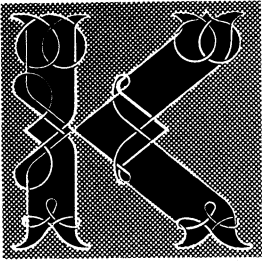
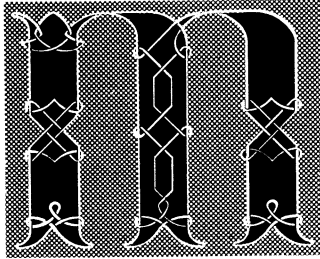


Issue No. 10
January (Winter) 1985

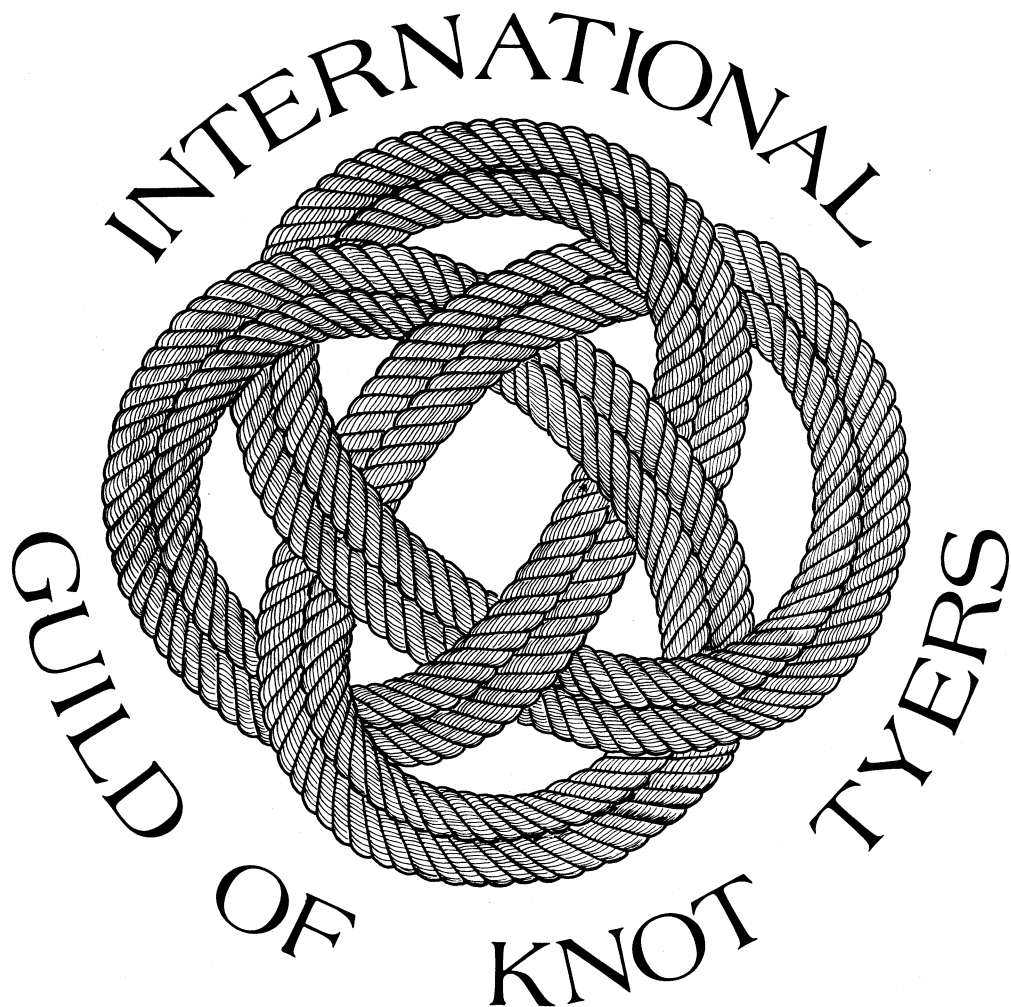


notting



matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE



"KNOTTING MATTERS"

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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Issue No. 10
January (Winter), 1985

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Editorial

There were cowboys in Australia too. Why is it not widely known? Perhaps because, unlike the Americans, they had no Hollywood equivalent to popularise them.

Knot-tying is (wrongly to some minds) always credited to sailormen. Could this, too, be just because a glorious Age of Sail has been portrayed expensively and exhaustively on film and in print? Surely, knotting and ropeworking evolved ashore. It can be argued we have the emphasis all wrong.

Before the Stone Age was an Age of Wood and Cordage (evidence of which has perished). Neolithic hands no doubt tied the so-called "sailors' knots". Later, harness makers devised better Turk's Heads than ever seamen did. Chinese women with no nautical heritage knew ornamental knots that still bewilder Westerners. Cathedrals and castles arose inside primitive lashups of scaffolding. Netmaking was a cottage industry. Tribal hunters and Renaissance artists; quarrymen and poachers; priests and farmers; all were familiar with knots. I know a woman who spent World War II tending barrage balloons in South London on Wandsworth Common. Her war effort was wire splicing.

In contrast, how brief was the reign of mighty sailing vessels: from Nelson's ships-o'-the-line to this century's windjammers, it was barely 150 years. Even in 1851, a sea captain complained that, in his crew of 56, only 3 could knot and splice.

Some of us heretics would like this Guild, at least, to get it right. Too much talk of ships and stuff puts off all those who view moving waters with dislike. Anyway, it's outdated. When all knotboards are nautical and each pub boasts a tiddly bellrope, then the real use of knots becomes blurred. Let's see more about knotting's true origins.

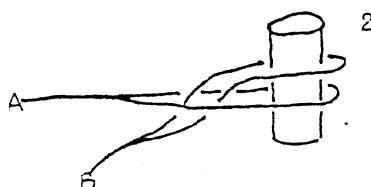
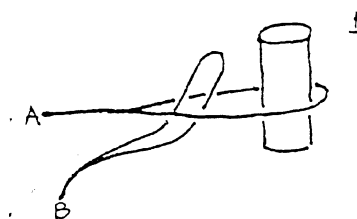
Mnemonic

"Reefing a sail or tying a parcel,
A Reef Knot the role will fulfill,
But joining two ends one should only use Bends
And a Reef Knot's a sure way to kill."

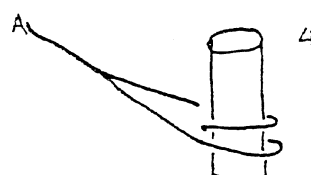
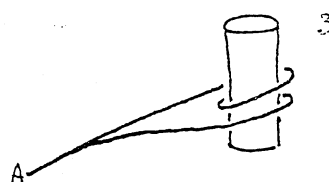
contributed by Stuart E. GRAINGER, Master Mariner.

Mooring Lines by TOM SOLLEY

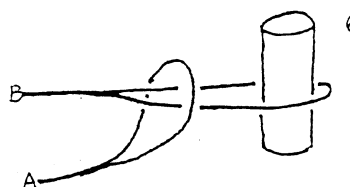
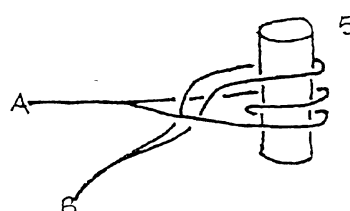
Most sailors are aware of the practice of looping-up when mooring to a post where another vessel has already moored. This courteous practice allows the other craft to free its line (A) without becoming entangled with the second line (B): figs 1 and 2.



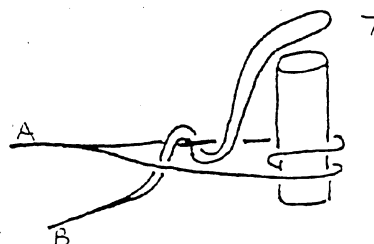
This method of mooring is fine when the first line has only its eye placed over the post, but sometimes a seaman places a full turn around the post to prevent it slipping upward during a fall and rise of the tide: figs 3 and 4.



