

ISSUE 52 SPRING - APRIL 1996

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# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the

The logo is a circular emblem. In the center is a detailed illustration of a reef knot (square knot). The words "INTERNATIONAL" and "TYERS" are written in an arc along the top and right sides of the circle, respectively. The words "GUILD OF KNOT" are written in an arc along the bottom and left sides of the circle, respectively.

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# KNOTTING MATTERS

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER of  
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS  
ISSUE No. 52    SPRING - APRIL 1996

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## EDITORS BYTES AND PIECES

Well! What a Whopper **KM 51** was! We can only take the credit for the items included, not the layout or the type face or the completeness or otherwise of the items used. We felt there was no point in typing all the text only to pay the printer to retype it. So we sent him all the originals and let him get on with it. He has done an admiral job for such a large bundle. It was a little late getting out but to be fair it did go to press at the printers busiest time, CHRISTMAS! Also it was nearly 100 pages instead of the more normal 20 or 30. By shrinking the font size to make one and a half pages fit on one page and other tricks he did well to get it down to 84 pages. Now the good news.

The Editor has a new computer. For those interested a quick description. Hard drive: 1.6 Gigabyte, 12ms EIDE: Motherboard: 486 DX4-100Mhz CPU; 1.44Mb Floppy drive; Scanner: Umax Vista T630 300x600dpi colour; Printer: Brother HL-660 Laser

(a true 600 Dpi printer). The software we have is Word Perfect 6 for windows, MS Word, and paint packages. Now the editors have to get used to using the new more powerful packages to produce this issue. With only three weeks to learn to drive this animal, we will make fewer mistakes and have a better look by next issue.

We have had another bumper bundle of letters and articles for **KM52**, and will be using it all by **KM53**, but this issue is as much as we could do in the time. Sorry if its a little late. One thing I did miss out in **KM51** is the name of the photographer for the Half AGM photos, Willeke van der Ham. She has promised to be the official 'Happy Snapper' for the AGM at Guilwell too, thank you Willeke. There are many articles and letters that we desperately wanted to include this time but it would have made this issue too late to reach you in time before the AGM. Please bear with us for one more issue and we can then take all the blame for all the mistakes.

We both hope to see as many of you at the AGM as can make it. Please feel free to speak to us and make sure I (Lonnie) make a note of anything you want me to lookup or do for you when I get home. If you let me forget to make a note I will definitely forget. Comes from getting old, well thats my excuse.

In **KM51** I published a knot, a whim really, but couldn't find the letter that went with it to give credit to the author. Well the coat zipper tag was cleverly remembered by Peter Williams from Abberystwyth. It has turned into one of three or four interesting knots that I try to entertain groups with when they can already do the Scout Tenderfoot Knots and I have got nothing to show them. Everybody likes it. Not bad for a notelet written to me in just 90 words or so, is it? Now I told you that so I can ask you this. Everyone has a book in them, but some times its the ditties from ones life that stick in history. This knot was taught to Peter in a van on a short journey up a mountain, he wrote it down on a sheet of toilet paper, (well it was about that size) and sent

it to **KM** to share. I'm sure you have at least one notelet in you, don't you?

From Jeff Wyatt - Guild Librarian, Dunstable, Beds... I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those Guild members who in the past have donated material to the Guild Library, particularly Pieter van der Griend and Jan Hoefnagel for their large contributions just recently.

Sincere apologies for not publicly thanking contributors in the past, it is my intention to remedy this in the future with regular acknowledgements in **KM**.

So please continue to support your library which is rapidly becoming a unique collection of knotting material.

## Secretary's Blotter

In a rush as always, just getting ready to creep off on holiday for a couple of weeks, after a busy winter at work wrestling with the elements attempting,

although not always successfully, to deliver electricity. Looking back to KM51, you may have noticed that when the editor said that he just wanted a page from me, he meant it, so when I rambled on as usual, I was reduced in size until I could only be read with a magnifying glass. Point taken (some hope), so without further ado, I will dive in.

I must start by thanking all those who sent me cards for Christmas and the New Year, they were all greatly appreciated. Thank you also to those who send me letters just letting me know what is going on in the outside world, it is this correspondence which makes the Secretaries role so satisfying. Some of the comments made are quite interesting, and as one of our American cousins recently pointed out, the "new" decimal currency in the UK is not nearly so convenient as the traditional £.s.d., which could easily be subdivided into halves, thirds, quarters, fifths, sixths, eighths, tenths, and twelfths. However, that aside, we all love our new currency, which is soon to be

replaced with an ECU, or something equally horrendous. As we all use our plastic cards so extensively now, hopefully soon we shan't need any money at all.

On a similar note, UK addresses seem to generate some amazement and amusement amongst our overseas members. One must remember that these are somewhat historic, and armed with a full UK address, the house can readily be identified on a map. This is without doubt intended to makes thing easier for the Inland Revenue to send the "heavy mob" round when the Treasury's coffers are looking a little empty. Incidentally, whilst on the subject of addresses, the UK Post Office now points out that provided the Post Code is included in an address, then it is no longer necessary to include the county. This will make life a little easier for me, as the mechanics of producing the mailing labels only allows me a maximum of five lines. My final word on the postal system has to be about the condition in which your KM arrives. I have had a number of complaints

from overseas members, who have sent me the “remains” of the envelope. Hopefully this edition has arrived in a more acceptable condition as I have used a heavier quality envelope. If you are still having problems, do let me know.

Those who have asked about the Tee-shirt I was wearing in the last KM. This was spotted on sale somewhere in the United States and was offered as a “novelty”. Unfortunately we have no details as to the source of this shirt, - just keep looking.

Moving onto more serious matters, I must remind you about the new “Group” membership class, which is specifically aimed at youth groups such as Guide Companies, Scout Troops, Sea Cadet Units etc. At present, the cost of membership is only ten pounds, and is aimed at encouraging leaders to introduce their charges to the wonderful world of knotting. The second reminder is aimed at those members who are UK Taxpayers. Did you know that by completing a Deed Of Covenant form, the IGKT can

reclaim from the Government, the tax which you have already had to pay on the value of your annual subscription. It could be said that this enables you to turn your misfortune (of paying tax), to the benefit of someone else (in this case the IGKT). DOC forms can be obtained from me, as can Banker Order forms, which will save you the bother of remembering to send me a cheque each year.

On to much more interesting things, you will be pleased to know that another branch has recently established itself in Dallas, with Garry Sessions as the contact. This is a small group at present, with all the members also being Scouts. Up there in the far north Somerled Karlsson has started a branch in Ystad, whilst Sven Eric Andersson who is well known throughout Scandinavia as Pille Repmarken remains our contact in Stockholm. In Belgium, Marc Lawereyns has organised some meetings in the lighthouse at Blankenburg, the next of which is to be held on the 21st April, all members welcome. Although I have not had the opportunity to talk to the new

team representing the Dutch branch, we have been invited by Wilike van der Han to hold our October meeting in Rotterdam, where we shall be the guests of the local members. I have already booked my holiday for that event, and I am really looking forward to it. There are of course many other active groups both in the UK and overseas, all of whom are doing wonderful and exciting things for knot tyers everywhere.

Now that I have just looked back over what I have written, I can see that I have already exceeded my brief by about one hundred per cent, and as the time is rapidly approaching when I must pack the luggage in the car, ( I have been helping with the packing - by writing this column, and keeping out of the way). As I shall now have to finish quickly, I will talk about one last item, the Internet, the Council have discussed this at some length recently. I do not propose to make any comments here, either for or against, however, as it would be your subscriptions which would be paying for our connection to it, do you have any views on this.

For example, should we, or should we not sign on; should we publish e-mail addresses in the next membership handbook?? We would like to hear your views. I look forward to seeing you all at Gilwell in May, best wishes - Nigel Harding ☚

## OBITUARY

This received at going to press from Brian Field.

Gustav ("Gus") Erickson died on September 25th 1995 after a long struggle with cancer. Gus was a founder member of the International Guild of Knot Tyers (North America) and well known in Scouting circles in his native Minnesota. He much appreciated the International aspect of the Guilds activities and despite his health, made the six hundred mile land journey to the Lansing exhibition in Michigan to meet friends from "the other side of the herring pond". I shall miss his dry sense of humor and his practical, down to earth approach to problems.

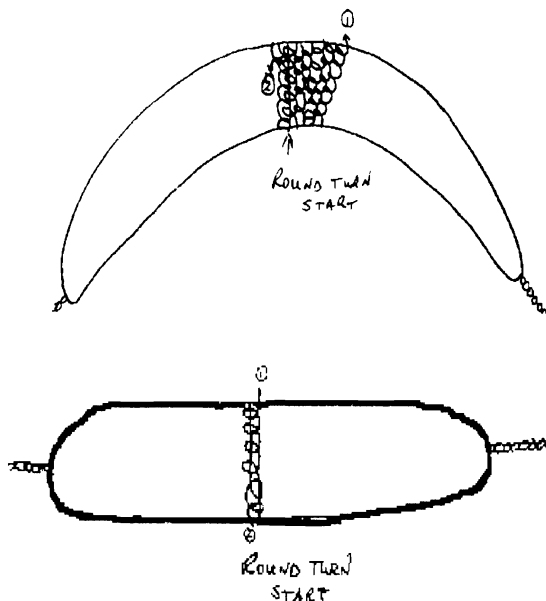


## BIG BOW FENDER

Fenders comprise 2 main parts, the core that does all the work and the cover that will keep everything together and takes the chafe. *L Popple* in his *Advanced Ropework* covers the stages in building up the core. I prefer to cover my fenders with needle or half hitching because this method allows a degree of shaping, it is possible to make the fender with some form of curve, I feel that making a straight fender and then bending it puts too much strain on the outside, the very part that is taking all the punishment.

To get some rough idea how much rope will be used, work out the surface area, ie circumference at centre multiplied by total length, if there is to be a large degree of taper, then average the circumference, I have found that 2 sq ft takes about 30m of 12mm rope. I work with rope lengths of between 10 and 15m, long splicing when fresh rope is needed, depending on handling problems I find that about 10-12m will be hitched in one hour.

As I said the core is very important and takes longer than you expect, I always build up on chain, and find that a series of suspension chains are welcome by the owner and enable a good fit to be made on the ship. When building the core you may try and arrange the larger ropes running parallel with the chain so that when the fender is fitted and bedded in, the rubbing stake beds into the fender. It is always good advise to tell the owner to gently push up against something so as to bed the fender well in, the chains can then be tightened up,



there is nothing worse in my eyes than a sagging fender.

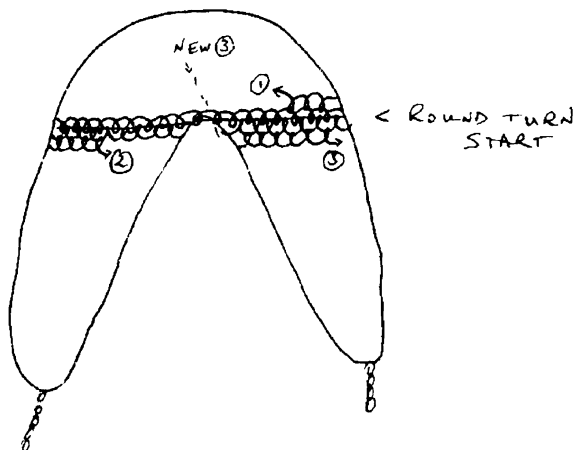
The material for the cover does depend on the customer and the effect required, for many years Manila has been used, this tends to rot from the inside out, staple spun polypropylene works well and is not more expensive if you look around, the split film I think tends to break down with ultra violet light. I have used Hempex (a polypropylene imitation hemp) this is more expensive but is good for a job that should look authentic. 12mm is fine for fenders 5/6ft long but would go up to 14 or 16mm for bigger jobs, it does not need to be too hard laid, using a Swedish fid is a great time saver and allows the rope to slip through that much easier as one is hitching. Should you have a source of cheap polyester or nylon then do of course use it.

I always like to put turksheads over the centre in heavier rope, I have seen examples of fenders with a number of turkshead

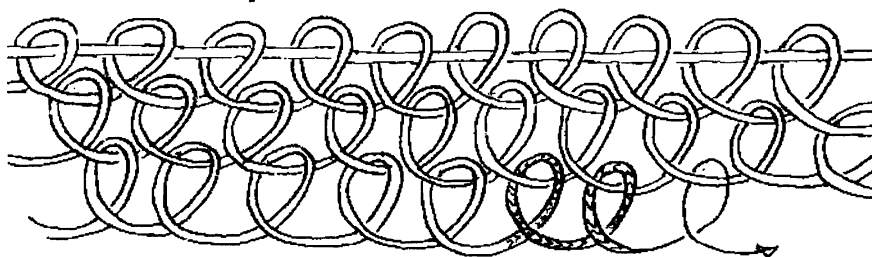
these can take the chafe and be replaced when worn. In Providence USA I saw mats with long thrums over the fenders to serve the same purpose.

Handling a very big fender can be a problem, one solution I saw in a photo of the blind fender makers workshop in Greenwich was to have the fender suspended in long strops that run through a block so that the whole fender could be turned. The whole question of handling large fenders is something that needs a lot of thought and planning. Good luck.

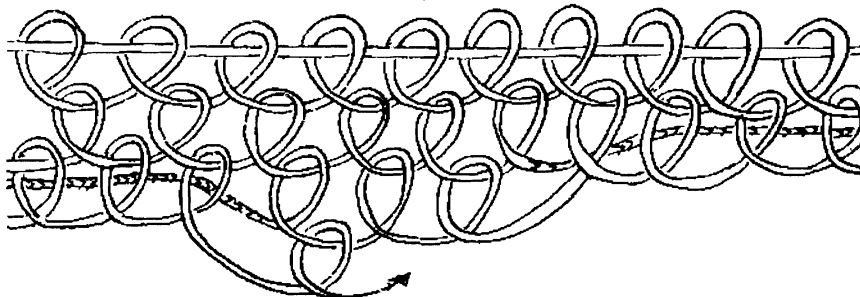
*Des Pawson - Ipswich,  
England*



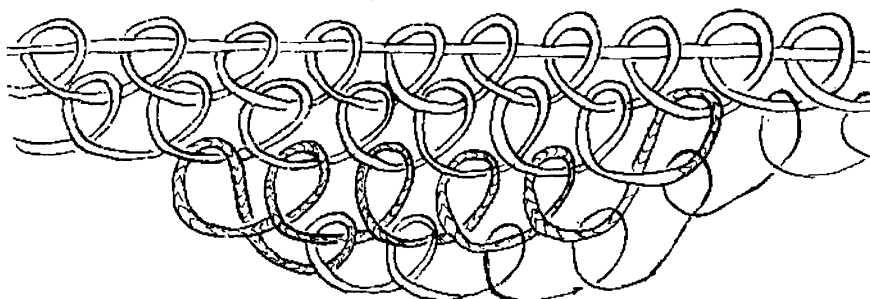
Straight Hitching



Hitching Part Row



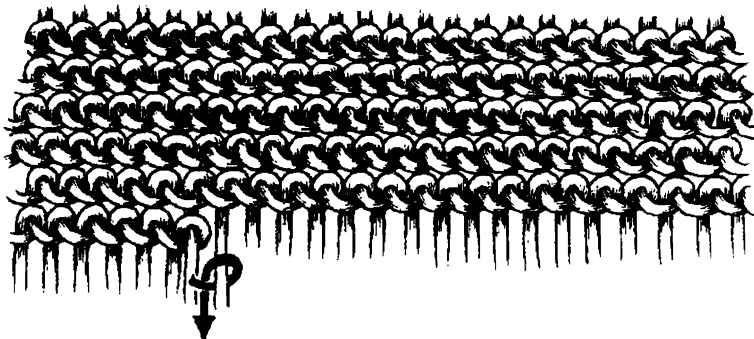
Hitching Back and Forwards





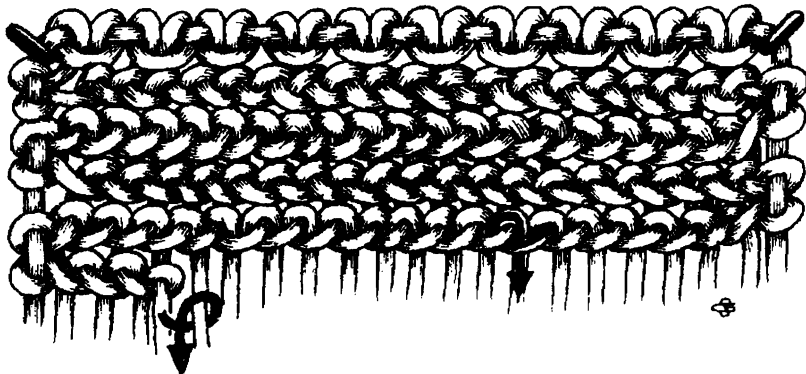
## LATERAL HALF HITCHING.

