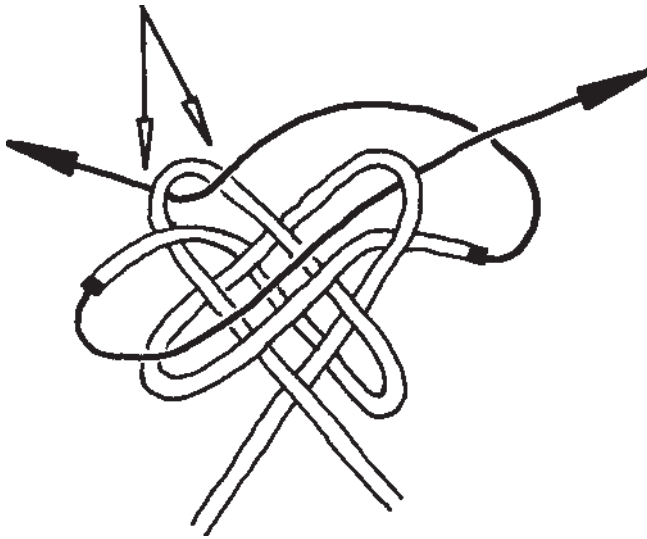
G.B.

Quotation

"Every Russian knows that if you see a queue you join first and ask what is on sale. Men and women carry string bags because they might spot a queue.

'INSIDE RUSSIA' by Trevor Fishlock, reported in the Daily Telegraph newspaper, Aug 8, 1988.

Correction



'K.M.' issue No. 24, page 7, fig. 1b, has one over/under sequence wrongly shown. Owen Nuttall's correction is alongside here.

More Nuttall Knots

from
Owen K. NUTTALL

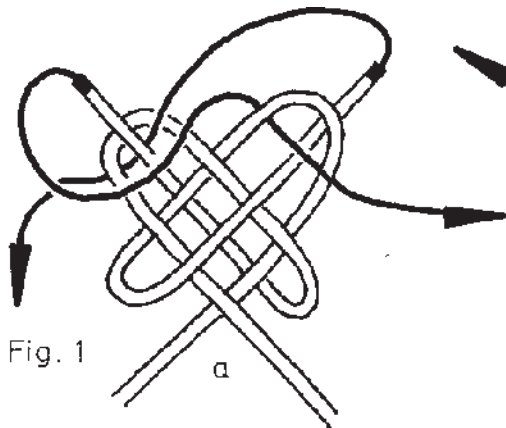


Fig. 1

a

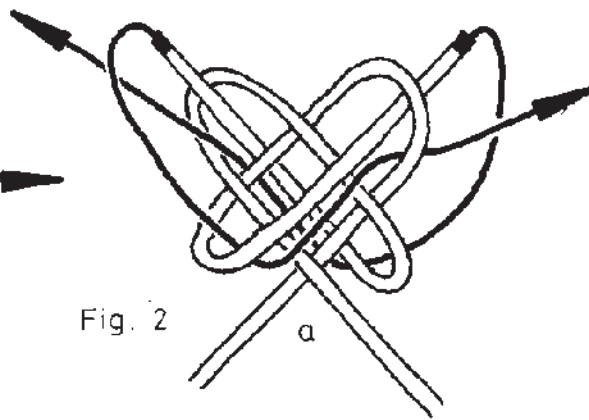
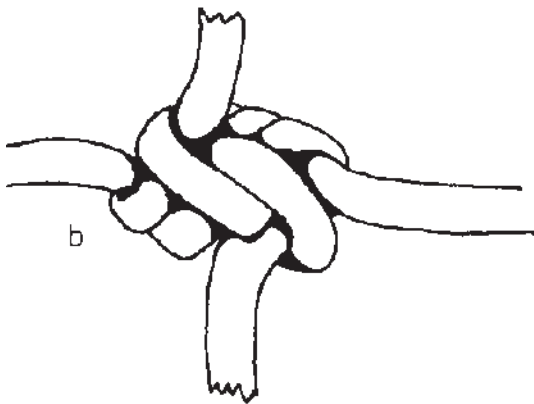