If the post has such a full turn then a simple eye looped-up will result in an infuriating interlock when attempts are made to release the original vessel's line: figs 5 and 6.

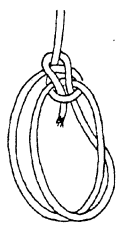
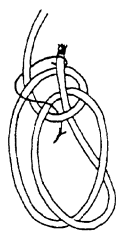
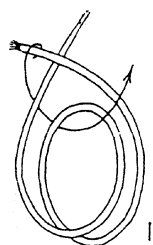


There is a simple solution to this problem: The visitor's line is looped-up as before and then a full turn is taken around the upper of the two parts of the eye leading to the upper turn around the post) then the visitor's eye is placed around the post as before: fig 7.

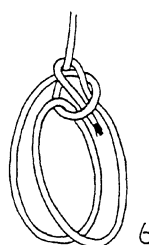
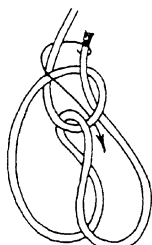
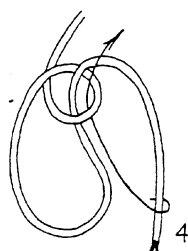


The second mooring line may now be hauled bar taut without trapping the original line. When the original line is slackened, it may be removed freely over the now bar-taut turn of the second line. Although this appears to be a complicated tangle, the first line can be freed with surprising ease.

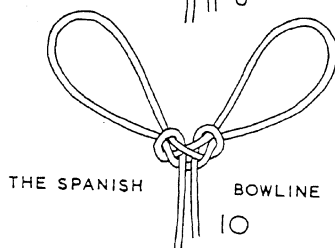
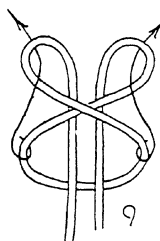
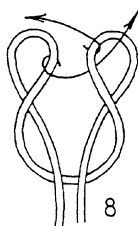
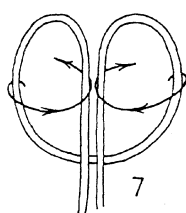
a page of knots



THE PORTUGUESE BOWLINE



THE FRENCH BOWLINE



THE SPANISH BOWLINE

by Eric Franklin

MANY of you frequently write to me about knots and I always try to answer. This time I am replying to a letter by courtesy of the Editor through this page. Here is the letter from T.L. S. W. Pain of Nottingham:

"For some time now we have been trying to find out how to tie a French Bowline. Neither our Scouters, nor the expert at the Boat Show have been able to enlighten us, and we wondered if you could find out if the knot exists, and if so, how to tie it."

Well, it does exist, although the Authorities seem to have some difference of opinion about it, and I can show you how to tie it! Let us, at the same time, deal with all the Bowlines with Continental names and kill more than one bird with the same stone.

Ashley, probably the greatest authority, does not give in "The Ashley Book of Knots" a French Bowline, but in describing the Portuguese Bowline he writes . . . "Felix Riesenberg mentions it in *Under Sail* (1915) and describes it in *Standard Seaman-ship* (1922) under the name French Bowline. He points out that the knot makes an excellent emergency boatswain's chair . . ."

The Portuguese Bowline (Query—French Bowline) and the way to tie it is shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3.

Graumont and Hensel, however, in their *Encyclopaedia of Knots* really go to town with their French Bowline. They describe the Portuguese Bowline (Fig. 3) but say . . . "It can be used for the same purpose as the French Bowline, but the latter is to be preferred." They describe and illustrate as the French Bowline, the knot shown in Figs. 4, 5 and 6 and say about it . . . "The French Bowline, or the Double Chaise de Calfat (Double Caulker's Chair) is superior to the ordinary Bowline as a sling, because a man can sit in the two loops more comfortably than in one. A man sits in one of the loops passing the other one about his chest and back under the armpits. The weight from sitting in one of the loops draws the loop under the arm taut."

In addition to this, these authors then describe the French Bowline on a Bight: this is made as in Figs. 4 and 5 but with a bight, and then finished similarly to the normal Bowline on a Bight. Not content with this, they later describe the False French Bowline in which no actual knot as such is made, but the parts are seized together in two places.

I do not think I would be too happy with the French Bowline—I prefer the Spanish Bowline which is shown in Figs 7 to 10. Ashley says . . . "There are only two well-known Double Loops . . . They are the Bowline on the Bight and the Spanish Bowline."

VOLUME LXI

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NUMBER 48

Quotation

" within the marble high hall, decorated with nets and ropes of red and brown"

'NINE PRINCES IN AMBER' by Roger Zelazny, pub. Faber & Faber (1970)

Sorry - entries closed 3 months ago, but it was nice to see this enterprise in *Yachting World*, Sep., 1984. (Advice was needed on items 3 and 4 . . . but the prizes redeem this lapse!)

A Ruddling good way to relax



BEING able to tie a small number of essential knots is second nature to most sailors, but how many know more than just the basic bowline, reef, clovehitch, round turn and two half hitches and sheet bend?

If you fancy your hand at knot tying, tie the following knots in small pieces of light line and send them to the address below, together with a completed entry form. You could win a Ruddles hammock — and first out of the bag wins a Ruddles tankard too! Entries can also be made at the Southampton Boat Show at the *Yachting World* stand, G6, where a sample of Ruddles ale awaits all entrants. Entries close 28 September.

Yachting World RUDDLES

Competition

Tie five knots and win one of three Ruddles hammocks and a Ruddles tankard



Tie these knots to win

1. Midshipman's hitch
2. Carrick bend
3. Bowline on a bight
4. Ashley's constrictor knot
5. Hunter's bend (Zeppelin bend)

Send to: *Yachting World/Ruddles* competition, Quadrant House, the Quadrant, Sutton Surrey SM2 5AS.

Name
Address

The Editor's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into, no staff of *Yachting World*, their printers or their families may enter.

FOOTROPE KNOTS

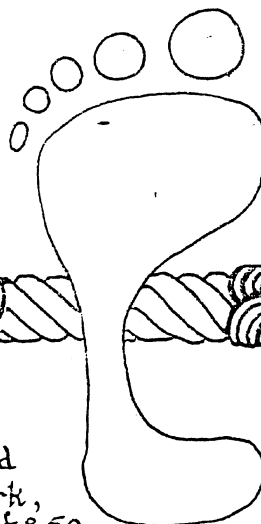
Des & Liz Pawson
501 Wherstead Road
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 8LL

Knotting Books, Tools, Materials

SAE. for full list

EXAMPLES:

Hard laid flax & cotton line · Loom cord
Well illustrated books from Denmark,
Raj Lund's 'Tovværks Kunst' (Rope Art) £8.50
'Måtter & Rosetter' (Mats & Rosettes) £7.50
12' Hardwood Fids £3.25 · Serving Mallets £7 & £8



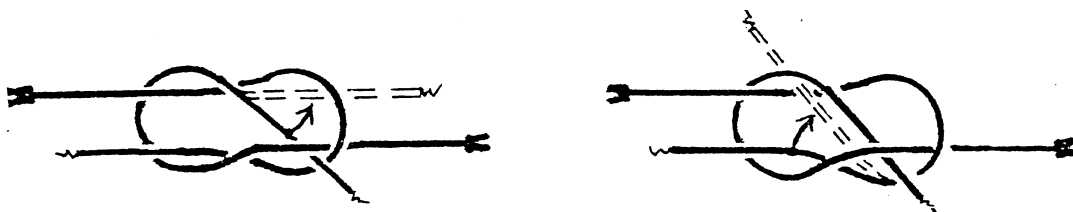
Trambles

with Desmond MANDEVILLE

TRANSFORMATION BY A TUCK?

