

Fluttery Lace Curtain

REGINA MCINNES



Photos by Matt Graves

HANDWOVEN



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WEAVE STRUCTURE

Huck lace and plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 25" weaving width; 14- or 12-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: 16/1 line linen (100% linen; 5,556 yd/lb; Vävstuga), turquoise, 1,748 yd.

Weft: 16/1 line linen, turquoise, 541 yd.

Notes on warp and weft: Regina used line linen from her stash and estimated its weight using a McMorran yarn balance. The warp and weft quantities are sufficient for making a curtain 1½ yd long with a curtain-rod pocket.

WARP LENGTH

699 ends 2½ yd long for one curtain (allows 5" for take-up, 26" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 28 epi (2/dent in 14-dent reed or 2-2-3/dent in a 12-dent reed).

Weft: 12 ppi (requires a light beat).

DIMENSIONS

Width in reed: 25".

Woven length: 59".

Finished size: (after wet-finishing, hemming, and sewing curtain-rod pocket) 24" × 56".

Though I'm still at an early stage of my weaving journey, my favorite yarn remains fine linen. I have woven with wool, cotton, cottolin, Tencel, and acrylic yarn but find myself drawn to the simple beauty of linen. Maybe it's because weavers have used linen since ancient times. It also helps that even today, linen is a desirable fiber for everything from bedding to high-end fashion.

I received a stash of linen from a dear weaver friend, Joan Pearson. I bought my loom from her in 2019, and she included a box full of yarn with it, most of which was fine linen. After having learned how to handle the linen and use it in weaving tea towels and tablecloths, I wanted to see if I could make a gauzy material. That's when the theme of "flying fancy" gave me the idea of designing a curtain for a bathroom, which would fly in the breeze of the open window.

For an airy material, lace comes to mind. I wondered what would happen if I used huck lace at a wider-than-suggested sett. Would it make the material suitable for a curtain that lets in light and air but keeps prying eyes out? While I was weaving the material, I was convinced of my failure, as the cloth did not look anything like the drawdown I had made. Still, I persevered and finished it in the hope that it would come out okay when off the loom and wet-finished. Off the loom, it still did not look very promising.

The pattern didn't appear until after I wet-finished, sewed, and hung the curtain in the window with the light shining through it. The pattern does not look like your classic huck lace, but it is pleasing, especially when looking at it from a distance. The choice of the turquoise color helped give this piece the desired effect of brightening up the bathroom, especially on a warm, sunny day with the breeze coming in and moving the curtain.

Selvedge tip

With most weaving projects, Regina uses fishing line as floating selvedges, even with plain-weave borders, to minimize draw-in at the selvedges so they look even and neat. She pulls out the fishing line when the piece is off the loom and uses it again.

