Knotting Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
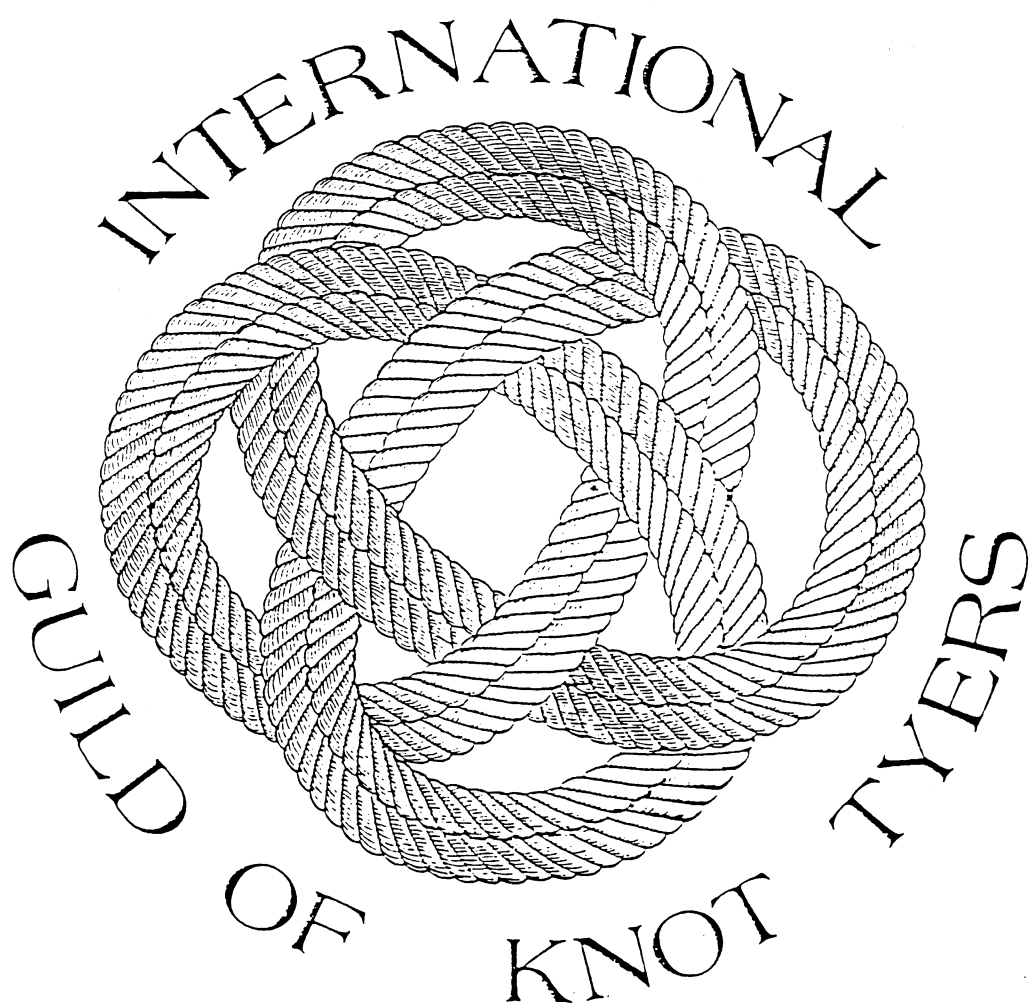
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

President: Percy W. Blandford

Issue No. 5
October, 1983

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EDITORIAL

In an article within this issue Dr. Harry ASHER describes an original method of classifying knots. There will be those - understandably - who dismiss his ideas because they may seem impractical. After all, didn't Australian knot craftsman Charles H.S. THOMASON write recently in these pages; "I don't know the names of many of the knots I tie."

One of the Guild's aims is, however, to undertake research into all aspects of knotting.

When I had to produce a training manual entitled 'The Identification of Knots' for forensic scientists and other criminal investigators, my first challenge was to devise a system of grouping and classifying over 100 basic knots, bends and hitches. You can't ask people who don't know knot names to look one up in an alphabetical index. I chose to group them according to the number of crossing points each one possessed. Scientists can count.

Harry ASHER's method actually describes in a kind of speed-writing how they are tied. Mathematicians studying topology assign numerical values to knots and then evolve formulae to compare them. The "Reidemeister Moves" are, I believe, an attempt to give names to the ways in which a cord may be arranged and rearranged. Some of us will never acquire the mathematical language to understand all of this; but we surely must be able to treat knots systematically and logically if we are to learn more about them than we know already. The legacy left us by the ancients and the old-time sailormen is most definitely not all there is to know.

We need a shorthand means of trading information and ideas without woolliness or ambiguity. Harry ASHER's suggestion may not be it. Fred BROWNE in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A. has proposed numbers and a computer. Bob LOYNES of Sheffield, England, has been toying with the idea of crossing points; not counting them, but listing them either 'O' (for 'over') or 'U' (for 'under). Bob CHISNALL in Kingston, Ontario, Canada is harnessing Linnaeus' biological descriptive headings. The debate has been opened; the race is on!

Meanwhile, unlettered and intuitive craftsmen and women like you and me should not be cast down. Harry ASHER and the rest of them would be the first to admire that Star Knot or a complicated Turk's Head which we have tied. The Guild is for all of us.

When Robert Baden Powell produced 'Scouting for Boys' in fortnightly parts in 1908 that triggered off the start of the Boy Scout Association. He included a lot of basic knotting in the requirements for being a good scout as well as suggesting making buttons out of leather bootlaces (opposite).

There are two interesting points. Where did he get the idea? It is a good way of making a turk's head, but it is not the usual one described in knotting books of that vintage. Then those of us who attempt to illustrate knots can have sympathy with B.P. - up to stage three he is correct, and this will ensure correct completion, but at stage 4 he has one crossing going over, where it should go under (the arrowed doubling end).

Percy W. Blandford

HOW TO MAKE BUTTONS OUT OF BOOTLACES

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2

3

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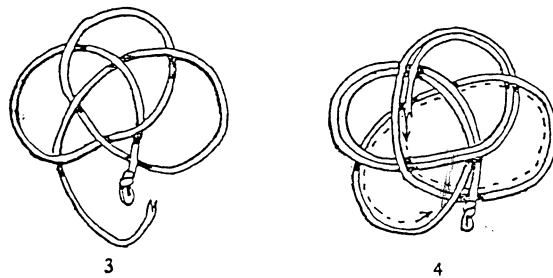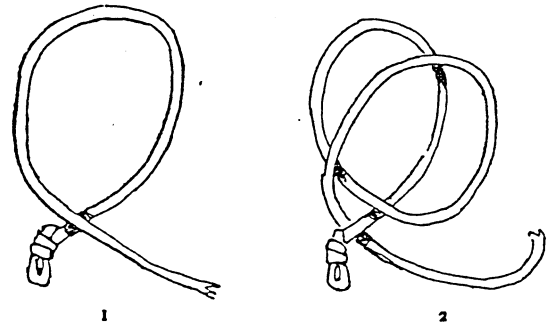
Continue till you have the whole knot doubled or trebled.

5
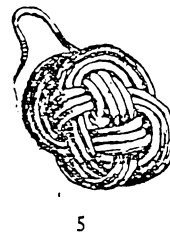
The loop for attaching the button is moved from its original position to hang from the centre of the knot.

6

Pull all tight, cut off loose end, and the button is complete.