Whilst covering a bottle with multi-strand lanyard knotting, predominantly Crown Sennit, I started to experiment by tucking each strand back under itself, so that it tied a Half Hitch around its neighbouring strand, and thus a row of lateral Half Hitches was formed around the cylindrical shape of the bottle, as



*Fig. 1.*

shown in *Fig. 1* above. The strands should be imagined as fastened at the top of the page, hanging downward. This technique works well as a covering for cylindrical shapes, such as bottles and fenders, also baskets made over a cylindrical former. Furthermore, it is possible to reverse the pattern on



*Fig. 2*

alternate rows and work within a boundary cord, attached at the end of each row by a Cow Hitch (Lark's Head Knot), as in *Fig. 2* above, to produce a rectangular shaped mat with a uniform selvage

2.

A variation of the preceding forms is provided by passing each strand over its neighbour before tucking the Half Hitch as shown in *Fig 3.* below.



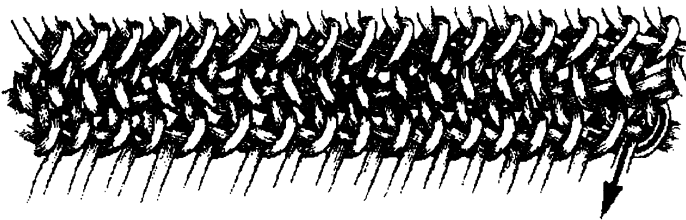
*Fig. 3.*

A further variation of pattern is provided by encircling two neighbouring strands together, instead of only one as previously. In *Figs. 4 & 5* below, the rows are shown worked in alternating directions.



*Fig. 4.*

*Fig. 4* shows the working strand passed below and around two neighbouring strands before completing the Half Hitch.



*Fig. 5*

*Fig. 5* shows the working strand passed above and around two neighbouring strands before completing the Half Hitch.

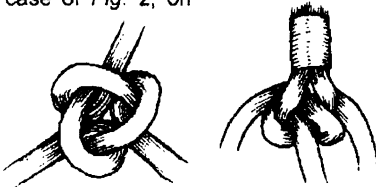
Two further variations of pattern can be achieved by the Half Hitch and Twist methods illustrated in *Fig. 6* below. Note that these methods require the



*Fig. 6.*

strands to be farther apart than the preceding ones, but in some situations this can be an asset. Allow at least two diameters between strands.

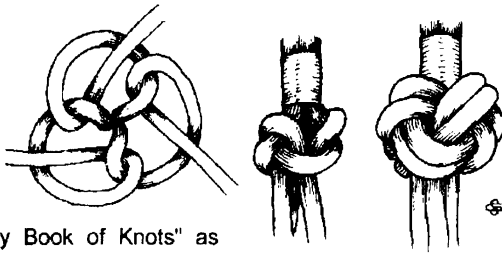
The lateral Half Hitching methods described on the preceding pages were tested using sixteen strands around lengths of plastic water pipe and, in the case of *Fig. 2*, on



*Fig. 7.*

a flat plywood board. However, remembering my own dictum that what can be tied in three strands can be tied in thirty, it seemed that the corollary should be that what can be tied in sixteen strands can be tied in three. The results of this are shown in *Figs. 7 & 8*.

The knot illustrated in *Fig. 7* is not particularly interesting or useful, beyond proving the above-mentioned corollary. However, the knot shown in *Fig. 8* is much more interesting and proved possible to double with a decorative result. Research, with the help of Geoffrey Budworth, to whom my gratitude is due, had not produced any evidence of prior publication of the preceding multi-strand covering methods, but this final three-strand knot does appear in "The Ashley Book of Knots" as #759, Capt. Albert Whitney's Sinnet Knot, with no mention of doubling or other variation.



*Fig. 8.*



## A THREE LEAD, FOUR BIGHT TURKS' HEAD WOGGLE

A tripled three lead four bight (3Lx4B) Turks' head has always been the classic scout's woggle, but I was never satisfied with the knot's ability to keep its shape and so looked for a more 'stable' solution. The 'basket weave' turks head for want of a better name, can be tied in any size in which an ordinary turks' head can be tied. As I am always amazed not to see this variant of a turks' head described in some manual of knotting, I would be interested to hear if other members have already come across it. Though the knot is relatively simple to tie, it does need to be tied on a cylinder in order to avoid confusion.

### PREPARATION

Take a 30cm length of broom handle or something similar and 8x2.5cm wood screws.

To mark the screw holes, the simplest method, is to cut a 5cm wide strip of paper and cut it so that it is just long enough to go around the wood. Now

draw a line parallel to the edges, 1 cm in from each end. Fold the paper three times so as to divide it into 8 equal parts. Number the folds 1-7 then place the paper on the wood, with one edge about 1cm from one of the ends (for the sake of clarity, we will call this the 'top end'). Fig 1 shows what the paper should look like before it is put back onto the piece of wood.

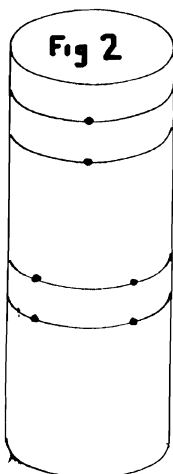
<	5cm	>
	fold 7	
	fold 6	
	fold 5	
	fold 4	
	fold 3	
	fold 2	
	fold 1	

π d    fig 1

With an awl or some other pointed implement, make screw holes along the edge of the paper at the top end at creases 1,3,5,7. Similarly make another set of holes on the line that is 1cm in from the top end, again at creases 1,3,5,7. At the other end of the paper make holes, both on the line and the edge, but this time, make them on

creasing 2,4,6 and at the joint in the paper.

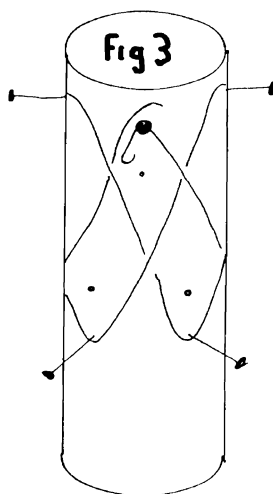
Remove the paper and you should have 4 sets of holes, two at each end, with the holes at opposite ends rotated through  $45^\circ$  compared to each other as in Fig 2



For the knot, I prefer square section leather thong which shows off the weave better than nylon. You will need a thong/string of about 150cm to tie the knot with ease.

### TURKS' HEAD

Tie a 3Lx4B turks' head and slip it onto the cylinder, with the standing and working ends at the top. Adjust the knot so that the screws can be fixed into the outermost holes on the



cylinder as in Fig 3. Even up the knot, but leave some slack.

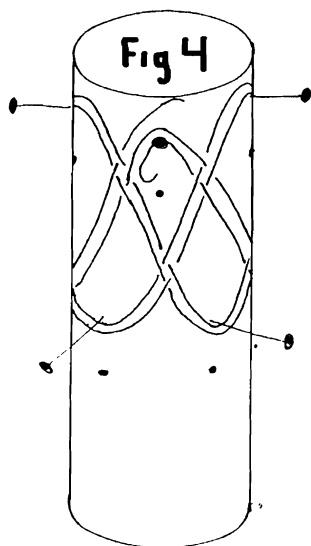
### DOUBLINGS

The working end now follows the first strand but where the original strand goes over, the working end goes under and where the original strand goes under, the working end goes over.

To avoid confusion and mistakes you have to be clear in your own mind, on which side of the original strand the doubling is carried out, and avoid crossing strands when going around the screws at the bights. At one end of the knot the doubling strand will be on the outside of the bight and at the other end it will be on the inside. A little care is all that is



needed to complete this doubling phase, though no doubt you will also quickly



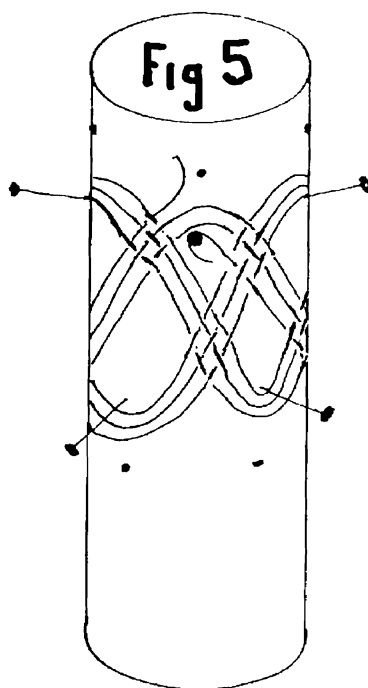
understand why the guidance of the screws is needed. At the end of this cycle you should have something resembling Fig 4.

As you complete the doubling cycle, and depending on what material you are using - its thickness and flexibility - you may find that the knot gets too tight to work easily. If this is the case, simply remove the screws at one end of the knot and place them in the set of holes 1cm in. Similarly, the

screws from the opposite end can be moved in should the need arise.

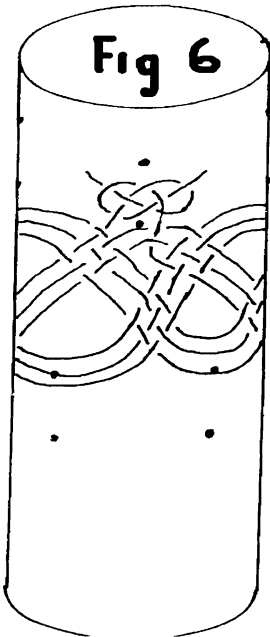
### TRIPLING

The third turn is going to follow the over-under sequence of the first turn and be the opposite of the second. It serves to lock the knot Fig 5.



## FINISHING

Once the knot has been tripled, all the screws can be removed, and the working/standing end of the knot which is inside the knot - in my diagrams, this is the standing end - is woven out through the bight. The knot is then worked tight on the wooden cylinder and the ends tied in a carrick bend (respecting the weave principle Fig 6)



Slide the knot off the wood and you have a woggle that will be the envy of many a scout.

For larger knots tied in finer stuff to make handle-covers and suchlike, the ends would be hidden under one of the leads, rather than bringing them out at the bight. Some may ask, why I don't just tie a 3Lx12B turks' head, but I think that if you try this, you will have to admit that it has a charm of its own. Fig 7 is a photocopy of the knot tied in 3mm flat thong.

*M Mcpartlan - London*



## **KNOTTING MATTERS BOOK REVIEW**

**This issues book review comes from Richard C Hopkins, Bristol, England:**

Richard: this book was sent to me by The Cordage Institute, 350 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA02043, USA. Cost US \$25 with \$10 postage.

### **KNOT TYING AND RIGGING - A SKILL IMPROVEMENT COURSE.**

**Published: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 1125 Fifteenth Street NW, Washington DC20005, USA.**

This 363 page, 8 1/2" x 11" papercover book from an apparently unlikely source is a highly informative and practical textbook on many aspects of ropework following the pattern of many American military manuals.

The aim of the book is to encourage positive safe attitudes to the topics in the text and thus reduces the the chance of accident and injury. This it does in an easy to read and unambiguous style.

Its nine chapters cover fibre ropes and wire ropes, their selection, care and maintenance, splicing and attachments.

A chapter on mechanical advantage leads to blocks and tackles, selection of the correct tackle for the task and the use, of slings, hooks, eyebolts and shackles. Lifting and moving of loads is covered mostly using mechanical hoists, although there is some advice on how to dangle heavy objects from a helicopter.

Because the rigging element is important to the intended users of this book, anchorages and various scaffolding structures are given coverage with information on guy lines and how to support vertical poles carrying electrical cables.

A final chapter on tools and devices used in rigging gets down to earth by covering the safe shoring or trenches and the sandpapering of peavey handles.

From the point of view of our members, only fifteen knots and hitches are described but splicing of laid rope, braided rope and wire rope is well covered.

The book is full of informative lists and tables which include, rated strength of shackles, safe working loads of shoring boards, hand signals to crane drivers and helicopter pilots, common wire rope faults and their causes, fid lengths and elastic elongation of various ropes.

There will no doubt be some of our members who may find this a useful addition to their bookshelves. Sadly, although the principles of rigging remain the same, the difference in practice means that our nautically orientated members will be better served elsewhere. To summarise, this is a very useful book but probably not to the taste of everyone in the Guild.

\*\*\*

**A snippet from an E Mail message received by Terry Ridings:**

Dear Terry, An interesting thought occurred to me. A lamb shank is a very nice piece of meat and makes a pretty good dinner main course. On the other hand, a sheep shank is a relatively useless knot!

Why is that? Richard.

**From Frank Harris:**

I have just heard that the Millennium Exhibition has been allocated to Greenwich.

You will remember that at the last Annual Meeting at Weston Super Mare I suggested that the Council should start considering how the Guild were going to celebrate this almost unique occasion. Not being able to attend the half yearly meeting at Leeds I was unable to ask what the Council had decided, if indeed they have discussed the matter. I would therefore like to request that the matter be put on the agenda for the 1996 General meeting.

I am of the opinion that any event should be held in Greenwich, as I expect a great many of our world wide membership will be visiting the event and will be arriving at Gatwick or Heathrow.

As for the sort of event we should be planning I think we should look back over the first fourteen years of the Guild and sort out our more successful efforts, The Knotting Extravaganza, The Bradford Textile Exhibition, Gloucester

Rope from Toilet paper, and  
The Trip to Rotterdam.

Do we repeat ourselves or can  
we find something else on a  
grand scale that can be  
undertaken by a large  
proportion of our membership.  
Give the matter some thought  
and bring your ideas to the  
AGM. If you will not be  
attending then write to the  
Secretary (or Editors).

**THE GUILD REQUIRES**  
**YOUR IDEAS NOW. IT**  
**WILL BE A LONG TIME**  
**UNTIL THE NEXT**  
**MILLENNIUM**

\*\*\*

**From Heinz Prohaska,**  
**Horshing, Austria:**

A short piece is included about  
the Piwich Knot. I asked Lars  
Holt for any historical details in  
his country, but have not had an  
answer as of present. Perhaps  
one of our Danish members  
could manage to find out more  
and write into **KM** or directly to  
me.