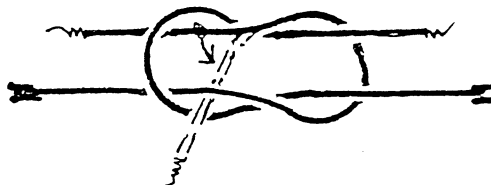
An experience common to us all, not only in our apprentice days, is to set out to tie one knot and end by tying another, quite different one. Often the two prove to be just one small tuck apart; so that, with patience, one can discover the fault and put it right - without untying completely and starting again. A single tuck transforms one knot into the other.

Are two knots like this in some way related, in view of the ease with which one transforms into the other? If so, the relationship is one that tolerates extreme differences of character. The Sheet Bend for instance is the most reliable of our simple bends. Yet it takes only a single tuck to transform it into either the worthless Thief Knot or else the temperamental Tumbling Thief, which will take a straight pull on the standing parts, and nothing else, to draw it up satisfactorily. Strange cousins, these two, for the dependable Sheet Bend!



The first to examine tuck-transforms seems to have been George Russell Shaw who, in *Knots, Useful & Ornamental* (1933 Edn.) looks at bends of the basic Carrick pattern. Of twenty arrangements that he thought theoretically possible, only eight constitute bends; but these eight he finds to be linked by a series of quite feasible tuck-transforms. Starting with the Square Knot (Reef Knot), that is to say, one can proceed a tuck at a time through six other bends, and finish with the Full Carrick Bend, without ever once untying and tying again. Quite a remarkable sequence.

Nevertheless, this early study missed some of the rich complexity of the subject. The Bends cannot really be thought of as linked together in a simple series, as beads are on a string. There are cross-linkages, too. At least half-a-dozen distinct routes from Granny to Reef can be identified - taking between three and five tucks each to execute. On the other hand there is no direct route, short of untying completely and starting afresh, from the Reef to the normal Sheet Bend. Every attempt produces merely the L.H. Sheet Bend:-



What this means is that a particular bend, the Reef let us say, is close - measured in tuck - transforms - to certain bends, and remote from certain others. Moreover, it can serve as a bridge between more distant neighbours; the Reef has links to one of the Carrick Bends, and also to the Ring or Water Knot, serving thus as an effective bridge between otherwise unrelated structures. The possibility begins to emerge of constructing a Map of the Bends, based on the tuck-transforms that exist between them. It is the purpose of this article to explore that possibility further.

TO TAKE A TRAMBLE THROUGH THE BENDS

Whatever would be the point of a Map of the Bends? One needs a map most, of course, if one is to plan a car trip, or a ramble on foot in the country. The latter in practice is often likely to be a circuit, progressing from point to point and finishing up just where one started out. A Tucker-Ramble, T-Ramble or TRAMBLE for short, means doing the same with Bends: progressing by tuck-transforms from Bend to Bend - naturally without untying or tying afresh - till one returns to the original starting point.

The Reef Knot forms a particularly good starting point, and there are four or five excellent TRAMBLES (one of which is described, below) starting from the Reef and visiting eight other different Bends, before returning to the Reef again. But just as the country rambles in a particular locality occasionally cross - a certain stile or gate, perhaps, occurring on more than one ramble- so one may find one bend turning up, occasionally, on more than one TRAMBLE. These are the cross linkages, mentioned above. Thus a map of the bends would serve to illustrate just how all these TRAMBLES relate to each other, as well as recording the pattern of tuck-transforms between the individual bends.

It is the essence of a map to be selective, to mark only the principal features; the choice depending on the scale. Once a basic 'grid' has been established, however, a map can be 'blown up' to include more and more detail. The understanding of the countryside which a map offers is exclusive, too: a waterfall and a mountain top cannot both occupy the same point on a map; there cannot be a river in the middle of a field if there is no river flowing in and out through its boundaries; and so on. Any first map of the bends is unlikely to be complete (and that shown below is not, even of the small area it sets out to cover) - but may well give useful clues as to what does - and does not - remain to be included.

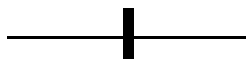
. . . . FIRST STUDY YOUR MAP

The Chart that follows is an attempt to map the bends of a small central zone, closely encircling the Carrick Bends. It comprises bends that are all reversible, that is to say, if you swap standing parts and working ends (making each working part into a standing end, and vice versa) you find your self with a bend of the same class. A Reef, reversed, gives another Reef - which is not true of the Fisherman's Knot. If you go only half so far (swap one standing part for its working end) you get a bend that occupies the diametrically opposite position on the Chart, and which we will call the Contrary. The Contrary of the Reef is the Thief Knot.

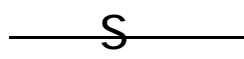
LINKS between Bends, effected by tuck-transforms and other simple manoeuvres, are shown on the Chart by lines (broad, thin or dotted) bearing symbols such as these:-




a Tuck involving
one working end



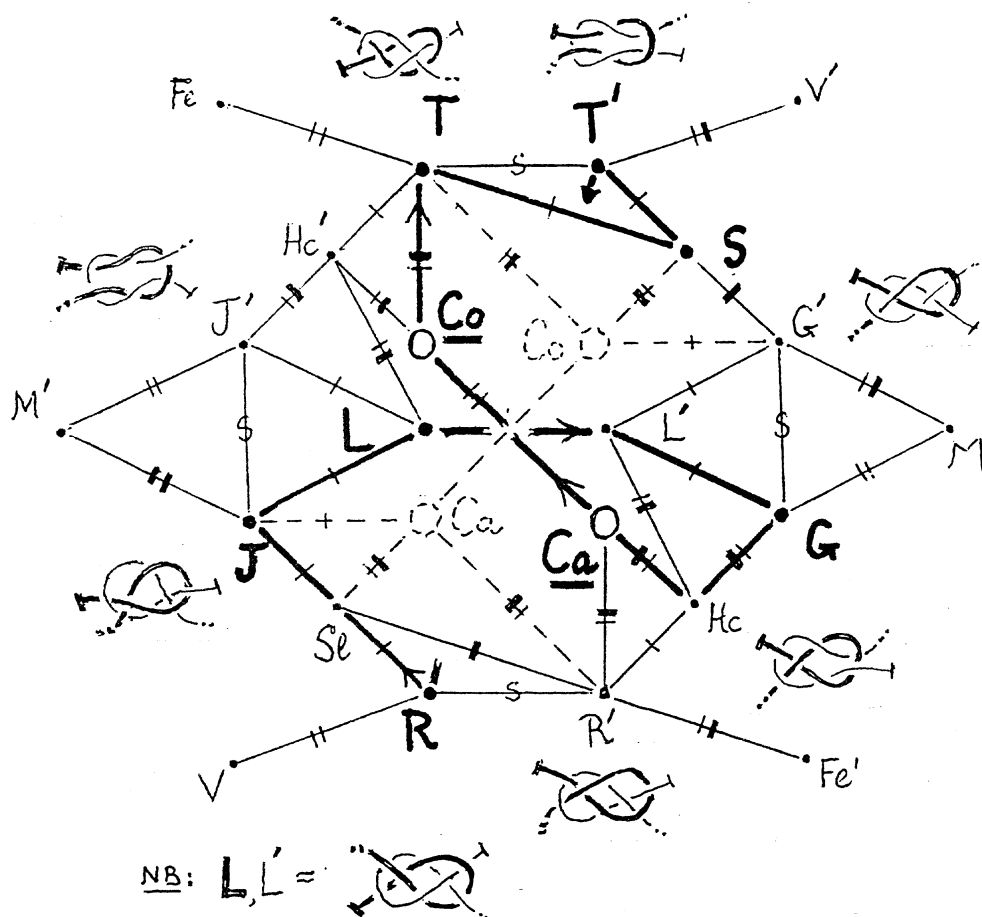
a Tuck involving
one standing part



a Shuffle, or
simple rearrangement

further, the symbol  indicates the exchange of one working end for its standing part.

