

The University of Wisconsin Library  
Manuscript Theses

Unpublished theses submitted for the Master's and Doctor's degrees and deposited in The University of Wisconsin Library are open for inspection, but are to be used only with due regard to the rights of the authors. Bibliographical references may be noted, but passages may be copied only with the permission of the authors, and proper credit must be given in subsequent written or published work. Extensive copying or publication of the thesis in whole or in part requires also the consent of the Dean of the Graduate School of The University of Wisconsin.

This thesis by CHRISTINA A. SWANSON  
has been used by the following persons, whose signatures attest their acceptance of the above restrictions.

A Library which borrows this thesis for use by its patrons is expected to secure the signature of each user.

---

---

NAME AND ADDRESS

DATE

Norwegian Immigrant Handweavings in  
Nineteenth Century Wisconsin

By

Christina A. Swanson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Science  
(Related Art)

at the

University of Wisconsin - Madison

1975

AWO  
S972  
C575

THESIS OUTLINE

Thesis Title: Norwegian-Immigrant Weavings in Nineteenth  
Century Wisconsin

Acknowledgements

Introduction

PART I: Background

Chapter 1. Historical Survey of Norwegian Cultural  
Development

Chapter 2. A. Norwegian Immigrant Settlement  
Patterns

B. Common Elements Affecting the  
Norwegian Farmer and Immigrant

PART II: The Weaving Forms

Chapter 3. Weaving Forms in the Norwegian Rural Culture

Chapter 4. Weaving Forms in the Wisconsin Norwegian  
Society

Chapter 5. Conclusion

PART III: Visual Evidence

Footnotes

References

Appendices: List of Slides

List of Illustrations

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend sincere thanks to my committee members for their help and guidance,

Mary Stieglitz, Chmn.  
Harald Naess  
Ruth Harris

I also wish to thank, for their time, help, and interest,

Mrs. Winner, Little Norway, Wisconsin  
Mr. Ken Colwell, The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wisconsin  
Mrs. Ralph Carratt, Orfordville, Wisconsin  
Mrs. Walter Bohman, Amherst, Wisconsin.

## Introduction

The purpose of this thesis, a study of the Norwegian immigrant handweaving in nineteenth century Wisconsin, is to consider the affect of social and cultural change on the art weaving and the craft of weaving in general. The social and cultural change, a result of the integration of the Norwegian immigrant into the early Wisconsin society, is vivid and dramatic and therefore quite clear in its effect. For background and comparison, the study also considers changes in Norwegian society and their affect on the weaving in Norway. These changes, caused by various factors according to location of the respective society, are similar in purpose and lead to like results, varying mainly in the depth and degree of the change.

In the course of the study three questions are posed and answered:

1. What is the cultural basis behind the woven textiles used by Norwegian immigrants?
2. How did the changing economic and social bases of society affect the weavings; and in what ways were the changes reflected in the Norwegian immigrant examples in Wisconsin?
3. What is the visual proof of the change here in Wisconsin? The last question is demonstrated in the collection of slides (listed at the end of the thesis) which compare Norwegian-made textiles with immigrant-made textiles.

Much of the information has come from literary sources which can be broken down into five categories; histories of Norway, histories of Norwegian immigrants in the United States, Norwegian immigrant writings, general books on Norwegian crafts and designs, and periodicals published by various societies. Other sources were individuals of Norwegian descent who provided information on weaving done by their parents or grandparents. Unfortunately, few actual examples of looms or woven textiles of Wisconsin manufacture have come to light.

## PART I: BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1. Historical Survey of Norwegian Cultural Development

The main unit of traditional Norwegian society was the single farm. This was a result of the fact that there were no villages such as are found in the greater part of Europe, rather there existed the "bygd" or a settled district of farms united by their dependence on the valley or fiord. The reason for this societal independence is due to the geographical characteristics of the country. Mountainous, Norway is poor in tillable land and in natural resources. The concerns of everyday life seldom took the people outside their home valley or district. The social stability of the system allowed for the emergence of a highly sophisticated folk culture, already set with a well developed range of traditional techniques, designs, and materials in the Viking age. This early achievement is the basis of Norwegian folk weaving; later stages in Norwegian history have provided the additions and refinements in the form of foreign adaptations and inspirations which accounted for the flowering of the Nordic folk culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Strictly speaking, emigration was nothing new in the nineteenth century. The sixth and seventh centuries in Norway saw an expansion of land clearance and a resulting population growth and prosperity.<sup>1</sup> By the eighth century

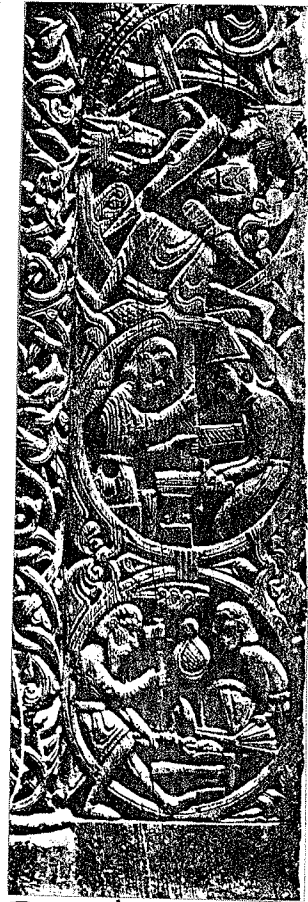
the land development became limited and the Vikings had to expand northward and east over the mountains, or else west across the sea to the islands north and west of Great Britain: Ireland, Scotland, and Iceland.

Prosperity for Norway and her island colonies peaked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The previous three centuries was the era of the Viking expeditions, peopled by men who were motivated by greed or the hope of trade and colonization possibilities. The Vikings had a great deal of love for finery and ornament (Illus. #'s 1, 2, 3). It remained with their descendants for hundreds of years and is reflected in the highly decorative qualities of the folk culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This love was so pronounced as to be described by a contemporary as a national weakness.<sup>2</sup> Although it produced inspiration to the native handicrafts, such love of finery was also the result of an unfortunate competitive spirit which promoted rivalry among the chieftans and later a lack of unity fatal to Norway's political position in the crisis of the following century.

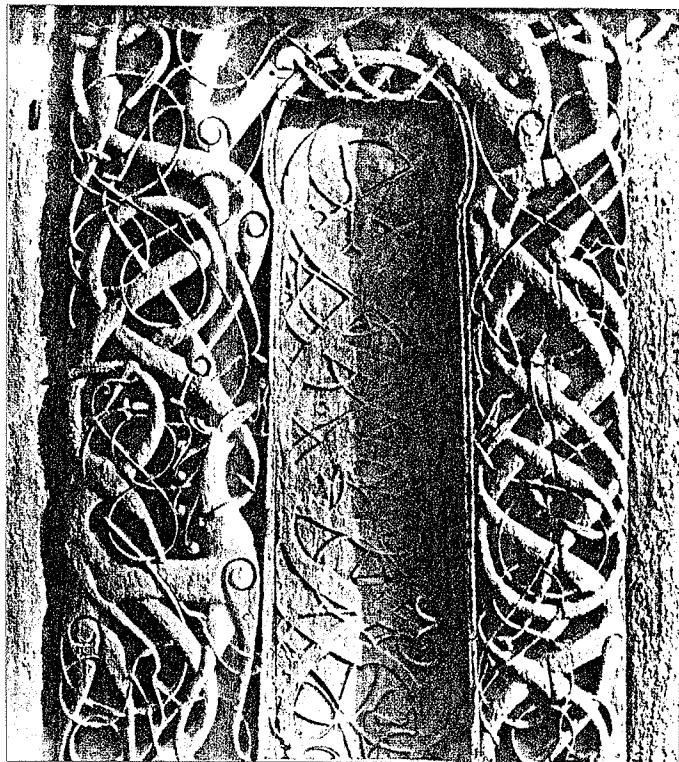
One catastrophe which hit Norway in 1349 A.D. was the Black Death, a disease which was disastrous both in terms of population depletion and in decline of political power. According to Thomas K. Derry, the Icelandic annals, a primary source for early Norwegian history, states that:



ILLUS. # 1



ILLUS. # 2



ILLUS. # 3

"The disease caused such mortality that not one-third of the people of the country remained alive."<sup>3</sup>

Slowly the Norwegian North Sea Empire dissolved into a mere province of Denmark unable to support itself even as an independent state under the Danish king. The only trade was maintained by the establishment of a Hanseatic (German) enterprise within the town of Bergen (ca. 1260 - 1500 A.D.). The Norwegians had no control over the trade goods, nor were the crafts supported. As a result the merchants were the only suppliers of grain, flour, malt, beer, Rhenish wine, textiles, hemp, tar, salt, household requisites, and luxuries from Italy and the Levant.<sup>4</sup> Besides Copenhagen, Germany was Norway's great source of cultural contact, which can be seen in the comparison of the styles in two tapestries, one in Norway (Illus. #13), and the other in Germany (Illus. #4). Textiles, being easily transported, are one of the finest conveyors of cultural influence and interchange between countries.

After the Protestant Reformation of 1537 the strictness and serious attitudes of Lutheranism in Norway further impoverished the arts and crafts, at least temporarily. As a result Norway's Renaissance, compared to this era elsewhere in Europe, was simple and modest. The country was to enter the new age without a central government and without a native nobility or middle class of sufficient importance to give leadership in the arts.



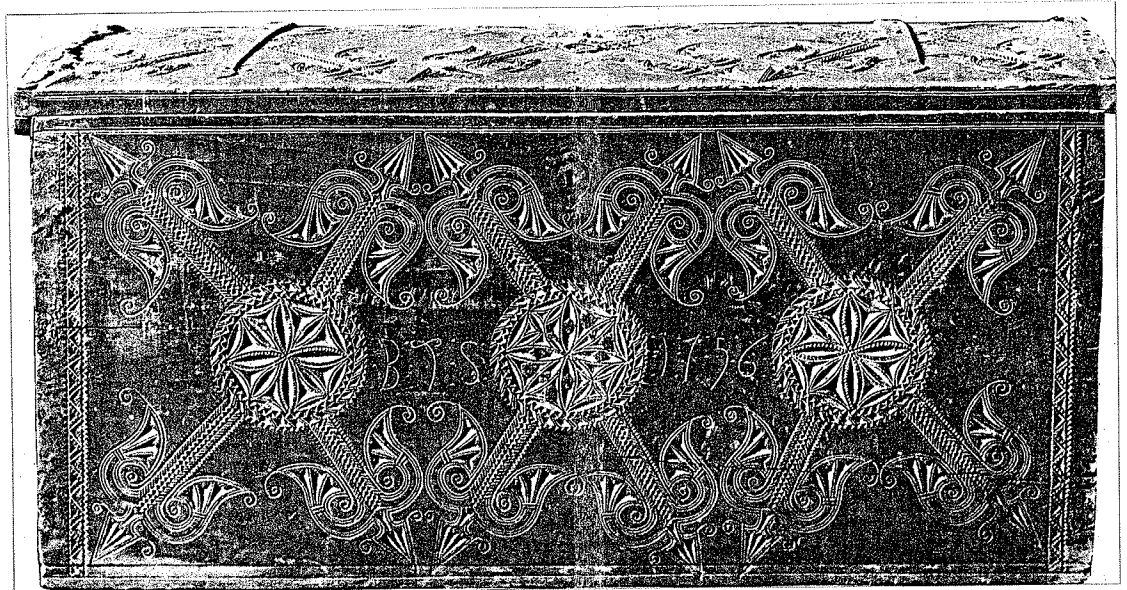
With the Renaissance, a small number of townspeople (many of whom were Danish or foreign merchants) followed the new styles and customs of Europe, but country life and art continued as it had in the middle ages because of the physical and economic isolation from the towns.

