

1983/1984

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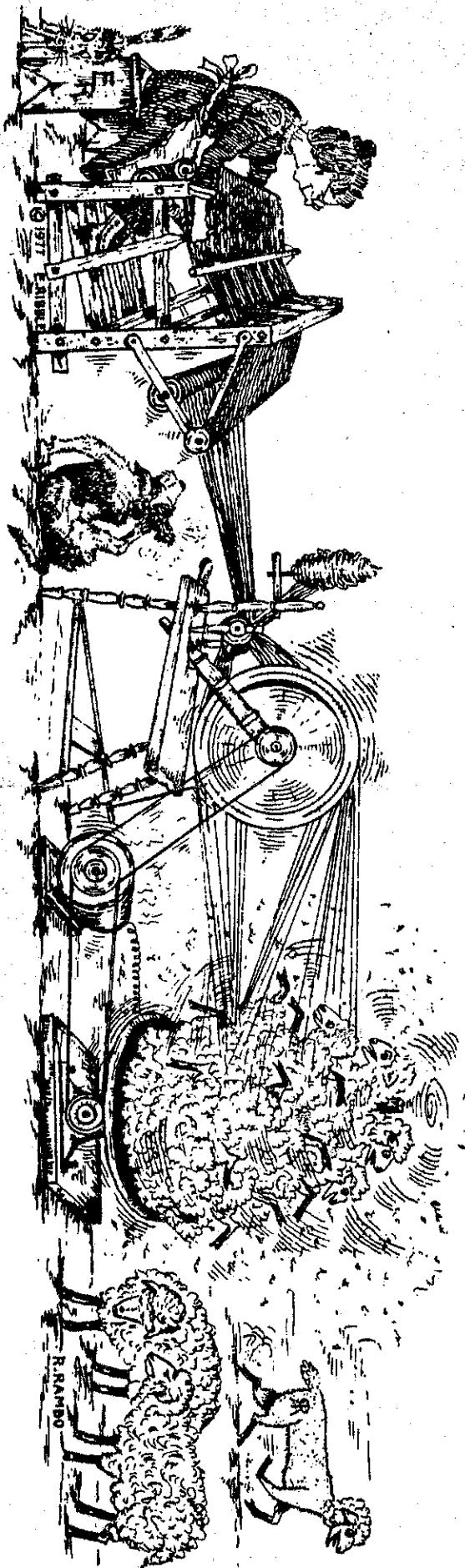
GLAD TIDINGS

An unexpected present from the Black Sheep Handspinners Guild to YOU, its members -- with best wishes for the warm and cozy holidays! We hope you enjoy this bundle of goodies and give you food for thought and spinning through these winter months...



Thomas Nast's famous cartoon from Harpers Weekly, 1880.

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A WEAVER'S DREAM

Woolcrafting without yarn

Concluded from preceding page

you can even enjoy wearing your fleecy vest before it is completely hooked.

For the finishing touches, trim the ends of the tufts on the underside and any strands of burlap that may have worked loose. A piece of horn or a thick leather knot would make a suitable and attractive fastening.

As you fill the wood box, hang out the wash, or bring up the stew vegetables from the root cellar, you will appreciate the practicality and versatility of your woolly vest.

Handcrafting wool without yarn . . .

Shepherd Reader Grace Thomson of Johnsburg, N. Y. sends this clipping from an old issue (Mar. '76) of *Organic Gardening and Farming*. It seems pertinent to our present needs, when the makers of synthetic yarns are encouraging mills to use equipment specially designed for non-wool products.

Making Unspun Fleecy Clothing

An old technique for making cloth without spinning or weaving can easily be used today to create clothing for the entire family.

by
JUDY HINDS

Beautiful garments, warm and waterproof, can be made with an ancient technique for using raw wool without spinning or weaving. The skill involved is so quickly learned that children can easily participate, turning the craft into a meaningful family project that uses a minimum of equipment or processing.

The technique is as simple as it is old: tufts of wool are pulled through coarse cloth. The fleecy-like result is called kaunakes cloth.