\*\*\*

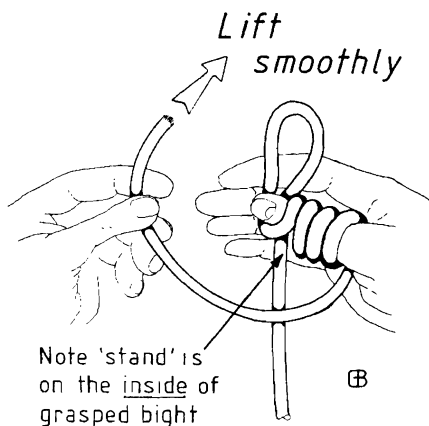
## TRY IT THIS WAY

**A suggestion from Geoff  
Budworth:**

Ashley's patter and method of  
'threading the loop' (#2570),  
which I admit to re-telling in  
my *Knot Book*, is contrived. It  
can be improved.

Start with the bight the other  
way around.

I saw US country singer Willie  
Nelson do this to camera, dead  
pan and without a word of  
introduction or explanation, in a  
film. He repeated it several  
times, using thick-ish stuff  
(8mm dia), and the impact  
remained strong.



## MACRAMÉ BORING?

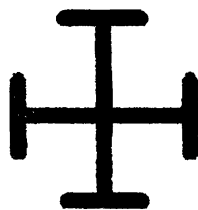
Though I have to confess that I am not a great macramé enthusiast - Turks heads being more my cup of tea - I have found a technique which, I believe, can add a new dimension to macramé work. This very simple method allows the creation of some letters and shapes, such as crosses - which can either be 'stand alone' or integrated into more traditional macramé pieces. Compared to the Turks head which I may at some stage bore you with, macramé has three advantages:

- It can be tied in the hand
- It doesn't take the 5-6 hours that some of the Turks heads require.
- Once you know the 'technique' you can apply it to any shape.

In this piece I will describe the way to make a (stand alone) Latin cross and a Scout cross (fig 1) and leave the rest to your imagination and pictures of some other shapes.



Latin Cross



Scout Cross

Fig.1.

### LATIN CROSS

1 Guestimate how much cord/thong is needed to tie a 15 part Solomon bar, a series of reef knots tied over a two piece core - then allow some more for good measure. As the length required will vary greatly depending on the thickness and flexibility of the medium, it is difficult for me to guestimate for you. Be prepared to err on the side of over generosity, at least at the beginning, as there is nothing worse than running out of string near the end!



Fig. 2

2 Double the cord and make a small loop by tying a lanyard knot, such as the two strand diamond knot (#781 Ashley) (fig 2)

3 Allowing plenty of slack to form the core of the knot, start tying a 6 part Solomon bar (fig 3). 1 part is counted for every reef knot tied.

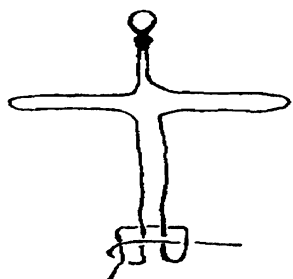


Fig 3

NB once the length of cord needed for the core has been guesstimated, there is no need to try to keep it in the cross shape. Do not tie the Solomon bar too tightly, as adjustments will have to be made later. **For the sake of this explanation, tie the bar with the left hand working end going over the core and the right hand one under.**

4 With the lower vertical of the cross completed, we are ready to start one of the horizontals and this brings us to

the two principles necessary for this technique.

- I. Every time there is a change in direction, a working end which has been going under the core will start going over, while the one was going over will now move under.
- II. Parts of the knot tied away from the central vertical (to be defined by the person tying the knot) will, eventually be tied with only one of the working ends.
- III. The left hand working end is the important one here and it is shown as having been tied over the core in the vertical, so it will be tied under in the horizontal.

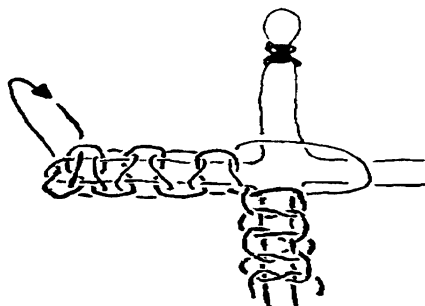


Fig. 4

Using a right hand working end tie a 3 part Solomon bar.

5 Fig 4 shows the 3 part bar completed and the left hand

working end coming from under the core and going down through the loop in the core.

The left hand working end now has to replace the right hand working end which is unpicked as the left hand piece replaces it, till the right hand working end is completely free of the left hand horizontal, now tied with only the left hand working end. NB with a bit of practice, the horizontal bar can be tied using only the left hand working end, but this is not recommended till you get an idea of how things should look.

6 The right hand 3 part bar is tied in a similar fashion except that the right hand working end will start by working over the core and then pass up through the loop before replacing the left hand working end.

7 Complete the 3 part vertical, not forgetting that the left hand working end will now go under and the right hand end over.

8 To adjust the knot, pull the excess core through the top vertical till the lanyard knot and loop are the required distance from the top of the cross. Work one part of the core out to the

end of the horizontal and then back in to the top of the lower vertical, pulling it quite tight and then down through the vertical. This slack has then to be worked through the Solomon bars all the way to the top. It is easier to work one side at a time. If in doubt, don't try to tighten everything in one go, better far to have to tighten twice and get a handsome knot than to try too hard and either end up with an uneven knot or snapping a string!

9 Once the excess has been worked through the knot to your satisfaction, the ends can be buried down the core of the top vertical and trimmed at the centre.

10 Congratulations, not for tying the knot, that's easy, but for following my instructions.

### SCOUT CROSS

1 This is only slightly more complicated than the previous cross. Guestimate the length needed to tie a 28 part Solomon bar plus core (the ends of each arm are twice 2 part bars and the arms are 3 part bars).



2 Guestimate the length of the core, but loop ends back on each other before starting to tie. It can help to bind the core temporarily at A and B as shown in fig 5.

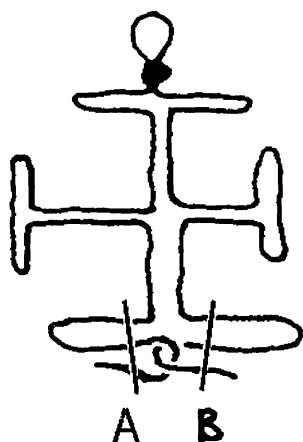


Fig. 5

3 The left hand part of the lower horizontal is tied with the left hand working end, and the only thing to beware of, is that the left hand working end starts over, then the right hand end will have to start under and vice versa.

4 When tying the horizontal arms the sequence is as in fig 6:

1 is tied with both working ends.

2 is tied with both working ends, the change in direction

also causing a change in the working ends going over or under.

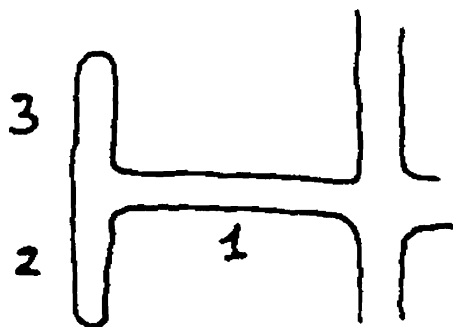


Fig. 6.

The left hand (in this diagram) working end then replaces the right hand end in 2.

3 is tied with both ends, not forgetting the change in the over/under sequence.

The left hand end replaces the right hand end in 3

The left hand end replaces the right hand end in 1.

5 The right hand arm is completed in a similar way, the vertical arm tied with both ends and the top horizontals each with their respective working ends.

6 When the slack has been worked out, the ends are buried in the core of the top horizontals and trimmed.

Fig 7 is a photocopy of the two crosses tied in 1mm leather thong, as well as other possibilities.

The 'E' is a silver cast of a knot tied in 1mm leather thong. The only problem with tying any of the shapes in Fig 7 is working out how to form the core and how many parts to the difficult bars will give the required shape.

To tie any of these shapes as part of a larger piece of

macramé, the core would probably be separate from the working ends. The working ends would also work down from the top to the bottom and then be used to continue the rest of the work.

I would be interested in seeing what you can come up with, integrating other macramé knots into pieces, or even simply by putting a twist in work.

*M McPartlan - London*

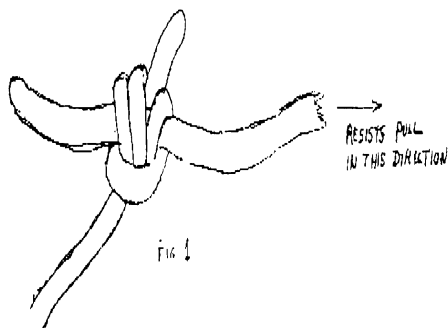


## SHOE LACE KNOT

One of my interests over the past several years has been discovering a knot or combination of knots for shoe laces that would have the following characteristics: easy adjustability, one hand operation, stability, security, smoothness of action, and workability in as many types of laces material as possible.

These knots are adjustable bends with a grasping element that provides a nip allowing passage of the adjustable segment in one direction only (unless the knot itself is collapsed by being pushed). The mechanism of action is as follows: tension from either eyelet side of the knot causes the nip to tighten locking the lace; tension on the free end relaxes the nip allowing the movable element to slide, then tighten, locking the lacing; pushing the knot from either side relaxes the nip allowing the knot to slide. In practice, a pull on one side of a loop tightens the lace, a pull on the other side loosens it.

A half dozen or so knots have turned up but most have been excessively fussy, unreliable, or difficult to operate. Two work well. The most elegant is a knot that is closely related to Bob Chisnall's bottom load Release Hitch (Budworth's fig 89). It differs in fewer turns and a final tuck between the last two turns. It resembles a fist gripping a rope.



The knot most adaptable to soft materials and disparity in size between the two elements seems to be the High Wycombe bend. This is tied in the bight. (There are a number of slight variations that appear similar but which don't perform as well so, accuracy of overlapping bight turns and final tuck are important.)

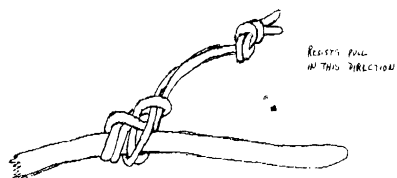


FIG. 2

The 'fist' or 'salute' knot is easily tied in a manner indicated by the following diagram. I usually put an overhand stopper on the end.

REDUCE SIZE OF PREVIOUS ILLUSTRATION (1/4)

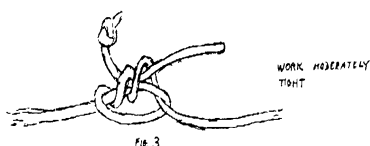


FIG. 3

The High Wycombe bend is tied in the bight with a short piece of material that is then attached to the lace or upper left lacing 'eye'. An overhand knot holds the two ends together until the knot is in place on the right side of the lace and ready to be attached to the left side.

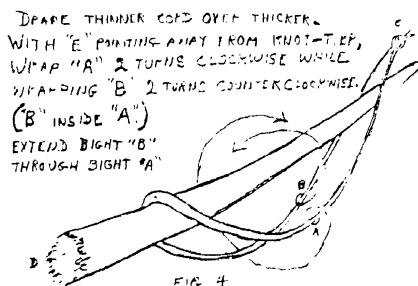


FIG. 4

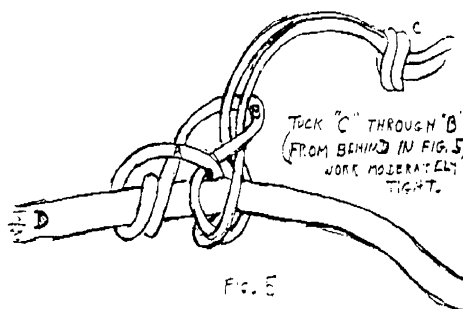
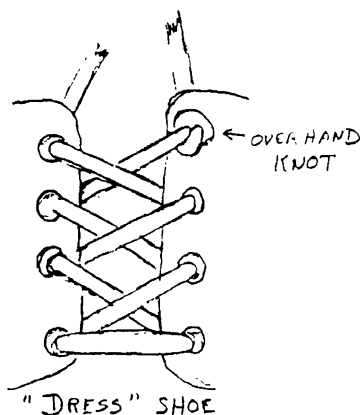


FIG. 5

I have used the lace knots described in the following manner: The laces are fixed at either the top left or bottom left eye, top left for conventional or dress shoe and bottom left for a 'speed lacing' arrangement on running or sport shoes - with a stopper knot.

If the tongue is padded adequately these can be hidden under the lacing flaps.

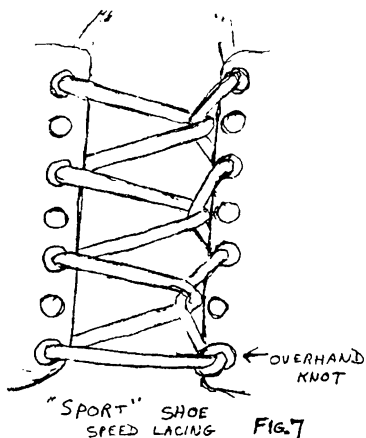


"DRESS" SHOE

FIG. 6

The free end of the left side of the lace is knotted to the right side with the selected knot. Or in the case of the High Wycombe bend the knot is tied around the right free lace and then passed with the left free end, from the under side, through the top left eye. The two are knotted together with an overhand or larger stopper knot. (This eliminates the need for other stopper at top of left side.) Excess material on the left side is trimmed.

3.

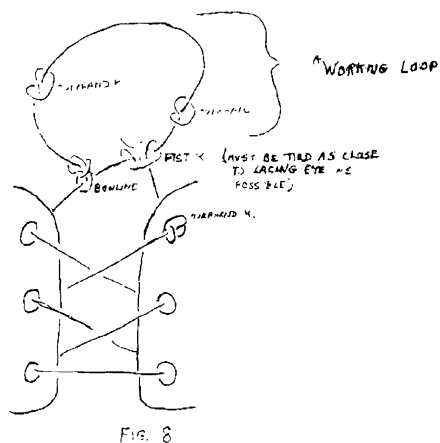


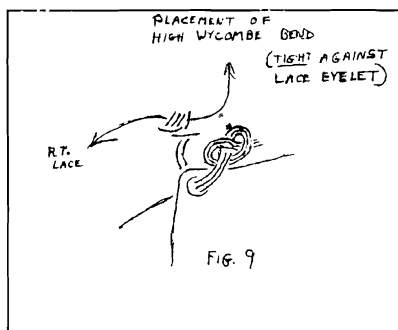
The right free end exiting the lace knot is, maintaining an adequate working loop, tied around itself just before it enters the lace knot with the smallest loop knot that slides freely.

I usually use a bowline seized with a dental floss constrictor knot.

Two over hand knots can be positioned in the 'working loop' before it is fixed 'eyeward' of the lace knot to provide a tactile sense of which side of the lace to pull when tightening or loosening. Overhand knots are positioned so the one closest to the shoe is always the one to pull. In the loosening or tightening operation the knots change position to provide proper tactile sense for the next operation.

The resultant combination of knots is arranged as in the following illustration:





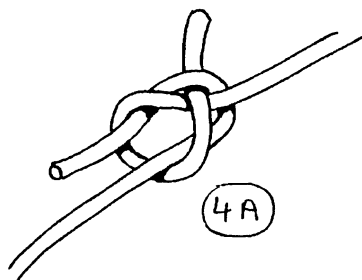
A few notes:

1. The grasping portion of the High Wycombe bend should be of smaller material than the laces and of same or less stiffness.
2. Lace knots should be as snug against the left eyelet as possible for adequate working room.
3. The one handed (loosening and tightening) range of these knots is dependent on the lateral distance between lacing eyes and if more looseness is desired two hands must be used.
4. The 'working loop' simply lies on top of the shoe and only need be long enough for ease of handling with adequate surplus for loosening.