At this time the peasant art started its great development toward what is now regarded as the traditional, national art of Norway. This development was based on the adaptation of medieval and Viking designs and forms to town fashions and decoration. There was no one district of true Norwegian culture. Each district exercised variations based on its own traditions, outside influences, needs, and materials at hand. Southern Gudbrandsdal, being exposed to more European influences and possessing fewer sheep, discontinued tapestry weaving based on Flemish weaving in the 1700's (Illus. #'s 19, 20). The Northern district, less exposed and richer in wool, continued the tradition until the mid-1800's.

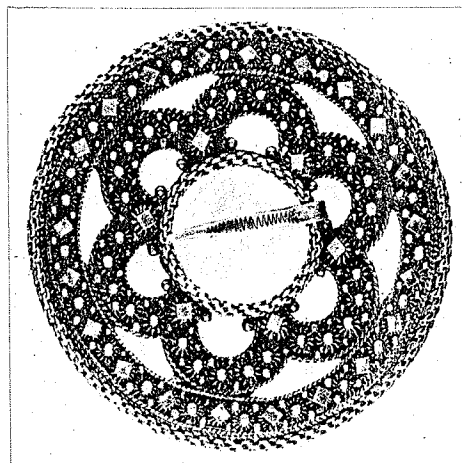
The peasant class which had prospered with the general prosperity (due to timber and shipping trades) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was known as the Bonde and was composed mainly of landowning farmers. Their culture and society had evolved from Norway's natural characteristics, its history and traditions. What came to be unifying factors for the Bonde was the use of the Norwegian language, as opposed to the official use of Danish in the cities, and their special arts and customs. A



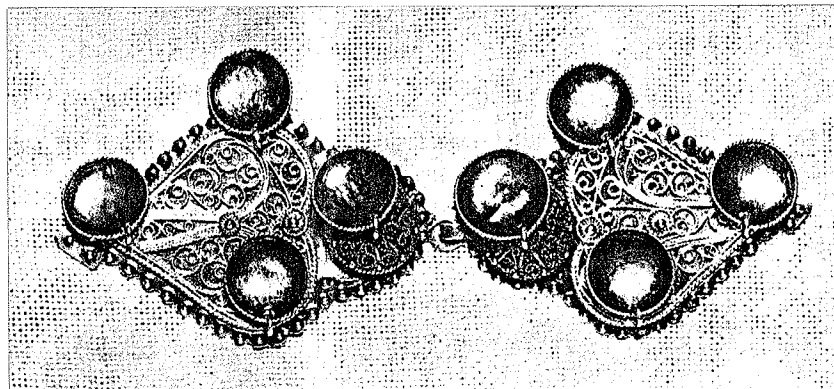
ILLUS.#5



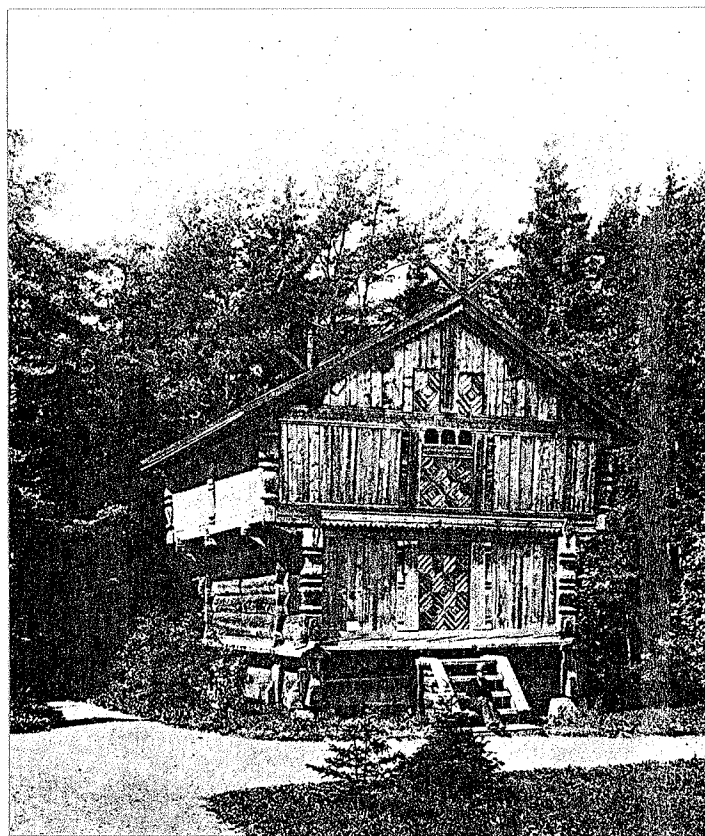
ILLUS.#6



ILLUS.#7



ILLUS. # 8



ILLUS. # 9

high degree of artistic achievement was characteristic in the areas of wood carving, iron work, silver and gold work, weaving, music, and architecture (Illus. #'s 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). It was from this tradition that many of the Norwegian immigrants in Wisconsin came.

The first half of the nineteenth century saw the continuation of the Bonde culture, but by 1850 there was a clear decline in the arts, architecture and costumes as well as in the oral literature. This was caused in a large part by a socio-economic change in the life of the average Norwegian.

The economic progress of Norway in the previous century (eighteenth) was halted after the Napoleonic wars. Poor crops, no land for expansion, a growing population, and limited trade opportunities put a strain on the peasant society. The small family farms, usually about twenty acres, could not support the large families and tenant workers. As most of Norway's economy had been based on maritime industries, and since the country was limited in raw materials, industrial progress was slow. Therefore, there was no outlet in industry for the rural population surplus.

With the previous balance of production and consumption in the rural area dangerously upset, there was already a basis for the first wave of emigration, mainly to the United States, and for the eventual dissolution of the peasant culture.

Norway's economy started improving by the mid-1800's with the rising grain prices. The London exhibition of 1851 also started a change in agricultural practices since, with the introduction of American machinery, farming could now be performed more efficiently, though it also released more laborers to the job market. Farming for profit gradually replaced the traditional family orientation.

The economic forces behind the societal change affected all aspects of culture and society of the times. A quotation from T. K. Derry's book, A Short History of Norway, reveals what was happening to the rural society.

"...Self-sufficiency was going out of fashion; it was becoming socially desirable to buy clothes and furniture, for instance, instead of making do with the home produced article which had satisfied earlier generations."<sup>5</sup>

Between 1855 and 1860 the provincial governors were already reporting the increasing use of factory-made clothing and urban styles, the first step in the adoption of middle-class bourgeois culture. Other alterations came with housebuilding and housekeeping practices, foods and beverages, and finally in the disappearance of the folk festivals and the old rural philosophy of life. Much of this was due to the spread of elementary education insisted on by the Lutheran church and finally made compulsory in 1821. It brought in new farming and housekeeping ideas, and gave the young goals for life which were different from those of their parents.

## CHAPTER 2

A. Norwegian Immigrant Settlement Patterns

On October 9, 1825 in New York City a small sloop docked and a group of families disembarked marking the beginning of the first organized Norwegian immigration to the United States. Having purchased land on the shores of Lake Ontario they established the Kendall Settlement. Since they had arrived late in the season, the first year in America was extremely difficult with no adequate housing and meager monetary means. It took this group five years to become self-supporting and confident enough to persuade others from Norway to join them.

The pattern they established in adapting to the American life would be repeated for the next seventy-five to eighty years. Newspapers reported their arrival as "A novel sight... in coarse clothes of domestic manufacture, of a fashion different from the American."<sup>1</sup> These were the rural people of Norway. The townspeople on the other hand were reported as wearing calicos, gingham, and gay shawls much as in the United States. Into the late 1830's Americans remained curiously ignorant of the Norwegians. In Boston the people "marveled at the foreign language of the immigrants, their clothes, and their customs, and (were) even more astonished to find that people who came from a land so near the ice region as Norway looked like other human beings."<sup>2</sup>

To the earliest immigrants, to become "American" was extremely important. Their success in America depended on their ability to compete and communicate with the Americans. Later immigrants were able to protect their Norwegian background longer because of larger numbers within the settlement groups.

In 1834 most of the Kendall settlement migrated to the Fox River Valley in Illinois. With this first westward move, immigration began in earnest. Through the various "Norwegian letters", travel guides, and the accounts of returning visitors to Norway, more and more Norwegians heard of the American opportunity. The letters of Gudmund Sansberg and Gjert Hovland circulated through western Norway where scarce money and failing crops made the letters sound as if they came from paradise. Ole Rynning's A True Account of America and other books provided guides and information to Norwegians contemplating emigration.

The push for emigration was strong for Ole Nattestad who with no inherited land had to try to live by other means. He was in succession a peddler, a blacksmith, sheepbuyer, and finally an immigrant farmer in America. His story was common, especially for younger sons of Norwegian families.

The emigrants and their families had much to fear in the move. Stories of wild Indians, slave-hunters, and fierce beasts of sea and land were told as often as the glories of America. Also, the clergy, the strong leaders

of Norwegian society, were against emigration. The emigrants' souls, they cautioned, would be lost without the guidance of the Lutheran Church. They viewed America as a place for the trouble-makers and no-goods.

Despite all hindrances, valley after valley and region after region felt the effects of the "American Fever." From 1836 to the Civil War thousands left the familiar shores of Norway to brave the expensive and often dangerous trip to the United States.

American frontier life demanded much from the immigrants, and for some the demands were too great. Lack of knowledge of the agricultural conditions of the midwest led to poor selection of land. Possibly the most tragic example was the Beaver Creek community, south of Chicago, Illinois. Settled in 1837 the land looked good in the fall, but by spring it had become marshy and mosquito infested. The settlement was virtually eliminated by malaria the following year.

The change in climate, particularly the extreme hot summers and cold winters, changes in diet, and inadequate, crowded housing contributed to much illness leading to loss of working time and money. With money already in short supply after traveling and freight expenses, most families had to work as laborers for the Americans to be able to purchase land, then priced at \$1.25 an acre.

Over the next several years, settlements moved north into Wisconsin. As several families from one Norwegian

valley would emigrate at the same time, they also would settle together. In 1839, Rock County was partially settled by people from Numedal. The same year settlers from Telemark arrived to start the Muskego colony in Waukesha County. Perhaps the best known settlement of the day was Koshkonong, close to the present town of Cambridge. Settled in 1840 by people from Beaver Creek, Fox River Valley, and Norway, it became notably wealthy and a favored stopping place for immigrants who arrived at Milwaukee and Chicago and were going west.