LINKED OVERHAND KNOTS

Part I - A Code for Description and a Means of Discovery

by Harry Asher

illustrations by
Eleanor Draper

This article introduces a concise code of description which is particularly applicable to linked overhand knots, and shows how it may be used to survey the field, to discover new bends, and to communicate with another reader.

Terms and Conventions   Fig. 1 shows a right-handed overhand knot. The first turn is like the start of a normal right-handed screw thread where a clockwise rotation screws down into the paper. Fig. 2 shows a left-handed overhand knot where the same clockwise rotation screws up out of the paper. Anyone to whom this idea is new will do well to pause here for thought. Notice that right- or left-handedness has nothing to do with which part is running and which is standing end.

When two overhand knots are to be linked we make the convention that one shall be on the left or west side, and shall always be right-handed and of darker cord than the other. The second overhand knot will always be on the right or east side of the first, and tied in lighter cord. It may be right- or left-handed. If right-handed the code is R, if left-handed the code is L. There is no need for any code for the darker overhand knot on the left, because it is always right-handed. At times in the text we shall also use 'rh' and 'lh' for right-handed and left-handed, and 'o-h' is convenient for 'overhand'

The parts of an o-h knot are shown in Fig. 3. The three spaces within the knot are the 's' (standing), 'c' (central), and the 'r' (running) spaces. North, South, East and West (N, S, E, and W) are as on a map. 'Up' and 'down' mean 'up' and 'down' through the paper, assumed to be lying face up on a table. The 'spine' is the twisted part on the North side; the 'belly' is the single part on the South side.

To describe two linked o-h knots we will assume that the first, the one on the left in dark cord, is fixed with the 's', 'c' and 'r' spaces open; its lead (standing part) enters the knot from the West side, and its end (running end) emerges Eastward. The end of the second knot in light cord does all the tying, and is said to go 'down through' or 'up through' the 'SI, 'c' or 'r' spaces in the dark fixed rh o-h knot. Sometimes the lighter cord is described as 'your own', e.g. "over the dark end and then under your own lead". The end does not have to plunge vertically up or down through a space, but can go through at a slant; thus we may say; "North up through 's'", or "Eastward down through 'r'", etc.

To introduce the method we will start by describing a well known bend, the Rigger's Bend, and we will refer to a figure (Fig. 4). We do this so that once the method is understood we can apply it subsequently to other knots without reference to a figure.

Instructions for Rigger's Bend   Start on the East side; take your own running end North-West, then South under spine, up c, East over belly, North over dark end and own lead, South-West under own lead, then up through r to complete own c-h.

The next step is to shorten the description into a brief code so that for the limited category of linked o-h knots we can answer the cry for help from Frederick BROWNE in No. 4 of our journal. However, I will not use numbers as he suggests, because letters are much more easily remembered, as was well shown by the change from letters to numbers in the STD telephone code.

The Code (for Rigger's Bend)   The first o-h is right-handed, but that need not be stated in the code for the knot because it is true for all the knots in this series. The second o-h knot is right-handed, so we write R.

When you have tied the knot following the instructions above, but before you have tightened it, you will see that the second o-h knot forms a ring round the spine of the first first fixed knot; if you hold the lead and the end of the fixed knot pointing firmly West and East then you cannot slip the ring formed

by the second o-h knot round to encircle the belly, it gets, blocked by the lead and end of the fixed knot. I call this arrangement 'Across the Spine' (Fig. 5a); in code it is <u>AS</u>. So up to this point the code is: <u>RAS</u>.

In tying the bend the end was taken <u>up c and up r</u> in code this becomes <u>UC UR</u>. So now we have:-

<div align="center">Code for Rigger's Bend is: RAS DC DR.</div>

The Code in General

In other linked overhand bends the second o-h knot may be tied <u>A</u>cross the <u>B</u>elly (Fig. 5b), and it may be '<u>R</u>ight- or <u>L</u>eft-handed. In general therefore the first three letters will be: RAS, RAB, LAS, or LAB. One further point that has caused some confusion: 'your own' overhand knot is completed on the second tuck (UR in the example above).

The System in Use

We will now use the system to find how many bends there are composed of two o-h knots linked by two tucks tied either AS or AB. First consider cases where the second knot is <u>rh</u> and is tied <u>across the spine</u> of the fixed rh o-h knot, and when the first tuck is up through the <u>standing</u> space ('s') of the fixed knot. This part of the code is RAS US. The second tuck can be US, UC, or UR. These three bends will be: RAS US US; RAS US UC; and RAS US DR. It is now but a small step to draw up the Table below:-

<div align="center">Table for RAS Bends</div>

Tucks		Tucks		Tucks		Tucks	
<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>
US	US	US	DS	DS	US	DS	DS
	UC		DC		UC		DC
	UR		DR		UR		DR
UC	US	UC	DS	DC	US	DC	DS
	UC		DC		US		DC
	UR		DR		UR		DR
UR	US	UR	DS	DR	US	DR	DS
	UC		DC		UC		DC
	UR		DR		UR		DR

At this stage we have four columns each of nine bends, making a total of 36. Of these only a few will be good. You may get a known bend, a new bend, or more often a mess. You can now try another 36 bends by tying them across the belly (RAB), making 72 so far. However the yield of good bends from RAB is less than from RAS. If you are feeling particularly strong you can tie 36 bends in each of RAS, RAB, LAS and LAB modes, giving a total of 144. There are many other combinations of two-tuck linked o-h knots, and in some both the belly and the spine are encircled, but they will not be discussed here.
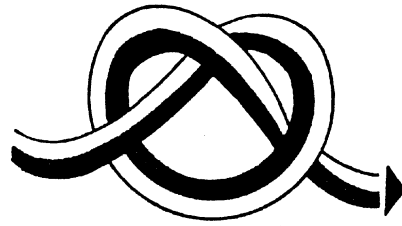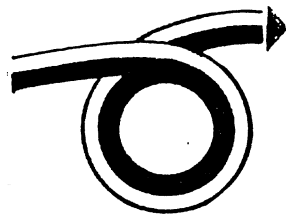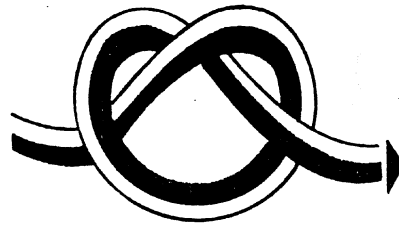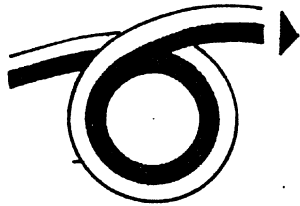
Fig. 1