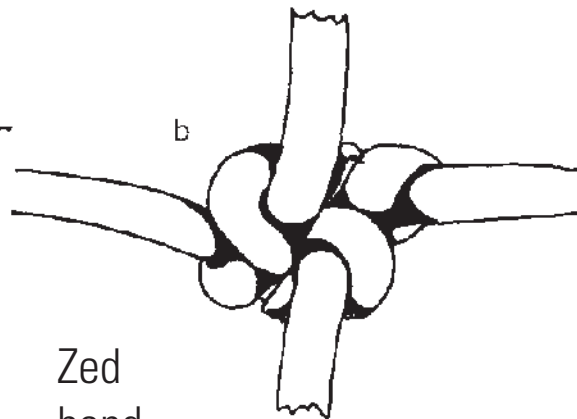
Fig. 2

a



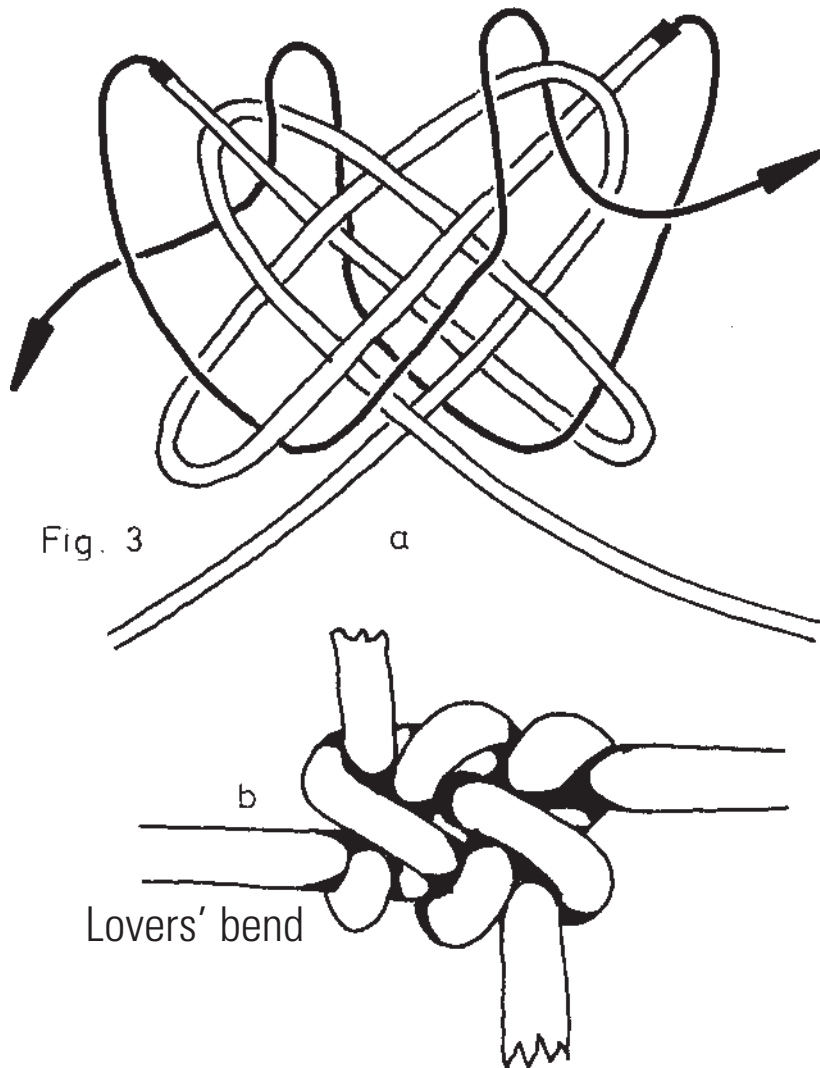
b

Mussel bend



b

Zed bend



These knots are all variations based upon Owen Nuttall's "Falmouth Way" start for Carrick Bends (see K.M. No. 23, page 18, and No. 24, pages 7-8).

The diagrams look complicated; tying in the hand is simpler... and fun.