In the following years, settlement spread west and north (see Distribution Map on following page). Western Wisconsin and eastern Iowa were occupied in the 1840's, and Minnesota by 1851. Levor Timanson's progress in America shows the pattern and degree of success experienced by some immigrants. He emigrated with his father in 1848 at the age of 18, and settled first in Rock County where he worked as a farm laborer, carpenter, and mason. Then, in 1853, he selected land in south-western Minnesota. Raising stock and grain, he owned 840 acres (550 cultivated) by 1882.

The prosperous settlement of the midwest was dependent on the general economic development in America during the nineteenth century. Settlers numbering in the hundreds of thousands were needed and largely supplied by immigrants of many nationalities. However, settlement also depended on the federal land policies and financial aid to the railroads,



which provided transportation of products produced on land opened by the Homestead Act of 1862. With much land in production, it was not long before agriculture became a sound and prosperous business.

By 1850, 13,000 Norwegians had reached the United States, and of these two-thirds were located in Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup> Many families arrived with only twenty to seventy dollars in their possession besides assorted trunks of household articles, including heirloom weavings. If they could, they bought land, but it was often miles from markets and grain mills. For the first several years little, if any, profit was made. Nevertheless, establishment of farms meant permanent residence of families and capital, and as a result, the demand and possibilities for communication and transportation with the east and "civilization" grew.

Norwegian men often had to leave their homes during the winters to find work to supplement their farm incomes. Wages were high in America compared to those in Norway, and this in itself was a considerable pull factor for immigration, particularly among young unmarried men and women. The young men would work several years, purchase land and develop a farm. Then they would often return to Norway briefly to marry. Wage-laborers were in demand by established farmers, American and Norwegian, and by companies building internal improvements (canals, railroads, roads, etc.). An experienced farm worker in Illinois or

Wisconsin received two or three times the wages of the farm worker in Norway.

The young women from Norway and the older daughters of immigrant families were often hired out as maids for American and Norwegian families. In Viroqua, Wisconsin, having a Norwegian housemaid was quite fashionable among the Yankee settlers;<sup>5</sup> but social equality was never achieved until the Norwegians attained professional prominence in the community. As housemaids, however, the girls were able to learn English and American attitudes and methods of housekeeping.

Many of these workers settled in Iowa and Minnesota in the 1860's and 70's after spending one to five years in Wisconsin or Illinois. For these later immigrants, the period of working served as an adjustment time when they could learn the ways of American life and agriculture. The earliest settlers on the other hand, didn't have this advantage. Working the mountainous and limited lands of Norway, where the average farm is twenty acres, they were unprepared for life in the midwest. In southeastern Wisconsin they selected timbered land with a stream or lake which meant land that was marshy and/or difficult to clear. In western Wisconsin, the roughness of the land reminded them of Norway, and they selected land which corresponded to their home environment. When prairie land was finally valued for its richness, the economic conditions of the Norwegians improved.

The Norwegian immigrant farm changed its emphasis in



ILLUS. # 10



#10

its first several years. Not content to be limited to the rigors of self-sufficiency (difficult anyway as livestock was rare in many areas), the farmer soon became interested in a profit orientated business. For example, in Coon Valley, close to Prairie Du Chien (settled in the late 1840's) the Norwegians prospered on dairying and tobacco raising.

The difference in the standard of living between the Norwegians and the Americans was not very marked. In timberland the log cabin was customary (Illus. #10), and the prairie house was typically the sod hut. Food was simple, often monotonous; pork, Indian corn, and occasionally wheat, milk, fish, wild fowl, and common vegetables. Clothing in the early days was rough, with wooden shoes and home-made woolen jackets.

Professor T. F. Grose of St. Olaf College has provided a description of the house in which he grew up in Minnesota:

"....a conventional white-washed log dwelling with a log shanty attached.--The first floor, making up one room only, performed potentially the functions of parlor, living room, dining room, bedroom, and kitchen... The upstairs or attic served as a sleeping room and as a place for stowing away emigrant chests, boxes, wearing apparel, "Wadmol" blankets, and other things not needed for immediate use."<sup>6</sup>

Americanization came at varying rates depending on when the immigrants arrived and where they located. The earliest immigrants acculturated fastest. They were in the greatest contact with the Americans and felt the social pressure more than later and larger groups who remained separated to a greater degree from the American

settlements. The separateness of the later immigrants was due to clannish feelings and to the need of going farther west to search for cheap land. Farther from Chicago and Milwaukee, American products were not as easily available as in the eastern settlements. As a result, the immigrant life in the west retained more of the ways of Norway.

With prosperity and settlement attained, the Norwegians took up the comforts and luxuries provided by the growing American industries and trades as soon as possible. Professor Babcock even found that, "If any modifications (in lifestyles) were to be made, it would be that the Scandinavians set a more bountiful table, and give more attention than the Americans to festivals and celebrations."<sup>7</sup>

B. Common Elements Affecting the Norwegian Farmer and Norwegian Immigrant

The above text has presented several sociological and economic changes which affected the Norwegian farmer and the Norwegian immigrant. These changes in turn had a profound effect on the relationship of the people to their handicrafts, which can be seen in the use and production of handweavings in Norway, and is even more pronounced in Wisconsin. In review these changes were:

1. Improved agricultural practices in the 1850's and 60's and increased use of cash crops meant more people were released from the farm and placed on other job markets.

As a result, the farm became a business in which the crafts

accompanying subsistence farming were no longer considered imperative. The ready acceptance of cash-crop farming in Wisconsin continued the trend away from craft production to the point at which it was practically nonexistent.

2. Compulsory education and communication improvements in both countries (newspaper, telegraph, and railroads) did much to bring urban goods and values to the rural settlements. Consequently, home-produced articles became "old fashioned" as middleclass and urban values became accepted. In the United States, the process was known as "Americanization" and the appearance of success was often more important than the preservation of the old ways.

3. To compliment the above trends, increasing industrial output and the low cost of manufactured goods made home-produced goods expensive in terms of time and labor. It was also easier to meet the new and faster changes in styles and fashions with manufactured goods.



ILLUS. # 11



ILLUS. #12

## PART II: THE WEAVING FORMS

### Chapter 3. Weaving Forms in the Norwegian Rural Culture

The crafts including weaving were well developed and flourishing during the Viking period. The discovery of the Oseberg ship early in this century revealed many advanced crafts and designs which survived in the country arts into the nineteenth century. With this ship from the ninth century was buried a woman of high rank, perhaps a queen, and all of the possessions she would need in the hereafter. Included among the artifacts were several rotted and disintegrated fragments of tapestry which, when pieced together, tell part of a story, perhaps of a great event in the woman's life. Here can be seen patterns and motifs in the clothed figures, the background, and the border motifs which reappear time and again in weavings up into the nineteenth century (Illus. #'s 11, 12).

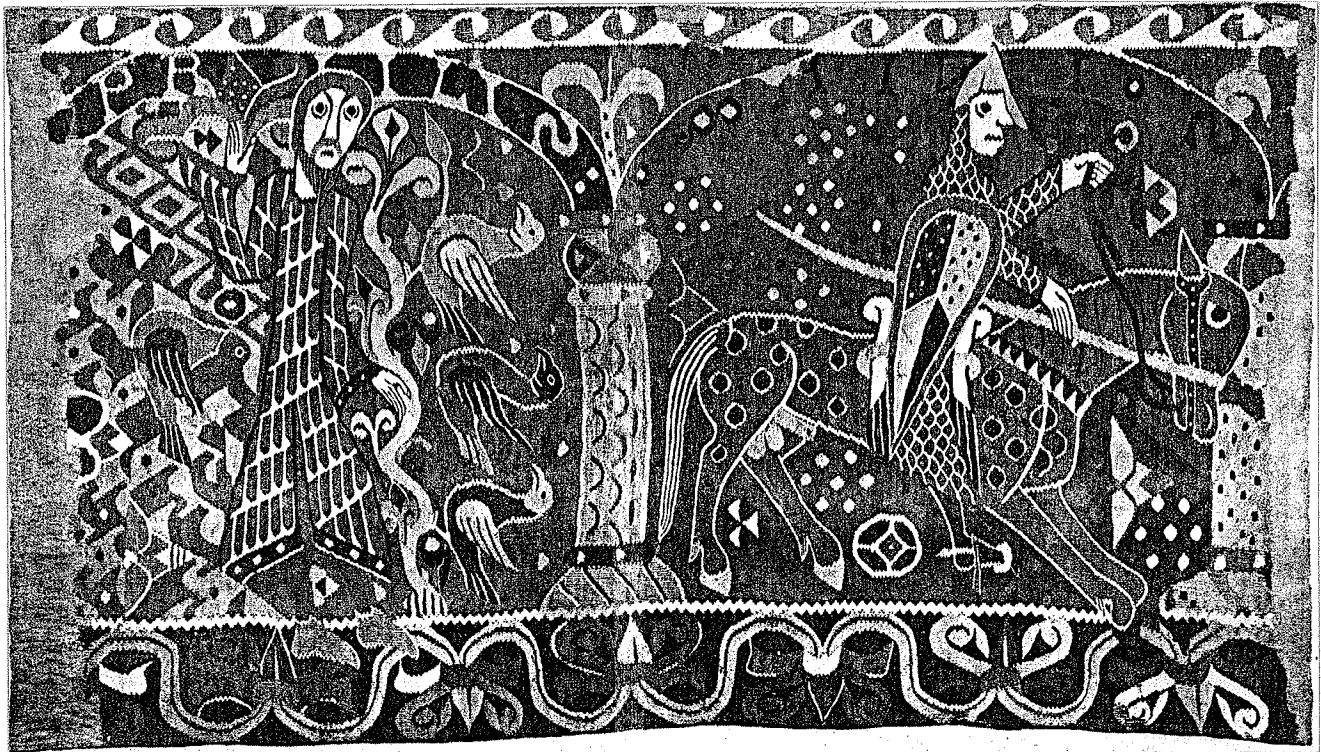
The Oseberg Tapestry displays two design techniques which are perpetuated to modern times. These are the use of all-over patterns as appears in the Oseberg figure's clothing, horses, etc., and the apparent breakup of the background surface by patterning. Over-all patterns are a major feature in Norwegian weaving of fabrics created for home use, as seen in the visual examples accompanying this study.