Fig. 2

SPINE

S   R
C

BELLY
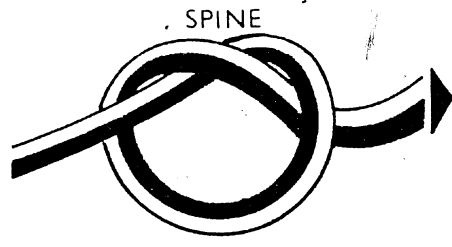
Fig. 3

Fig. 4   From The Knot Book by
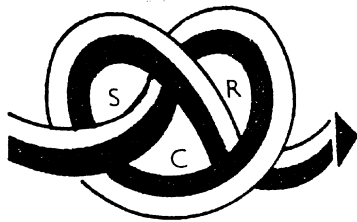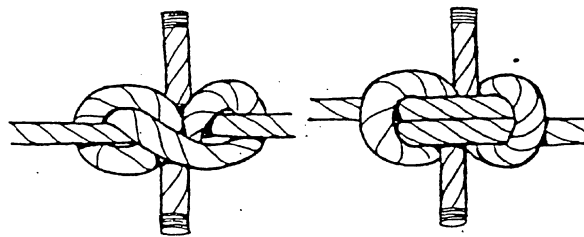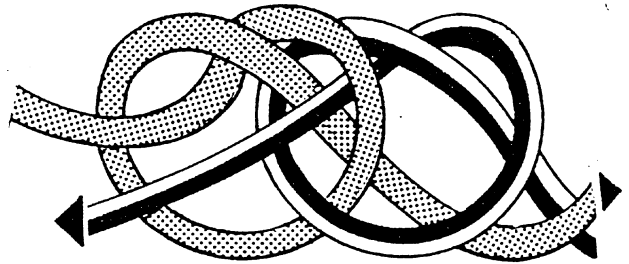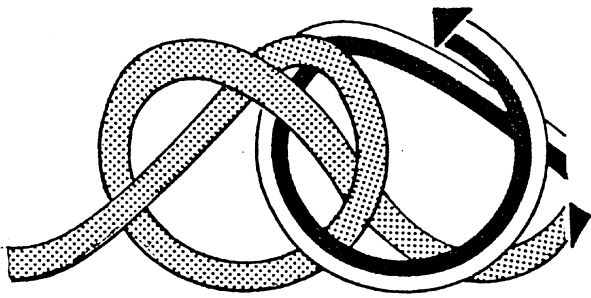   Geoffrey Budworth

5

First Use of the System

Our code can be used as a concise system of notation which may be more easily memorized than the bend itself, perhaps more easily followed than a diagram, and readily communicated to a friend who knows the code. We will use it here to describe some established bends:

RAS	US	UC	The Twofold Overhand Bend, Ashley No. 1426, same structure as the two-strand Matthew Walker knot.
RAS	US	UC	Desmond Mandeville's Neat and New, Knotting Matters, No. 4, page 3.
RAS	UC	UR	The Rigger's Bend, described earlier in this article.
RAS	DC	UR	Ashley No. 1408, a neat bend, the two ends emerge together on the same side.
LAS	DS	UR	Desmond Mandeville's Poor Man's Pride; Rosendahl's 'P' Knot, see Knotting Matters, No. 4, page 3.

Second Use of the System

This use is to discover new llinked overhand bends. A selection is given below:

RAS	US	UC	Neat, rather like the Rigger's Bend. The ends normally emerge perpendicular to the leads and on opposite sides. However, with some manipulation they may be made to emerge together on the same side.
RAS	UR	US	The ends emerge approximately parallel to the leads.
RAS	DS	US	No great claims, but it seems to be an adequate bend.
LAS	DS	UC	Once more some resemblance to the Rigger's Bend.
LAB	DR	DC	A neat bend; ends emerge together perpendicular to leads. By internal rearrangement it may slip to LAB DR DR, but harmlessly, affecting slightly the way the ends emerge.
RAB	DR	UC	A neat bend, ends parallel to leads. Special feature is that if the bend is tightened by a pull on the leads it remains easily broken; but if it is tightened by a pull on the ends it can jam tight. I rate it best of the bunch.

There are several other acceptable combinations, and bends resembling the Rigger's Bend turn up quite often. If you like to work through the series of 144 bends you can tie 24 per day for six days; then rest on the Sabbath.
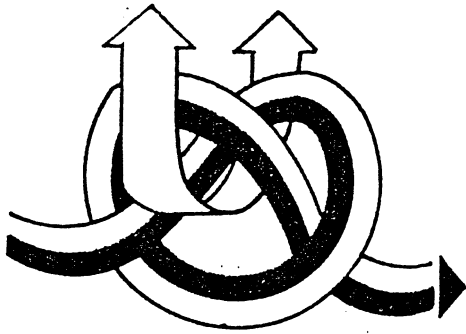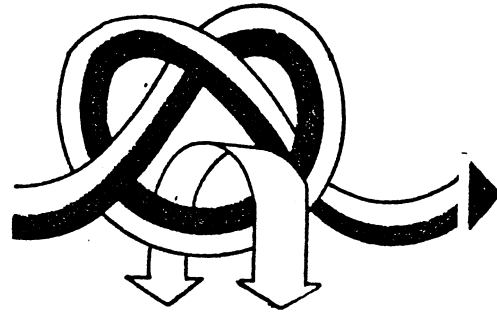
Fig. 5a   Fig. 5b

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PAGE 14?

In the last issue (No. 4, July, 1983) of this newsletter, page 13 was devoted
to a correspondent who, at the bottom of the page, discussed the Sheepshank. He
stated; "In over 40 years I have only....." There was a blank section at the top
of page 14, a printing error. What should have appeared is; " . . . . . seen it
used once , along the keel of a ship's lifeboat as a goatline for excess people.
Would it not be better to have say three knots, and learn these well? i.e. Figure
of Eight, Round Turn & Two Half Hitches, Sheetbend.

Yours faithfully,

                              J. GARSIDES   Airdrie
                                               May, 1983

(Apologies, Jim – Ed.)

QUOTATION

"Sometimes in fine weather, the able seamen would play a trick on us. As the
long line of men and boys hauled away at a single brace, our voices echoing the
cries of the shantyman who was giving us the time, a man in the centre of the
line would quickly double a portion of line as the slack came to him, by
'marrying' it and with the next swinging pull he would pass more line aft to his
neighbour who would in turn pass the bight to his neighbour. When three men had
the concealed double rope safely held they would wait for the next heave and
then suddenly let the lot go. Everyone behind them would fall flat on their backs
on the deck, having exerted all their weight and pulling power against three
fathoms of slack rope!"

'BOY ALOFT' by Gavin Craig, pub. Nautical Publishing Co. (1971)

A' the knots o' a sailor's craft

Weel could he tie in a trice,

An' nae thocht ava o' a day to daw

When the Deil wad han'le his dice;

Yet I stude yestreen at the back o' the kirk

In oor am hame port o' Leith,

An' heard him tie ae knot wi' his tongue

That he winna wark lowse wi' his teeth.

(viz: Marriage - the knot you tie with your tongue, and can-not work loose with your teeth)

'THE LUM* HAT WANTIN' THE CROON' and other poems by David Rorie, M.D., pub. By The Moray Press (1935)

*'lum' = silk

WHY NOT A LOGICAL KNOT BOARD? by Eric Franklin

This article was first published in 'The Scouter' magazine, September, 1960.

How many Scout Headquarters have you been in where the knot board, either permanently hanging on the wall or brought out for use as and when required, is a tatty old thing of doubtful use? Not yours, of course. You took a lot of lovely care, tying all the correct knots and mounting them meticulously on a board for all to admire. But what about all those others.