Rog Gillespie - New Hampshire, USA

## LAP KNOT

This is the famous 'nameless' knot that Pieter van de Griend has been writing on, calling it the 'false sheet bend'. (fig 4a)



In 'Knots and Rope Problems' (Arhus 1992) he gives a description of it (p26,49,50) and says:

'The sheet Bend structure in SheetBend configuration yields 4 different bends, of which 2 are truly Sheet Bends and 2 are false Sheet Bend versions. I have been unable to find any (early) English reference naming this particular bend. However, in 1907 Lehman called it 'Falscher Weberknoten'. There are several references of usage,

Max von der Borne (1892) shows this knot in slipped form; Graumont and Hensel (1939) name it an English Bowline.

Then Charles Warner, in 'A Fresh Approach to Knotting and Rope Work' (Victoria, 1992) gives an example of a slipped one (p166, fig 427), that he calls the 'Girdle Knot'. The same slipped one is also given by Ashley (#1224).

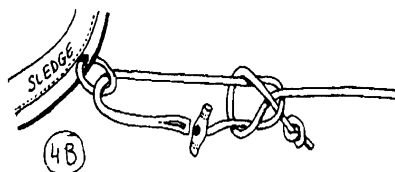
I said 'nameless' knot because the 'false sheet bend', even being a false sheet bend, is by itself a true and real knot, not a false one. Take the granny knot; being a false reef knot, it is however a true granny knot! The overhand knot, which is a false half hitch, it a true overhand knot, and so on.

False knot cannot be the name of a knot, even if practical as a reference name.

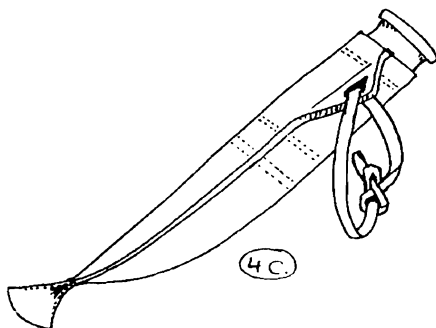
This is why I prefer to call it 'Reversed sheet bend' which is less pejorative or derogatory, for itself and for the people who use it, (mainly native peoples...). Or to give it a name refering to the situation in which I have observed it. (In this case Lapland)

So, I have noticed that, on many occasions, rather than use the classical and usual sheet bend that all civilised people know, in other cultures they prefer to use 'this' knot, or this variant. (Saami from Lapland, N American Indians and P v d Griend adds Maassai from E Africa, Australian Aborgines, and peoples from the Indonesian Archipelogo).

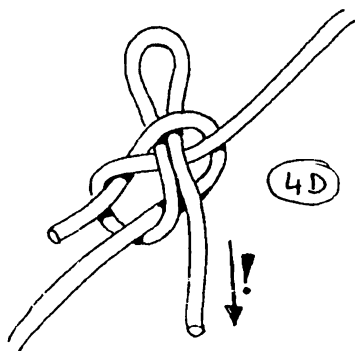
I have seen it used for the hide equipment of the reindeers hitched up to their sledges, for instance (fig 4b).



Or for the leather tongue used to hang up the sheath of the famous Lap knife (in a Becket form). (fig 4c)



I tried it and adopted it. Very often it comes easier and quicker to tie than the sheet bend, and when a bend has to be undone very quickly, you make it slipped (fig 4d).

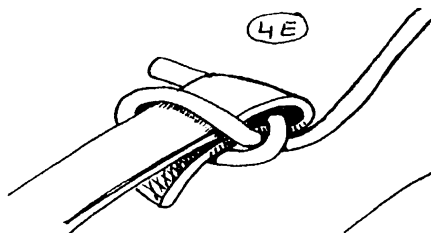


Pull the end, and the knot will undo in a flash, the string on the end having no need to pass back through the bight or the loop of the other part (as in a slipped becket bend for instance) a very good solution for emergency or security systems.

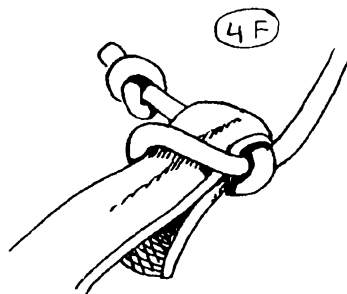
The so called 'Lap knot' seems to be also the best answer to solve a serious problem, how to join together a rope with a strap in the most economical and secure way.

Up to now, the best answer I have found. I have tested in the worst conditions, pulling heavy

loads respectively with the same knotted strap and rope, during many months, under sun, rain and snow, the knot didn't move at all. (fig 4e)

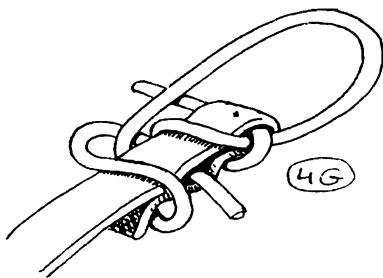


To be more secure, you can add an overhand knot to the end. (fig 4f)



The Lap knot is also the original knot to make an eye or a loop at the end of a strap, with a short peice of rope. (fig 4g)





Fold the end of the strap. Make a Lap knot, then a second one in the opposite direction, as shown.

Robert Pont - France

#### **AND NOW A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARIES:**

The South East Boat Show is to held at Cliff Quay, Ipswich on the 2 - 6 May 1996. The Essex branch are planning to put on a stand, (yes they have cleared this with the Norwich branch or IGKT). Anyone interested who would like to help or join in is more than welcome, it interested contact Don Woods on 01708 229178.

Did anyone see the recent programme on BBC2 (British members obviously) on forensic science. An expert (IGKT member maybe) knot tyer, helped them catch a serial killer by the knot which he always used to tie up his victims, he was an Austrian and was caught with the help of American police, after committing murder in America, England, Austria and Germany. If you were the expert, let us know. Ed.

**From Jack Keene, Dallas, Texas:**

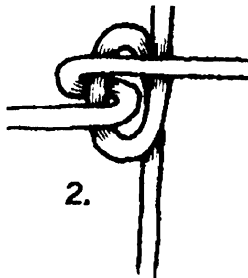
We are planning a local IGKT meeting in Dallas as motivated by Gary Sessions. I have been roaming the Internet recently looking for Knots. Jan Anderson's 'The Knotting Dictionary of Kannet' was the first item I found, on <http://www.ida.his.se/ida/-jan/knoper.eng.html>. Any other sites that others may know about?

## A FORM OF MAT WEAVING

This may be how the grubby mat shown by Des at Leeds was made. I am making a loom to try to prove it. Perhaps others would like to try it?



1 Each warp is lifted between finger and thumb and turned clockwise through  $180^\circ$ , to form a vertical



half-hitch.

2. The weft is worked from left to right, using a netting needle. Crossing above each warp first, the weft then passes from lower right to upper left through the vertical half-hitch in the weft, finally crossing again from left to right above it. This forms a horizontal half-hitch in the weft

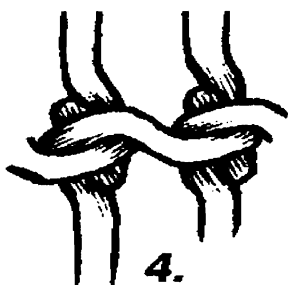
interlocked with the vertical one in the warp. These two half-hitches are in equilibrium, the vertical one tending to fall away anti-clockwise and the horizontal one having the same tendency in a clockwise direction

3 When the two half-hitches are tightened, they will hold each other in place due to this balance. However, if either



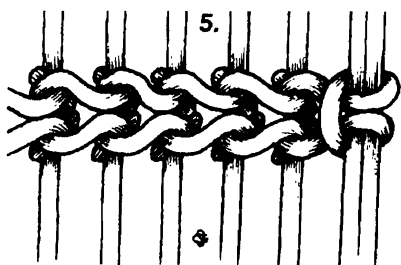
half-hitch is made in the opposite sense to that illustrated, the other must be applied in the opposite sense also, in order to retain the required equilibrium. If this rule is not followed, the fabric will fall apart.

4 Consecutive crossings are worked in this way as far as the selvage, but the nature of this method requires a strong, bulky selvage and at least two warps are required.



Three warps laid up together would not be too large, bearing in mind that the weaving method produces a fabric four diameters thick.

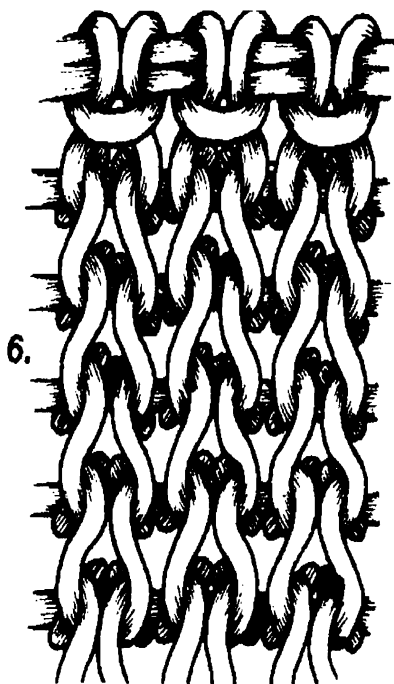
5 When the right hand selvage is reached, a cow-hitch (Lark's Head knot) is made with the weft around the warps and the next row follows, using the above method, but with both vertical and horizontal half-hitches made in the opposite sense.



Thus the warps will be turned anti-clockwise and the weft will be passed through the vertical half-hitches from lower left to

upper right. This change of direction is not essential, but it provides a characteristic herringbone design, not only on the working face, where the design runs horizontally, but also on the back, where the same design occurs, only turned through a right angle to run vertically. Several variations of design are possible, depending on the way in which the half-hitches are worked, but the rule stated under 3 above must always prevail.

*Stuart Grainger - Oxford*



*And now a bit of whimsy from  
Richard Hopkins - Bristol:*

### PATTER SUGGESTIONS

Bowline Knot - made by sailors  
- clothes line knot made by  
ladies.

Slip Knot - warning for frosty  
mornings.

Fisherman's Knot - when telling  
whoppers.

Will Knot - signed himself  
wont.

Reef Knot and Granny knot-  
first cousin to reef knot, which  
my uncle says is fathers best  
knot.

Overhand Knot - underhand  
knot used in best circles.

True Lover's knot - usually  
followed by the marriage knot,  
sometimes called a splice, but  
often ending in a tangle.

Marriage Knot - tied by the  
tongue, can't be undone by the  
teeth.

The Can-not or can't, the what-  
not and the for-get-me-not and  
the knot you tie to remember to  
forget something.

Waste-not - want not, proverbial  
pair.

Must have four hands, anyway  
you double your fists.

Manila rope, hemp rope,  
skipping rope, tight rope, bell  
rope, Eu-rope, Asia, Africa and  
the USA.

Handkerchiefs must be hard to  
get, there's a corner in them on  
all sides.

These are what I hanker-chiefly  
after.

Racing to see who will be first-  
result a tie.

This makes the problem more  
knotty, or nutty.

I will now impersonate a  
silkworm, the worm turns (turn  
round).

This silk has a stitch in its side,  
probably hemmed too long in  
the box.

I rub my hands together and a  
silk will materialise before your  
material eyes. I stroke the silk  
and it changes colour; I make a  
good living by dyeing.

*Found in a book called 'Silken  
Sorcery' and there's more from  
Richard found in a book  
written by Eric Jones:*

### NAUTICAL UNEQUAL ROPES

Realising that a great many  
magicians use corny scripts, I  
am enclosing such a one for

those who will be required to entertain in Yatching circles.

For those who like punishment, here it is. Try this with your 'Unequal Ropes'.

Taking the ropes in the left hand, one at a time, tell the story of the 'rope family'.

"I'm afraid this is a very ropy story. He was so thin as a baby he was christened Thready. Here is his mother. She is a little bit taller, a really Lady Rope, a Lass who was a real stopper not a bad looker, really, in fact, quite a bell rope. And here is the man she was spliced to, a tall man, Sir Rope of Figs who was in the cleaning out business."

"The family all lived at Ropes End, Twinning, Notts, Europe. Sir Rope had a brother, Larry, who sent him a cable which said that Larry at to go to Manila and would the family like to come to."

"Now Sir Rope was staying in the Strand Hotel at the time and, according to him, Larry was a little odd. He always had a piece of string tied around his foot. A sort of toe rope but, being of strong fibre, Sir Rope decided to go."

"He went down to the Turks Head to swallow a Spanish Burton before he embarked on the Matthew Walker which was a junk moored at Blackwell. the steward, who was a cockney, said "Haw Sir Eyes pliced your luggage in the Wall Knot cabinet in the state room" and being a handy Billy, he told them how to sling their hammock. As Thready said, it was a sight to see his parbuckle up his hammock."

"I hope you've got the thread of this story and have cottoned on to why I am stringing you along? Well finally the boat got under way and was whipping along over the reef not at a great rate of knots but enough to be able to see the bowline from the fisherman's bend."

"Night came and our family of ropes climbed into their hammocks (here perform the move of bringing up the bottom ends of rope to the top). As you know, with a hammock your feet and head come up to the same level and your bottom sags down, (our American friends could refer to the hammock as being a Butt Sling), and it gives one a rolling

'itch as it makes the sheet's bend. (By this time the trick will have been completed)."

"Well, after a good night's sleep our three ropes knot up and stretched themselves. As you can see, they were the same sisal the time (here show the three ropes.)"

"It just goes to show that if you give a magician enough rope he will fox you and spin you a good yarn."

Emphasis should be placed on the under lined words with a raising of the eyebrow to telegraph the pun on the different ropes used in the boating world. Well, if you don't like it you don't have to use it do you!

*Ed. let us know if you use it or know of any others.*



## A DIAMOND FIBRE

About ten years ago we discovered the magic of mohair, the 'Diamond Fibre' in a pure mohair saddle girth which cured a long standing serious girth gall problem for a much favoured mare owned by my wife.

Having won a Blue Ribbon for worsted spinning at the Sydney Royal Easter Show it seemed like a good idea to spin the mohair, make the cord and then the girths. That was the first mistake.

It takes me about three hours to spin 100g of mohair and there is 300g+ in an average girth! Many months of searching located commercially spun 100% mohair yarn and many more months later we found a generous man who showed us how to make the eight ply (4x2) cord and encouraged me to make my very own twisting machine.

We started making the simplest of cord girths and then progressed to the more robust woven girths favoured by the

Western riding fraternity. A nice hobby, mistake #23!

People will talk to each other. Requests for cord\* started to come from further afield from those tired of various plastic cords calling themselves 'Molon', 'Acrylic Mohair' etc. We had also started to make a range of bridle reins and this is where Mr Ashley comes into picture.

Mohair is very slippery and we use Ashley #1252 when finishing rein ends after crowning. Ashley #2981 makes a nice soft rein with some elasticity whilst #2968 using a tightly twisted cord and plaited very firmly appeals to the most 'macho' of cowboys.

Ashley Sinnet #3047 usually draws a small group at any show. About three years ago we stumbled on the ancient craft of '*Sfrang*'\* which gave us a plaited girth structure and decided we owed it to the comfort of all horses to spread it around.

We registered our meaningless *haseneso*\* name, thinking it was probably the superlative ultimate in Italian, and started to actively sell cord in 28m hanks.

We are now selling cord as far north as Moreeba in far N Queensland to Perth in Western Australia. An amateur VHS video helps nervous starters who soon learn to enjoy the gratitude of horse owners.

We have just launched a range of hand woven saddle cloths to utilise the qualities of the natural fibre and are hopeful of turning a profit in 1997/98!

Still, its a fascinating world of horses with more than 600 equestrian disciplines, each with its own fad, foible and fashion, and around 120 million potential equine customers.