The breakup of the background surface becomes a strong

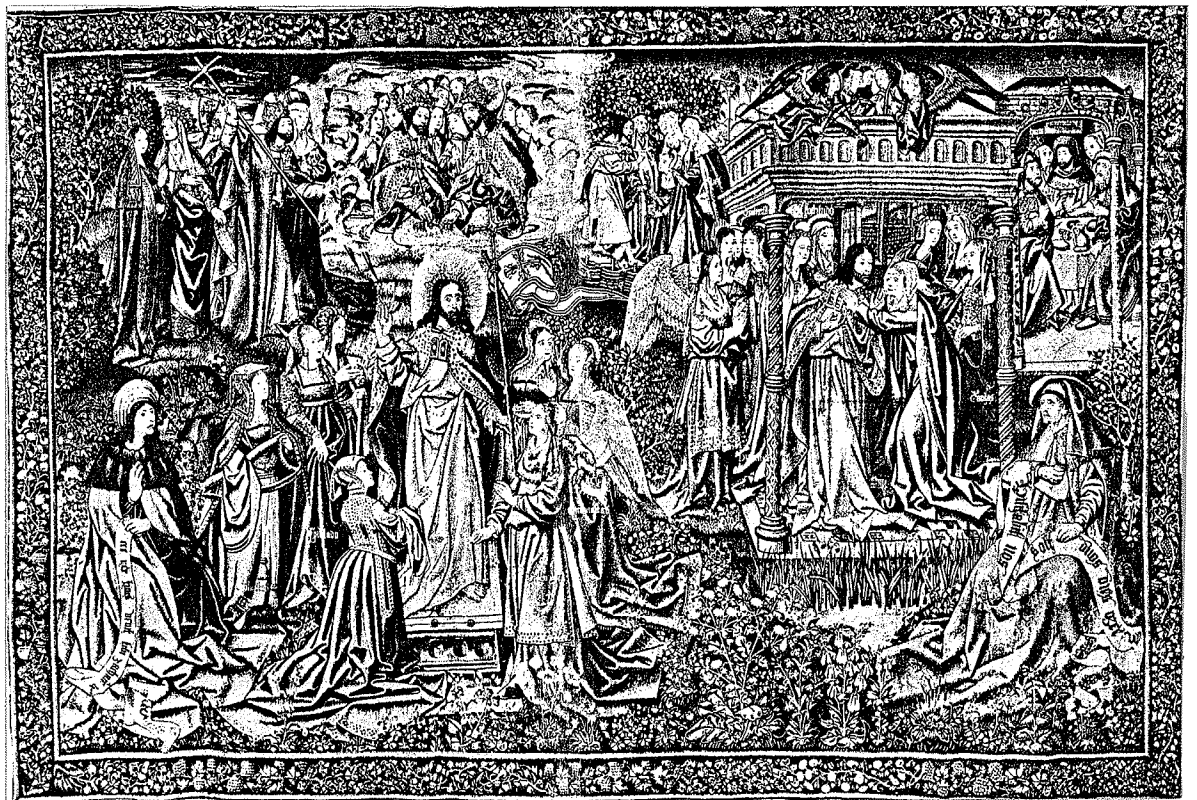
characteristic of the Norwegian picture weaving done in the tapestry technique later in the middle ages and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One of the earliest picture weavings is the Baldishol tapestry (Illus. #13) found under the floorboards of an old stave church. The textile, dated to the end of the twelfth century, is part of a series (April and May) depicting the twelve months, a common theme throughout Europe at this time. Here again is the breakup of the background into patterns and colors. The textile is decorative, illusionary, and illustrative. Later picture weavings play more on this quality where the scene comes into view as the patterns fall into place out of an abstract arrangement.

The picture weaving of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show influences of Flemish weaving, yet remain steadfastly Norwegian in style and design. In the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries Flemish tapestries were designed by the leading artists of the day, Raphael, Rubens, Goya and others. Subjects, generally dictated by the nobility or the clergy, included religion, mythology, history, romance and various aspects of daily life.<sup>1</sup> Reality in the figures was stressed. Later, the weavings also included great emphasis on dimensionality, making the scenes appear as if they were stage sets (Illus. #'s 14, 15).

A change now came in the shape of the Norwegian textiles. The old tapestries were long and narrow to be hung at eye-level around the room. Norwegian houses were



ILLUS. #13



ILLUS. #14

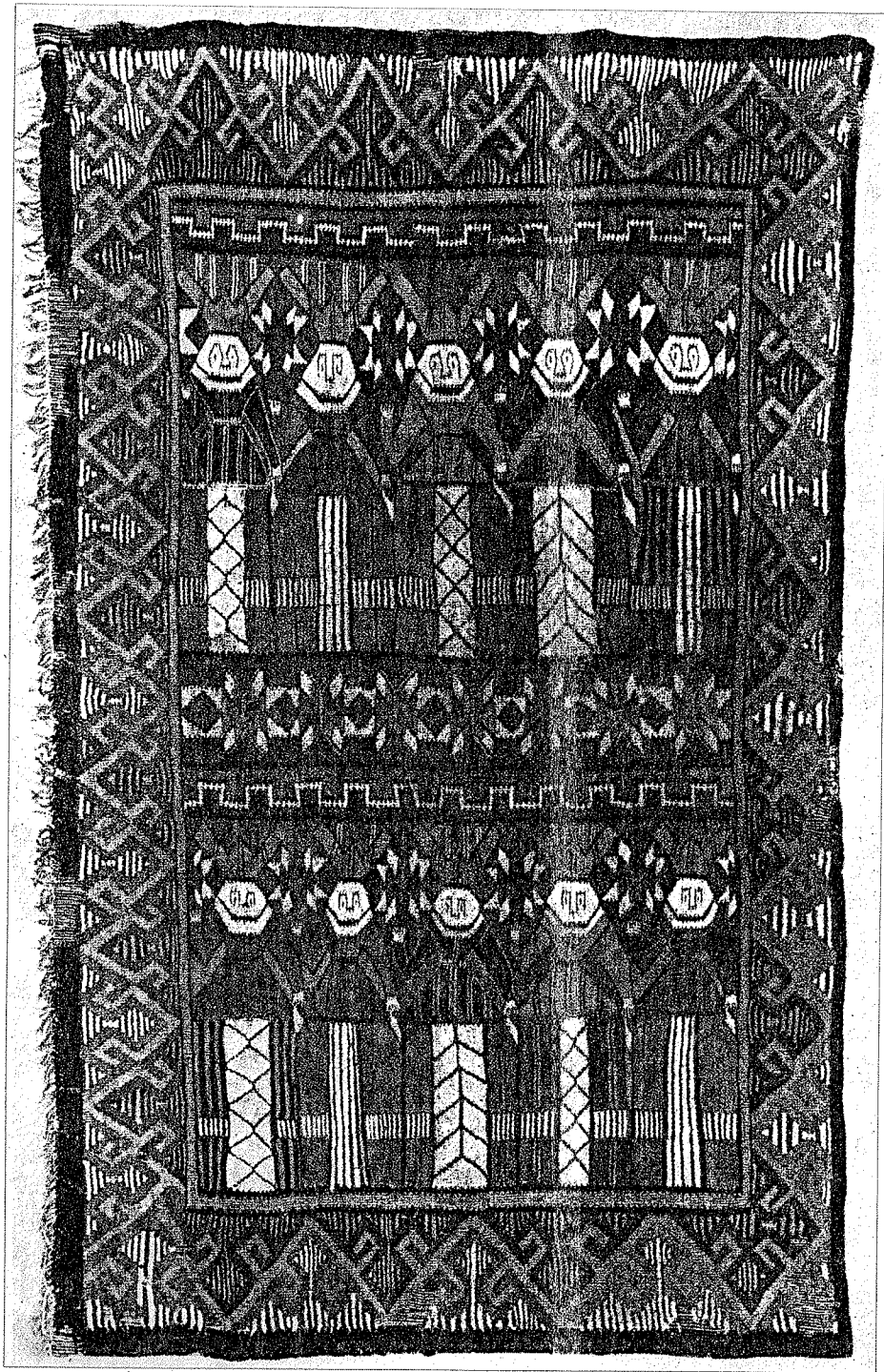


ILLUS. #15

traditionally windowless log structures with a smoke-hole in the center of the roof above the hearth to provide ventilation and light. The tapestries were carefully hung below the level at which the smoke hovered. The introduction of chimneys allowed the development of two story housing and windows, causing a breakup of wallspace once utilized by the weavings (Illus. #'s 16, 17, 18). The new Flemish-style tapestries were vertical in shape to conform with the new style in housing.

The Flemish influence was first felt in the towns about the mid-sixteenth century, however after 1600 the picture weaving industry was almost totally a rural concern.<sup>2</sup> The rural weavers were mainly women, while in the towns the weavers had largely been men, possibly immigrants from Flanders and northern Germany.

Producing the picture weavings was not an accomplishment of every farmer's wife or daughter. Rather there were specialists weaving these textiles at their farms from where the tapestries would be distributed across the countryside. Each tapestry weaver had her special motif for which she was known. Gyllaug Haga, who worked in the second half of the seventeenth century was famous for her weavings of "The Five Wise and the Five Foolish Virgins" (Illus. #19), for which she received a sum equal to that paid for a cow.<sup>3</sup> At least four other women were recognized for their weaving ability that are still known today.



ILLUS. #19

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

With the rural adaptations of the foreign tapestries, the picture weavings maintained their Norwegian culture. Borders of the tapestries were geometric much like the patterns seen in the Oseberg weavings, and there was no attempt made to achieve a sense of perspective or reality as was the goal in the Flemish textiles. The Norwegians preserved the flat surface of the textile as an inherent quality of the fabric structure. The motifs and the background were regarded from a decorative viewpoint, and once again the textile can be seen as an abstract decorated surface and as a scene with the figures delineated by a typical fine black line. In keeping with the preservation of the textile's surface qualities, the picture weavings were not placed in scenic "stages" as were the Flemish tapestries. The backgrounds were broken up as in the previously mentioned tapestries by geometric patterns and a spraying of symbols and designs (Illus. #'s 19, 20), probably continued from the earliest tapestry weavings. The design motif of similar subjects seems to have been repeated with little change except in details of dress or positions of horses legs, etc. (Illus. #'s 20, 21). The picture weavings were worked in slit tapestry technique except where the design called for straight vertical lines. Then the pattern threads were interlocked to prevent a split which would weaken the textile. The interlocked vertical lines can be distinguished by their zig-zag appearance (Illus. #24).



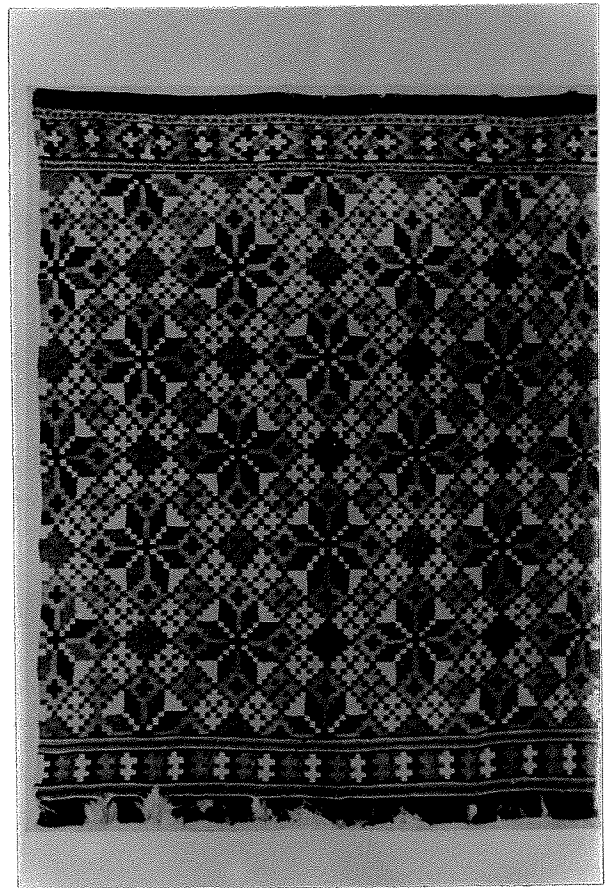
ILLUS. # 20



ILLUS. # 21



ILLUS. # 22



ILLUS. # 23

Biblical and courtly scenes from southern European textiles and printed books were popular inspirations for these tapestries, but were not the only subjects used. Horsemen, florals copied from imported cushion covers, the details of the parish oriental rugs, and ecclesiastical vestments and estate owners clothing provided other design sources.<sup>4</sup>

These tapestries were in great demand during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but seemed to have been largely replaced in the eighteenth century with the increased manufacture of carpets and coverlets. In parts of Norway however, tapestry weaving was continued into the nineteenth century as a process for making cushion, seat, and sleigh covers.