Some of these links are exemplified in the BASIC TRAMBLE, shown on the Chart with a broad line, which will be described, step by step, later. This Tramble passes through points S₀ and H_c on the Chart - without stopping at either - the reason being that the steps on either side of them are alike, and can thus be doubled-up and taken together. Points L & L' are in practice identical.



Bends on the Chart are shown by letters as follows:-

G, J, R, S & T are the Granny, *Jinx (or Whatnot), Reef, Sheet Bend and *Tumbling Thief - bends marked with an *asterisk being illustrated with a thumbnail sketch.

C', J', R' & T' are *bends formed from G, J, R & T by internal rearrangement only. Each will be seen as the Contrary of the bend that is diametrically opposite, on the Chart.

The Full Carrick Bend with adjacent leads is Ca; with opposite leads, Co.

Hc, Hc' are forms of the *Half Carrick Bend, A.1444

L, L', similarly, of the *Single Carrick Bend, A.1445

Fe, M, & V are the Figure-of-Eight, Matthew Walker & Overhand Bends, tied with opposite leads: A.1411, A801 (1426), A.1412

Fe', M', V' are the same bends, but tied with parallel leads, viz. A.531, A.776 (1408), A.1410

Se is the Left-Hand Sheet Bend, A.1432

HANDEDNESS. Certain bends shown on the Chart combine both right-handed and left-handed twists or loops, and may be regarded as neutral overall. These are:-

R,R'; T,T'; L,L'; and Fe,Fe'.

Apart from these, all bends to the left of the Chart are left-handed; those on the right, right-handed.

There must also be a "mirror-image" chart, that will show all the same bends, but of an opposite handedness.

The two charts are linked in a manner indicated here by dotted lines. (The locations for Ca & Co shown as dotted circles belong in fact to the other chart; each is linked at three points, as shown, to this chart. Also Ca & Co on this chart - full circles - will have corresponding links to the other chart. These links are for simplicity omitted)

. . . . THEN PROCEED STEP BY STEP.

The BASIC TRANBLE - shown on the Chart with a broad line - runs as follows. NB to secure the handedness shown on the Chart and described above, one should start with the Reef tied: right-over-left, left-over-right.

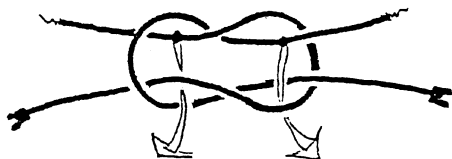
R ———→ J ———→ L ———→ G ———→ Ca ———→ Co ———→

→

→ T ———→ S ———→ T' ———→ R

Step ONE --> J

Tuck both working ends out through the twist of the lead strands.



Step TWO J --> L

Lay working ends so as not to cross; pull one out through the other loop, crossing above its own lead strand.



Step THREE L --> G

Pull the other working end out, similarly.

Step FOUR C --> Ca

Close loops to Carrick pattern. Pull one working end, and its standing part, opposite ways, through the other loop. Repeat this operation with the other pair of ends.

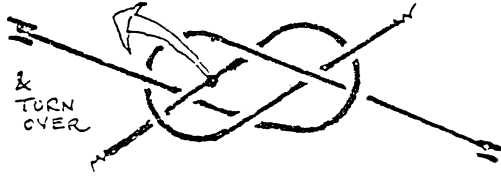
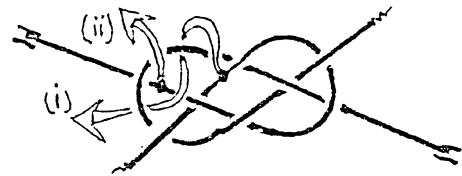


Step FIVE Ca --> Co

Withdraw one working end from under its lead strand, and re-tuck in the reverse direction. Turn over, and repeat with the other working end.

Step SIX Co --> T

Withdraw one working end, and lay it between its lead strand and the other loop; lock it there by pulling the lead strand out through that loop.

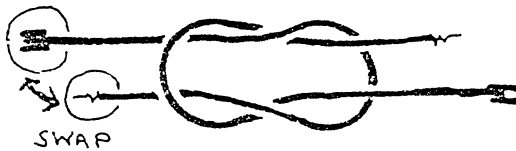
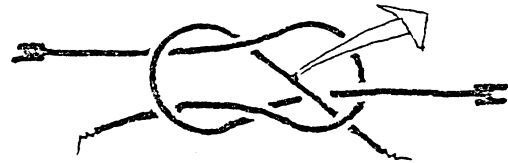


Step SEVEN, T--> S

Pull out one working end alongside its own standing part.

Step EIGHTS --> T'

Do the same with the other working end.



Step NINE T' --> R

Exchange one working end for its own standing part.

Notes to the BASIC TRAMBLE:-

- (i) Timing : with practice the Basic Tramble can be completed in two minutes - or even less.
- (ii) Reverse direction : the Basic Tramble may readily be executed in the reverse direction.
- (iii) Step 4 1/2 : the first tuck only of Step Five produces a stable bend that draws up well, and is of interest because it corresponds to the point at the very centre of the Chart.

It is the -Cr - Full Carrick Bend.

- (iv) Step Five, as a whole, will be seen to involve a complete change of handedness (from rr - Ca to ee - Co), as required by the Chart.

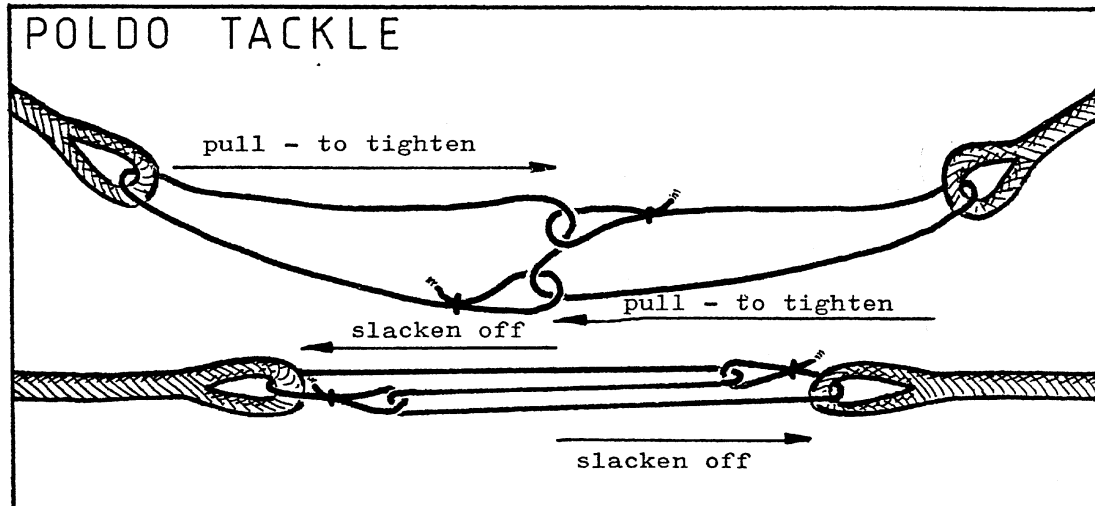
Quotation

"George made regular inspections of all the sailing gear, especially the ropes and halliards, which were subject to considerable wear. We were always digging out our sewing kits to mend tears or to whip the ends of frayed ropes. Every piece of cordage needed constant adjustment, as the flax ropes stretched slack when dry and shrank into iron rods when wet. We found the best technique was to set them up as taut as possible when dry, and then keep them doused with water, Arthur was our rope specialist. His job was to keep the coils of rope neatly stowed and ready for action, and with so much rope on board it kept him busy."

'THE BRENDAN VOYAGE' by Tim Severin, pub. Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. (1978)

cy canute looks at the Poldo Tackle

Pricey modern gadgets work better than old-fashioned ones until they fail. Then there is often no choice but to chuck them away. Singlehanded sailors and wilderness pioneers quickly learn this truth. A replacement made of pre-Industrial Revolution materials, wood, leather or cordage, may be cruder but it will work and can be mended again and again.