All our work to date has been empirical but with the aid of constant feedback and published scientific research we are starting to put meat on the bones of our claim that mohair is 'the best thing for horses since grass'.

Mohair is about the strongest natural animal fibre as well as the most desirable, the most elastic and the least likely to felt. Add to this its excellent washing quality and ability to dye in deep lustrous colours and explanations come rather easily.

As a girth it can expand to accommodate horse movement without rubbing, whilst still in contact. The non felting fibres present a huge surface area to transpire sweat away from the contact area by the process of adsorption (as distinct from absorbtion).

With these theories we can now seek more detailed feedback and work for increased horse comfort and performance and hope for some rewarding money in the future! Although our curious crafts (as knot tiers) are not so much about the sordid matter of money but it would be nice to earn the wherewithal to travel and meet fellow 'nutters' and 'crackpots' and to exchange skills and lie about how we nearly got rich.

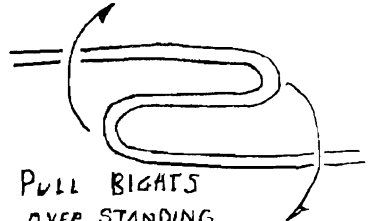
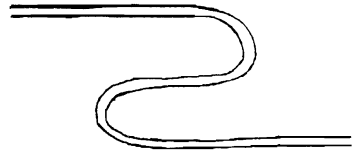
**Peter and Rosemary Laing - Stroud, NSW, Australia**

*Ed: \*these are words we cannot read too clearly, and hope we have reproduced faithfully, please for the sanity of your editors, print any unusual or very technical words.*

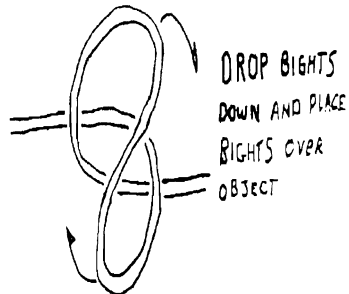
## From Mak Niickols, USA

Is this a new method to tie the constrictor knot?

MAKE "S" SHAPE



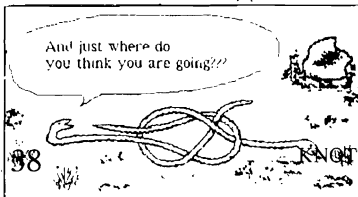
PULL RIGHTS  
OVER STANDING  
PARTS



DROP RIGHTS  
DOWN AND PLACE  
RIGHTS OVER  
OBJECT

THAT'S KNOT FUNNY

by JACK KEENE





## FROM OUR POSTBAG

### **From Brian Feld**

The following request for help came to me from Fred Veih in Michigan U.S.A. Could you please publish it in the next issue of KM.

#### **S.O.S. HELP NEEDED**

Does anyone know, or has anyone invented, any stories that can be used in teaching knot tying? I know the 'rabbit hole, rabbit, tree story (bowline) but other yarns about other knots would be appreciated to; Fred Veith, 602 E. Grand River, P O Box 427, Laingsburg, Michigan, U.S.A.

### **From Maritime Combsof Kodiak Alaska USA**

I just wanted to let you know that I finally recieved the information on the Guild and two copies of KM. There was a mix up at the main post office and some of the mail destined for Kodiak had gone on a plane bound for Dutch Harbour! But I finally got the packet and I am very pleased with the magazine and look forward to receiving future copies.

I would also like to make a suggestion on something that you might be able to include in KM. I would like to see some kind of 'WANT ADD' section in the back of the magazine. That way people could trade or sell tools, materials, books, and 'WANT' adds. I'm not sure if the laws in the U.K. would allow you to do this but I think that other members would probably like this service also. I think that if you can do this that you should charge a small fee and make this service available to members only. I even thought up a name for the new section "THE KNOT SWAP".

*ed: There is no problem in sharing members needs and excesses in hardware. Services or classes however might be classed as true advertising and would have to be charged for. The members 'has anyone got' would be free.*

### **From R F Hammond, Queensland, Australia:**

Does anyone have a pattern for rope sandals with the type and size of rope used?

Ed: Short and sweet!

**From Stuart Grainger,  
Witney, England:**

Whilst to some extent ageing with Percy J. Blandford's comments (issue 51) on the limitations of purely traditionalist knotting, I would like to suggest that similar limitations attend too practical a view of knotting. My own interest in the craft tends towards the decorative rather than the practical and there is no doubt that the interest in decorative knotting has increased in recent years. The extent to which different disciplines have widened their outlook to include new skills is very encouraging and we are, at last, finding that people who once considered that all knotting knowledge was to be found within macramè are now better informed.

One of our problems, which is also one of our strengths, is that knot tying is an extraordinarily wide sphere of activity and no single person can hope to be an expert in every aspect. It may be true that Ashley knew nothing of 'synthetic fibres', but one can only wonder at the amount he knew about the knots

which were existent in his day. Percy asks 'Are we the authority on modern knotting?' No single one of us is, and no knotting craftsman who knows much about it would dare claim to be. Anyone seeking such an authority, however, would be very foolish to ignore the Guild and 'Knotting Matters' in particular, because I know of no other authority which presents such a wide and knowledgeable reservoir of modern information about knots. If we lack climbing expertise, perhaps it is because climbers are not interested in passing on their skills to anyone other than climbers. Certainly we do not exclude them from membership and they would find themselves made welcome among us, but I hope that the Guild will never give one form of knotting precedence over another.

Finally I would like to suggest that Percy's aim for more modern thinking would be helped by some 'new blood' on the Council. I have the greatest respect for every member of the Council and it is not their fault that some of them have been re-elected year after year because

nobody else would stand. I appeal to any member who can spare the time to attend a meeting four or five times a year to offer to stand as a Council member at the next AGM. It is no good regretting what you are not prepared to change.

*Ed: this is so true of all organisations, a reluctance for committee work, but if you want new blood, sometimes you have to be that new blood. So how about it?*

**A request sent to Stuart Grainger for help with learning to tie a particular knot from a lady in Amersham, Bucks:.....**

I have been looking for some time for a book or someone who can show me how to tie a knot used on a necklace I have from Nepal, the knot is a most useful one as the length can be altered to suit ones clothes, and there is no fiddling with a clasp. She feels it would be easier to learn from someone rather than a book, so does anyone live fairly close who would be willing to help? If so let us know and we

will pass on your phone number to this lady.

**From Mike Howarth, Hitchin, England:**

I am writing to say that I am unable to carry on with my membership, pressure of work is taking my attention.

I will miss your most interesting magazine. Just to let you know that ropework has been a great inspiration for a PhD about children's use of computers I am engaged in. As I work at the computer, my electronic graphics tablet stylus has a natty little Turk's head grip.

*Ed: sorry to hear you cannot continue your membership, but glad we have been of some use.*

**From Geoff Budworth:**

We are urged by Frank Harris to trawl the trade telephone directories periodically, looking for rope, cord and twine stockists, so as to tell other Guild members about them.

Well then, the newest in my Yellow Pages - **Ammossco Ropes Ltd** supplies all types of steel and fibre ropes, lifting equipment and mooring systems (with associated hardware) to industry, shipping, offshore oil

and gas producers, as well as straps and bindings for packaging. It is a subsidiary of Aminex PLC.

When I visited Amossco's warehouse at Unit 3, Block 6, Vestry Trading Estate, Otford Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 5EL, I saw laid and braided white synthetic lines of all types from 2mm to 160mm diameter; and I came away with 10x200m cops of 2mm nylon braid @ £1.88 each (including sales tax). My stuff, I was surprised and pleased to learn, came from Russia's oldest rope making company KANAT (established in the early 1400s) at Kolomna, near Moscow, and not, I am told, among the most modern plants in the world. With a capacity for 10,000 tonnes output of rope a year, they make a complex range of nylon, polyester and polypropylene constructions in sizes from 2mm to 96mm diameter, also fishing ropes and commercial fishing nets, braided nylon cords and twines.

All of Amossco's products and supplies meet BS, DIN or ISO criteria. Goods can be fully certified (free) if required; and,

for orders over £500 delivery is included.

Contact David Hart (mention my name) by phone 01732 463888, or fax 01732 461777.

**From Dan Cashin,  
Havertown, USA:**

I enclose a list of people who have written to me for Guild information after reading a letter I wrote about the Guild in the magazine 'Sea History'. I hope some of them join this wonderful group. I would also request a favour in the next KM, whether there is any interest amongst East Coast US Guild members in getting together sometime in the spring or summer of 1996. If there is enough interest I could find somewhere to host the meeting. Any questions or comments can be sent to me at my address or better still call me on 1-610-446-7831. I am also sending this letter to LuAnne Kozma and Eric Will to ask their advice. If they do not mind, the Guild can use me as the East Coast point of contact for the Guild.

As far as where the meeting might take place, I will ask Ed Jacobs who is the manager of a wonderful C & D Canal waterfront restaurant called Schafer's Canal House if he could help. At worst we could just have a lunch or dinner there without any big shindig having to be arranged. I also might ask the new Independent Seaport Museum if they are interested. They were the Philadelphia Maritime Museum until they moved to a new and bigger waterfront building in Philadelphia.

*Ed: Good luck to your endeavours Dan, from tiny acorns, mighty oaks do grow, it can only help membership.*

**From a letter sent to Stuart Grainger from Bernard Graham, Poole, England:**

My speciality went under the name of 'A Variety of Works in Potato'. The enclosed photograph is of one of my more successful efforts. From the base to the top of the handle is 3' 2" and it is made entirely from fried potatoes. Briefly, a large potato is cut into slices about 3/8", then soaked in salt

water to make it pliable. It is then woven and fried. As it is built by 'tucking and turning' I suppose it could be described loosely as rope work. You may be interested in the continuous chain which is suspended from the edge of the basket. This is



made from one slice of potato and, if one is careful, it is possible to make six links from one slice.

*Stuart:* The chain actually reminds me of the carved wooden chains attached to traditional Welsh 'love spoons', but carving one from potato and frying it must require nerves of steel and exceedingly steady hands. I know this is not strictly speaking a 'Knotting Matter', but I found it most interesting

and it does illustrate what a wide range of skills our members encompass.

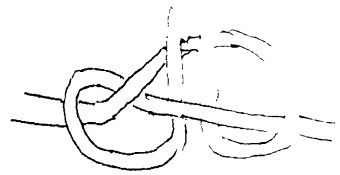
**From a letter sent to member Robert Jackson. Birmingham, England from George Dawson Australia:**

When in Cairns, Queensland, in July last year I saw a magnificent bellrope in the local museum. I was eventually able to trace and visit the creator a Cdr Chas Thomason who is now about 80 yrs old. He had also made a bellrope for the 'Endeavour' which is a full scale replica of Captain Cook's vessel and was visiting Cairns at that time. He also made tiddly handles for the crew's mugs all of which are now on display on the vessel which is touring Australian ports giving cruises, trips and sailing experience to enthusiasts and tourists. She was built in Fremantle mostly by volunteer craftsmen and workers and completed at the end of 1944.

Cdr Thomason kindly gave me 4 buttons and a copy (issue 35) of Knotting Matters. for which I am extremely grateful.

A few years ago I made two pictures from 'The Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework'. One of them is in the local 'Whale' museum.

In my spare time I have made many net shopping bags of polystyrene cordage and found this knot useful when joining in colours etc as, apart from being quite secure, enabled me to melt



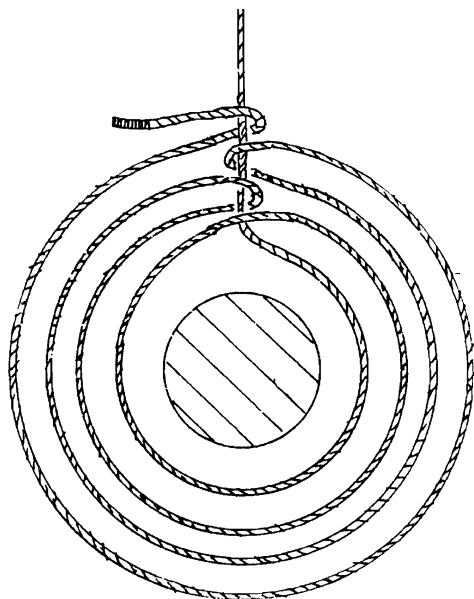
the two ends together which cannot be achieved with a reef knot. I have not come across the knot, which is 2 interlocking half hitches though it obviously is not a new one.

***And now for some comments on previous articles in KM:***

**From Nicolas D Jones, Stourbridge, England:**

In response to Mr Heinrich's query concerning W Smith & Son Redditch (?). I can confirm that they do manufacture sail makers needles and are to be found at: William Smith &

Sons (Neptune Works) Ltd, 86 Palmers Road, East Moons Moat, Redditch, Tel: 01527 510960. Their products are retailed by Bainbridge Aqua Batten Tel 0-1753 645323.



R.B.S. 1/96

(on a T stud) a locked figure of eight.

All of these hitches can be extraordinarily difficult to release if there is any tension applied by a strong wind, current or tidal fall.

The hitch used for many years by professional boatmen on inland waterways is illustrated (left). It has the virtue of being quick and easy to tie and (probably more important) it will never jam no matter what strain is applied to the standing part.

To tie the hitch, turn the rope twice round the pin, tuck a loop under the standing part and drop the loop, *without twisting*, over the pin then repeat the action in the opposite direction. This will hold but for extra security tuck the tail under the standing part and back over once.

**From Richard Thomas, Hoddlesdon, England:**

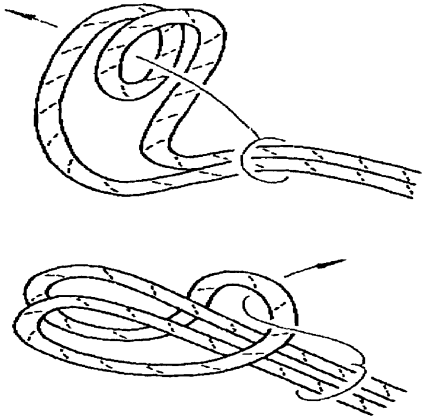
I would like to make an addition to Stuart's article about Inland Waterway Knots.

Mention is made of the use of the round turn and two half hitches when mooring to a ring. I agree, but when mooring to a dolly, pin or bollard you often see the clove hitch used or even

### ANIMALS KNOTS

In KM51 Ken Davey reported about the tailorbird. I would like to see more details. Which knots are used? To his question, another bird, 'Webervogel' in German, is also said to use knots, moreover, on television

some years ago it was shown that Gorillas use knots to join the ends of lines when making its nest. Sometimes the knot is a square knot, mostly though its a granny.



### PIWICH KNOT - SAINT JOHAN - PERFECT KNOT

With reference to KM48\49 I will tell you a little more about this knot.

I myself use it in mountaineering for several purposes with one or more coils, and have done for about 15 years. Some ways of tying the knot and applications are shown in fig1 and 2.

Some years ago I found the knot in the Danish mountaineering manual 'Klatring - en sikkerhed

pa fjeldturen' by Lars Holt, published 1983. It was named 'Sankt Johan' and shown for tying in (fig3). In view of the obsolete style, no chest harness, no sit harness, just a sling around the body, the system can

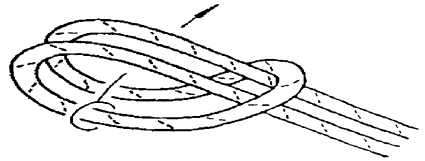
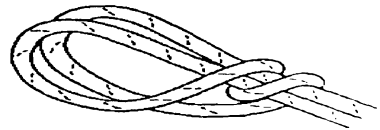


Fig. 1 Making



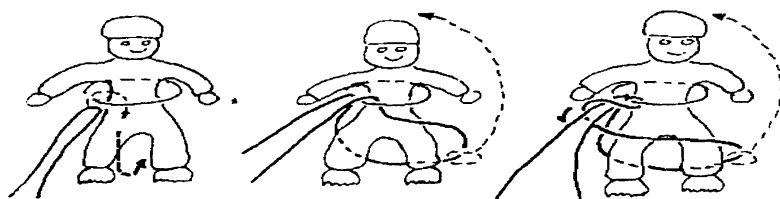
hardly be a modern creation.