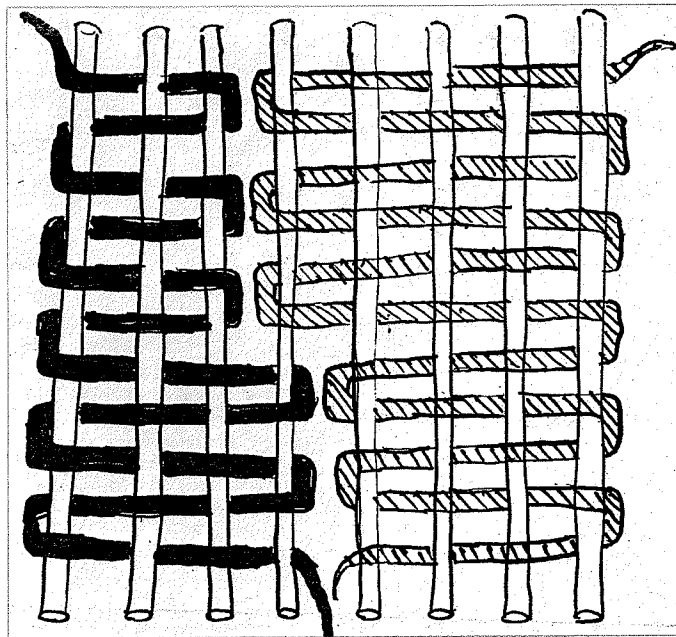
The center of the picture weaving industry was in the valley of Gudbrandsdal which geographically was the cross-roads between the north, south, east, and west of Norway. It was also one of the most conservative centers of the rural "aristocracy", consequently the traditional display of wealth at festive times by the hanging of the fancy textiles could be easily accomplished through the use of the expensive picture weavings.

With the decline in picture weaving came an increase in other forms of weaving. Tapestry now became predominately geometric in patterning and is commonly called square-weaving or aakle. A traditional form, it seems more women could

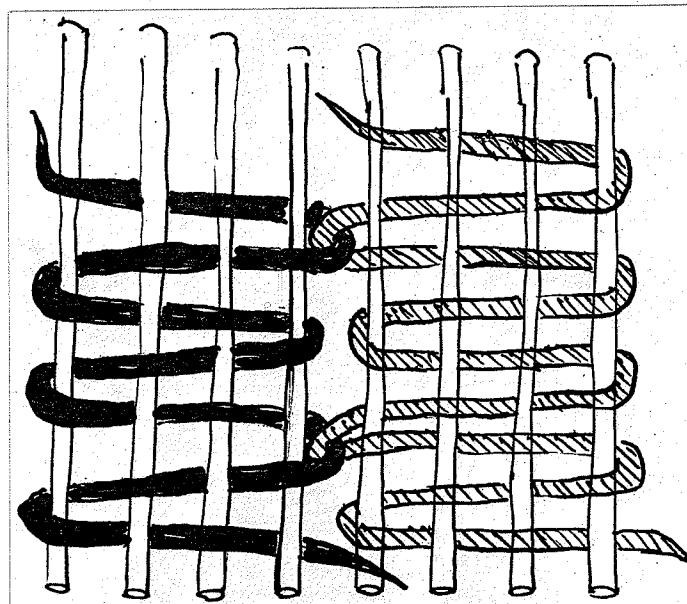
accomplish this type of tapestry as so many more examples came over to America than was the case with the picture weavings. The square-weaving was done in a tapestry technique calling for an interlocking of the pattern threads in alternate rows (Illus. #24). Later square-weaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were often woven by the Swedish method, in which the pattern threads were interlocked in every row.<sup>5</sup> The Norwegian method made a textile completely reversible while the Swedish technique produced a ridge on the back wherever two colors joined. Whichever method was used, it produced a firmer, longer lasting textile than the primarily decorative slit tapestry. These fabrics were commonly used for coverlets, sleigh covers, and other household purposes. Popular patterns included the Viking Oseberg designs, the knot motif (Illus. #22), and eight-leafed roses or stars (Illus. #23) arranged in stripes or all-over patterns.

Two other forms of fabric came to the forefront with the square-weave tapestries, double-weaving (Illus. #25) and stickweaving, also called Swedish coverlets. Both of these techniques require a horizontal loom, which apparently was not introduced until the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries in Norway.<sup>6</sup> It would seem that the other weaves requiring more than two harnesses to the loom may also not have been woven until this time, but little is written about them as they are not considered in the "Art" weaving class.

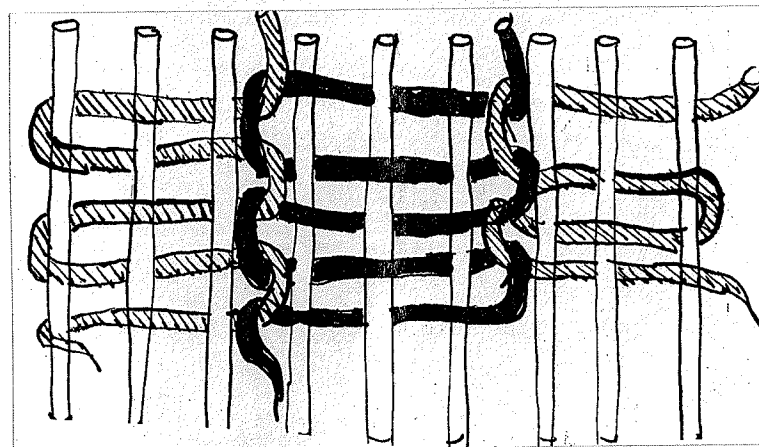
The double-woven coverlet seems to have been given



ILLUS.#24 Slit tapestry



#24 Single Interlocked tapestry



#24 Double Interlocked tapestry



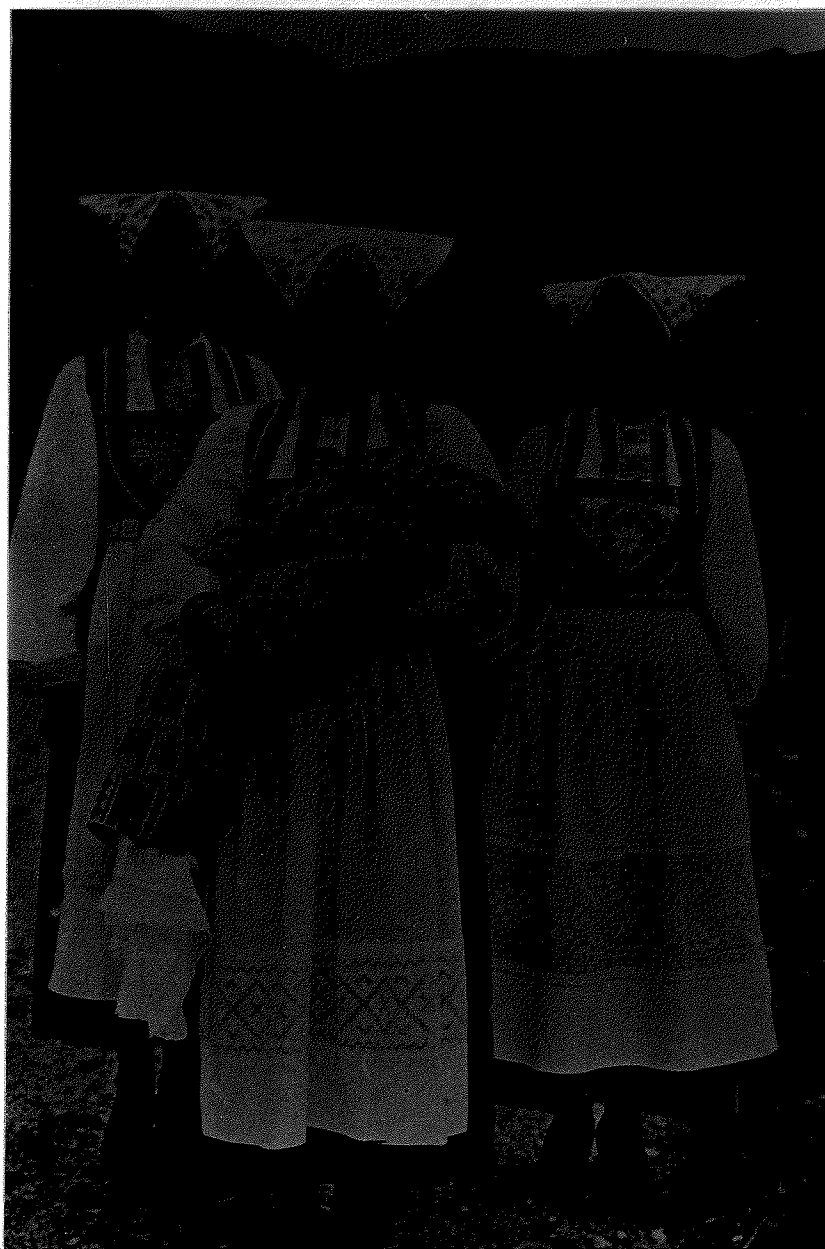
ILLUS. #25

important religious significance. Many were designated as "Burial" clothes and were used to cover the coffin in lieu of flowers as it was "Sung out" to the place of burial. In these years (1700's) the rural religion still contained traces of pagan beliefs, as neither Catholicism (from 1000 A.D.) or Lutheranism (from 1536 A.D.) had a total effect on the lives or the thoughts of the common people until the emergence of the fundamentalist sect of Haugeanism in the early 1800's. The coverlets seemed to have a magical quality of protection, perhaps designated by the motifs, including psalm and hymn verses, woven into them. The earlier coverlets were primarily designed with pagan motifs and symbols. Later the Christian motifs were introduced as a design tradition. The coverlets were important also in baptism and marriage (Illus. #26) ceremonies.

The double-woven coverlets had a functional side to them. According to Helen Engelstad, "Norwegian double-weaving invariably implies coarse wool, or wool and linen."<sup>7</sup> Evidently they were sewn onto fur rugs and used as bedspreads.<sup>8</sup> It appears that whatever mystical powers they held were to provide protection throughout one's life.