It is hoped there will be space for more of Owen's knots in future issues of this journal.

Man of Gold

For those members with spare cash to invest, here is a jeweller's catalogue worth reading. Anthony G.A. CORREA makes plaited and knotted items of personal adornment of a novel nautical kind.

His latest glossy booklet shows handwoven Turk's Head necklaces, rings and bracelets, tie-bars, cuff-links and dress studs, ear-rings and brooches. He does similar items in miniature anchor chain and interlocked bow shackles or bottle-screws.

Carrick bends, bowlines, monkey's fists, square and granny knots abound. There is even the traditional African elephant hair knot tied as a finger ring.

My favourites (not actually knots) are his Zodiac brooches, with each constellation picked out in diamonds, each diamond of an order of magnitude proportional to its corresponding star. Also his lighthouses with diamonds flashing where the lamps would be.

All this stuff - mark you - comes in 14 or 18 carat gold, so it is NOT cheap! if, nevertheless, you can afford to indulge yourself, contact Anthony CORREA via P.O. Box 401,
Wiscasset,
Maine 04578,
United States of America.

Letters

Dear Geoffrey,

The recent Committee decision, by a seven to three majority, to recommend to the next A.G.M. a change of the Guild's name, also required the initiation of a debate in "Knotting Matters" so that members can consider the proposal well in advance of the decisive date. You did print a light-hearted letter from me on this subject in Issue No. 24 but I shall be grateful for the opportunity of putting the case in greater detail.

The proposal approved in Committee is that the Guild shall become the International Guild of Knot Crafts. The syntax is sound without any need for enlarging "crafts" into "craftsman" or "craftpersons", because the definition of a "Guild" is "a group or association of persons of the same trade, pursuits or interests", so the word "persons" can be read into the word "Guild" without addition. "Craft" is generally defined as a skill, ability, proficiency or expertness in something, especially in handiwork or the arts.

Thus a Guild of Knot Crafts is correctly interpreted as a group of people who are interested in attaining proficiency in anything associated with knots, their history, development, use in design and practice, strength and understanding, not merely the tying of them. This would include such crafts as rug-making, lace-making, tatting, crochet, knitting, fishing-fly tying, even perhaps basketry and weaving. In this way knots become the common ground upon which many diverse crafts can meet. There may well be scope for us to introduce a new, wider form of membership in association with more specialised Craft Guilds.

It is natural to ask why a change of name is necessary, after all, we have managed to establish ourselves quite well as Knot Tyers. Indeed we have, but the word Tyers not only limits the scope of our declared interest, but, for some inexplicable reason, perhaps a juvenile association with shoe-laces, neck-ties and other items of apparel, it seems to inspire a frivolous response. It raises a smile, but does not engender respect and the Guild is now old enough and large enough to require and demand respect.

Finally there is the cost of changing our name. We shall have to change out official notepaper and badges, but our publications are still saleable with the old name and they can be changed, as reprints are required. Regarding badges, they will continue to sell until the next A.G.M. and we suspect that many members will cherish their old ones as evidence of their earlier involvement. It seems that the total cost of the proposed change is unlikely to exceed 50 pounds. If a decision to change our name were to be deferred for that reason alone, it would be a very dubious economy, for the cost of such a change is far more likely to increase with time. If it is a suitable one, then we can afford it and there is never likely to be a better time to implement it than now.

Yours sincerely,

21st. August, 1988

Stuart GRAINGER

Comer Cottage,
Main Street,
Merton,
Bicester,
Oxon OX6 0NF,
England.

Dear Geoffrey,

I refer to Stuart Grainger's Limericks on the name of our Guild.

A Guild is an association of people with like interests, not of a craft. Our title is correct.

Yours sincerely

Edward HUNTER (Dr.)

6 Gayton Court,
Somers Road,
Reigate,
Surrey RH2 9DX,
England.

Dear Geoffrey

I did not vote for the proposed change of name. I am not against a change, but there seemed something wrong. As a 'bloke wot rote' I should have seen the flaw then. The suggested name might not cause titters, but it would get us labelled an ignorant lot. The word 'guild' has to refer to people and crafts are not people. You can have a 'craft guild' or a 'guild of craftworkers, craft people or even crafters (more of a transatlantic term)'. A 'guild of knot crafts' is not grammatically correct.