Using unspun wool and burlap feed bags, it is possible to make a wide range of handsome and practical garments for any member of the family. Bands of hooked burlap can be used as collars, hems or borders. The idea can also be adapted for home furnishings, such as cushions and seat covers. Your own inventiveness is the only limit.

An excellent first project is a fleecy vest. It is easy to make and is a versatile piece of apparel. There are three main steps in making any kaunakes-style article: putting together a burlap form, preparing the wool tufts, and finally hooking them through the burlap.

For the burlap form of the vest, select or make a pattern, keeping in mind that a short raglan-type sleeve will keep your shoulders warm, and that the back should be long enough to cover the drafty gap between tops and pants. Pre-shrink the burlap by washing it in warm

water. When it is dry, cut out the pattern and sew the seams together by hand or with large machine stitches. Omit facings.

To prepare the wool, choose the cleanest sections of the fleece. Pull and stretch a small handful of fibers and roll them back and forth between your hands to make a smooth, round strip a foot or so long. The strips do not have to

To hook in the strips, take your crochet hook down from the top, catch the strip, and gently pull up to make a loop.



be perfectly uniform in length or thickness. If the wool is very dirty or strong-smelling, it can be lightly washed before the strips are prepared. Be careful: over-washing removes the lanolin that keeps the garment waterproof and softens your hands as you work up the strips. The wool could be carded, making it possible to roll and cut somewhat longer strips, but this isn't really necessary.

To hook in the strips, hold a length of wool on the underside of the vest. Take your crochet hook down from the top, catch the strip, and gently pull up to make a loop about 1/2 inch high. Skip a few holes in the burlap, and continue hooking, leaving the ends of the strips on the underside. The loops do not have to be uniform in size, but to avoid binding, they should not be packed too close together. Simple patterns in contrasting colors of natural wool can be worked if desired.

It is best to hook around the edges first to keep the burlap from unraveling. Turn under the full seam allowance and hook through the double thickness. It doesn't hurt to take even a little more than the usual 5/8-inch allowance at the arm holes for extra ease. Once you have anchored the edges, you can continue hooking wherever you like. In fact, part of the fun of the project is the freedom from having to work in a particular order.

Since the large crochet hook is the only piece of equipment needed for the project, it is a pleasant kind of piecework, easily picked up during a slack moment or packed up for traveling. And unlike a knitted sweater,

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The loops do not have to be uniform in size. But to avoid binding, they should not be packed too close together.

Jan. 1979
THE SHEPHERD



LEFT—Woolen type on left; worsted type on right.

The Shepherd
Jan. 1979



RIGHT—Woolen type fleece on left with carders and rolag. Worsted type on right with comb and lock.

Woolen and Worsted

by
DOLORIA M. CHAPIN

How many of you could tell me the difference between WOOLEN and WORSTED? Did you know that in every garment you wear, with the exception of some extruded monofilament synthetics, the threads are made either by a woolen or worsted principle?

One time after doing a demonstration at a department store, a salesman from the men's department told me he had been selling woolen and worsteds for years, but never knew how they differed.

Basically, it is the fiber arrangement! While there are exceptions, usually shorter fibers are carded and rolled so the fibers crimp more and are arranged in every direction. This captures air as the fibers are drawn out and twisted into the thread. This gives softness,

sponginess, stretch, and it insulates. The thread may also be fuzzier. These can be brushed to raise the ends into a soft nap.

Worsteds, on the other hand have parallel fiber arrangement. This is usually done with longer combed fibers. The parallel fibers are drawn and twisted into a smooth, hard, strong thread. This thread might not be as warm, but it will wear longer than a woolen-spun thread. The thread is virtually solid.

Manufacturing machinery does this work in large quantities with large machines, but handspinners still prepare their fibers (which are more frequently of wool than other fibers throughout our country) the way they have for centuries.

Carders are paddle-shaped tools with staples imbedded which are all bent at the same angle. Brushing the fibers with these is much like brushing one's hair. It aligns the fibers. For woolen spinning the batt is removed at the final stage of carding and rolled into a long soft roll which is ready to spin by hand, spindle or wheel.