So I like the Poldo Tackle which Italians Bigon and Regazzoni picture on page 118 of their 'Guide to Knots', published in G.B. by the Century Publishing Co. Ltd. last year. The open/take-up-the-slack/shut arrangement is versatile; and ideas occur for adjustable, tensioning and quick-release devices.

The sole snag I see is that crossed bights or elbows like that cut breaking strengths in half: but our 'hi-tech' cordage is usually many times the safe working load - so, no problem.

I'm a cynical old dog, averse to new tricks, but I admit this contrivance is a splendid demonstration of how knots make rope work. Now - someone - tell me, what use is it?

Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions for 1985 were due on 1st. January. They remain unchanged - £1.50 for Juniors (under 16); £7.50 for Seniors; and £10.00 for Families. Payment goes to Frank HARRIS, the Hon. Membership Secretary, please ladies and gentlemen, at 14, Games House, Springfield Grove, Charlton, London SE7 7TN, England (cheques, etc., payable to 'The International Guild of Knot Tyers').

An historic quest

Brian FIELD of Maldon, Essex, draws our attention to an intriguing statement appearing in *KNOTS, TIES & SPLICES* by J. Tom Burgess, originally published in 1884, since revised and rewritten and reprinted in a modern paperback edition. Found in Chapter 1 - Introduction, it reads; "Napoleon ennobled, on one occasion, an inventor who was able to tie a secure knot in a piece of stretched string."

Can someone track down for us the story behind this seemingly extravagant claim?

Swinging the Lead by the Editor

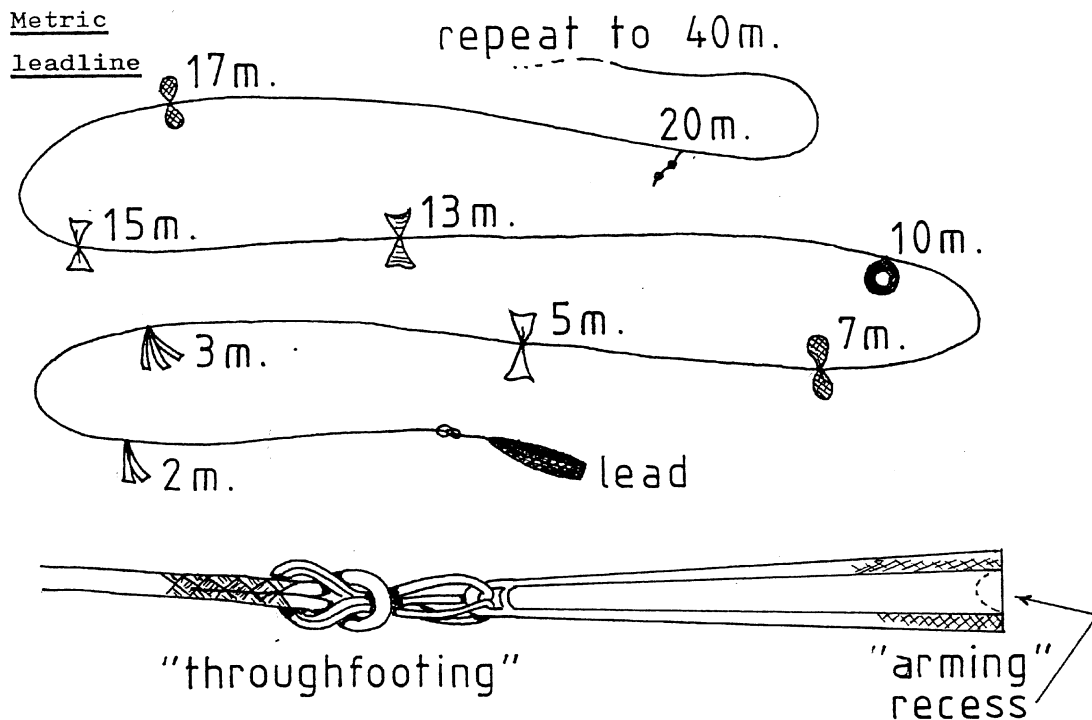
The knotted alphabets of Mandeville and McBeath (issues 4 and 7) have fascinated a few readers and a New Zealander is working on yet another. Stalwart Guild member Quinton WINCH - journalist and knot author - points out, however, that a more practical example of a rope that "speaks" is the sailor's lead-and-line used to sound water depths.

An able seaman's work aboard sailing ships must have been arduous indeed when "swinging the lead" could become a term for pretended sickness or failure to pull one's weight: leadsmen needed strength, skill and endurance. They stood on a plank (later a hinged platform) projecting outboard from the "chains" or ledges which spread the shrouds of a forward mast, body weight leant upon only a canvas apron. Wet, wind and cold all went with the job.

The lead (10-14lbs.) was swung like a pendulum, one hand gripping a round turn of the one-and-an-eighth-inch line, the other holding the remaining 25 fathoms coiled. After working up to 2 or 3 complete backward circles (which some thought unnecessary flamboyance) it was released smartly to fly ahead in the direction the ship was heading. Judged right, it sank and touched bottom with the line straight up-and-down as the ship's way brought it back level with the leadman.

This method was varied for deep sea soundings so that the lead could be placed sufficiently far forward to reach bottom before the leadman was carried past it. Men had to be stationed along the ship's side, each holding his part of the coiled line. The first man dropped the lead, then each man in turn let go his coil as the strain fell on it. A "lazy leadman" stood by to coil the incoming line, right hand over and left hand under to make a right-handed coil and thus prevent kinking. A lighter, shorter lead-and-line was used in small boats.

As chains do not exist on modern warships, the present-day 4.5-6.3kg. lead cannot be hove. Should boat hooks or hitchers, oars and spars, or echo sounders not do the trick, then sounding is done with the vessel slowed or stopped from abreast the bridge. The 50 metres of 9mm. special waxed hemp line is hauled in and the depth of water is read off by means of an odd yet effective system of marks which have changed little since Nelson's day (see 'Metric leadline' above).



Leadlines are these days marked in metres as follows:-.

2 metres = 2 strips of leather,

3 metres = 3 strips of leather,

5 metres = a piece of white duck (i.e. light sail canvas)

7 metres = a piece of red bunting (coarse woolen flag fabric),

10 metres = a leather washer,

13 metres = a piece of blue serge (twill-weave worsted),

15 metres = a piece of white duck, once more,

17 metres = a piece of red bunting, again,

20 metres = two knots,

(this sequence being repeated to 40 metres).

On a dark Winter's night, when hands are benumbed with cold, marks are put to the lips which can distinguish instantly duck from bunting, bunting from serge.

Depth markings (2,3,5,7 metres, etc.) are sung out by the leadsman to the bridge in time-honoured fashion, thus (for red bunting - 7 metres); "By the MARK SEVEN." This is the source of American humorist Samuel Clemens's pen-name 'Mark Twain', for he was a young pilot on Mississippi-Missouri stern-wheeler riverboats who knew the leadline's worth. Once, when asked by a passenger if he was the man who knew where the mudbanks were, he said; "Madam, I'm the man who knows where they ain't."

Unmarked intermediate depths (4,6,8,9 metres, etc.) are called "deeps", e.g. "DEEP NINE", but even these can be identified with short ends of marline thrust through the leadline. Fractions of metres are called thus; "And a QUARTER six" (6.25m.); "And a HALF six" (6.5m.); "A QUARTER LESS SEVEN" (6.75m.). This is where scope existed for disgruntled leadsmen in my day to get away with calculated impertinence. Certain captains liked leadsmen in the chains when entering harbour just to create an impression, although their soundings were unneeded and unheeded. So, a hand could call anything which sounded right...and a frequent offering' was; "It AIN'T 'ARF cold, Sir!"