Moreover, I found the knot, named as 'perfect knot' now, in a book about angling. 'Perfect', because it would be nearly perfect. In this application the knot had several coils.

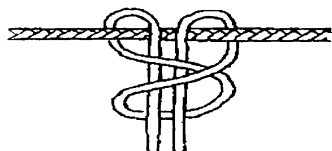
Finally, also in one of the last years, I saw the knot here in Austria in a garden used for fastening the ropes of a swing in rings of steel. This version had one coil.

The knot seems to have lots of inventors.





*Sådan bindes Sankt Johan.*



*Sankt Johan*

Fig.3 Danish method of tying

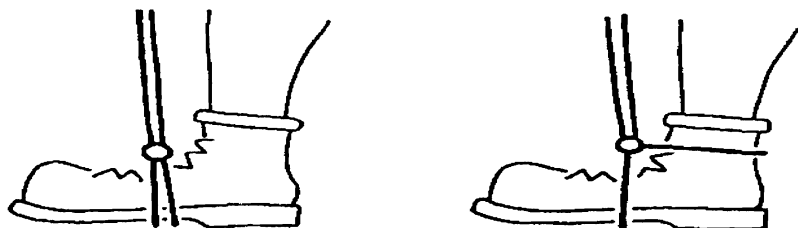
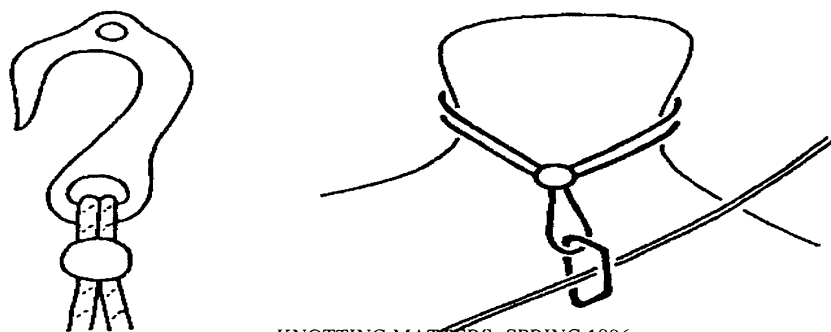


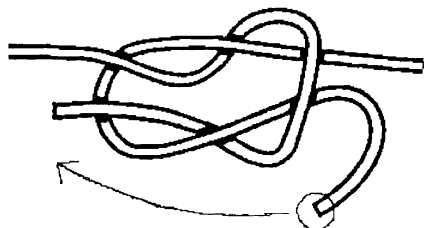
Fig.2 Applications



# WOODY'S KNOTS

by Dave Williams

The reef knot even if made properly is a dangerous knot to use for joining two ropes together. This is because a jerk on one of the ends, which straightens it out causes the



knot to capsize as shown in the diagram below. The straightened rope will then slip out of the other end.

The reef knot is entirely safe when used to tie a rope round



(especially a soft) parcel such as a sail, which is how the reef knot got its name.

If you wish to tie two ropes together where the knot will be

out in the open, then the sheet bend is a much more satisfactory knot to use. It cannot capsize under tension in the same way as a reef knot.

Start by making a bight in one of the ends, and hold it as a loop.

Pass the other end up through the loop, taking to the same side of the loop as the end of the bight.

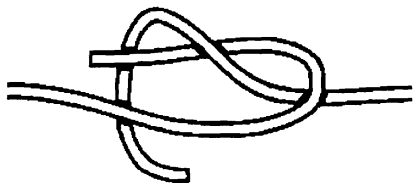


Finally, bring the end over the standing part of the bight and between itself (where it was first passed through), and the end part of the bight.



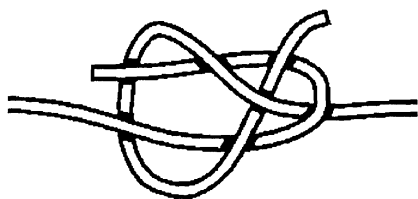
Draw tight , keeping the same shape of the knot.

The big advantage of the sheet bend is that it may also be used to join two ropes of different



thickness. For the knot to be safe, the bight must be made in the thicker of the ropes. The thinner rope then pulls the standing part and end of the thicker rope together.

If the thick rope is more than twice the size of the thinner one, or is stiff, then the double sheet bend (se the next exciting instalment!)



### MODERN MONSTER SPLICING TOOL

One tool not usually carried in the modern day riggers tool box is the fork lift truck, yet I know

of times when this is just the tool to help put in a splice. Bridon Ltd. (what used to be British Ropes make up Giant mooring roped at their Charlton works using a braid on braid rope that must be all of 200mm dia. and to pull the core through the outer they enlist in the help of a couple of fork lift trucks. But they are not the only one to use the fork lift truck. I was recently told of a major piece of wire work carried out on the Macopari 7000 lifting barge of Hanoi Island in the South China Seas by a group of Chinese and Chilean oil rig workers making up a pair of Huge 30000 ton breaking strain wire lifting slings. Making a sling spliced continuous cable laid sling of about 450mm dia. They used a fork lift truck to open the strands and another to pull the strands through, the twist factor from the wire was such that they had to take the tyres and run the wheels between 2H section girders rigged up to form a sort of rail gantry to stop the wheels of the fork lift being twisted off the ground. I asked if there had been any photos taken the answer was

everything was in such a rush that photography was the last thing on their minds!

by **DES PAWSON**

### **More Clock on Ropes**

I read with great interest George Alderidge's article on Splicing Clock Ropes (Knotting Matters No. 51, pp 62/63) as someone who was set the task by a customer some years ago, "here is the cord and this is the clock, splice it" - a 12 strand braid with no lumps/bumps or increase in the cord's diameter allowed.

George wrote me a very interesting and helpful letter in response to my enquiry; one thing we were not able to resolve is the type of fibre used in these braid. The first reaction is that it is Hemp, but living in this far corner of a once great empire my experience is limited to only having handled hemp cordage at the Chatham Historic Dockyard. Does anyone have any comments / suggestions on the fibre sold as "clock rope", as a person who only works with natural fibre I have a deep interest in learning more about this material. I wonder if this

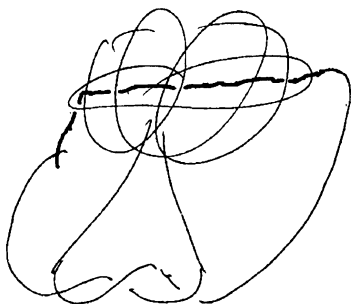
could be the famed Italian Hemp that one hears about?

A thought/suggestion - would it be possible to encourage Guild members to add their email address to the member's list published every year? (I realise this is extra work for Nigel) Also to run a regular feature on a knot related Internet Web Pages that might exist - it is just so much easier to ask a quick question of someone with mail; somehow a letter or phone call demands a whole block of time, and expense! With email I could have this letter on your desk tomorrow and save 90 cents (about 50 pence), and you could just load it into the next **KM** without having to do any re-typing (this is , of course, if you chose to publish it).

**Ed:** Lets hope someone can help with the clock rope. If members will send in their email addresses then I'm sure that Nigel would be happy to add it. There are still a lot of members that don't think email addresses will become as important as telephone numbers. How many members are on the Web?

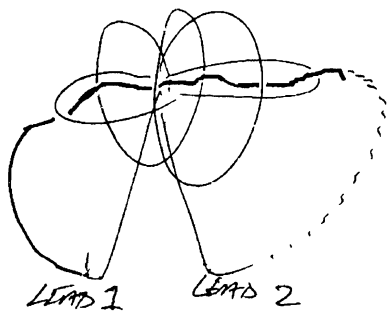
## More Breastplates from Richard Phelan

I have been trying out some new ideas as to how to make up "Breastplates" in a very easy way or simple way to do. Enclosed is, what I call a "Jury



Mast Breastplate". I don't know if anyone else has come up with the idea but once you take principle of the idea you can do no end of breastplates using the same basic rule. I found it worked as follows.

1. Make up a knot, i.e. "Jury Mast" or "Reef Knot or any one along these lines. I do three

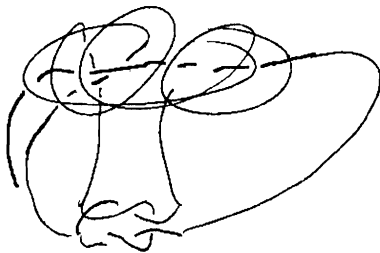


loops holding the cord in my

left hand and looping the lead up over to the left and down and back to the right so that the lead is on top pointing to the right, do three of these, and then put the top to the bottom and the bottom to the top, you will see when you pull these though every lead is over under, over under etc.

Then do a loop, bend or a reef under it, its up to the individual as to what they choose, as illustrated or simply follow it round using one of the leads left over and thread it through the knot under over, under over or over under, over under. What ever is the opposite to the lead and when you have joined up with the other lead you simply double up, and that's it!

I have done quite a few, and the jury mast, enclosed, looks quite nice on the front of a bottle, or



on a knot board, etc.

The photo enclosed has this "Jury Mast Breastplate" on top

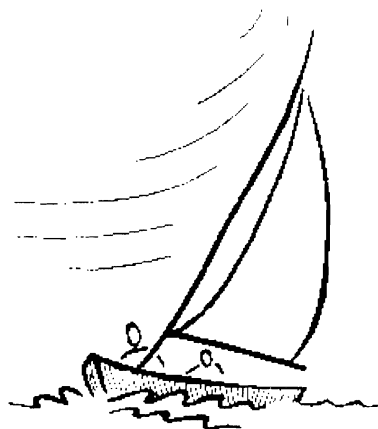
of a half round sinnet that I did for a chap in London who wanted a name chart and the knots numbered rather than lots of little labels, and it came out quite effective. Anyhow thought that you might be interested in this idea and pass it on in **KM**.

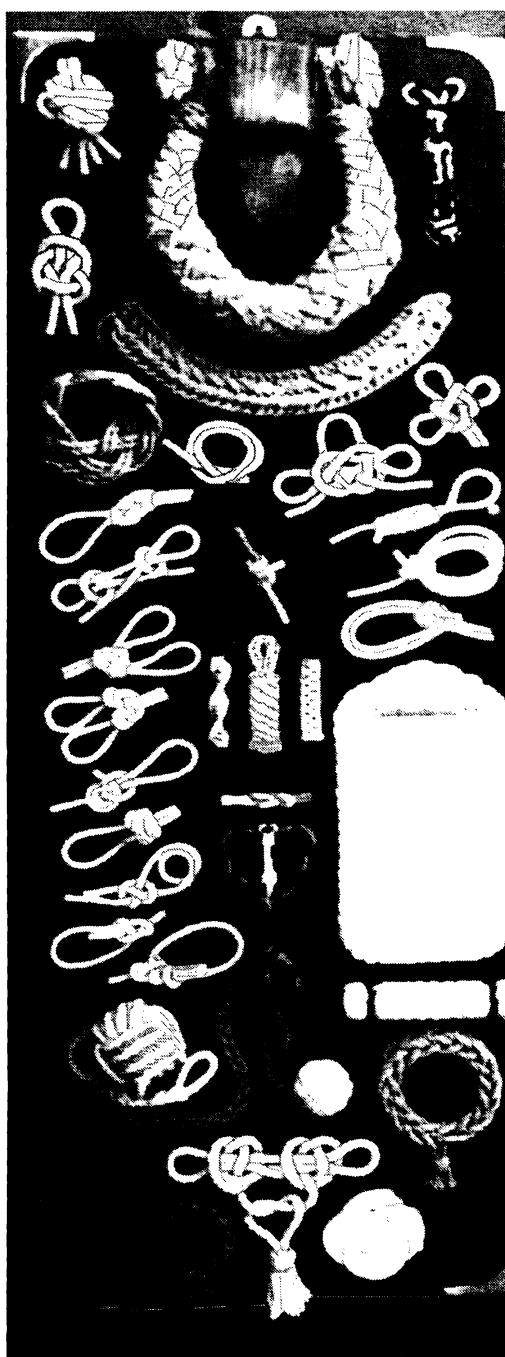
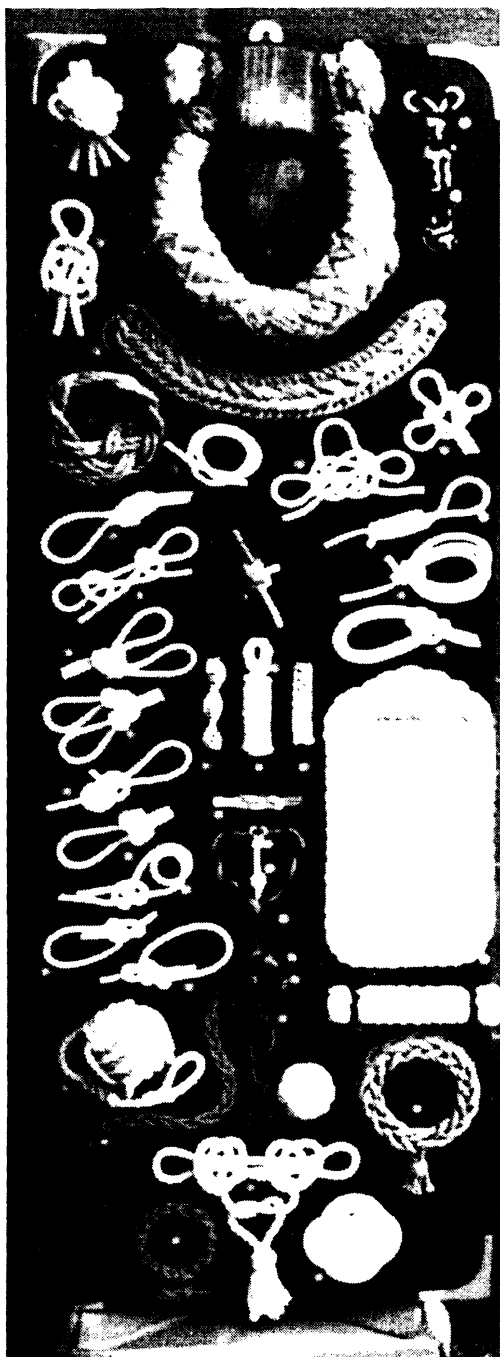
**Ed:** We thank Richard for his interesting letter, drawing and colour photo. After two hours of trying to make the drawings printable, I finally gave up. It was only a single biro sketch that I kept loosing the line in, so I've put them in as received. The photograph however is a very good example of what your new computer can do. The knot board was less than half the size of the photo and the bits of shadow that there were, was very defused and didn't help to define the edges of the knots. The first photo (on the left) was the best scan I could do. Using the 'Adobe Photoshop 3.0' I filled in the white (burned out bits where the knots should be) spaces with shading lines to hint at the edges of the rope in the knot as I could see them. Notice that the plaque is just shaded lines of different lengths but it

gives you an idea of what it should be. We will always try to make the best of your photos and drawings. However you can help by using black and white film for photos and try to keep some contrast in (not black on dark brown or white on light grey etc.).