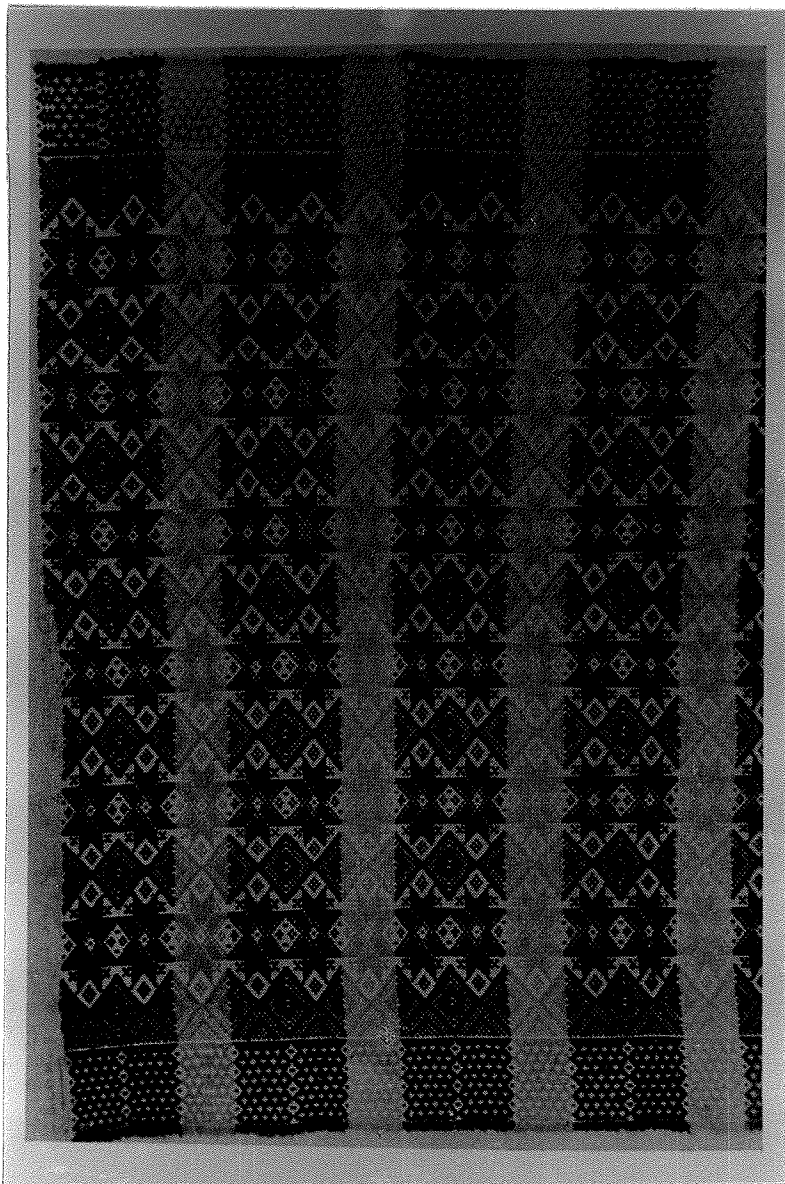
The other dominant weaving technique was also commonly used in a coverlet form. Stickweavings (Illus. #27), known by some as christening blankets, apparently often performed many of the same functions of the double-woven coverlet.

While these textiles were used as wall hangings during festive occasions, they were also used to accent a



ILLUS. # 26

the ... the ...  
... were frequently ...



ILLUS. # 27

... of ...  
... as a ...  
... the ...  
... this ...  
... vegi. ...

new status symbol, the four poster bed. As in the old style houses, the beds were frequently in the living quarters, thus the bed linens were a perfect item in which to display the farm wife's weaving skill.

Other textiles were used for everyday functions. Krokbragd provided one with a heavy utilitarian fabric which could also be very decorative in an imitation tapestry texture. Monk's belt, rosepath, pattern twill and diaper weaves, and Sjonbragd and Vestfoldmett (the Swedish Dukagang and Krabbasnar, respectively) were used to produce colorful textiles for household purposes.

Perhaps one of the most noted of the Scandinavian fabrics are the pile-woven textiles (Ryer). Popular on the west coast of Norway, these textiles were used to replace the fur rugs which the fishermen carried in their boats. The pile rugs were as warm and dried out faster than the fur rugs. They also replaced fur rugs on beds and in the sleigh. Of course, the pile weaves were adapted to use as bench covers, wall hangings, pillow covers, and rugs as were the other techniques. As a bed rug, the pile side would be down for warmth and the ground fabric would be woven into a pattern for beauty.

The weaving history of Norway is long and remarkable for its skillful techniques and artistic sense of design. It is unfortunate, though not surprising, that more of the everyday textiles have not survived. While not every woman who sat at a loom during the long Norwegian winters was

capable of producing the art weavings and complicated coverlets discussed earlier, it is only logical that many women produced simpler, though just as beautiful, textiles for their own homes. In Norway, the pride of the house and the woman was her weaving ability, since she was the only provider of these necessary articles. Also, textiles were one of the most ready ways of bringing color and sparkle into a life generally filled with toil.

Many of these family heirlooms came here packed among other possessions of the Norwegians. When the immigrants became prosperous in America, they often sent home for more of their family belongings. Sometime between their time of arrival and the present day many of these textiles have been lost to antique dealers, and collectors, or because of wear and age, or just a lack of interest by succeeding generations. The loss is immeasurable both for the Norwegian people in Wisconsin and Norway, and for the student wishing to describe the history of Norwegian immigrant handweaving in Wisconsin.

Chapter 4. Weaving Forms in the Wisconsin Norwegian Society

The Norwegian rural arts were practically dead by 1865. These arts, developed by people dependent on the agricultural system for their sustenance, were already receding in societal importance when the first Norwegian immigrants pioneered in Wisconsin. In Norway scholars were collecting the arts and literature of the Bonde culture for historical preservation. In this way the culture was preserved, but was otherwise available only to the upper classes in the form of weaving schools teaching the art of weaving. While individuals would be taught the old ways, after 1865 the Bonde culture and art was largely lost to the rural population.

In America, the pioneering Norwegians apparently abandoned the attempt to perpetuate the weaving arts which were so well developed in Norway (see also Elaine Smedal's masters thesis, Introductory Index of Norwegian Handicrafts Design in Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin, 1945). Early immigrants wove to supply clothing and household goods as needed, but growing population, prosperity, and transportation improvements soon resulted in store goods brought in from the east which displaced the family loom. In the early 1850's stores in southern Wisconsin carried a wide variety of clothing and household materials, as well as ready-made clothing, shoes, caps, etc.

Much of the Norwegian rural arts traversed the Atlantic

in handmade chests. Clothing and blankets, spinning wheels, silver, decorated wooden household goods and other family heirlooms were brought then, and later when families were settled. However, few of the arts were continued here in Wisconsin. It is not immediately clear what was so different here as to totally stop the creative out-flow so abruptly. Erling Ylvisaker in Eminent Pioneers states "Their needlework, their cooking, and even arrangement of the furniture, everything they touched bore the stamp of the little country across the sea."<sup>1</sup> Yet, the major arts and crafts never attained their former importance.

Perhaps a part of the answer lies in the use of the word "major". In this study, a major craft is one in which the society places particular value. By this definition a change in major crafts is possible through changes in the society and the differences between societies. These crafts -- weaving, silver, metal working, and woodcrafts, and costume -- all require time, energy, and a stability within the society not present in the first years of settlement.

The presence of a weaving activity varies according to location, time, and conditions of settlement. The first Norwegians in Wisconsin, for economic reasons, selected land not previously settled. Like pioneers throughout all of American history, they were responsible for clearing and breaking the land, building shelters and in general creating a continuing community. The conditions for the housewife

were similar to those described by Professor Grose in Goodhue County, Minnesota, in the early 1850's: She "...made cheese, churned butter, baked bread, boiled soap, carded wool, spun yarn, wove cloth, and sewed clothes. --- Home-prepared food and home-furniture and garments were largely in vogue.---"<sup>2</sup> In general, states Johan R. Reiersen, they conducted the household affairs as they had in Norway.<sup>3</sup> That must have been extremely difficult. Norwegian farms had been established for generations. Here there was no farm, no close neighbors, no extensive collection of household tools. Besides their normal duties the wives were also needed in the fields, and when the family could afford livestock (at first, a cow), their care, as in Norway, was under the woman's domain.

It must be remembered that Norwegian farms were typically only about twenty acres and worked by large numbers of people. Wisconsin farms, in comparison, were eighty to one hundred and sixty acres, and worked by far fewer people. There was less time for craftworking.

Another difficulty in the art of weaving was the lack of livestock, particularly of sheep. Livestock was difficult to transport and provide for without roads, adequate cleared land for feed, or sufficient shelter. Thomas Knoph, owner of the general store in Scandinavia, Wisconsin (1853-1854 records), reported that "Most of the farmers had no chickens, pigs or sheep during the first four years of settlement."<sup>4</sup> In other locations, weaving was known to have been carried on

as mentioned in Professor Grose's quote above, however, the weaving had no creative position within the lives of the people.

As most Norwegians came with the intention of achieving social and economic betterment, the attainment of material possessions became an indicator of their success. Large farm houses, barns, and dairy herds replaced the festive fabrics and other articles as symbols of wealth. Clothing and other outer appearances became acculturated. For example, in Norway "the woman was most renowned who could spin the most yarn or weave the most cloth in a day. Here in the Norwegian settlements that woman was most renowned who could make the best cake."<sup>5</sup>

The Norwegians had mixed feelings about the American society. Democracy and justice were oft quoted selling points, and equally often, cheap or free land. However, American products were often complained about in letters to Norway. Cloth and clothing were regularly listed as necessary supplies from home. "Buying clothes here keeps me poor; the cloth is the worst shoddy and never lasts,..."<sup>6</sup>

Part of the feeling of the mid-nineteenth century was the orientation of society toward the machine product. The textile and clothing industries were the first affected and the first adapted to home use. The relative ease of transporting them, the brightness and color of the prints, and their low cost, soon made textiles a major product on the western reaches of the United States. Gingham, chintz,

calicoes, and other fabrics were popular and soon appeared in quilts and other household articles.

The search for looms in Wisconsin has produced few actual examples, but many reports have been made of looms disposed of fifteen and twenty years ago. These looms were hand-hewn here in Wisconsin and like their Norwegian predecessors, large and heavy. Not every family was able to own a loom, and those who did not borrowed, if possible, from their neighbors or relatives. Since the looms were large, great accommodations were made in the small cabins for the duration of the loom's use. By the time a family could afford the time and space needed for a loom, they could also afford to purchase the manufactured fabrics of colorful prints, fancy weaves, and household textiles. The looms were often reduced in the number of harnesses for simple rag rug weaving.