Leadlines have a long eye splice at the working end, and the lead has a hide becket through it. These two loops are "throughfooted", forming a strap bend. The standing end of the leadline is back spliced. A hollow recess in the bottom of the lead can be "armed" with tallow to bring up samples of the sea-bed (sand, shingle, mud, etc.) to help the navigator fix his position in the chart.

It is prudent not to over-estimate the depths into which you are heading and seamen advisedly call a quarter of a metre LESS than the actual soundings. Lines are also measured and marked without the lead weight attached, to gain a few extra centimetres of safety margin.

Letters

Dear Geoffrey,

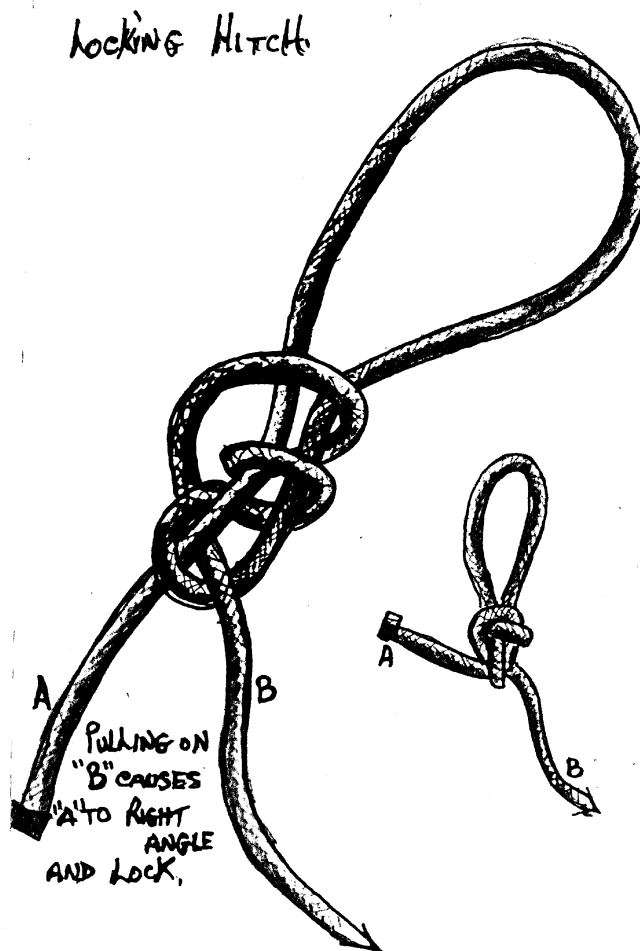
I apologise for not being able to attend the AGM at Greenwich.... However, my enthusiasm for the Guild has not wavered: neither has my indulging with a piece of string. I have enclosed a hitch that I would like you to analyse. I call it a "locking hitch". You will see why I cannot find a hitch, outside of a figure-of-eight on a line that is similar. I particularly like this one as it can be used - I have - as an adjustable dog's lead (good for "Jack Russells"). If you cannot find its equal, then it is open for the "World Fair knot purse"!

Regards to you,

Ted UPTON

23-10-84

Watton-at-Stone,
Herts.



Hello Geoffrey,

I read the newsletters with great delight, recommend the organisation to everyone, and am proud to be a member. My boat's name, by the way, is "Katy", and I think of the Guild ("K.T.") each time I say her name.

Suggested formal name for knot-tyers: ligators or ligaturists, from the Latin "ligare" (to bind or fasten). Related to ligament, religion, rely, ally and many other words. Rich in connotation, concise, specific.

Good luck and so long,

Brion TOSS

Maine, U.S.A.

30th. June, 1984

Dear Mr. Editor,

One Knot - It has to be the 'double overhand'. Easy to tie, decorative, and it does nearly every thing...slip, stopper, blood, water, fisherman's, true lovers, transom, Hunter's (I think), oh - and reef.

There must be more, but that's all I could find as a beginner in Knottery.

Yours sincerely,

Andy KENNEDY

Clapham, London

3rd. Sept., 1984

Mr. Frank G. Harris
Hon. Membership Secretary,

Dear Frank,

Thank you very much for the nine (9) issues of "Knotting Matters". Immediately upon receipt, I shot the cat, kicked the dogs out of the door, locked my dear wife in the barn, ripped out the phone, smashed the telly and brewed a gallon of Costa Rica's best brew and settled down to devour some of the best reading material I've seen in a long, long time.

From the first to the ninth issue, just fabulous. It's just the type of organisation that has been needed for so long. And when I think that I'm a part of it, I'm re-thrilled. My congratulations to the founding fathers.

Re. the first paragraph above, Dear Wife is back in the kitchen and the electronics have been replaced and I'm back to ear rubbing with the dogs. But I must admit "Knotting Matters" is truly fast and factual material which I really enjoy. Believe it or not, besides the technical exchange of gossip and technique, I have spent several great hours going over the membership list in the April issue. The addresses are at the same time somewhat humorous and enlightening in that so many place names are found in these United States.....

Presently I work as an "Exhibit Interpreter" which includes selling tickets to our exhibits at the Lore Oyster House and the restored Drum Point Lighthouse. I also take or give guided tours through these exhibits and lie to the folks as best I can. Mostly I'm down at the Oyster House being more familiar with the "waterman's" side of affairs.

And at the moment I'm arranging some "hang-them-from-the-rafters" coils of manila tow rope to fill up the corners of the "small craft" exhibition the second floor. With a length of the same manila I make a button (Ashley's 880) and button it into a small eye to act as a belt or gasket to hold the hanging coils tightly together. Simple enough and the exhibit director thinks they're just great.

So thanks again for the K-M issues and also for the additional papers. I'll get around to setting myself up as the local representative during the coming months.

Respectfully,
Dick ROMING

Maryland, U.S.A.
18 October 1984

Dear Geoffrey,

Thanks for the programme of the General Meeting of the 6 Oct 84. Unfortunately it arrived about a week after the event. It therefore seemed a little pointless sending back the attendance chit. However, both Robert HARLAND and myself express our regrets at not being present.

Personally, I can't wait to meet my fellow members and will make every effort to do so when I am on leave in the U.K. That will probably be during the Autumn of 1985.

At the moment I am in the middle of making a bell rope for the Merchant Navy Officers' Club. When I present it, I will do so with the compliments of the "International Guild of Knot Tyers".

Robert owns a cruising yacht and both of us are busy "tiddlying" it up with a bit of fancy rope work. It all takes time though, mostly due to the large amounts of San Miguel (the local brew) which we consume during our deliberations. Anyway, as you can see, we are keeping our hands in at this end although suitable material is difficult to come by, believe it or not.

Please give my regards to Mr. and Mrs. Holliss of the Rope Shop at Emdworth when you are next in contact with them. I knew them well when I was serving in Portsmouth, and have had many happy dealings with them.

Keep sending the quarterly news letters and other "bumph"; it is all read avidly out here. We, in turn, will try and think of some appropriate contribution that we can make to your excellent News Letter.

-

Yours sincerely,
Bob JONES

Hong Kong
29 October 84

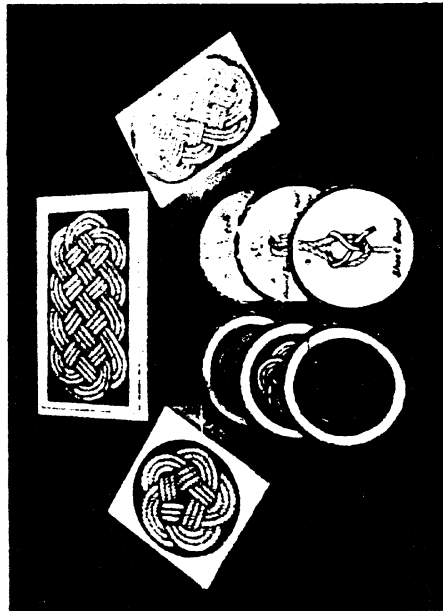
Definition

"STONNICKY" - a rope's end, often knotted, used aboard ship to chase sluggards; a bo'sun's hastener".