It is a fact, and I speak from experience, that the majority of knot boards made for Troop use are too often impractical to employ for the purpose for which they should be used - the instruction of Scouts. Others, of course, are wonderful examples of knot craft, the only use for which is to mount in a beautiful frame and hang high on the wall for visitors to admire. This is no doubt excellent advertisement, which has its value, but we should be more concerned with instruction. Well then, why not combine the two? A knot board which is decorative, which will be admired by visiting Scouters and yet which is eminently practical and designed for use by the ones who matter, the Scouts.
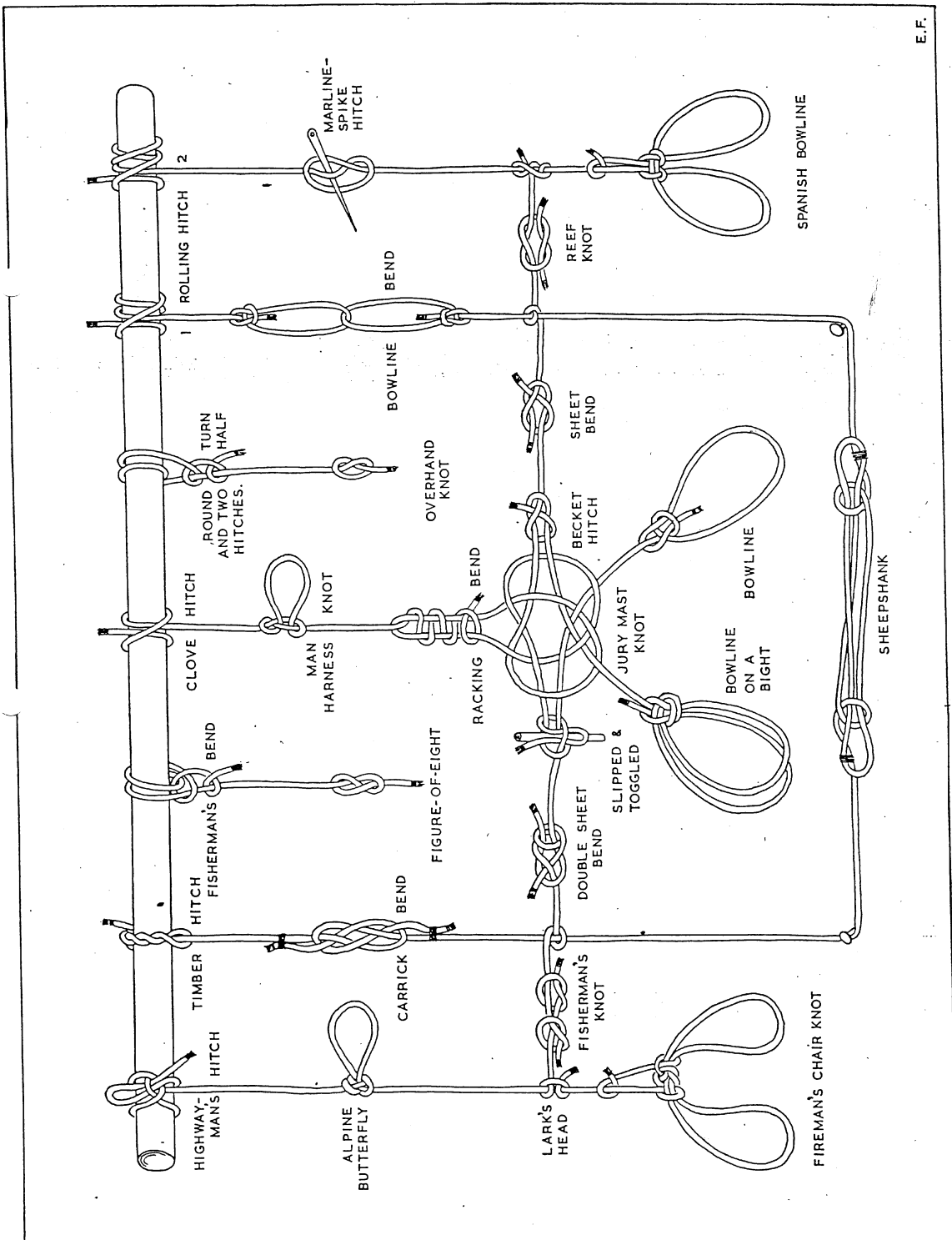

With this thought in mind, I have been at some pains to design the knot board which is illustrated here. It is so worked out that the cords are continuous, everything is interlinked by knots. All the hitches are attached to a length of dowelling at the top and the whole assembly can be lifted by this rod and then moved around to where it is most needed. It can be turned round so that the other side of the knot can be seen (you can't do this with any other knot board I've ever seen) and, to a large extent, handled with impunity. To achieve this state, I have cheated in one or two minor ways. For example, to ensure that the Marline Spike stays in the Marline Spike Hitch, it is not metal, but wood, carved from a piece of thin beech dowel and sandpapered: it is then fixed in place with touches of "Copydex" where it touches the cord. The

The Sheepshank would soon fall apart with handling, so the loops at each end are seized to the standing parts: this is in any case permissible and, in fact, often advisable and should be included in the teaching. The end loops could also be toggled, the toggles again being secured with Copydex.

Another dodge I thought of to improve the utility of this unit was an additional method of fixing the knots. When it is completed, lay it down on several thicknesses of newspaper and after pegging it out nicely in position with a sufficient number of pins, go over the whole surface with a thin solution of shellac, using a soft brush, and trying not to soak it so much that the newspaper is going to stick to the cords. When it is dry (about ten minutes) carefully turn the whole thing over and do the same to the other side. Further coats can be added if required. When finished, the various parts of the knots will be permanently fixed as you want them: moreover, when it gets well and truly dusty, the whole thing can be dipped in a bucket of water with a detergent, shaken, and hung up to dry. The dowel at the top should be varnished first, of course. If you have used a white cord, you can use "Valspar" Clear Varnish instead of shellac.

The decision as to what knots to use, and how to arrange them, needed some thought. It was essential that every knot actually required from Tenderfoot up to First Class must be included (n.b. these requirements have been drastically simplified since 1967 - ed.), but a great deal more than these were needed to make the sort of job I wanted. I must therefore look for other recommended knots or interesting and worthwhile ones. The Carrick Bend, probably the most perfect of knots, was a "natural". The Bowline Bend is an obvious method of fastening two ropes safely and securely together; but the Spanish Bowline, apart from matching excellently the Fireman's Chair, appears to be little known so that went in. The Spanish knot is good fun to tie, a better knot to use for the same purpose, and one that seems to be gaining favour in Scouting circles. The Racking Bend is, without doubt, the best method of fastening a thin rope to a thicker one, while the Alpine Butterfly is rapidly superseding other knots for the middle man on a climber's rope. The Jury Mast Knot in the centre appeared to be the best knot I could think of for linking up the various sections and, at the same time, making a decorative centre-piece for the whole design. This, however, doesn't detract from its use as a sling at camp for holding foodstuffs up off the ground, provided that there is a convenient tree handy. So we finish with a logical series of knots, all worthwhile and many essential to us, the whole forming an attractive and decorative piece of work.

There are various ways in which the knot unit could be mounted. My choice would be a sheet of plywood or hardboard covered with a piece of tent canvas or sailcloth, tightly stretched in place. Two hooks screwed in towards the upper side serve to carry the assembly, the dowel resting on them. Two suitable pins, or pieces of dowel screwed in place from behind, are permanently fixed in place so that when the assembly is placed on the board the cord at either end of the Sheepshank is stretched sufficiently to slip over them. Two pins can also be added to keep the two Bowlines out at an attractive angle. For a frame, I would suggest a length of 11/2,' rope (about 1/2" diameter) glued (Copydex?) round the rim of the board; this piece of rope could be carefully measured for length and the ends joined in a Short splice which would come exactly in the centre at the bottom. Turk's Heads at the sides and top could be added for decoration, if required, and a coat of shellac added. The names of the knots can be stencilled on the actual board, typed on self-adhesive linen labels or omitted altogether, just as you please.

DESIGN FOR KNOT BOARD

MARLINE-SPIKE HITCH

ROLLING HITCH

BEND

BOWLINE

REEF KNOT

SPANISH BOWLINE

ROUND AND TWO HALF HITCHES.