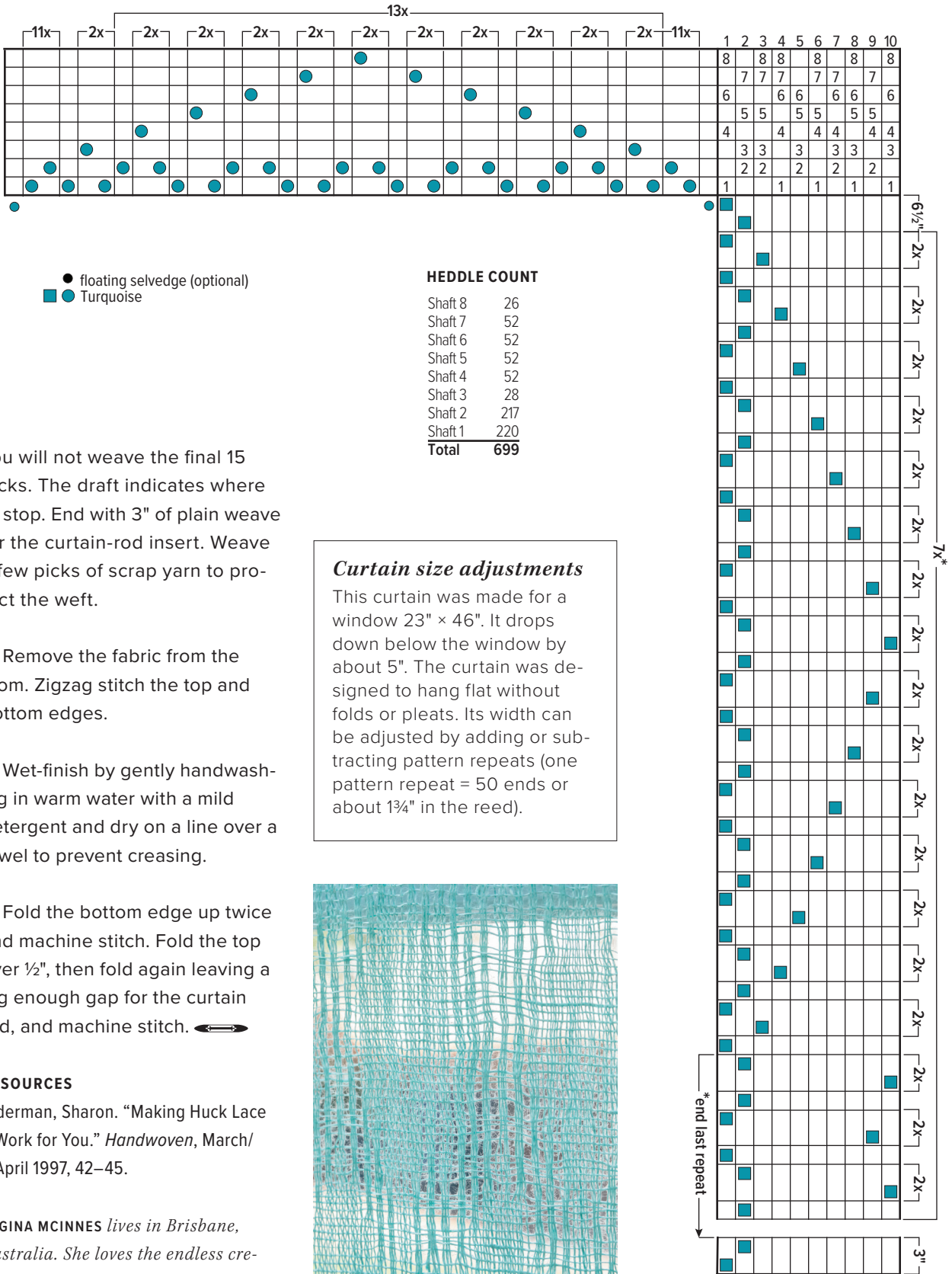
1 Wind a warp of 699 ends 2½ yd long. Floating selvedges are not needed, but Regina used fishing line to help ensure her edges were neat (see Tip). Centering for a weaving width of 25", sley 2 per dent in a 14-dent reed or 2-2-3 per dent in a 12-dent reed.

2 Wind a bobbin with weft. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

3 Weave about ½" of plain weave for the bottom edge, followed by 6" of plain weave before starting the pattern.

4 Continue weaving following the draft in Figure 1. Note that on your last repeat,


1. DRAFT



you will not weave the final 15 picks. The draft indicates where to stop. End with 3" of plain weave for the curtain-rod insert. Weave a few picks of scrap yarn to protect the weft.

5 Remove the fabric from the loom. Zigzag stitch the top and bottom edges.

6 Wet-finish by gently handwashing in warm water with a mild detergent and dry on a line over a towel to prevent creasing.

7 Fold the bottom edge up twice and machine stitch. Fold the top over 1/2", then fold again leaving a big enough gap for the curtain rod, and machine stitch. 

RESOURCES

Alderman, Sharon. "Making Huck Lace Work for You." *Handwoven*, March/April 1997, 42-45.

REGINA MCINNES lives in Brisbane, Australia. She loves the endless creative opportunities weaving provides, no matter how old you are or what you want to weave.

Curtain size adjustments
 This curtain was made for a window 23" x 46". It drops down below the window by about 5". The curtain was designed to hang flat without folds or pleats. Its width can be adjusted by adding or subtracting pattern repeats (one pattern repeat = 50 ends or about 1 3/4" in the reed).