Turk's Head Bangles
in a wide range of
materials and colours.



Boxes
of lime or sycamore
hand decorated with
knot motifs in
pyrography.



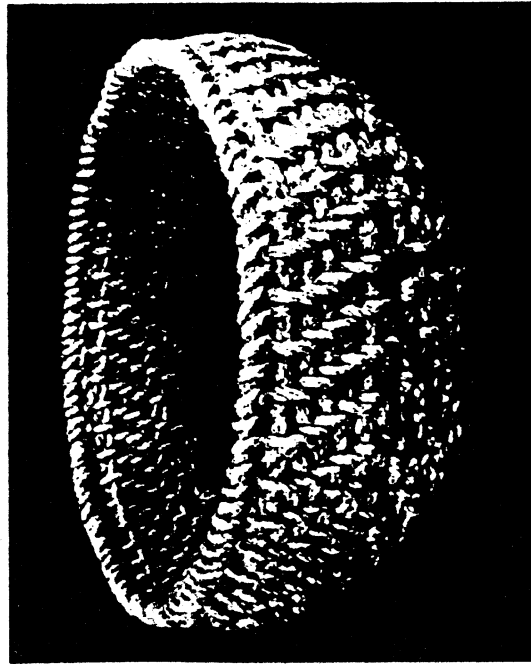
Coasters
pyrographically decorated
by hand on various wood
vencers, with a rope
surround.



Key Rings
with Monkey's Fist or
Turk's Head tags.

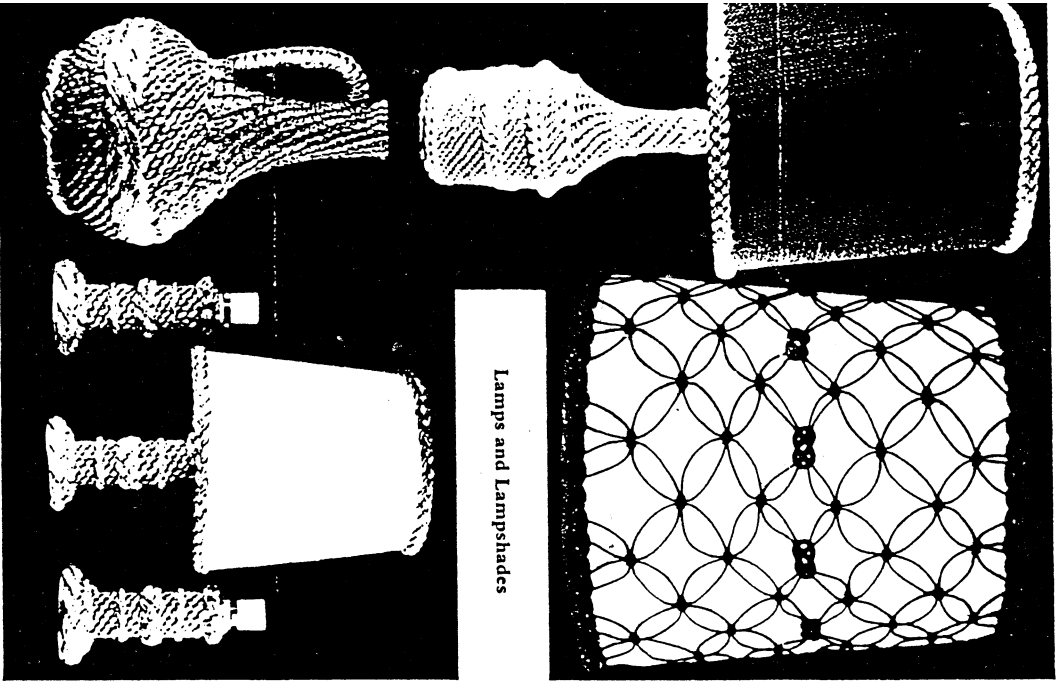
Ropecraft

by Stuart Grainger



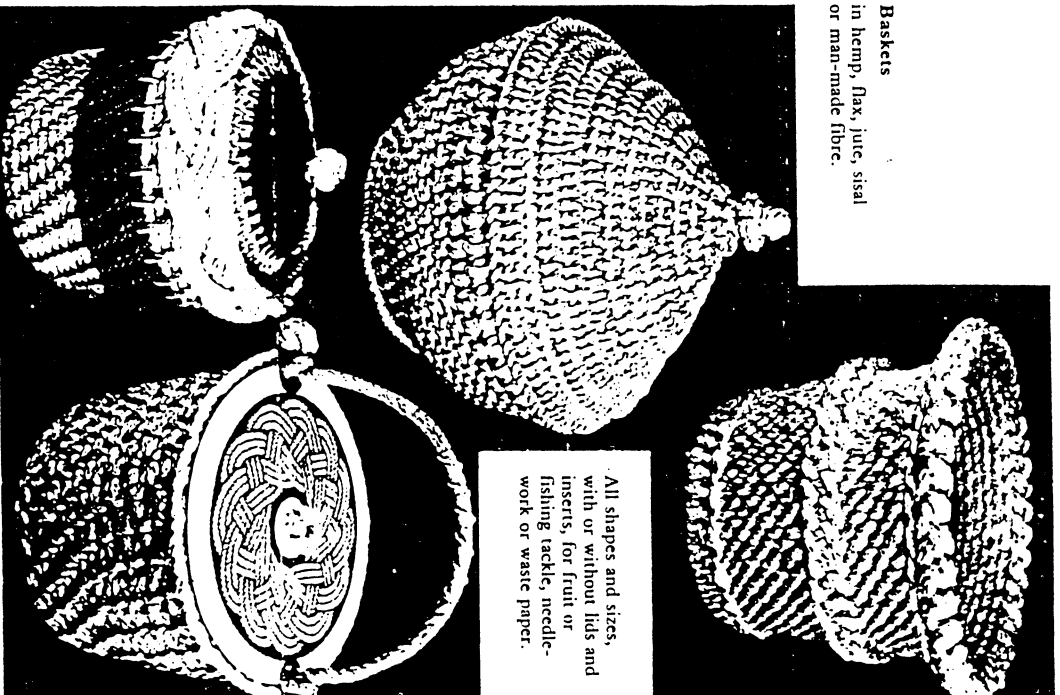
Stuart Grainger is a Master Mariner, a Member of the Devon Guild of Craftsmen, author and illustrator of several books and numerous articles on craft subjects. His work in rope and cordage uses the ancient techniques developed in sailing ships but brought up to date in original designs for modern environments. Some of the photographs included here feature standard items normally held in stock, others are exhibition or specially commissioned pieces.

Stuart Grainger, Perchwood Creek, Tuckenhay, Totnes, Devon TQ9 7EQ.



Lamps and Lampshades

Baskets
in hemp, flax, jute, sisal
or man-made fibre.



All shapes and sizes,
with or without lids and
inserts, for fruit or
fishing tackle, needle-
work or waste paper.

Guild President

Percy W. BLANDFORD's 2-year term of office ends in April, 1985, and nominations for his successor are now invited. The election will be held at April's A.G.M.

Last October at Greenwich, Eric FRANKLIN was nominated as a candidate for this Presidential election. Eric is a Guild founder-member who has contributed to the Guild's growth in many ways, compiling a draft Constitution, representing us to the Scouting movement, and serving since the outset as an I.G.K.T. committee member. He is an eminent knot author. His profile may be read in 'K.M.' issue No. 5, page 14.

Other nominations from home and abroad must reach the Hon. Secretary not later than 31-3-85. Proposals should be in writing (the consent to serve a minimum of 2 years in office having first been obtained) and signed by proposer and seconder. A pen-picture would be appreciated by members who may not be familiar with the candidate.