If we change, I think it should not be more than one word, to avoid confusion amongst those who know us already. We must think again. I do not want to say I am a member of the International Guild of Knot Crafts- that last word has to mean people.

Best wishes,

August 14, 1988

Percy BLANDFORD

Quinton House,
Newbold-on-Stour,
Stratford-upon-Avon,
Warwickshire CV31 8UA
England.

Dear Geoffrey

Thank you for sending me the information about the I.G.K.T. I would love to join.

I am a self-employed engineer "student". It is with regret that I learn the sheepshank is now not recognised. What about the dog and cat-shanks? When I make a sheepshank I put a piece of wood in both ends of the bights, then they will never slip. Also I have pulled Land Rovers with ease with a piece of rope, simply by tying 3 or 4 trucker's hitches in parallel with each other. This works out like a gear reduction. I have seen the main standing of a rope shear off due to too much pull exerted.

Two other knots that I have found interesting are the figure of eight bend and the one-way bend. This last is superior to the Sheet bend.

The clove hitch - also known as the builder's knot (and with modification such as the Chinese hitch and gunner's hitch) - I have seen a miller tie on the mouth of sacks ... and in 30 years he has yet to see this hitch slip off a sack. This is in my opinion a very good hitch.

Anyway, Geoffrey, I am most interested in the old crafts of rope work and the old ways which must not be forgotten, like grass ropes on the farm; oh yes, I have seen them put to good use.

Yours sincerely,
David Claud MIGGIANO

Croft Bungalow,
Llantood,
Cardigan,
Dyfed,
South Wales SA43 3NN

Dear Sirs,

I have received an invitation to take part in the Anglo-American Knot Fair '89. I like to inform you that I am not going to take part in any way. The reason is that I am very disappointed with the way the I.G.K.T. handled the Extravaganza in 1986.

As a member of the I.G.K.T. living outside the U.K. I have only a few opportunities to attend fairs and meetings and exhibitions. There is a lot written about these things but there has been no pictorial information.

I have written and asked for photos or pamphlets as I very much liked to see the knotting made by the members. The only thing I have seen is a video-tape from The Extravaganza showing some old men tying knots and a lot of advertising for the I.G.K.T. Nothing about the Ashley knots and the knot-boards.

From the Rotterdam Fair I have not seen anything pictorial offered to members of the I.G.K.T.

Have there been any photos taken from the Extravaganza and from other fairs. Have the knotting-boards been documented on photos? If they have, are there any pamphlets going to be made? Are these photos and pamphlets going to be offered to the members? Will the Knot Fair '89 be documented on photos? Will this documentation be available for members?

What I am asking for is a chance as a member outside the U.K. to "attend" fairs and exhibitions arranged by the I.G.K.T. by buying photos and pamphlets of the knotting ... NOT of the officers or other members attending the fairs. I am interested in the work members have contributed to the fairs. I am sure many members all over the world would like to be informed by getting a chance to buy such information.

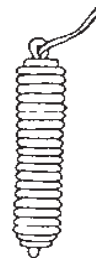
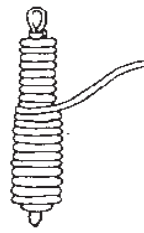
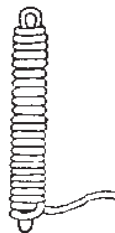
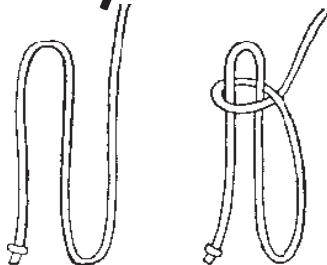
With wishes for many Happy Knottings,

Apr 17, 1988 Sten JOHANSSON

Skebokvamsvaegen 123,
S-12435 BANDHAGEN,
Sweden.