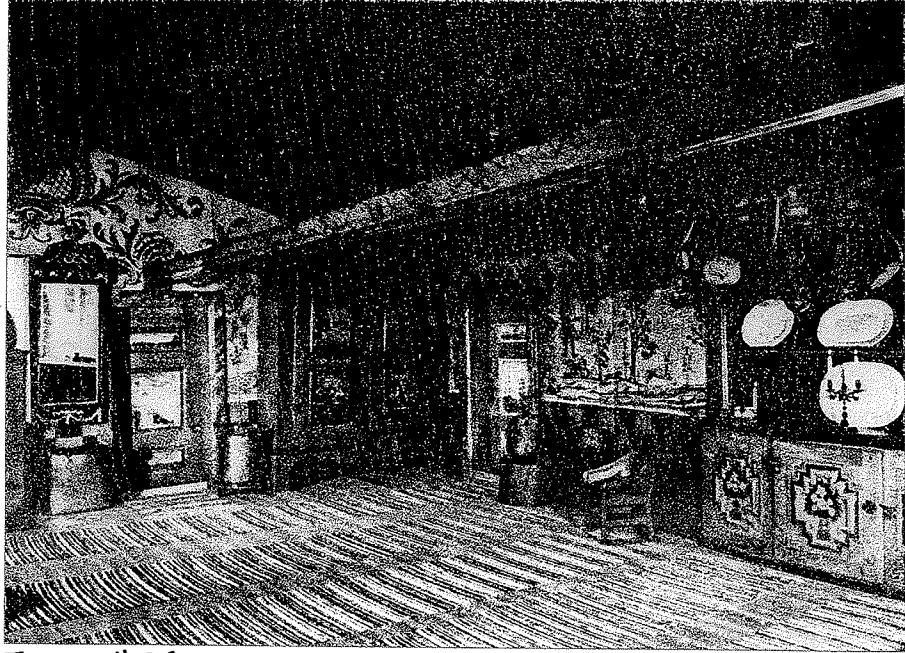
Some immigrant-made looms can be seen at the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin; at Little Norway, Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin; and at the Brewery, Mineral Point, Wisconsin.

Many of the weavings remaining here in Wisconsin are plain, utilitarian fabrics of tabby or twill weaves. Blankets were sometimes woven with stripes and table linens were often of diaper and overshop patterns.

Rug weaving replaced almost every other type of weaving. Woven of rags they were used as hit and miss floor rugs, also common in Norwegian farm houses (Illus. #28). The wife of an immigrant Norwegian minister, Mrs. Fredrik

country

8 vanni



ILLUS. #28

Duss, wrote home, "My work these days is to sew rags, a woman is going to weave me a rug, my old chemises were good for nothing else,..."<sup>7</sup> This type of rug was apparently common in the country home. Another woman related that her aunt's home had varnished oak floors covered with yards and yards of hit and miss rag rugs.<sup>8</sup>

Several of the crafts were continued, especially those not requiring a great deal of tools or space. Rosemaling and knitting are well known, the first for it's decorative qualities, the second for it's utilitarian qualities. For many years socks, sweaters, and other woolen goods were home-produced.

New ways of working with fabrics were adapted from their American neighbors. Quilts became popular especially as a means of thrift. Also the hooking of rag strips through burlap bags for rugs became a new method of using scraps and worn-out articles. Today, elderly women in Norwegian settlements still hook the rag rugs, at times as wall hangings, imitating the pile-woven techniques.

Quilts were quite unknown in Norway and appeared to be a novelty to at least one young woman who described them in a letter home. "These spreads are very common in this country; they first sew the material out of quite small, cut-up pieces,.... they put fully as much work into their spreads in this country as they do with sofa cushions at home. But then they are sometimes really beautiful and show well on the bed especially herw where they never use



ILLUS. # 29

bed curtains."<sup>9</sup>

This woman was of the upper class, being a minister's wife, and it is doubtful that many farm wives or daughters had much time to put into sofa cushions. However, in America, quilts were an economical and efficient way of utilizing scraps and rags while producing a needed article. To become a well-known quilter was perhaps as desirable as being known as a weaver in Norway.

#### Chapter 5. Conclusion

When considering the woven work of the Norwegian immigrants in Wisconsin, it is not possible to evaluate them on an aesthetic level comparable to that of the weavings which preceded them in Norway. Too many conflicting or at least intruding factors must be taken into account. These factors have been considered in this study. What appears to have been a decline in a sophisticated folk culture and reflected as such in their woven arts, can perhaps be better seen as a cross-cultural study of two related, but decidedly different societies.

The major difference between the two societies is the degree of and reaction to industrialization and the values accepted by an industrialized society. While Norway was to become as equally a "modern" society as the American, the rapidity of change was the major factor in creating the difference between the Norwegian and the immigrant. In

Norway, the change came slowly. The industrial changes could be assimilated into the society without total destruction of the past orientation; there was rather a process of reorientation. For the Norwegian immigrant, time for gradual acceptance of the new social values was minimal. He was placed in an environment in which industrialism was just becoming the social idol. A personal industry was always required to create an existence in Norway, and the Norwegian folk culture exhibits a great abundance of that. However, a social industry, the need to produce above that which the individual and society needs, is a value foreign to almost all pre-industrial societies. The presence of a highly developed artistic tradition is not an indication of overproduction within a society, rather it is a part of a societal need for self expression and a mechanism for social continuation. When the art traditions no longer satisfy the needs of the society, they will be dropped or changed, depending on the degree of variance between the societal needs and societal use of the particular set of arts to fulfill those needs.

In Wisconsin, it is obvious that the conditions presented new needs and required new values from the Norwegians. The necessity to create a stable existence in a new land and to establish the individual within the new society demanded a change of the Norwegian immigrant. The changes came through acculturation to the "American" way of life. Norwegian traits were reformed into "American"

forms. The social clubs (ie., The Sons of Norway) and the Lutheran church are excellent examples of how the Norwegian immigrant groups were able to maintain their unity within the American structure.

In a similar way, the arts, specifically the weaving arts, evolved into new forms. The primary needs, food, shelter, and clothing were difficult to obtain and of first consideration. With economic and social stability, the Norwegian sought to show his new status. The art weaving was no longer of important social value, and he could now afford the luxuries of nineteenth century American society. In many cases the arts and crafts which replaced them were less a product of necessity and more of a recreational nature.

The weavings of Norway became romanticized as the gulf between Norwegian memories and American lives widened, and the social values which maintained the importance of the weavings weakened. This phenomena was not isolated in Wisconsin or the United States. In Norway the Bonde culture became idealized by the upper classes, and in many other European countries at this time, the same process occurred. It is quite possible that it is also heppening now in developing areas, where the native arts and crafts are being undermined by industrialism.

As the arts are produced by and reflect the values and nature of a culture, art will always have a meaning within the particular cultural environment. It is important that

the arts of a society and its culture are examined together. Only by knowing the nature of the culture can its reflections in the arts be understood. Conversely, the study of the arts can bring a fuller understanding of the culture and its development. This study of the Norwegian immigrant weaving crafts has considered both the arts and the social-cultural changes of the immigrant's life as a means of understanding the change in the use of the woven textiles among the immigrants in Wisconsin. It is hoped that with interest in cultural backgrounds, less of the ethnic backgrounds will be lost to modern conventionalization.

Division, Character

The Arts and the Immigrant  
Chicago, 1969

Thor S. Heilland  
Scandinavian

Harvard University  
The American

## FOOTNOTES

## Chapter 1

1. Thomas K. Derry, A Short History of Norway (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1957), p. 26.
2. Derry, p. 25.
3. Derry, p. 71.
4. Derry, p. 79.
5. Derry, p. 182.

## Chapter 2

1. Theodore C. Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition (New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd., 1969), p. 28.
2. Blegen, p. 28.
3. Babcock, The Scandinavian Element in the United States, (New York: Arno Press, 1969), p. 95.
4. Babcock, p. 93.
5. Peter A. Munch, "Social Adjustment Among Wisconsin Norwegians", American Sociological Review, 4 (1949), p. 782.
6. Theodore L. Nydal, "Social and Economic Aspects of Pioneering as Illustrated in Goodhue County, Minnesota", Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 5 (1930), p. 51-52.
7. Babcock, The Scandinavian Element, p. 102.

## Chapter 3

1. Christa Charlotte Mayer, Masterpieces of Western Textiles from the Art Institute of Chicago, (The Art Institute of Chicago, 1969), p. 25.
2. Thor B. Keilland, "Modern Norwegian Tapestries", American Scandinavian Review, 33 (1935), p. 304.
3. Haavard Rostrup, "The Tapestries of Gudbrandsdal", The American Scandinavian Review, 44 (1956), p. 162.

## Chapter 3 continued

4. Thor Keilland, "Norwegian Tapestries", The American Scandinavian Review, 35 (1947), p. 28.
5. Janice S. Stewart, The Folk Arts of Norway (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), p. 164.
6. Helen Engelstad, Dobbeltvev I Norge, (Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, Oslo, 1950), p. 136.
7. Engelstad, p. 133.
8. Engelstad, p. 137.

## Chapter 4.

1. Erling Ylvisaker, Eminent Pioneers (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1962), p. 46.
2. Theodore L. Nydal, "Social and Economic Aspects of Pioneering as Illustrated in Goodhue County, Minnesota", Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 5 (1930), p. 52.
3. Johan R. Reiersen, "Norwegians in the West in 1844: A Contemporary Account: Theodore C. Blegen, Trans. Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 1 (1926), p. 118.
4. Malcohm Rosholt, "Two Men of Old Waupaca", Norwegian-American Studies and Records, Vol. 22, (1965), p. 87.
5. Theodore C. Blegen, Norwegian Migration To America: The American Transition (New York: Haskell House Publishers. Ltd., 1969) p. 200-201.
6. Frontier Parsonage: The Letters of Olaus Fredrik Duus, Norwegian Pastor in Wisconsin, 1855-1858. (Minnesota, Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1945), p. 106.
7. The Strange American Way: Letters from Wiota, Wisconsin, 1855-1859. (Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), p. 154.
8. Erna Oleson Xan, Wisconsin: My Home (University of Wisconsin Press, 1950), p. 134.
9. The Strange American Way, p. 91.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- #1 Viking-style Ornament for a spur strap, ca A.D. 950  
Janice S. Stewart, The Folk Arts of Norway, p. 14.
- #2 Remains of the portal of Hylestad Church, J. S. Stewart,  
Folk Arts, p. 20.
- #3 Urnes Church carving ca A.D. 1050 J. S. Stewart,  
Folk Arts, p. 17
- #4 St. Michael, detail from the tapestry on "Abraham and  
St. Michael" Germany, Cathedral of Halberstadt, 12th-13th  
c. Joseph Jobe, ed., The Art of Tapestry, p. 38.
- #5 Wooden beer mug, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 85.
- #6 Chest from Valle showing typical Setesdal chip carving,  
1756, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 67.
- #7 Filigree slangesølje (a type of pin) from Hovind,  
Telemark, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 141.
- #8 Filigree clasp. J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 134.
- #9 Loft in Telemark, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 49.
- #10 A Pioneer Log Cabin, Muskego, Wisconsin, 1840; and  
Dr. Soren J. Hanssen's Home at Koshkonong, Knut Gjerset  
and Ludvig Hektoen, "Health Conditions and the Practice  
of Medicine Among the Early Norwegian Settlers, 1825-  
1865". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 1 (1926)  
p. 31.
- #11 Fragment (2/3 actual size) of Oseberg weaving, Sofie  
Krafft, Pictorial Weavings from the Viking Age, p. 30.
- #12 Fragment (2/3 actual size) of Oseberg Weaving, Krafft,  
Pictorial Weavings, p. 32.
- #13 Tapestry from Baldishol Church, 12th c., about 6½ ft.  
long, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 156.
- #14 The Resurrection (Redemption Series), Flanders, Brussels  
about 1500-1510. Christa Charlotte Mayer, Masterpieces  
of Western Textiles, p. 26.
- #15 Noli Me Tangere, Flanders, early 16th c. C. C. Mayer,  
Masterpieces, Plate 13.
- #16 Aarestue (house with central stone hearth) from  
Numedal, built around, 1300 A.D. J. S. Stewart,  
Folk Arts, p. 54.