A.G.M. 1985

The third A.G.M. of the I.G.K.T. will be held on Saturday, 13th. April, 1985, aboard the R.N.R. London Division's H.M.S. President, alongside the Thames North Embankment in King's Reach, London E.C.'4.

The day's programme starts at 10 a.m, with the arrival of members, arranging exhibits, meeting and chatting (the organiser might even manage the provision of coffee this time!). At 11 a.m. the Guild's A.G.M. business agenda begins.

Lunch - at a modest cost - will be arranged aboard nearby H.M.S. Chrysanthemum. From 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. when we disperse, there will be a number of presentations and talks strictly linked to our interests in rope and knots.

Do contact the organiser, Geoffrey BUDWORTH, if you are willing to talk, demonstrate or instruct us during the afternoon.

Visit

Frank THOMPSON has secured an invitation for members to visit the sail loft where Jim LAWRENCE of Brightlingsea works (and Frank too). The date is Saturday, 4th. May, 1985. The outing suggested is a morning look round the loft and work in progress, with a short talk on how sails are made; then, after lunch (plenty of pubs and cafes), a practical demonstration of the hand work (splices, rat-tails, grommets, roping, cringles, eyelets, baggywrinkle, etc.) that goes into sailmaking.

The address of the loft is 22/28, Tower Street, Brightlingsea, Essex. It's not far from the town centre on a road leading down to the waterside. There's a large forecourt and street parking, as well as a free car park near the town centre.

Those planning to enjoy this day out, drop a line to Frank THOMPSON now. On the day, come prepared NOT to smoke (a cigarette burn can write off a £2,500 sail) and wear indoor slippers or stockinged feet on the cutting floor (which must be spotless for making white sails).

Quotatoin

"In the earlier days of the Range the rope was made usually of buffalo-hide, but the later cowboys threw ropes of rawhide or, particularly in Texas, of' fine hemp.

If of hide, they commonly were a half inch in diameter and were braided from four strands, sometimes from as many as eight. If of hemp, their diameter ordinarily was three-quarters of an inch. They varied in length from a minimum of forty to a maximum of seventy feet.

The loop was formed by passing one end of the rope through the "hondo" at the rope's other end. This hondo, or, as often called, "honda", was sometimes a cunningly devised, knotted or spliced eyelet, each in the rope itself and lined with smooth leather; sometimes a metal ring; but more commonly was a stout rawhide or brass object shaped like an inverted letter "U", with a bar across its opening and firmly attached, at the middle of the bar, to the rope.

Lariats varied in length, not only because of the differing capabilities or preferences of their wielders, but also because of differences in the methods of using them. Although the manner of enlarging the noose and throwing it was universally the same, the home end of a Texan's rope very commonly, before the throw, was tied by a half hitch to the saddle horn. No such fastening was attempted in the far Southwest or in the Northwest, except by occasional men, and by them only when roping animals of light weight.

Because the last few feet at the home end of a thus "tied" lariat were necessarily passive, the user of that style needed more length in his rope than did the man who threw a "free" reata and thus, in other technical, interchangeable terms for this form of throw, "dallied", "daled", "vuelted", "felted", or "dale vuelted", his rope. Each of these five interchangeable terms was derived, seemingly, from the Spanish phrase "dar la vuelta", which means to give a turn to a rope or to belay it.

Practically speaking, the Texan used a long lariat, but actively employed only a part of it."

'THE COWBOY' by Philip Ashton Rollins, published by Charles Scribner's Sons (1922)

New Members, etc.

New Members (1-8-84 to 31-10-84)

BIGGS, Chas. N.	The Hollies, Nash Lee Road, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks;
COLLIER, Bernard N.	The Poplars, 1, St. Agnes Road, Noak Hill, Billericay, Essex;
CORTESE, Agostina	Cannaregio 4925, .30121 Venice, Italy;
ELY, George E.	1247, Neptune Avenue, Wilmington, CA907Lt4, U.S.A;
FIELD, Tim J.	58, Estcourt Avenue, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3ET;
KEMP, Ian	12, Southwick Street, Southwick, Brighton BN4 4ND;
KROGH, Steen	Klovermarksvej 12, 9800 Hjorring, Denmark;
LISTER, David	12, Vaughan Avenue, Grimsby, South Humberside DN32 8QB;
PAYNE G.W. & Family	Little RosemorranFarm, Gulval, Penzance , Cornwall ;
ROMING, R.M. (Dick)	Box 80, Coster Road, Lusby, Md20657, U.S.A
ROWLEY Jerry	8021, Holy Cross Place, Los Angeles, CA90045, TJ.S.A;
SMITH, Leslie G.	111, Connaught Road, Brookwood, Surrey GU24 OEU;
STAPLES, Bruce	114, Linacre Road, Hampton 3188, Victoria, Australia;
STORER, George	76, Wolseley Road, Milehouse, Plymouth, Devon PL2 3BP.

Changes of Address

BOGEL, Bill	after 'Madrid' delete '24'; insert 28044;
CANNINGS, G.	119, Manor Drive, Worcester Park, Surrey;
DEVINE, Anne	c/o Mr. P. Devine, 18, East Beeches Road, Crowborough, Sussex;
EATON, Mike	1, Albany Villas, Millbrook, Cornwall PL10 1BX;
HAWES, John	37a, Market Street, Cirencester, Glouc. GL7 2NX;
HUNTER, Dr. E.A.	6, Gayton Court, Somers Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9DX;
JOHNS, Simon	1, Raglan Street (Top Left Flat), Dundee;
KIRBY, Albert	94, North Street, Emsworth, Hants. PO10 2PN;
OSBORNE, P. & S.	LCP, BAOR, B.F.P.O.

Delete (Membership Lapsed)

Richard ARNOLD; C.G. BELLINGHAM; Chas. CHARLES-DUNNE; Robert A. COX;
R. CRAVEN; Tony DIXON; Ron W. EVANS; Syd EVANS; Sir Fredk. HARMER; W.J.
HEARTH; R. HENDERSON; Thomas HOPTON; George KING; Tom MEDDINGS; David
MILNE; P. MORGAN; Steven ROWLEY, W. SMITH; John N. TORRENT; A.
WALBRIDGE; Mrs. Helen WARD; A.J. WOOD.

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Puzzle - STEALING BELL ROPES

In the tower of a church two bell ropes pass through small holes a foot apart in a high ceiling and hang down to the floor of a room. A skilled acrobat, carrying a knife and bent on stealing as much of the two ropes as possible, finds that the stairway leading above the ceiling is barred by a locked door. There are no ladders or other objects on which he can stand, and so he must accomplish his theft by climbing the ropes hand over hand and cutting them at points as high as possible. The ceiling is so high, however, that a fall from even one-third the height could be fatal. By what procedure can he obtain a maximum amount of rope?

Solution - in April's issue No. 11

Oddment

Which is the slenderest bend possible? A spliced join is, of course, slenderer than any bend; but, if a splice is out of the question, then Desmond MANDEVILLE believes his Tumbling Thief Knot (see 'The Alphabend', issue 4, page 5, letter 'T') may be it. A Tumbling Thief (simple bend, not centre-tucked) in 0.2" dia. braided cord can be worked slender enough to pull through a 0.5" internal dia. hole or tube quite easily if the ends are cut quite short. A Reef Knot or Sheetbend goes through only with great difficulty...a Granny not at all. The Harness Bend comes nearest, but - he thinks - the Tumbling Thief has it!

Quotation

Sailors wore bells to tell the time. They would shake their wrists, shout "Six bells", swallow cups of hot tar, sing several "Yo Ho Hos", tie knots in each other's appendages and hornpipe the dawn away.

'ADOLF HITLER - MY PART IN HIS DOWNFALL', by Spike Milligan, pub. Penguin Books Ltd. (1971)