TURN HALF

CLOVE HITCH

OVERHAND KNOT

SHEET BEND

MAN HARNESS KNOT

BECKET HITCH

BOWLINE

RACKING BEND

JURY MAST KNOT

BOWLINE ON A BIGHT

SHEEPSHANK

FISHERMAN'S BEND

FIGURE-OF-EIGHT

SLIPPED & TOGGLED

TIMBER HITCH

CARRICK BEND

DOUBLE SHEET BEND

FISHERMAN'S KNOT

HIGHWAY-MAN'S HITCH

ALPINE BUTTERFLY

LARK'S HEAD

FIREMAN'S CHAIR KNOT

E.F.

If the idea appeals to you, you do not have to stick to my selection of knots, nor to my arrangement. By all means work out a better one and if you do I should be delighted to receive a photograph!

10

Dear Mr. Budworth,

On purchasing a copy of your Knot Book, I read about the International Guild of Knot Tyers. I was immediately interested and would like to know more about the Guild. I would be very pleased to receive any information regarding the Guild.

I first became hooked on knotting when, as a 10 year old Wolf Cub, I was introduced to the mysteries of reef knots, sheetbends and bowlines, and admonished to always use the proper knot for the job in hand. That was in 1924, and since then knots and knotting in many forms - ropes, working knots, fancies, nets, mats, bellropes, etc., have remained a great interest to me.

I spent more than half my working life in the coal- mines. This wasn't half so bad as many people would have you believe - honestly I enjoyed pit work. Still, that's by the way. For several years I was a coalcutter, and operated an undercut machine which winched itself along the face on a 5/8ths. inch flexible wire rope. The anchor for the winch rope was a steel rod inclined at an angle between roof and floor, and which passed through a loop tied in the end of the rope. Being wire, it was, of course, impossible to tighten the loop manually. The loop was made, placed over an anchor point on the machine, and then tightened by the winch. Perhaps, you'll be wondering what all this is about. Well, to cut it short, the loop we used to tie is given in your book as Ontario bowline. A good knot.

I have enclosed a S.A.E., and await your reply to my enquiry about the Guild.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,

William Simpson, Manchester
9 Aug 83

Dear Geoffrey,

WORLD'S FAIR KNOT (Newsletter, Summer 1983, p.15). This 'new' knot is identical to Ashley 1690, although at first sight, the method of tying appears to be different. How difficult it is to invent a new knot!

ps:the cutting doesn't say which World Fair. Perhaps it predated Ashley. If so I take it all back.

Yours,
Ettrick Thomson
Aldeburgh,
Suffolk
13 July, 1983

(n.b.It was a Press item from the Seattle area, Ettrick, and their World Fair was in 1962. Lucky old prizewinner!! I wonder where they found their judge - ed.)

Dear Mr. Budworth,

This is to say that we have now 'filled the vacancy' so to speak, and to thank you for your kind offer of help in this matter.

It is good to have a known list of knot experts, and we may have other projects at some future date.

Yours sincerely,

Julian van Hasselt
Editor, Granada Publishing
Adlard Coles Ltd.
27 July 1983

Dear Geoffrey,

Dr. Harry Asher's translation of the Russian knot sheet has prompted this quick note . . . Knot No. 18 – the Top Knot – which caused Dr. Asher to query his translation may be explained in a way which was consistent with its use.

I have forgotten its name but in my young days in the Service I was taught that Knot 18 was the knot to tie at the head of a jury mast in a whaler (28ft.) or cutter (32ft.) -when the boat's rigging had been carried away by the elements.

The jury mast would most probably be an oar and the masthead knot would be slipped over the loom of the oar. Three of the loops would serve as points to secure the forestay and two shrouds. The two tails would be tied together to make a fourth loop (reef knot with hitches) to create an extempore block to service the halyard for the storm trysail or any other piece of material to serve as an emergency sail. So it seems that a "top knot is not an inappropriate name for a jury mast head knot

Fred Browne's idea of "Living Treasure" (K.M. Vol. 3, p.13) is an admirable one and one that is well worth pursuing. In fact, I would like to end up one day like that myself, just sitting and doing the ropework and explaining to interested bystanders just why I did this particular little insignificant detail which may not show in the completed item. Just to know every thing is done properly and goes towards giving the item it's finished character. A created whole rather than an attractive facade.

Yours, aye,
Charles Thomason
      Queensland
      Australia
      5-7-83

It's easy to sketch the outlines of many basic knots. Simply make a cross or 'x', slightly flattened, in one of a number of patterns (see Fig's i – v below). Join the ends of the crosses, as indicated, to complete your diagrams. Add the over-under sequence (you saw how to do that in the last issue) to complete the knot. Fig. (i) can be either lefthanded or righthanded overhand knot. Fig. (ii), depending upon location of short ends, may be a reef, thief, granny or threef knot. Fig (iii) is the figure of eight knot and fig. (iv) one of the carrick bends. Fig. (v) shows how to construct twists. Putting down crosses as your preliminary layout is good for pencilling a quick knot sketch for someone on the back of a used envelope; or it may be used on graph paper as the start to a smarter illustration.

Look again at Fig. (iv). To produce a double line drawing, an alternative method to that in the last issue is as follows. Fill in the seven internal compartments of the knot diagram (Fig. (iv)) with the lozenge shapes depicted in Fig. (vi), and also draw lines around the outside of the pattern. Erase the original (now the centre) line (see Fig. (vii)). Insert the required over-under sequence (Fig. (viii)). By working with lightly pencilled guidelines this method is practical, and it particularly suits larger knot layouts such as large mat patterns with a great many crossing points.

n.b. No attempt has been made to construct very -neat illustrations by means of drawing instruments.
The figures below are quick freehand efforts done by the methods advocated above.

In the next issue . . . designing large Turk's Heads with compasses and protractor.
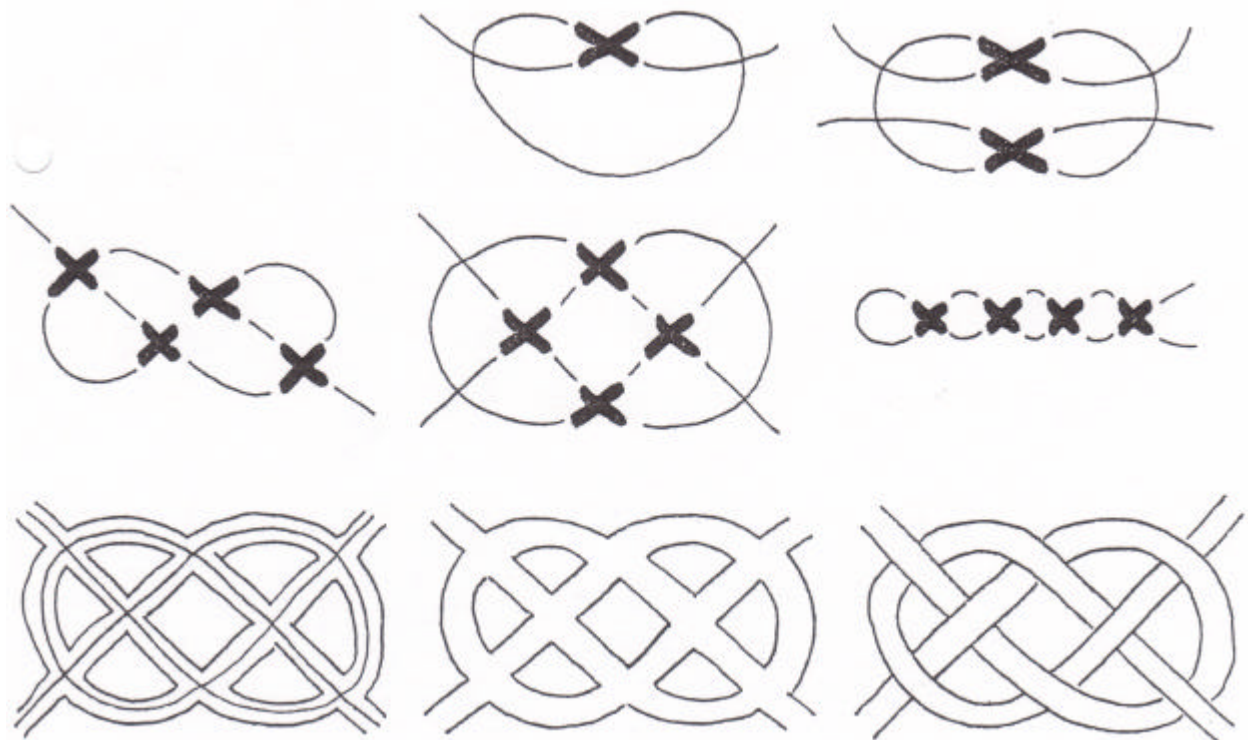
<u>PROFILE OF A KNOTSMAN</u> by the Editor