Handy Hank

from 'SCOUTER' August 1967



Or...CORD CARRIED COMPACT!

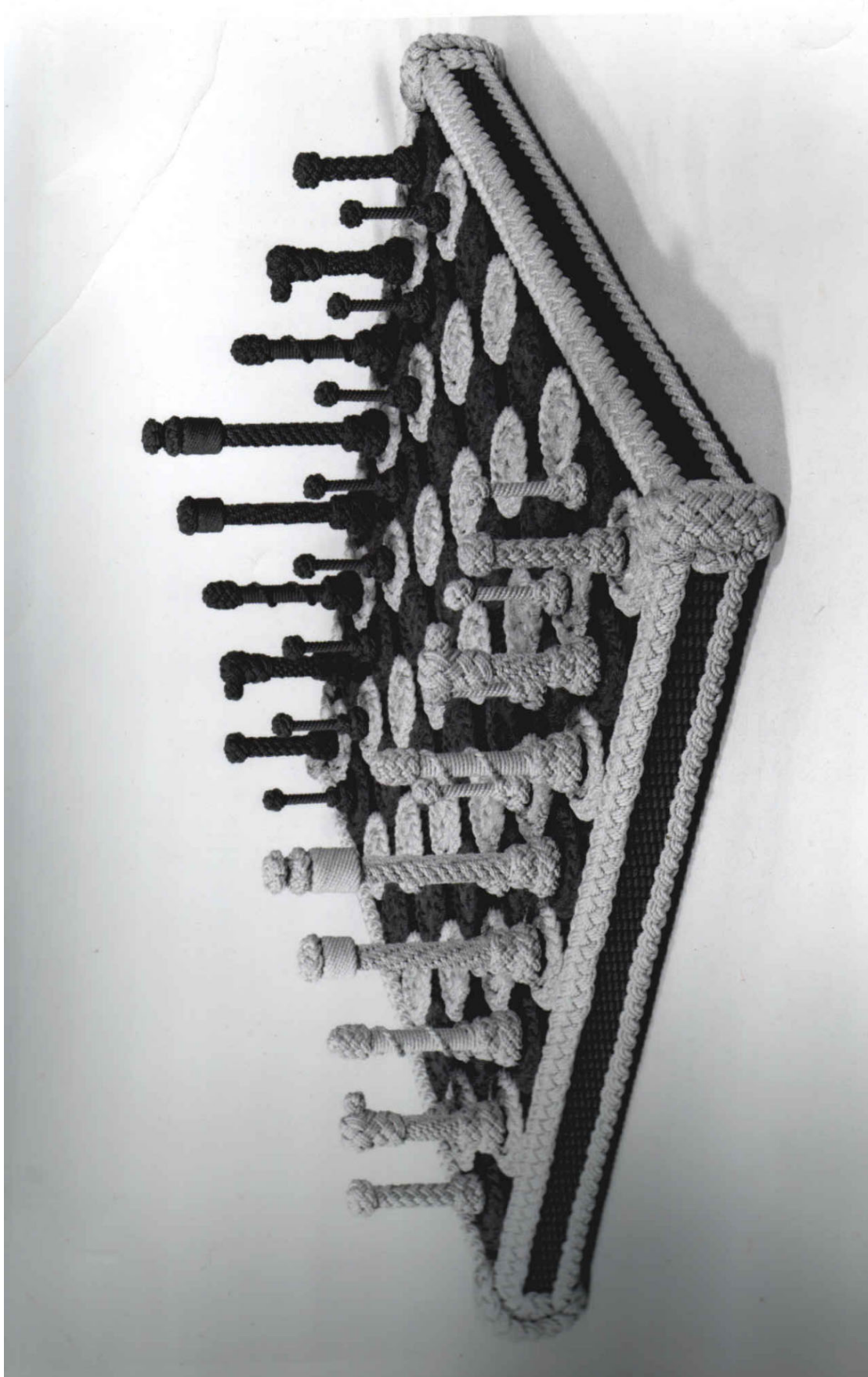
K N O T B O A R D

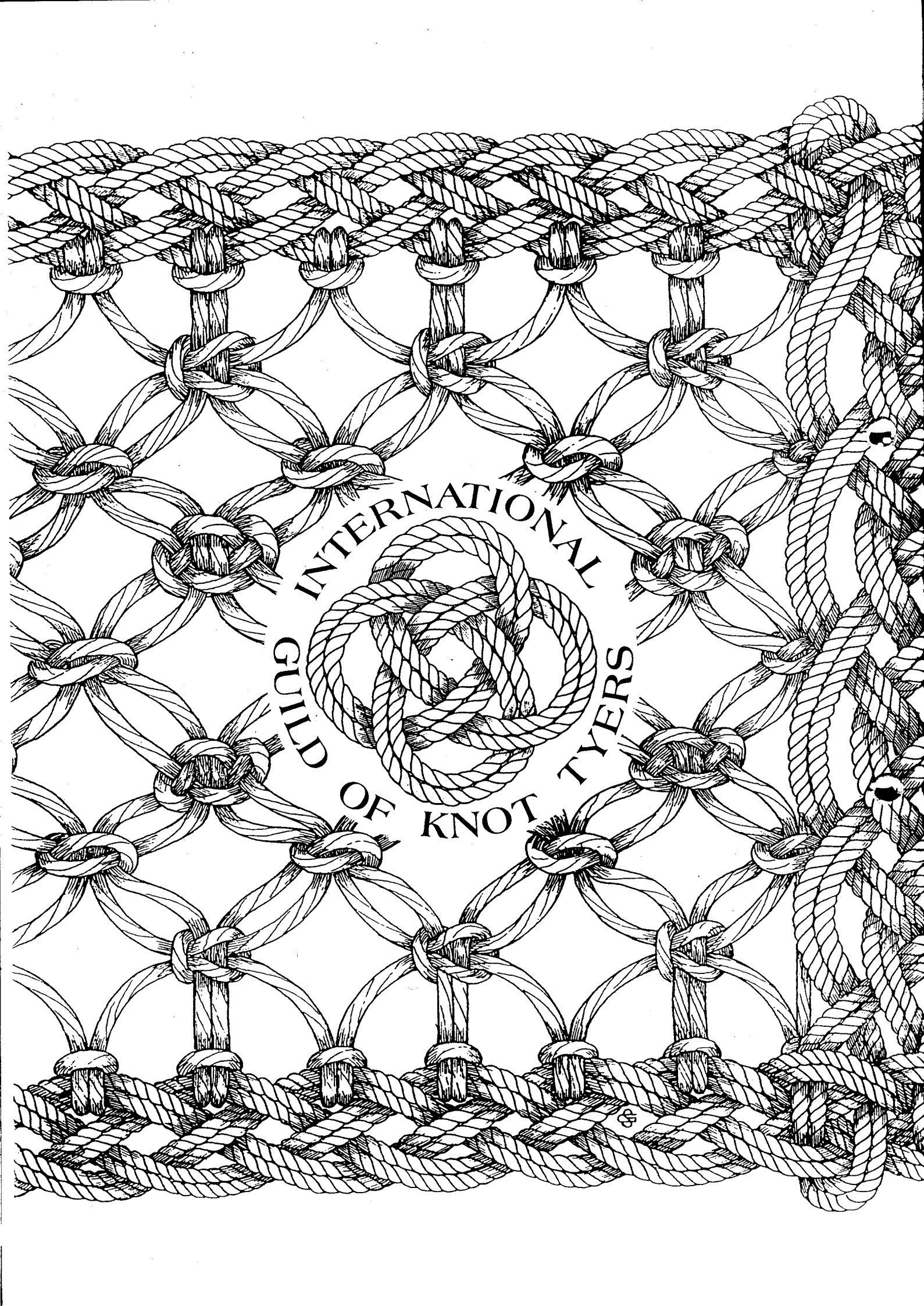
(1950's)by James NICOLL,
of Godstone, Surrey, England



CHESS SET

(1980's).....by Eric DAHLIN
of Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.





INTERNATIONAL
GUILD
OF
KNOT TYERS

