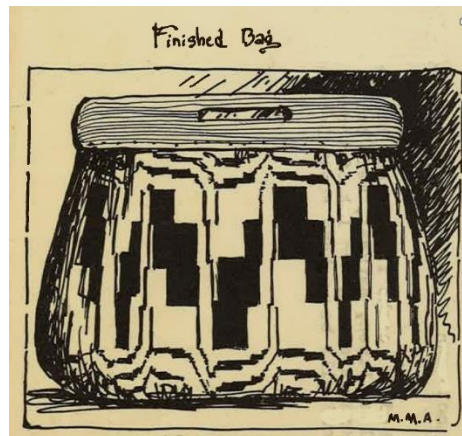


## Shuttle-Craft Bulletins: Weaving for Handbags

Mary Meigs Atwater wrote often on weaving for bags. In July 1931, she wrote about them for summer selling and then again in December for Christmas weaving. Bags are a small article that can be produced quickly. In July, Mary recommended the 3-harness weave (or Krokbragd) as she did in the 20s, and in December she was advocating a crackle weave in a "Modernistic" pattern shown here. The crackle weave bag was woven with a cotton warp set at 30 ends per inch with a black silk pattern yarn and old gold linen tabby. One way to weave the pattern was to weave a two-block pattern, on treadles 1 and 3 or on 2 and 4 developing the figure by squaring each block.



The bag frames she used were available from Nellie Sargent Johnson, a weaver in Detroit who published the Handweaving News from 1933 to 1951. She advertised in the 1931 Handicrafter Magazine.

These handbags were small by today's standards (9" x 14") and the weaving of the fabric was the smallest part of the cost of

**BAG FRAMES—Specials for December**

CELLULOID GATE-TOP FRAMES — 10" shell only, 11" and 12" in white, black, beige, or shell, each \$1.50

METAL — a new pewter finish frame, two straight pieces 8" long, 3/4" wide, with slots at each end for handles, 65c each, or 6 for \$3.25

WOOD — as illustrated in cut: 8" \$1.25; 10" \$1.65; 12" \$2.00 each.

MOIRÉ SILK BAG LINING — excellent quality, in tan, grey, or white, 36" wide, yard \$1.25

Special stiffening for inside of envelope purses 75c yard. An excellent material, press this to your purse material with a warm iron, and you are ready for the lining.

**NELLIE SARGENT JOHNSON**  
12489 Mendota Avenue Detroit, Mich.

production. She suggested the use of several colors, textures and figures to make the fabric as gorgeous as possible. Weaving the outside in an interesting weave and then the lining in plain weave for the fabric all in one piece. Handles could be card-woven instead of purchased frames to reduce production costs.

She listed cotton or rayon as suitable materials and wrote that a long warp should be used to produce at least a dozen bags per warp. Mary emphasized that in order to make a profit by selling one's weaving, it is essential to select a special product that sells and can be made in quantity—something to consider for the holiday boutique.

The wooden handles are still available, here is one on Etsy:

For more on 1930s handbags, see the following website:  
<https://vintagedancer.com/1930s/1930s-handbags-purses-history/>