ERIC FRANKLIN is the Guild's doyen - a founder member -now in his mid 70s, yet still active in so many ways.

A lifelong Scout (over 50 years a Scout leader) and camper he was, until age compelled his retirement from the post, Assistant District Commissioner in Wimbledon & Merton; and the Scout Association recognised his efforts with a distinguished service award. He has been an influential knotting author and his books are stocked by Scout Shops as their authorised publications on the subject. They include 'Tying Knots', 'A Dictionary of Knots', 'An ABC of Knots' and 'Kamut' (ethnological string figures or "cat's cradles") as well as innumerable articles in the former 'Scout', 'Scouter', and (now) 'Scouting' magazines. Some of these latter items will appear with his permission
- the first in this issue - of our newsletter. He has recently compiled over 500 of his own excellent drawings for a book on fancy knotting.

The young Eric played water polo at County level, and was a prize-winning mile and half mile front runner; and once - in Sidney Wooderson's days - clocked 2 minutes 1 second for the half mile.

He is a member of the exclusive Inner Magic Circle, a member of its council and the museum curator. Some I.G.K.T. members will have enjoyed his demonstrations of rope magic. He clearly enjoys being a showman, yet, being privy to so many secrets, he must also be a discreet fellow. This veteran entertainer has also been an active player in a banjo orchestra for the past 30 years.

Listening to Eric reminisce, it's hard to keep track of all his experiences - clerking in a shipping office, a travelling salesman, an authority on mica insulation for condensers, sent by government on a war-time trip to the U.S.A., made redundant aged 59, then conjuring another career (when none seemed possible) in advertising.

Now a proud grandfather, Eric Franklin finds the time and energy to continue existing interests . . .and to promote new ones, like our Guild. When asked how he is faring, he often replies; "Oh, keeping alive." Well, Eric, you're doing more than just that. You enrich the lives of all of us who come in contact with you!

<u>NET, ROPE & TWINE MUSEUM</u>

The Romans brought ropemaking to Britain and found the climate around Bridport in Dorset ideal for the growing of hemp. It was to be the town's staple industry for centuries. Now visit the Net, Rope & Twine Museum in South Street, Bridport, Dorset (tel: 0308 22116); nearest railway station – Maiden Newton; open every morning (except Sundays and holidays) throughout the year 10.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m; from 1st. June until 30th. September, also from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Not open Thursdays or Saturday afternoons. No Sunday opening at all.

<u>A NEW BEND?</u>

The bend shown in Fig 1, with a method for tying it in Fig 3, is very, very, like the Rigger/Hunter, shown in Fig 2, but it is different, and I believe it to be new.

The difference lies in the fact that in the Rigger/ Hunter the two standing parts are linked (or twisted, or tied in an overhand knot) and the ends are parallel, but in the new bend it is the other way round. This does not mean that it is simply the Rigger/Hunter with ends and standing parts interchanged; such a knot exists, of course, but its ends are linked in the opposite sense, and it is no good as a bend.

It is worth mentioning that if neither standing parts nor ends are linked, the result is Desmond Mandeville's Bend N ('The Alphabend', Newsletter, Summer 1983, pp 2-5). If both are linked, there are four possibilities. With the standing parts linked as in the Rigger/Hunter, one way of linking the ends makes only a trivial difference; the other makes a bend (Ashley No 1426, Mandeville M) based on the 2-strand Matthew Walker. With standing parts linked in the opposite sense and ends unlinked, Ashley No 1425 results; linking the ends, either way, makes no essential difference.

ETTRICK THOMSON
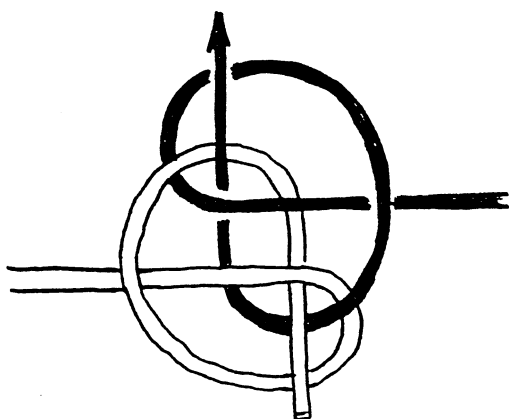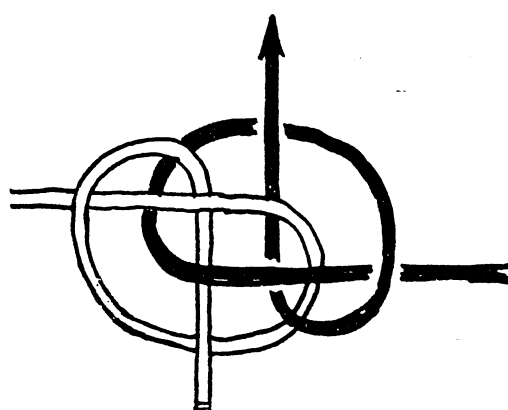
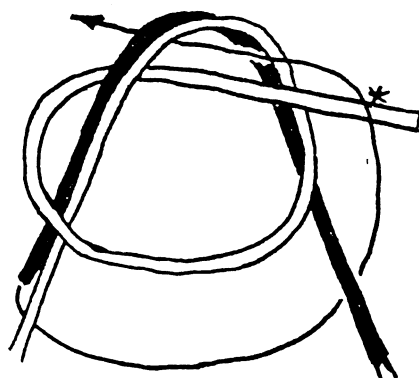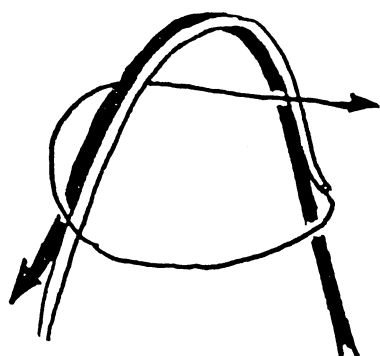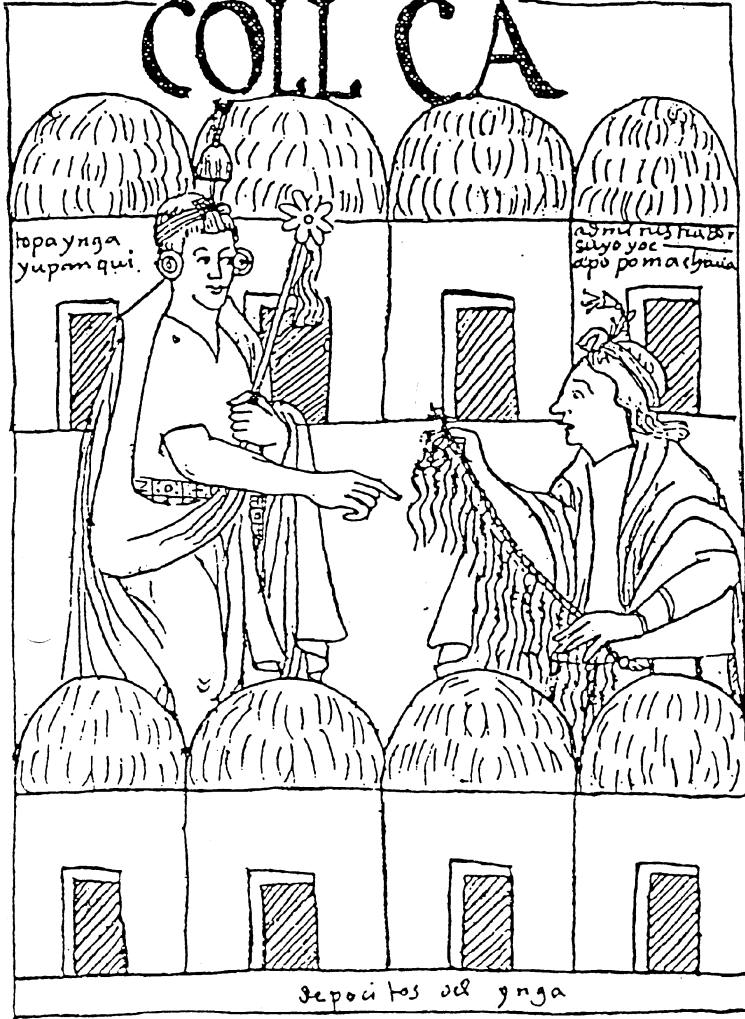Fig 1.The new bend   Fig 2. The Rigger/Hunter Bend