Worsted is prepared by combing the fiber lock with a steel comb, old fashioned wool combs, using a flicker on a board to open the fibers, or perhaps spinning directly from a lock of clean, grease fleece. The fleece can also be removed in the batt from the carders and spun from the upper right corner for a near worsted effect.

In pioneer times woolens were spun,

then knitted or woven into garments for warmth. Many accounts of pioneer women state they made worsteds in case they were taken captive. Those in the Deerfield raid did have to endure two years of captivity in the clothing they had on at the time of the raid, marching for days through snow.

Worsteds have a smooth surface in a garment, plain woven. Men's suits are usually worsted, made of long wools which account for the sheen in a fine suit. Some threads are so finely spun and glossy they resemble silk, yet wear for years. Tweeds are woolen-spun.

Handspinners also see the natural characteristics in various sheep breeds that lend themselves better to either woolen or worsted spinning, although by all means, some can be spun either way. Note the photograph showing two distinct types of wool. The short "cloudlike", dense fleece lends itself better to the woolen method. The long "lock-like" fleece works beautifully in the worsted method.

Breeds that are the most characteristically like the first type are Jacobs, Cheviot, Montadale, Hampshire, Columbia, Dorset, Southdown, Oxford, Suffolk, Cobequid (New Zealand breed), and some Tunis, Finn Landrace, and Merino.

Breeds noted for good worsted spinning are Romney, Perendale (New Zealand breed), Leicester, long stapled Corriedale, Lincoln. Some Merinos, Rambouillet, Tunis, Targhee and Oxfords. Montadale and others can also be used if they appear "open", fine, and long. This list is by no means complete, but if you studied samples of these fleeces you would soon develop an eye for choosing the specific characteristic you wanted for each.

This list does not contain the very coarse fleeces such as Karakul, Scottish Blackface, and other breeds raised for the carpet trade.

One more observation from a handspinner's point of view is that I prefer to wash my wools for spinning woolen, but like to spin in-the-grease for worsteds. Washing causes the fibers to curl or crimp more than normal, be more springy, and make more bulk, while spinning worsted in the grease (in handspinning) the oils allow the fibers to be stretched and slid parallel without undue crimp. Washing the worsteds after spinning them in the grease leaves them soft, open, and sleek—perhaps more airy.

Woolen spun threads are great for afghans, warm bulky sweaters, pillows, hangings, scarves, and ponchos.

Worsted spun threads are ideal for woven clothing yardages, curtains, rugs, upholstery, socks, crewel, needlepoint, work sweaters, and mittens.

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Woolen and Worsted

Concluded from page 21

Knowing more about woolen and worsted will help the sheepman select fleeces for sale to the handspinners as well as plan his breeding with fleece sales in mind.

Some handspinners will pick a fleece because they like it rather than having specific purposes in mind for its use. It is wise for spinners to keep an inventory of both types so they can be used purposefully for best results.

Perhaps these facts will help you in your next purchase of wool fabrics. Beware of reprocessed wool, which never has the beauty, hand, or crease resistance of virgin wool. Gentle handspun still remain king or queen of the wool yarns in beauty and quality.

A Weaver's Prayer

Oh God, the warp you gave me,
My life,
I got it tangled.
I broke some threads, I made mistakes,
I wove too bright a border.

You take the shuttle out of my hands
And let me rest a while
And mend my threads,
Correct my faults,
And put it all in order.
by Valborg Gravander

calligraphy: RUBY COG

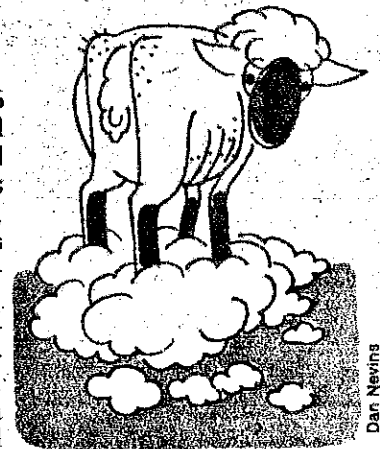
Sent by KRIS PETERS

SHEAR DELIGHT

Australia has some 135 million sheep, which need to be clipped by hand each year. It's a laborious process — and expensive, too, since sheepshearers hardly get fleeced, charging up to \$1 a head.