Drawings are often essential to describing how to tie a knot, as text alone can be confusing. Your drawings can be worked on, even if you don't show your over's and under's, **if** you make the pen follow the cord all the way through so I can see where the loop goes when I come to shade out the under passing's.

Keep your letters and stories coming in. Don't be put off by my whinging. You draw it and describe it and we will try to print it.





# Two Pretty Simple Interweaves

Pieter van de Griend

In this article we shall demonstrate two interweave techniques. Make a Turk's Head Knot of 4 parts and 7 bights, either using the method described by Frans Masurel in KM51 pp67-69 or, if you have access to it, by Karl. W. Nilsen: "Om Tyrkerknop slått i handa" in *Norsk Sjøfartsmuseum årsberetning 1978*, Oslo 1979, pp132-133. Alternatively you could also try making one from figure 1.

The first interweave will have a so-called gauchon weave, also called column coding, i.e the crossing types per column are identical. It can be obtained by letting the working end start off on the left of the original Turk's Head Knot. Follow the 14 steps of the tying method of the first table (see figs. 1-5).

The second interweave has a so-called herringbone weave, also called row coding, i.e all crossings have identical parity per row. It can be obtained by letting the working end start off on the left of the original Turk's Head Knot. Follow the 14 steps of the tying method of the second table (see figs. 6-10).

Although these techniques were demonstrated on Turk's Head Knots of 4 parts and 7 bights, there is no problem extending the principles to Turk's Head Knots of 4 parts and a number of bights which is a member of the sequence 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, .... If you use a different colour of cord for the second Turk's Head, the distinctive patterns will show up quite clearly and help you keep track of your interweave.

In the tables below the bold typeface indicates where the working end crosses its own standing part. The normal typeface is reserved for where it meets a crossing with the original 4-part Turk's Head.

Thanks is due to Frans Masurel, who caused this article to be written.

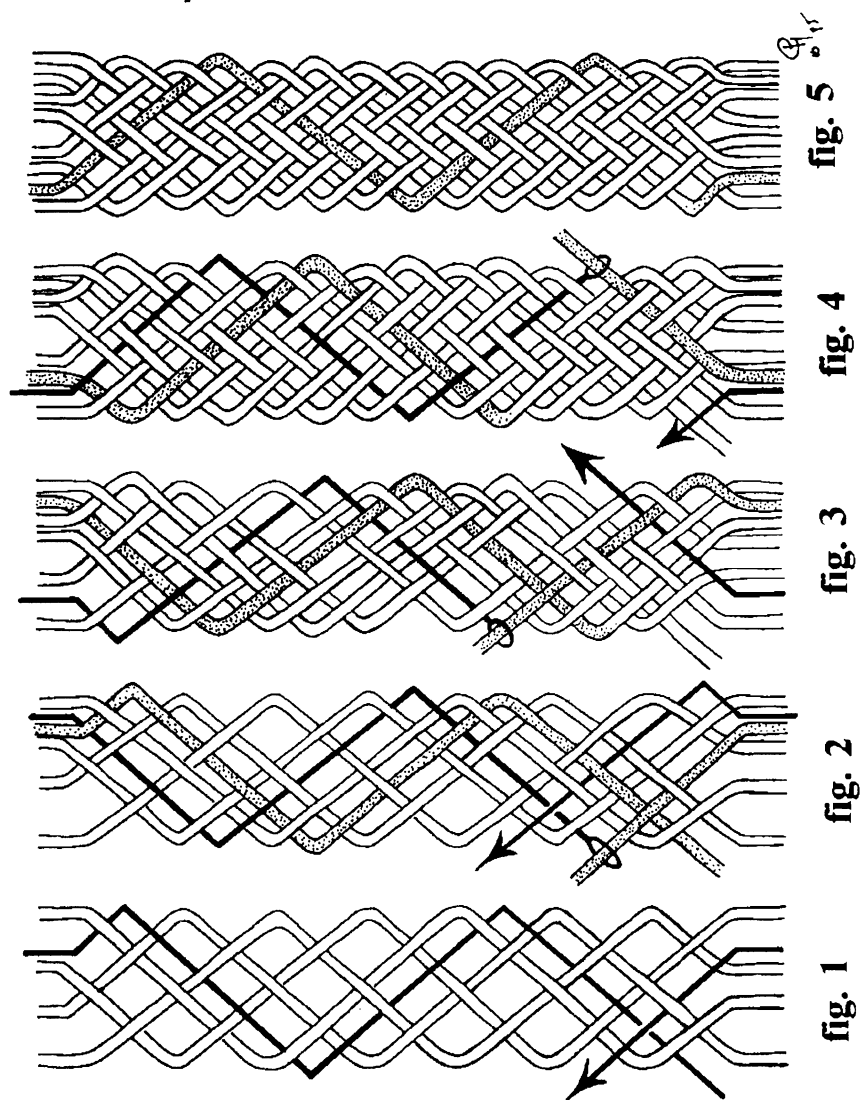
© Pieter v.d Griend

January 1996 ☺



THE GAUCHO WEAVE	
1	L → R: U - O - U - O
2	R → L: U - O - U - O
3	L → R: U - O - U - O
4	R → L: U - O - U - O - O
5	L → R: U - O - U - U - O
6	R → L: U - O - U - O - O
7	L → R: U - O - U - U - O
8	R → L: U - O - U - U - O - O
9	L → R: U - O - O - U - U - O
10	R → L: U - O - U - U - O - O
11	L → R: U - O - O - U - U - O
12	R → L: U - O - O - U - U - O - O
13	L → R: U - U - O - O - U - U - O
14	R → L: U - O - O - U - U - O - O

THE HERRING BONE WEAVE	
1	L → R: U - O - U - O
2	R → L: O - U - O - U
3	L → R: U - O - U - O
4	R → L: O - U - O - U - U
5	L → R: U - O - U - O - O
6	R → L: O - U - O - U - U
7	L → R: U - O - U - O - O
8	R → L: O - U - O - O - U - U
9	L → R: U - O - U - U - O - O
10	R → L: O - U - O - O - U - U
11	L → R: U - O - U - U - O - O
12	R → L: O - U - U - O - O - U - U
13	L → R: U - O - O - U - U - O - O
14	R → L: O - U - U - O - O - U - U



## The Gaucho Interweave

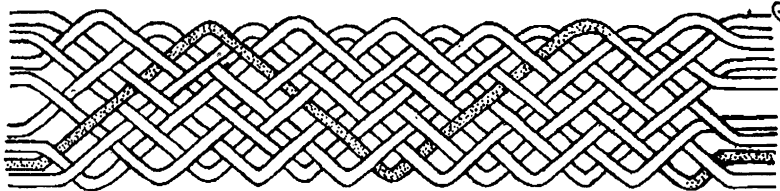


fig. 10

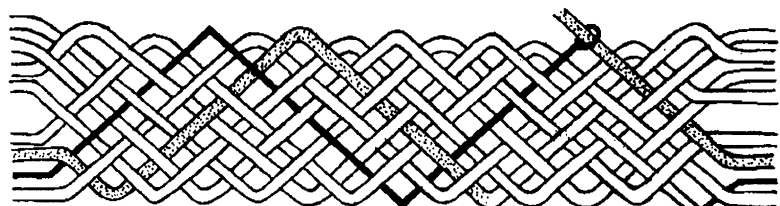


fig. 9

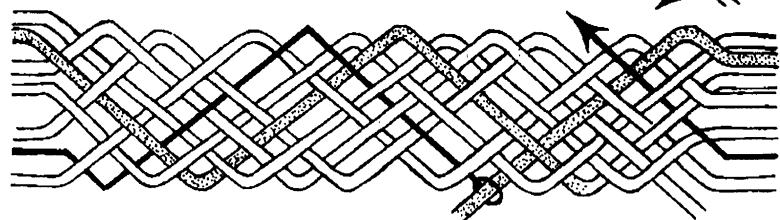


fig. 8

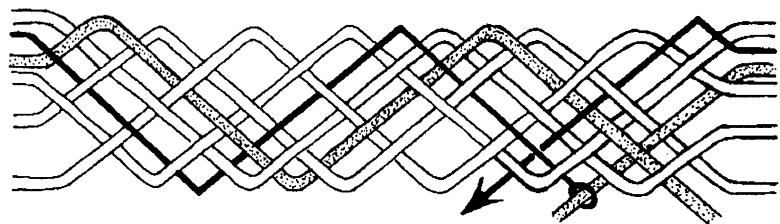


fig. 7

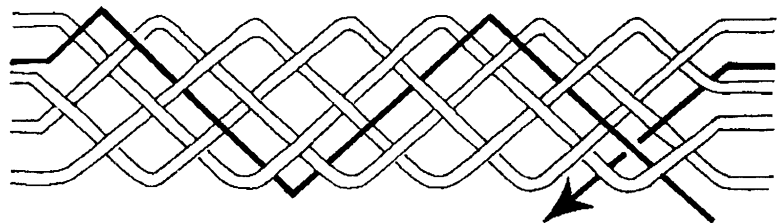


fig. 6

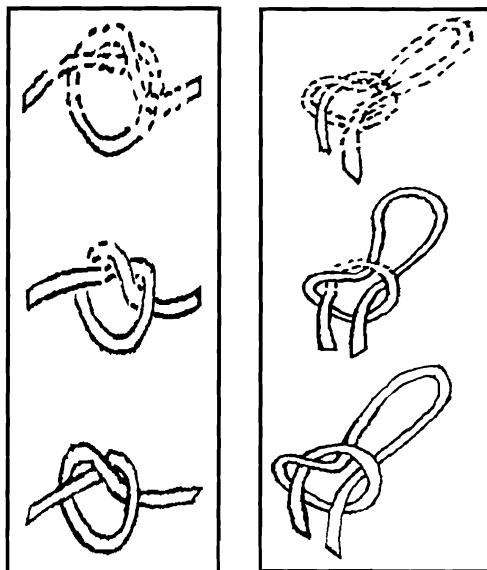
## The Herringbone Interweave

## From Edward Greer, USA.

First let me say how much I have enjoyed reading **KM** through the years, especially the comments of our various editors. Everyone seems to agree that the most frequent reason for not submitting material for publication is that readers find drawing knots difficult. While we cannot match the work of Stuart Grainger, (**Ed:** who can) I think we can, with practice, make some improvement, and clearly get our ideas across.

One of our greatest difficulties in the drawing of knots is perhaps getting the crossings right. Another is in keeping the right side and the left side of the line properly aligned as the line winds through the loops and crossings of the knot. I have found it helpful to start drawing the knot with solid lines, both left and right until you come near the first crossing. Then use dots or dashes through the first crossing. At this point, you do not need to be concerned over whether the working end goes over or under the standing end. Continue with dots or dashes,

not letting the left side get far ahead of the right, through all the crossings and loops of the knot until you come to the working end, which is finished with solid lines. I have used two simple illustrations below.



Later after some practice you will reach the point where you will want to show whether the crossings go over or under as you go along. Leave plenty of space. do not have three line crossing at one point, if you can avoid it. practice drawing the same knot several times. Remember- Knotting ventured, Knotting gained!

## FROM OUR POSTBAG

*From our New Zealand Chapter's newsletter, written by Roger Carter.....*

Just after I had finished printing all the newsletters yesterday at the museum, I talked to a museum visitor, she asked me who had made the bell ropes on the museum's bell. I explained that they were for the most part donated by local members of the IGKT and said that I expected that she had not heard of us, living as she normally does on a yacht in the marina in Larnaca, Cyprus, on the contrary she said, she was a founder member of the guild, the lady in question was Mrs Ann Devine, one of the fateful 25 who met aboard RRS Discovery on the 17 April 1982! She lived in NZ several years ago and was visiting old friends, what a coincidence she should call into town, and into the museum the one day of the month I was able to get in there. A meeting of destiny do you think?

I went to a Maritime History Seminar, on our way south we called in on our New Brighton member Richard Hodge. Richard has spent a whole year devising the knots and making a chess set and board, and in the process he has invented several innovative variations on established knots, back splicing Crown Hitching for example. The final result of Richard's work is exquisite. Richard's work has not gone unnoticed by the laity, he has been on TV and in the newspapers, unfortunately because good news is no news, they have not done justice to his dexterity, knowledge and innovative efforts. Well done Richard, an accomplishment to be proud of. In the new year Richard is off to the UK to represent the chapter at a variety of functions, knotting and nautical. Bon Voyage!

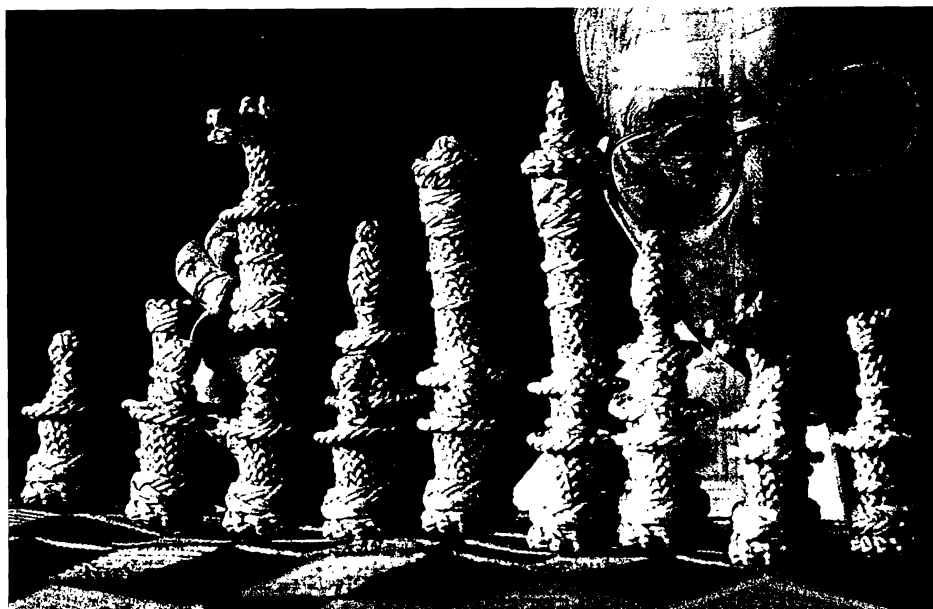
While in Christchurch, I was invited to preview the refurbished Antarctic Exhibition in the Canterbury Museum, a

fascinating collection of the equipment and memorabilia both historic and recent, associated with the various nations explorations and scientific projects down on the ice. Among the more recent exhibitions was an American Team issue parka, on the zip-tag was a fancy work toggle, a sort of miniature 'bellhop' to help gloved hands zip up the parka. The maker is acknowledged on the label, he is guild member Alan Priddy of Pocatello, Idaho. Alan was the Maintenance Supervisor of the American Antarctic Base, and spent at least 12 seasons down on the ice. A couple of years ago, he decided, at season's end, to take a leisurely trip home to Idaho, holidaying on the way, during the course of which, he looked me up, and we spent a most enjoyable afternoon chewing the fat on matters knotting. Alan told me he made most of his toggles whilst whiling away the time during the long flights and airport waits necessary to his lifestyle. It was a real pleasure to see his name and see a sample of his work remaining in NZ.

Did you see the Prime Suspect programme on TV, where the police were comparing the knots used to tie victims in separate murders? Several of our members in various parts of the world are consultants to their local police department, on the subject of Knots and Cordage used in crime.

The last 'Friends of the Museum' field day included trips to the wreck of the ship Hydrabad on Waitarere beach just north of Levin, and a visit to the Flax Museum in Foxton. Research that I carried out prior to the trip has revealed some very interesting history about NZ Flax (*Phormium Tenax*) Rope made in NZ from whale line in the 1840s to rope used to make the boarding nets that the American invasion forces used in re-taking the Pacific Islands. There is still more research to be done, including the celebrated Maori rope making and knot tying. When complete I shall serialise it, starting in the new year.