Fig 3. How to tie the new bend

Be sure to make the crossing marked *
Draw up by first pulling the ends tight.

DEPOCITODELIИGA COLLCA

The store rooms of the Inca Topa Yupanqui. The picture shows the administrator giving an account of the stores to the Inca by means of his *quipu*.
From Poma de Ayala, *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno* (1580–1620)

In fact, the Peruvian Incas used those knotted pendant cords suspended from a top cord as a decimal system of keeping elaborate accounts, lacking a written language.

Overhand knots, Figure of Eight knots and Multiple Overhand knots were commonly used to denote various numerical values.

They were old when the Spanish Conquistadores arrived in Peru.

Anyone intrigued to know more about the logic of the Peruvian Indian quipu should read 'QUIPUS and WITCHES KNOTS'

Stage 1   Stage 2   Stage 3

Stage 4   Stage 5
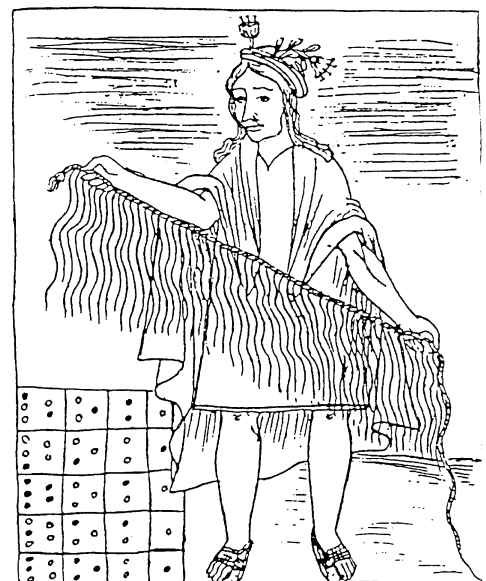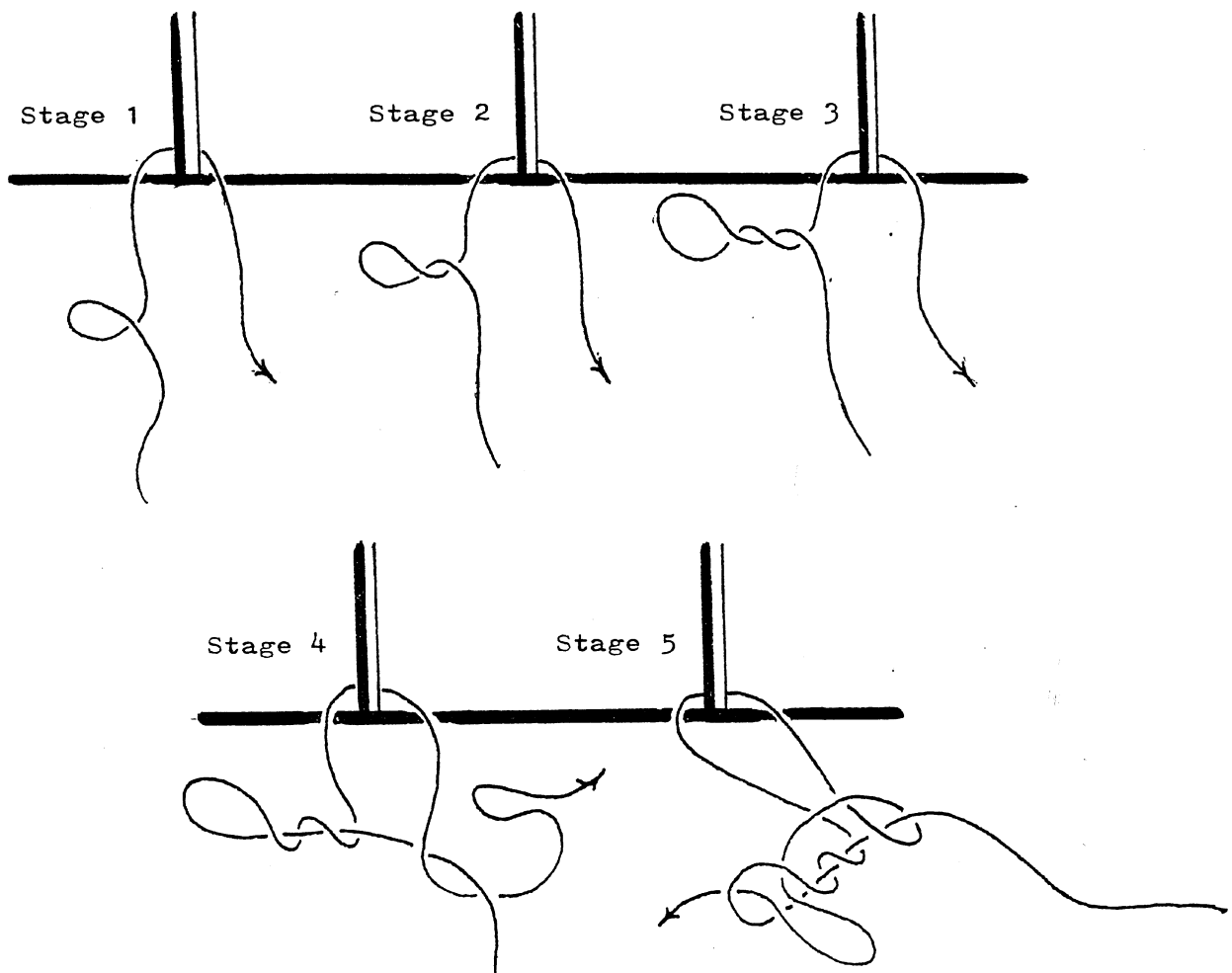
"NO NAME KNOT"

L. F. Osborne, M.D., of Washington State, U.S.A., submitted this loop knot to the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich in England recently in the hope that it would be useful to them.