But now Aussie researchers report identifying a natural protein that, when injected into certain sheep, causes their wool to simply fall off. At most a little rubbing brings off the fleece in fistfuls.

As reported recently in *Science* 82, the protein, called epidermal growth factor, causes an adult sheep to lose its entire fleece within a week. And



Dan Nevins

after another week, signs of new growth can be spotted. The protein has produced no harmful side effects, but its widespread use is impractical for now because it must be extracted from the salivary glands of adult male mice.

FAMILY WEEKLY, September 26, 1982

Sheep guides pony

EDMOND, Okla. (UPI) — Marie is blind, but Ralph can see and takes good care of her.

He makes sure she finds her way home every night, and seldom leaves her side.

The odd thing is that Marie is a pony and Ralph is her seeing-eye sheep.

"You don't have to believe it if you don't want to," says Dick Robey, who owns Ralph and Marie. "Horses don't like sheep in any kind of way. But Marie here won't go anywhere without Ralph.

"It probably sounds ridiculous, but that dadburn sheep must know the pony is

blind. If you watch the way he leads her around, you can tell the sheep knows she can't see."

A visitor to the Robey farm may find the two sleeping nose-to-nose in the front yard. At night, they share the same stall, where Marie uses Ralph as a pillow.

Marie, who always has refused to be ridden, doesn't care much for people or other horses. And Ralph doesn't like other sheep.

The Robeys never tried to teach the two to get along. It just happened.

"That darn sheep adopted that pony last winter,"

Robey said.

"Marie's been out here for the last 20 years. The last few winters, she got cold. The wife's been putting her up in the barn. Last winter she lost her eyesight."

That's when Ralph arrived. A boy who worked for the Robeys owned a sheep, but didn't have any where to keep it. So Robey and his wife, Helen, let him keep it in their barn.

"We'd put the pony outside, and we started turning the sheep out there with her," Robey said. "One day when we got back late, we found them in the same stall. That sheep would get right in front of her and lead

her to the barn."

"If that pony nickers, here comes Ralph, and you'd better git out of the way or he'll plumb run over you," Robey said.

"If a stray dog shows up, why Ralph here turns into a different sheep. You wouldn't recognize him. He'll rear up and get between Marie and that dog."

Robey figures Ralph will be one of the few sheep around to die of old age.

"He's got life all taken care of as long as that horse is alive. That sheep has found a saviour in that pony," Robey said.