During recent months I have been attending meetings of the 'Relocate Edwin Fox' Wellington



*Richard's chess set as it appeared in the local Christchurch paper.  
Well done Richard*

Charitable Trust' a rather ponderous title, but commensurate with the task ahead of them.

They are dedicated to shifting the old 'Indiaman' from the foreshore in Picton to a site in the new Lambton Harbour complex in Wellington. The Edwin Fox was the last of the Honourable East India Companies Ships, she is an important and rare surviving example of 19th century wooden ship-building, and has a history which includes the Crimean War, and convicts to Australia, as well as immigrants

## Knotty problem on chess board

by David Gee

Retired merchant seaman Richard Hodge, of New Brighton, has probably produced the first knotted-rope chess set seen in the world.

"I have not seen anything like it in any of the literature," Mr Hodge said. A member of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, Mr Hodge went to sea in England at the age of 15 after training that included the splicing and tying of knots.

Since then he has continued his skill of tying knots and today, in his retirement, he continues to make ropes for bells and also uses his skills on leather work for horses.

The chess set and board took Mr Hodge a year, and he designed it as he progressed. He made it in nylon, which he dyed, and says now that the first is made he could make another in six weeks. He plans a bigger one soon, but first he will take the set to Britain to show it to other members of the guild.

His biggest problem in making the chess men was with the intricacies of the knight's mouth and ears. He cannot estimate the number of knots in the chess pieces, but says there are more than 10,000 clove hitches in the board.

"It's been a life-long interest. It's like origami, the Japanese paper-folding skill, you never get to the end of it," he said. "With three metres of line in the hand you have a Rubik's cube."

Mr Hodge, who cannot play chess, started the chess set because he was interested to see if he could create the shapes.

to NZ. The working director of the Trust, Malcolm McGregor has contacted us with a request for the Chapter to provide volunteer riggers, that should provide the Chapter's 'riggers dept' with a healthy challenge in the event that she does actually make it across Cook's wild Strait.

Roger finishes with an appeal for someone to take on the editorship of the NZ newsletter, due to commitments to his sick wife etc.

*Letter from Heinz Prohaska about the Piwich Knot.*

*Referring to my letter of 14th January 1996 I am able now to add some details concerning the name "Sankt John". As Lars Holt wrote new, he learned the knot in Norway on a glacier course arranged by the DNT (Den Norske Turistforening) in 1970. As far as his younger brother, who besides the glacier course also took the glacier instructor course, remembers, the knot was named after one of the pioneers concerning these courses in Norway. His name was John, I will try to find out more.*

## TRAINING

**This concludes our series on training, trying to stir the pot as it were. These thoughts on training come from Percy Blandford**

As the first president I think back to those early days and wonder what the other pioneer members think of the way the guild is going. From those early meeting of a few enthusiasts on "President" alongside the Thames Embankment we have progressed to six-monthly British gatherings of more people at many places, as well as overseas activities. I am sure Geoff. Budworth will be glad to see the way the magazine had developed, following his early hesitant, but successful, efforts. I congratulate the members who share their knowledge and ideas at meetings and put them on paper - and thank them as well as the editor and his predecessors, who have given much time and effort in producing the magazine.

I am unhappy about the training discussions. Ours is not a subject for formal



subject for formal qualifications. We should not institute examinations and award certificates and titles. I shudder at the idea of someone becoming 'Turk's Head Tyer, first class' or whatever! Preparing training material is another matter. If anyone wants help in putting over knotting to a class, I hope we can provide it, Otherwise, let us continue in an informal manner, with any training usually on a one-to-one basis.

Brian Glennon, a rigger in the USA, asks about the use of the term 'Master' in relation to his craft. Although I have been a rigger and have lived over there, I am unsure of the application of the term in America. In Britain it is usual to reserve the title for a self-employed craftsman, who may employ others, who are not entitled to call themselves ;Master:, no matter how skilled. There is a Guild of Master Craftsmen - for bosses!

*Ed:* This has been our attempt at raising the discussion about training. There is so much going on out there, but only the people involved know about them. Thinking back over my time

learning knots, I have learned almost everything from personal teaching. Spending a weekend at an AGM or helping on a Guild stall at a show can be very enlightening. My idea of formal training when I first joined the Committee and then on the Sub-committee for Training, was to do something for the people who cannot take a weekend off to pop over to America or Holland or even Leeds, for whatever reason. I thought of some kind of postal training in packs or projects on different subjects. Since then I have learned that others have given many hours trying to do the same sort of thing. There has been much time given in designing systems of badges, titles and awards, even joining in on already running schemes like City and Guilds, Scouting or Duke of Edinburgh Awards. But in the end it seems that the only way that will satisfy most people who have expressed any opinion is the oldest and first, **KNOTTING MATTERS.**

I have an image by Norman Rockwell on my living room wall called 'Scouts of many trails'. It was given me when I

was six or seven. It is of an old man in his Captains cap, sitting at a table amongst his maps and a globe, a model ship on the wall and an open travelling trunk on the floor. Leaning over the small table next to him, as he points to the globe with his gnarled and knobby hands are a Land Scout and a Sea Scout. The old man is giving what little time he has left to share what the two boys will never get the chance to have again, the first hand experiences, mistakes and all, of history and knowledge, important and trivial. With fewer and fewer old people being cared for at home, (this is an observation not a criticism) and the most valuable thing you can be is young, (that is a criticism), we seem to be loosing our sense of perspective. There are some grumpy old battle axes out there that wouldn't give you there trash, but there are a lot of wonderful tellers of stories and teachers of tricks and skills that look forward to sharing what time and knowledge they have. This is perhaps why I was so touched by the death recently of Albert RN Burton. Other than a

few moments at several different meetings, I only spent one day with him while he made a knot board for me to give to a retiring Scout leader as a gift from the Group. Now when I think of that painting I see Albert's face on that old man, his room filled with photos of himself and his ships and his work.

Perhaps the best that I can do is to encourage the DOERS to pass on the little tricks and short cuts that will never fill a book but would be a very good paragraph in **KM**. Because I am involved in Scouting I teach the basic or tenderfoot knots to Cubs Scouts, Guides and Boys Clubs. The way I teach, the reef knot or how to splice an eye is aimed at children who aren't old enough yet to know left from right. My way is very simple but works for me with children. Now I will never write a book on the subject but I may need a filler one day for **KM** and can certainly fill a page. When I think of all the people that I have learned from, a little bit here and a little bit there, if only they could see that, rather than holding themselves up for

some sort of praise, they are sharing their little bit with the rest of us, we really would have a publication to be proud of.

Perhaps a series like the old "Fishing with Mr. Crabtree" cartoon series would do. A characterisation of someone like Albert RN, Charlie Smith, Ken Yalden, Geoffrey Budworth, Stuart Grainger or any of the other doer's and teachers could entertainingly explain some knot or short cut that is talked about at an AGM or while watching men work or when trying to do something at home. If that doesn't grab you then an occasional series like Knotmaster or Woodies Knots that is aimed at getting the new member to write in with the questions they would be too embarrassed to write in to **KM** about but would ask of someone at an AGM in a one on one situation.

Now its over to you. What would you like me to do, as a concerned member of the Guild, a member of the controlling committee, a mender of the Training Sub-committee or as the Editor of the Guilds Newsletter? Do we get the

training that we deserve after all?

**Yours**

**Knotted**



OOPS!

### GET WELL CHARLIE SMITH

Sorry to hear of Charlie's recent heart attack. The editors would like to send their best wishes and we are sure the best wishes of all of the members, to Charlie for a speedy recovery. We look forward to seeing him at the May AGM which he is organising at Gillwell Park in Essex. We hope full of vim, vigour and vitality, well recovered.



# INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

*Calender of events - 1996*

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	HELP WANTED
last Saturday in April & April 21 (at 11 o'clock)	Dutch Branch meetings Belgian Branch meeting	Rotterdam Maritime Museum Blankenberg Lighthouse, Blankenberge,	Jan Voss Marc Lauwereyns	0355 266 116	
May 11 (Sat)	IGKT 14th AGM	Gilwell Park, Essex			
May 24 - 27	International Festival of the Sea	Bristol Historic Docks	Watch this space for further information		
May 25-27	Pitstone Spring Festival	Pitstone, Nr Leighton Buzzard, Beds	Barry Darkins	01296 661115	Displays welcome
May 26 - 27	Ellesmere Port Boat Museum	Ellesmere Port Boat Museum	David Watkins	01244 682117	Yes - displays wanted
			(please telephone for details)		
June 13 - 16	Wooden Boat Show - Footrope K (London Knot Tyers (George Aldridge)	Nat'l Maritime Museum, Greenwich	Des Pawson	01476 690 090	No
June 20-23 (Crafts -23	3rd Annual Ivinghoe Midsummer	Ivinghoe, Nr Leighton Buzzard, Beds	Barry Darkins	01297 661115	Displays welcome
June 22 - 23	Canal Boat Rally	Tower Wharf, Grand Union Canal, Chestre	David Watkins	01244 682117	Yes - displays wanted
	(sale of your own items permitted!!!)		(please telephone for details)		
June 28 - 30	Wooden Boat Show (USA)	Mistick, Connecticut, USA	Des Pawson	01476 690 090	
June 16-17	Pitstone Farm Open Day	Pitstone, Nr Leighton Buzzard, Beds	Barry Darkins	01297 661115	Displays welcome
July 14-15	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -
September 15-16	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -
July 4 - 8	West Cornwall Maritime Festival	Penzance			
July 8	Dia da Marinha (Navy Day)	Portugal	(Please telephone for more info)	00351 1 3428105	
July 13 - 21	International Sea Festival	Brest, France	Int'l Rendevous for Boats & Mariners		
July 14	North Western Branch IGKT Mee	Albion Inn, Park Street, Chester	David Watkins	01244 682117	
September 8	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	
November 10	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	
August 25 - 26	Ellesmere Port Boat Museum	Ellesmere Port Boat Museum	David Watkins	01244 682117	Yes - displays
<u>Other events in Portugal</u> (telephone for confirmation for all events)					
All year (except Mondays & holidays)	Museo da Marinha (Navy Museu (permanent museum with shop)	Mostiero dos Jeronimos, Belem, Lisbon		00351 1 3620019	
Saturdays (all year)	Feira da Ladra (a Lisbon Fair)	near the Arch of S.Vicente Church, Lisbon	Joachim Escudeiro	00351 1 9141222	
August (?)	Facint '96 (Handicraft Fair)	Sintra Town Hall, Sintra (near Lisbon)	Joachim Escudeiro	00351 1 9141222	

## MORE EVENTS REQUIRED, PLEASE!!!!!!

To those who *have* sent information on forthcoming events, many thanks. HOWEVER, the 'veritable flood of notifications' is still only a trickle! There must be lots more going on. Come on Guild Members and Branch Secretaries, please let me know about meetings and events in your area so that visiting knotters can meet like-minded souls. Advice of overseas events would also be most welcome.

Jeff Wyatt  
91 Luton Road  
Dunstable, Beds  
LU5 4LW  
Tel: 01582 664504 (Ansaphone)

## OBITUARY

DR HARRY ASHER MA, PhD  
1910 - 1995

Harry Asher's recent death at the age of 85 takes from the scene a remarkable IGKT founder member. Educated at Lancing College and Cambridge, England, he taught maths and physics at boys' public schools and physiology at Birmingham University.

During WWII he was involved with radar. Picking French and German during a spell at the University of Geneva, he later learnt Russian and for many years translated its technical texts. Harry wrote several books, one photographic and others on physiology (notably *The Seeing Eye*). He had an inventive flair. Two of his devices became standard in optometry and he once sought my view on a gadget to simplify reversing a car with caravan attached.

While a professor in Oregon, USA, he had fallen, literally and often, for horse riding which he practised enthusiastically until, eight or so years later, at the

amazing age of 65, he succeeded in Exmoor's gruelling two day Golden Horseshoe endurance ride. His fitness kept him going. I recall him, small, white haired and 70, admitting that he might have to give up riding as the horses would soon be too strong for him; but, at that time, he was still turning daily backward somersaults on his garden trapeze.

Aged 80 Harry had survived a heart attack that should have killed him. He retired from work, set about enjoying himself, and this was when he acquired his fascination for knotting. He continually asked why and how. Why did right-handed rope coil more easily clockwise? How did Ashley's seemingly identical #3114 & #3115 (half hitching & marline hitching) behave differently? I'm not sure we ever truly satisfied him. But I taught him to spin a miniature lariat and he was enthralled by the Lego rope-making machine 12 year old Neal Pawson built and demonstrated at the Guild's 1986 'Extravaganza'.

Much of what Harry Asher wrote in Knotting Matters was incorporated into the early Guild booklets 'A New System of Knotting - Volumes I & II'. These he turned into 'The Alternative Knot Book', published in 1989 by Nautical Books, an imprint of A & C Black Ltd, in which he described a number of knot variants and an original taxonomy; but it was his cute 'Pedigree Cow' that was adopted by the Girl Guides Association.

Harry disliked the mathematical closed curve theory of topological knots but admired the late Desmond Mandeville's ergonomic 'trampling' and deemed it a wonderful discovery. His own ingenious interlacing of jug, jar or bottle sling loops, so that they always came out the same size, I named in print 'Asher's Equaliser'. The label irked him, and he told me so, but he also defined the 'Law of Hitch and Bight' (his name not mine). An avid letter writer, many of his other knotting notions remain on paper for future knotting students to rediscover.

He leaves behind his beloved doctor wife Patria, son Robert, daughters Pauline and Catherine. Harry Asher, coming late to knot tying, added to its lore and helped create our Guild.

*"Death closes all: but  
something near the end,  
Some work of noble note, may  
yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove  
with Gods."*

(Tennyson)

Geoffrey Budworth



An organisational meeting of the Texas branch was held on 4/2 96 at which 5 intrepid knot tyers, ignoring bad weather and icy roads met. In attendance were Tony Barrick, Tim Barrick, Jack Keene, Robert Higgins and Gary Sessions. All but Tim were IGKT members. Several others were invited but the weather was really bad. Texans do not drive well or often in snow and ice. There was a lot of knot talk and coffee drinking. We discussed some things that we wanted to do and since everyone present was involved in scouting, some of our activities will be directed in that direction. Our next meeting will be held on 21/4/96. We will keep KM updated on our news. Gary Sessions. Ed: Well done Gary and the Texan branch we look forward to hearing bigger and better things from you soon.

# GUILD SUPPLIES

## I.G.K.T. BOOK PRICE LIST 1995

ITEM	PRICE
<b>THE KNOT BOOK</b> Geoffrey Budworth	£2.50
<b>MUCH ADO ABOUT KNOTTING (The 1st 10 years)</b> Geoffrey Budworth	£2.50*
<b>BREASTPLATE DESIGNS</b> Brian FIELD	£2.50
<b>TURKSHEADS THE TRADITIONAL WAY</b> Eric Franklin	£1.50*
<b>NYLON NOVELTIES</b> Eric Franklin	£2.00*
<b>KNOTCRAFT</b> Stuart Grainger	£3.60*
<b>ROPEFOLK</b> Stuart Grainger	£1.30*
<b>TURKSHEAD ALTERNATIVES</b> Stuart Grainger	£2.20*
<b>SOMETHING DIFFERENT Over 50 Button knots</b> John HALIFAX	£3.95
<b>KNOTTING MATTERS - Past Editions</b>	£2.00*

\*Indicates 33.3% discount available on orders worth £30 or more at retail prices.

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