- #17 Interior of a Hardanger røkovnstue (house with corner fireplace but without a chimney); from a painting by A. Tidem and Painted decorations around the walls. J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 32.
- #18 Farm in Gudbrandsdal, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 54.
- #19 The Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins tapestry, Mid-17th C. J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 159.
- #20 Three Wise Men tapestry, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 160.
- #21 Knight on Gudbrandsdal cushion cover. 17th C. Roar Hauglid, Ed., Native Art of Norway, p. 13D.
- #22 Chequer (square-woven aakle from sogn, Knot motif and borders from middle ages and later. R. Hauglid, Native Art, p. 133.
- #23 Aakle from Hardanger. Square-weave of 8 leafed roses and lozenges. R. Hauglid, Native Arts, p. 132.
- #24 Slit, Single (Norwegian) interlocking, and Double (Swedish) interlocking Tapestry techniques. Peter Collingwood, The Techniques of Rug Weaving, p. 171, 174, 143.
- #25 Horse blanket from Nord-Trondelag in double-weaving, J. S. Stewart, Folk Arts, p. 155.
- #26 Christening party with Christening tapestry (stickweaving). Godmothers in finest apparel. R. Hauglid, Native Arts, p. 164.
- #27 Christening tapestry (stickweaving) from Luster, Rows of 8 leaf roses. R. Hauglid, Native Arts, p. 136.
- #28 Norwegian farm house using rag rug runners. Eivind S. Engelstad, Storgarder i Norge, p. 23.
- #29 Modern farm house in Norway with picture weaving wall hanging and square-weaving table runners. Eivind S. Engelstad, Storgarder i Norge II, p. 191.

## LIST OF SLIDES

- I. Picture Weaving- Man on Horse, 29" x 23", Little Norway, Wis.
- II. Picture Weaving- Bird and Floral, 23" x 22", Little Norway, Wis.
- III. Picture Weaving- Animals on Blue Background, 19" x 24", Little Norway, Wis.
- IV. Square Weave Tapestry- 1790, 42½" x 42½", Little Norway, Wis.
- V. Square Weave Tapestry- 48" x 22 5/8", The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- VI. Swedish Weaving- 1/3 Coverlet 22" x 72", The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- VII. Swedish Weaving- Coverlet 72" x 92", The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- VIII. Same as above- reverse side.
- IX. Swedish Weaving (Stick weaving)- Wedding shawl from Mrs. Lothe Milltown (gift) 72" x 50", Little Norway, Wis.
- X. Kroksbradg coverlet- Helen Allen Textile Collection, University of Wisconsin.
- XI. Same as above- reverse side.
- XII. Kroksbradg coverlet- 56" x 26" (1/3rd), Little Norway, Wis.
- XIII. Monk's Belt and Bound Weaving- ½ coverlet, Helen Allen Textile Collection, University of Wisconsin.
- XIV. Monk's Belt- Coverlet 60" x 88", The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- XV. Monk's Belt Border Towel- Helen Allen Textile Collection, University of Wisconsin.
- XVI. Inlaid and Monk's Belt- 18 1/4" x 12 3/4" Mat, The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- XVII. Same as above- reverse side.
- XVIII. Inlaid on Plain Weaving- 39 1/4" x 16 3/4" runner, The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.

- XIX. Same as above- reverse side.
- XX. Inlaid on Rosepath threading- 10 3/4" x 55" runner,  
The Brewery, Mineral Point, Wis.
- XXI. Overshot- 72" Tablecloth, The Brewery, Mineral  
Point, Wis.
- XXII. Master Bedroom, Little Norway, Wis. (Purchased  
Slide).
- XXIII. Hand woven woolen underskirting (Wis.), Luther  
Valley, Wis.
- XXIV. Woven rag rug (Wis.), Luther Valley, Wis.
- XXV. Twill Wool Sheet, Woven by Ingeborg Anna Iverson  
Scandinavia, Wis. Mrs. Walter Bohman, Amherst,  
Wis.
- XXVI. Table linens in Twill Stripe and Bird's Eye by  
Ingeborg Anna Iverson. Mrs. Walter Bohman,  
Amherst, Wis.
- XXVII. Table Linen in Overshot by Mrs. Iverson, Mrs. Walter  
Bohman, Amherst, Wis.
- XXVIII. Twill Striped Blanket by Bergit Dahle, Little Norway,  
Approximately 1850.
- XXIX. Knitted lace pillow cover edging, 1880-85. Mrs.  
Walter Bohman, Amherst, Wis.
- XXX. Crocheted lace edgings, Mother of Mrs. Ine Olmstead.  
Orfordville, Wis. (Luther Valley).
- XXXI. Pile and Embroidered needlework pillows, home of  
Mrs. Ine Olmstead, Orfordville, Wis.
- XXXII. Knitted and Beaded sleeves by Mrs. Olmstead's  
Mother, Orfordville, Wis.
- XXXIII. Embroidered Christening cloth made by Mrs. Ine  
Olmstead, Orfordville, Wis.
- XXXIV. Same as above, close-up.
- XXXV. Hooked Pile Rag Rug, Close-up, By Mrs. Ine  
Olmstead, Orfordville, Wis.
- XXXVI. Hooked and Braided Rag Rugs, By Mrs. Ine  
Olmstead, Orfordville, Wis.

~~XXXVII. Appliqued quilt, 1880-85, by Ingeberg Anna Iversen,  
Mrs. Walter Bohman, Amherst, Wis.~~

XXXVIII. Quilts by Mrs. Olmstead's mother, Orfordville, Wis.

XXXIX. Vertical Tapestry Loom, Little Norway, Wis.

XL. Norwegian horizontal loom, taken in Norway. Mrs.  
Walter Bohman, Amherst, Wis.

XLI. Norwegian Spinning Wheel, Luther Valley Historical  
Association, Orfordville, Wis.

XLII. Same as above- close-up of hand carving.

XLIII. Norwegian Spinning Wheel, Mrs. Ine Olmstead,  
Orfordville, Wis.

Available through the Department of Environment and Design,  
School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, Madison,  
Wisconsin.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Babcock, Kendric C. Scandinavian Element in the United States: The American Immigration Collection. Series No. 1. New York: Arno, 1969 (Reprint of 1914 ed.).
- Bergmann, Leola N. Americans From Norway. New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1950.
- Blegen, Theodore C. Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition. New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1969 (Reprint of 1940 ed.)
- Blegen, Theodore C., ed. Land of Their Choice: The Immigrants Write Home. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.
- Collingwood, Peter. The Techniques of Rug Weaving. New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1968.
- Dedekam, Hans. "Tapestry Weaving in Norway". American-Scandinavian Review, 15 (1927) pp. 205-214.
- Derry, Thomas K. A Short History of Norway. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1957.
- "The Disillusionment of an Immigrant: Sjur Jorgensen Haaeim's 'Information on Conditions in North America'". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 3 (1928), pp. 1-12.
- Duus, Olaus Fredrik. Frontier Parsonage: The Letters of Olaus Fredrik Duus Norwegian Pastor in Wisconsin, 1855-1858. Northfield: The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1945.
- Engelstad, Helen. Dobbelvev i Norge. Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1950.
- Engelstad, Eivind S. Storgarder i Norge. Oslo: Hjemmenes Forlag, 1962.
- Engelstad, Eivind S. Storgarder i Norge. Oslo: Hjemmenes Forlag, 1963.
- Gjerset, Knut and Hektoen, Lugvig. "Health Conditions and the Practice of Medicine among the Early Norwegian Settlers, 1825-1865". Norwegian-American Studies and Records: 1 (1926), p. 31.
- Haugen, Einar. "Norwegian Migration to America". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 18 (1954), pp. 1-22.

- Haugen, Einar. The Norwegians in America: A Students' Guide to Localized History. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press, 1967.
- Hauglid, Roar, ed. Native Art of Norway. Oslo: Dreyer, 1965.
- Hopstock, Carsten. Norwegian Design: From Viking Age To Industrial Revolution. Oslo: Dreyer, n.d.
- Hoverstad, T. A. The Norwegian Farmers in the United States. Fargo: Hans Jervell Publishing Co., 1915.
- Hovde, B. J. The Scandinavian Countries, 1720-1865: The Rise of the Middle Classes, Vol. II. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948.
- Jobe, Joseph, ed. The Art of Tapestry. London: Thames and Hudson, 1965.
- Kielland, Thor. "Norwegian Tapestries". The American-Scandinavian Review, 35 (1947), pp. 22-29.
- Kielland, Thor B. "Modern Norwegian Tapestries". The American Scandinavian Review, 23 (1935), pp. 302-308.
- Knaplund, Paul. Moorings Old and New: Entries in an Immigrant's Log. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963.
- Mayer, Christa Charlotte. Masterpieces of Western Textiles From the Art Institute of Chicago. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1969.
- Munch, Caja and Johan S. The Strange American Way: Letters from Wiota, Wisconsin, 1855-1859. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970.
- Munch, Peter A. "Social Adjustment Among Wisconsin Norwegians". American Sociological Review, 14 (1949), pp. 780-787.
- Nydal, Theodore L. "Social and Economic Aspects of Pioneering as Illustrated in Goodhue County, Minnesota". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 5 (1930), pp. 50-60.
- Popperwell, Ronald G. Norway. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972.
- Reiersen, Johan R. "Norwegians in the West in 1844: A Contemporary Account". Theodore C. Blegen, tr. Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 1 (1926), pp. 110-125.

- Rosholt, Malcolm. "Two Men of Old Waupaca". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 22 (1965), pp. 75-103.
- Rostrup, Haavard. "The Tapestries of Gudbrandsdal". The American Scandinavian Review, 44 (1956), pp. 157-162.
- Semningsen, Ingrid Gaustad. "Norwegian Emigration to America During the Nineteenth Century". Norwegian-American Studies and Records, 11 (1940), pp. 66-81.
- Smedal, Elaine Alvine Gudrun. Introductory Index of Norwegian Handicrafts Design in Wisconsin: M. S. thesis (Education). Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1945.
- Smedal, Elaine and Tressler, Anne. Norwegian Design in Wisconsin: Serigraphs. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1946.
- Stewart, Janice S. The Folk Arts of Norway. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1953.
- Thomas, Wm. I., et al. Americanization Studies: The Acculturation of Immigrant Groups into American Society, No. 3. Old World Traits Transplanted. Montclair: Patterson Smith, 1971.
- Xan, Erna Oleson. Wisconsin, My Home. Madison: University Press, 1950.
- Ylvisaker, Erling. Eminent Pioneers: Norwegian-American Pioneer Sketches. Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1962.

Approved: *Mary Steiglitz*  
Date: *August 18, 1975*