written by David Finhall, age 31
of Trumansburg

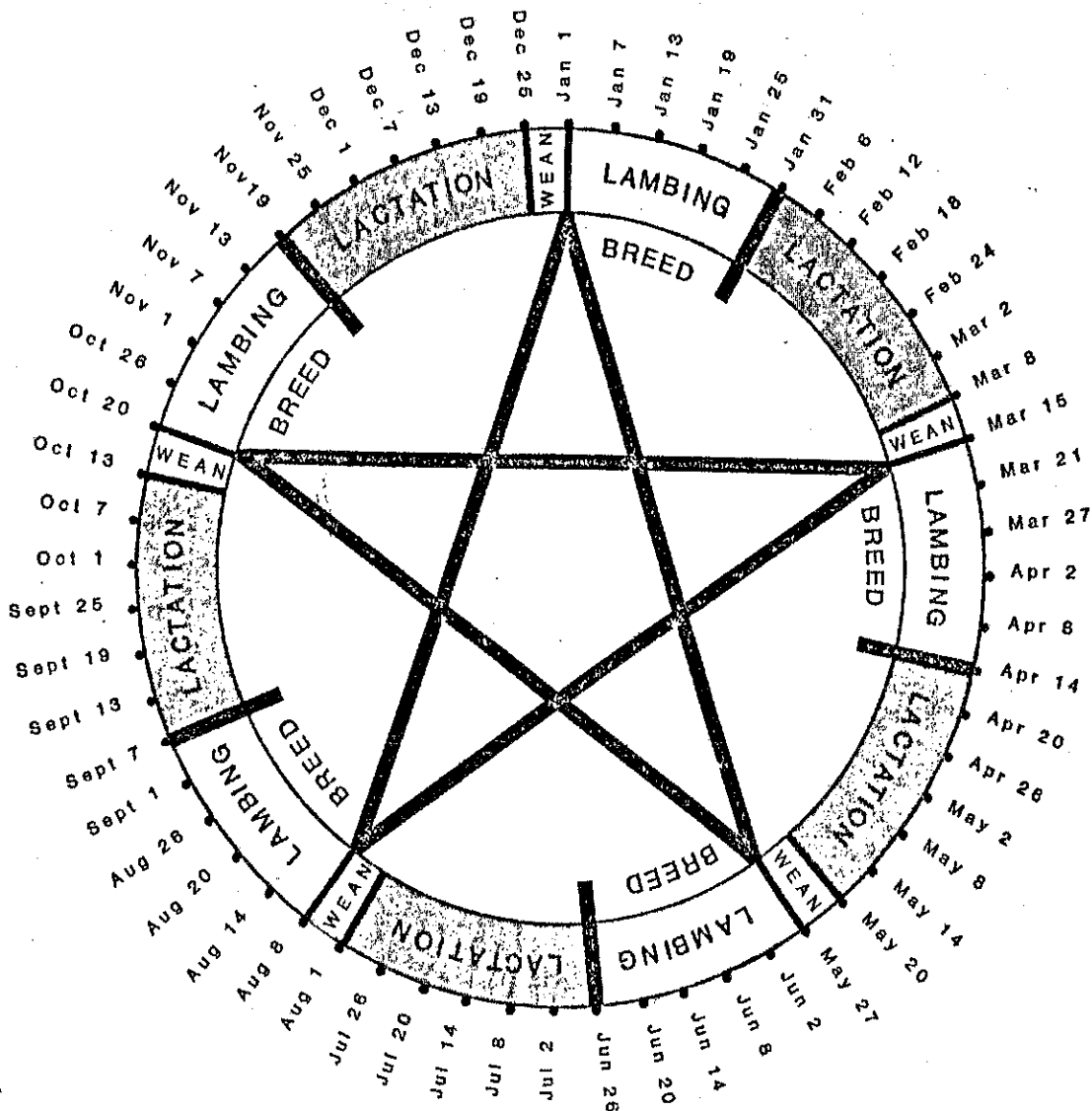
Said Ms. Thatcher, "I know war's not cheap
But the Falklands are our lands to keep.
So show them the fire
Of the British Empire,
And, above all, 'Don't give up the sheep!'"

The CITIZEN.

April '83

STAR

Accelerated Lambing System
Cornell University November 1983



WORLD BEST? *The Web June 1982*

The owners of Lochinver Station near Taupo are claiming an unofficial world record for the most lambs shorn on a single property in one day.

The tally of 8499 lambs was clocked up using all 17 stands in two woolsheds.

The Stevenson family, which owns the 12,000 hectare property, is to apply to the Guinness Book of Records for recognition of the tally.

— Wool News

When weaning lambs, leave them in familiar surroundings to reduce stress, and remove ewes out of hearing if possible.

Energy saver

Roasting lamb instead of beef or pork saves fuel since lamb roasting temperatures are 25 degrees F. lower (325 vs. 350 deg.).

Countryside
January, 1984

All the world is queer save me and thee,
and sometimes I think thee is a little queer.
—Attributed to a Quaker speaking to his wife

DYE NOTES



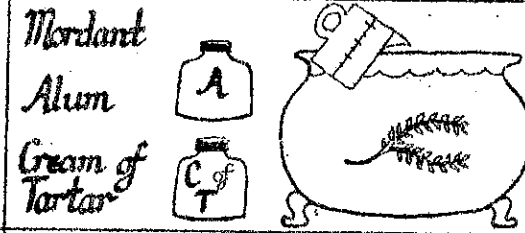
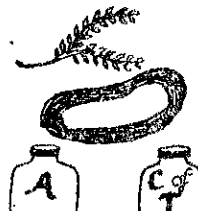
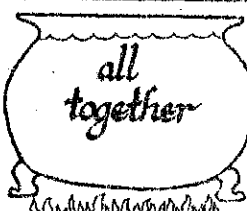


The following chart is the third and last in a series of three, from the book, Nature's Colors: Dyes From Plants by Ida Grae, MacMillan 1984.