It is tied easily and quickly in the dark; and easily, instantly releasable under tension. It was designed, he states for quick tie-down and instant release of aircraft in the Southwest Pacific during W.W.II, and is called "No Name Knot".
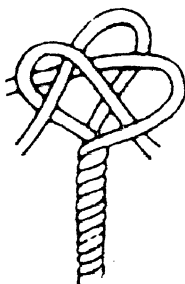
It's new to me. Does anyone know more about it?

QUOTATION

"And old Lance Skuthorpe, rarely without a rope in his hand, throwing half-hitches. He had a rope in his hand for hours every day (n.b. in his eighties - ed.) endlessly tying half-hitches . . . . . He wasted hours showing bush children tricks with ropes

'THE ROUGH RIDER' by Jack Pollard, pub. Angus & Robertson Ltd. (1963)

MUCH ADO ABOUT KNOTTING by Cy Canute-~

Gilwell Park, 100 historic acres near Chingford, Essex, is Mecca for Scouts. September 3rd. and 4th. was the weekend when gales and rain blew 1983's Summer out of sight. Yet that was the two days when 2,000 adult Scouts, all Wood Badge holders, converged for their annual reunion; and when the I.G.K.T. held its most successful exhibition of members' work.

Eric FRANKLIN, founder member, arranged it; and Guild President Percy BLANDFORD, an equally distinguished lifelong Scout lent his name to the idea. Both worked hard throughout the weekend. Your President was quick to grab a broom and sweep leaves when it was the most useful job he could do at the time. Eric - whose age is revealed in 'Profile of a Knotsman' - soldiered manfully on for two days despite irksome aches and pains. Professional rigger Ian McCORMACK and Geoffrey BUDWORTH were also on scene to make sure the Guild got noticed.

The select crowd proved interested and knowledgeable. The stall was inundated and admired. Ten new members signed up on the spot. Three others wrote in later. Others are expected once the leaflets taken for them reach their destinations.

The "knotting workshop" - Eric's inspiration - was most popular. He had produced 100 copies of each of six worksheets, step-by-step drawings of items such as Turk's Heads and Ocean Plaits. Also provided were soft boards and pins. Many tried their hands. Mrs. Ivy BLANDFORD - unasked - stood for hours both days, guiding uncertain fingers, and then selling the worksheets at 1Op. each or 6 for

5Op. We grossed 35.60p. Having deducted the cost of printing (1O.8Op.), Eric has kindly proposed that half the remainder should go to Guild funds. He has also received a promise that the Guild will receive prominent coverage in Scouting Magazine.

A great day. Our thanks to Eric for his insistence that Guild representatives must be allocated comfortable accomodation, meals (which I'm told were magnificent at any price), and a prime site for the exhibition stall.

BOOK REVIEWS

'THE MARLINSPIKE SAILOR' by Hervey Garrett Smith,
first pub. in G.B. by David & Charles (1972)(orig. pub. 1949)

This is a knotting classic, accepting the short time most knot books have been around. The author was a life- long yachtsman, American, whose skilful drawings brought a new clarity to the subject. The book is a delight just for the pictures; and the contents aimed at the practical boatman, heaving lines, canvas buckets, wooden bilge pumps. It is dated but very pleasantly so . . . for example, directions how to construct a wind-driven sail-boat race in the form of a weather vane mounted for amusement atop your outside privy! This marvellous work is marred by the appendix (a copy of some manufacturer's instructional pamphlet) on how to splice braid-on-braid ropes. Find an older edition in a second-hand book shop and avoid the intrusion.

'QUIPUS AND WITCHES' KNOTS' by Cyrus Lawrence Day,
pub. by the University of Kansas Press (1967)

Do you seek a cure for haemorrhoids, snake bite-or headache? In this scholarly work, Mr. Day (yes, the same C. L. Day respected for his 'Sailors' Knots') traces the use of magic knots, religious knots, knot calendars, and even the decimal logic of Peruvian quipus is analysed. He reveals just how very old knots really are...older than the wheel, fire, cultivation of the soil or harnessing the wind. The book contains illustrations from rare manuscripts of the slings used by Ancient Greek and Roman physicians; and the Constrictor Knot (often wrongly assumed to be Ashley's invention) is demonstrated to be at least a couple of thousand years older than generally supposed. Primitive people were not simple where knots were concerned.

BOOK LIST

'AN INTRODUCTION TO KNOTS' by E. T. Davies (I.G.K.T. member)*
pub. Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd. (1981),
price £3.OOp.

Soft-covered and pocket-sized with a concise index, Mr. Davies has made a very practical selection of about 60 knots and attachments, clearly illustrated. An ideal book for anyone beginning to need knots to use, slightly overpriced.

'NETS - How to Make, Mend and Preserve Them' by G. A. Steven,
pub. Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. (1960)(orig. 1950)

This book was selling for 7/6 in 1960; and it still surfaces from time to time in second-hand book shops for the decimal equivalent of that price. With clear instructions and drawings, Mr. Stevens (who was Naturalist at the Plymouth Laboratory of the Marine Biological Assoc. of the U.K.) explains the basic techniques and then gives us a few useful things to make.

'COWBOY ROPING AND ROPE TRICKS' by Chester Byers,
pub. by Dover Publications Inc. (1966)(orig. 1928),
price £1.05p.

This is another of those excellent modern re-prints of a fascinating old book long out of print. Worth the price just for the photographs of the author, Will Rogers, Fred Stone and Elsie Janis with ropes in their hands, it show you how to spin a lariat and then progress to stunts like the 'Crinoline', 'Butterfly' and 'Ocean Wave'. Rope spinning was once a part of circus, vaudeville and Scout camp fire. I haven't seen it done for years. Is there anyone who can still show us?

'ANGLERS' KNOTS in Gut and Nylon' by Stanley Barnes,
pub. Cornish Bro's Ltd. (1948)

A marvellous source book if you like to know where knots originated and what they were first called. Stanley Barnes, M.D., D.Sc., L1.D., F.R.C.P., was formerly Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Birmingham. The Stanley Barnes knot is named after him. It appears often in second-hand shops and is well worth the search for the many anecdotes about knotting it contains.

'MACRAME' by Dona Z. Meilach,
pub. by George Allen & Unwin (1971);
price £4.25p.

If you already own Virginia Hervey's books and you liked Bonny Schmid-Burleson's book, then this is the next one to look for; splendid illustrations, some in colour, of original work with a strong American West Coast influence.

'THE TECHNIQUE OF BASKETRY' by Virginia I. Hervey,
pub. BT Batsford Ltd. (1975);
£4.25p.

Forget old-fashioned wicker work or raffia! If you're jaded and wondering what else you could do with knotting and a chest full of cordage oddments, this is for you. A magnificent book full of ideas for original pots and containers created using knotting and wrapping techniques.

REMINDER

Annual subscriptions become due 1st. January, 1984,
and increase as follows:-   Jnr. £1.50p.   Snr. £7.50p.
                                  Families £10.00p.