Cut this chart out and save it with your dyeing notes.



Urtica dioica
nettle

One Pot Dye and Mordant Method

Action	Ingredients	Time
Soak Together	plant scoured textile water  	Overnight
Simmer	All Together	15 Minutes
Remove	Textile from Pot	Temporarily
Add	Mordant Alum Cream of Tartar 	
Return	Textile to Pot	
Simmer	 	30 Minutes
Cool	All Together	Overnight
Rinse	Textile 	
Dry		

DYE NOTES



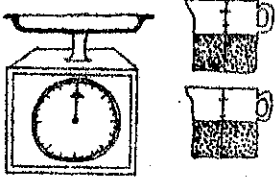
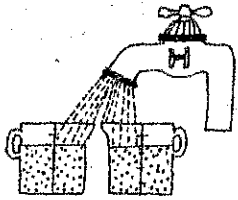
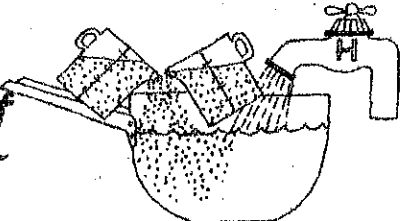

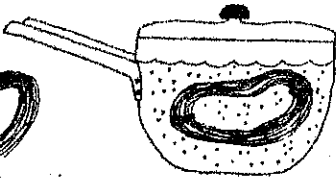
The following chart is the second in a series of three from the book, *Nature's Colors: Dyes From Plants* by Ida Gree, MacMillan 1984.

Cut this chart out and save it with your dyeing notes. The third chart will be, *One Pot Dye and Mordant Method*.



Clematis
clematis

Pre-Mordanting the Textile (Fibre, Yarn or Fabric)

Action	Ingredients	Time
Measure	<p><u>Mordant:</u></p> <p>Chrome </p> <p>Cream of Tartar </p> 	
Dissolve	<p>Mordant in Hot Water</p> 	
Pour	<p>Mordant Solution Into Pot of Hot Water</p> 	
Enter and Cover	<p>Scoured Yarn </p> 	
Simmer 195° F	All Together	1½ hours
Cool	All Together	Overnight or longer
Remove	Yarn	
Proceed	To Dyeing or Store Wet or Dry	for future use

Easy Keepers

Once upon a time there was a man, call him Good Christian Herder, who thought of raising sheep. Knowing nothing of such things, Herder journeyed the countryside, interviewing every sheep that crossed his path, asking each about the difficulties of keeping a few of their number. All told Herder the same thing: "Sheep don't need much; a bite of grass, a sip of water and a pinch of salt — that's all we need, really". Convinced by repetition, Herder decided to go ahead, and he did, buying 50 ewes and a ram. Upon arriving at the farm with his new flock, he took them straight away to the pasture to show them where they would be living. "It isn't much, he apologized, "just a field with a fence around it, but the grass is good and there is plenty of water, and first thing in the morning I'm going into town to get you some salt blocks". The sheep inspected the field, tasted the brook water and nodded approval: " This is all we need, we will be happy here, don't you worry". As for Herder's lack of a barn, the sheep said "don't be silly, we don't need one, this is perfect for us out here".

For the first months all went well. The ram bred the ewes, the ewes ate the lush grass and the days shortened unto winter. One day Herder noticed that there was not much grass left in the field and he went to talk with the sheep about it. "Yes", they agreed, "there isn't as much grass as before, but don't worry, we don't need much. Besides, we can always feed on those bushes". Herder would have none of that and forthwith bought hay for his flock. The sheep were grateful, ate heartily, and quickly grew back the fat they had lost.

Soon Herder was beset with another problem, and after considering how to bring it up tactfully, said "I'm sorry to complain, but you sheep could save a lot of hay if you did not walk all over it". The sheep, not a bit offended, answered calmly "that is the way Mother Nature has made us. She taught us to always look for the very best bits of hay, and that means we have to walk around on it to find them". Herder understood, and then asked if the sheep had any



ideas on how to avoid the waste, saying that he just could not afford it. "Our last owner put his hay in feeders" replied the sheep, "that way we could not get at it to walk on". So Herder built some feeders and everyone was again pleased, sheep included.

Other sheep habits bothered Herder too. One winter's day he brought up their habit of crowding so close together: "when I want just a few of you to walk through the gate, all of you come rushing at once". "We know" said the sheep, "we are like that. Mother Nature taught us to stick together, so we do". Herder, never quick to tamper with nature, asked the sheep how he might manage to get them to do his will, and as usual, the sheep cooperated. "You could build something called a 'sorting chute' and we could even teach you how" offered one old and wise ewe. And they did, and he did, and once again peace settled upon the farm as winter deepened and ewes grew heavy with kids.

Lambing season began to the joy of all. Herder herded harder now, hauling hay by day and moving about the pasture by night, helping the ewes to lamb, bringing fresh water and clean hay to the new mothers. It was exciting work, but he also got very tired, retracing his steps over the pasture many times each night, coming to the aid of yet another

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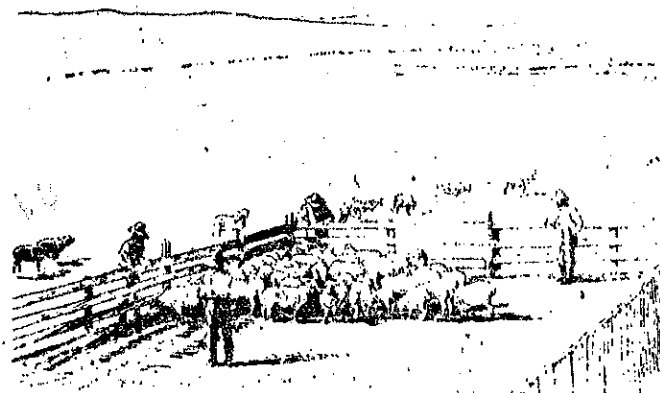
lambing ewe. One morning Herder mentioned this to his flock: "Could you possibly come over by the gate when you feel you are ready to lamb?" The sheep recognized Herder's problem right away, and answered "but we are timid animals. Mother Nature has taught us to lamb just as far from any disturbance as we can get, so that is what we do — we find a quiet corner way away from everyone else. We cannot help it". Herder had no reply.

A couple of nights later, tragedy struck. Two lambs froze to death in a far corner of the pasture, before an exhausted Herder could get to them, and that same night, a lamb was carried off by the wolves that had begun to prowl the fence line. Herder was in a frenzy but the sheep just shrugged: "we cannot fight wolves, we are just sheep". Unsatisfied, Herder asked for suggestions, and as usual, the sheep politely replied: "Our last owner had a barn he liked us to lamb in. It was always safe there and he never seemed to get so cranky during lambing". Herder was taken aback at the prospect of building a barn, and he fumed

"So now you need a barn, do you?". The senior ewe, between mouthfuls of hay, almost disinterestedly replied: "not at all. We don't need a barn. After all, Mother Nature only expects us to lamb once or so a lifetime and we can do that standing on our heads". Herder, scratching his own head awhile, reached a decision and made a telling observation, all in the same sentence: "I will build a barn then, for it seems that I expect a lot more of you than does Mother Nature".

The sheep, knowing so much more about raising sheep than Herder, designed the barn for him, or rather told him how to draw up the plans, for they could not write, or at least they had never tried. As the plan formed, Herder sensed that there was something wrong here, the drawings didn't seem right to him, and he said so one day. The ewes were busy tending their lambs and paid little attention as Herder went into details of the barn plan. But he pressed on anyway: "These plans call for the barn to be only 4 feet high — that just won't work because I am over 6 feet tall". The sheep yawned sleepily and answered "then build it higher. We need only 4 feet, if you need more, help yourself". But Herder wasn't finished yet: "and these doors, they

are only 18 inches wide. I can barely squeeze through and I could never get the hay inside". As you would by now expect, the sheep replied that 18 inches was all they needed and that if Herder needed more, he should "build whatever you like. 18 inches or 18 feet wide". "Eighteen feet? Now there is an idea" said Herder, "that wide I could drive a tractor through it, if I had a tractor, to bring you the hay". Sheep, having little or no interest in machinery, paid him no mind, many of the ewes were asleep.



Herder became exasperated: "You sheep don't seem to care a bit what I am doing for you, all you care about is a bite of grass, a sip of water and a pinch of salt. At this, several sheep turned slowly to Herder and repeated what Herder by now knew by heart: "As we told you when you bought us, we sheep don't need much".

Herder did not surrender. He built his barn, a one with double doors, and he bought a tractor. His flock grew and grew, becoming the pride of the county. The sheep and Herder had no cause for worry now — he had built them all the chutes and feeders and barns and loaders that were required. As he showed off the place to visiting neighbors, Herder explained how he had come to peace with shepherding: "Sheep don't need much, it is true. Most of this is for me".

This story was told a few years ago in Sheep Canada Magazine. Bruce Clement found it there and had it reprinted in the May 1980 issue of the New England Farmer. We shortened and re-wrote it.

BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD Newsletter 66 - January 1984
P.O. BOX 6701 Editor: Marianne Horchler
Ithaca, N.Y. 14851 R.D. # 1, GENOA, N.Y. 13071

I hope everyone of you enjoyed very happy holidays and had the opportunity to give and be given many spinning-related items! A HAPPY 1984 to all of you! Let's make it a good year for the guild by attending meetings, volunteering for programs, demonstrations etc.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW OFFICERS

Please note that our new officers for 1984 are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Virginia Lance, 505 Warren Rd., Ithaca 607/257-3737
VICE PRESIDENT: Linda Dickinson, Box 321, Spencer 14883 607/564-7597
(Contact Linda if you have suggestions for programs)
TREASURER: Mary Ann Sumner
RECORDING SECRETARY: Joann Schaff
LIBRARIAN: Kathie Garnsey
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Marianne Horchler

ROCK DAY - January 7

Our Traditional Rock Day was very successful this year; 23 people were present when the meeting was called to order but more came later. There were some interesting show-and-tells and the dish-to-pass lunch was one of the best ever! Following are the minutes of the meeting as submitted by Joann Schaff, Recording Secretary:

The meeting was called to order by the president, Virginia Lance, at the Varna Comm. Center with 22 members and 1 guest present.

The treasurer's report was presented first. At the beginning of 1983 the Guild had a balance of \$1350. Income for the year totalled approx. \$3400, but expenses were almost \$3500, leaving a balance of \$1258.46.

Spring Fever will take place at the Women's Community Building on March 3 & 4. This year, Seven Valley Weavers is the sponsor. Cost for a guild table is \$25 (Guild takes 10% of sales) and for individuals is \$5 (Spring Fever takes 10%).

Brother Kim Malloy will probably come back in May to give a program focusing on quality of fleeces, skeins, etc.

Ideas for future workshops were discussed - Kay Ross suggested Allen Fannin; Erica Rowe suggested Barbara Wheeler and said she would contact both Fannin & Wheeler to get more information. Another suggestion was for advanced and intermediate spinning workshops. A committee on workshops was formed consisting of Joan Johnston, Marti McGee & Joann Schaff.

The New York State Craft Show Directory (a periodical) was mentioned by Erica as a possible addition to the library. Cost is \$7.50/yr.

Virginia Lance asked for volunteers (one to open building, put on coffee, etc., one to clean up afterwards); Marti McGee volunteered for the Monday, February 13th meeting.

Melissa Ladenheim, from the DeWitt Historical Society, wants to find traditional folk artists - those who have learned their craft in a family, religious or community setting. There was some discussion of the meaning of traditional, especially concerning spinning. No firm conclusion was reached.

There was an incredible amount of food for lunch - all of it delicious!