Emanuel Anthony Posselt

E. A. (Emanuel Anthony) Posselt published prolifically on topics related to weaving and textile manufacture from 1892 until his death in 1921. His book on the Jacquard machine is considered to be a classic.



E. A. Posselt, Author

Biographical Information

The following information is taken from a 1900 biography [1].

Author and textile expert. Born Reichenberg, Austria August 21, 1858. Son of Emanuel Anthony and Elizabeth (Demuth) Posselt.

Graduated in 1876 from the Imperial Government Weaving School of Reichenberg. Next managed his father's mills in Reichenberg, where he got his first practical experience in textile manufacturing. Visited most important cities in Europe carrying on the manufacture of textiles.

Came to the United States August 14, 1878. From that time until 1884 he was employed as a designer or supervisor in leading mills in the New England States and Pennsylvania.

In 1884 he became the first director of the first successful textile school in the United States, started in Philadelphia in connection with the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art. In 1891, he resigned his position and accepted editorship of the *Textile Record of North America*, as of 1900 the foremost journal on textile manufacturing in the United States.

At this time he established a private textile school as well as a book business in textile literature. His first published work was *The Jacquard Machine* (4 editions as of 1900). His next and most important publication was *The Technology of Textile Design* (7 editions as of 1900), followed by *The Structure of Fibres, Yarns and Fabrics*. He also published *Textile Calculations* and *Textile Machinery*. He also published in the United States such valuable works as *Wool Dyeing* by Professor Gardner (written in England).

He was editor for the textile department in Funk & Wagnalls' *Standard Dictionary* and numerous other works.

His books are the standard authorities in this country on the subjects which they treat, and have equal status in England, where they have been republished.

He is married and has two children.

Care should be taken in interpreting information in published biographies. Biographies about living persons (as Posselt was when the biography above was written) usually are more laudatory than biographies about dead persons. In addition, a biography of a living persons often is based on information provided by that person, which usually is cast in a more favorable way than information compiled from records after a person dies.

Genealogical records on the Web say he married Anna Clera Pollinger on July 2, 1884 in Colchester Vermont, and that they had three children: Anna (1896), Elwood (1906), and Gertrude (1908). Posselt's date of death is listed as 1921.

Books

Posselt published two series of books, *Posselt's Textile Library*, started in 1892, and *Hand Books of the Textile Industry*, started in 1914. He also authored or co-authored several other books. Bibliographic citations for Posselt's books are given in Appendix A.

Posselt's Textile Library

Nine volumes were projected for this series, although only seven were published. Posselt wrote five of the seven; the other two on dyeing were authored by others. Dates that actually appear in the books are in boldface. The other dates are educated guesses.

volume	title	author	date	editions
Ι	Textile Calculations	Posselt	1892	at least 6
II	Wool Dyeing, Part 1	Gardner ¹	1896	?
III	Textile Machinery (Part 1)	Posselt	1898	?
IV	The Jacquard Machine	Posselt	1887	at least 6
V	?			
VI	Textile Machinery, Part 2	Posselt	1901	?
VII	?			
VIII	Wool Dyeing, Part 2	Gardner ¹ and Knaggs ²	1896	?
IX	Textile Machinery, Part 3	Posselt	1905	?

Hand Books of the Textile Industry

All the books in the *Hand Books of the Textile Industry* were written by Posselt.

volume	title	author	date	editions
1	Dictionary of Weaves, Part 1 ³	Posselt	1914	?
2	Narrow Woven Fabrics	Posselt	1917	?
3	Silk Throwing	Posselt	1918	?
4	Fabric Analysis	Posselt	1920	?

¹Walter Myers Gardner, 1862 - ?; authored or co-authored several other books on dyeing and the British coal-tar industry.

² A. B. Knaggs; no other books by him are known.

³ Introductory notes are in English, German, and French.

Other Books

The following books do not contain any indication that they belong to either of the series above.

title	author	date	editions
Technology of Textile Design The Structure of Fibres, Yarns	Posselt	1888	at least 7
and Fabrics (2 volumes in 1)	Posselt	1891	at least 4
Cotton Manufacturing, Part 1	Posselt	1903	?
Cotton Manufacturing, Part 2	Posselt	1903	?
A Glossary of Silk Terms	Chittick ¹ and Posselt	1915	?

Book Content

Posselt's books on textile machinery and manufacture now are primarily of historical interest, but his books on weaving are still relevant.

His books are all technical in nature, matter-of-fact, and comprehensive with respect to the situation at the time they were written.

All his books are well illustrated, most especially those on textile machinery, which contain many high-quality engineering drawings. See Appendix B for examples. What few "photographs" there are in the books, however, are of mediocre quality, as is typical of the standard printing technology of the time. There is no color except for a few advertisements.

Most of the book contain many pages of advertising, as is typical of trade books of the time. Some readers will find the advertisements more interesting than the rest of the books.

Advertisements for Posselt's own books, as well as for his various businesses, are extensive. At least as far as advertising was concerned, Posselt was not burdened with excessive modesty. He described his book *The Technology of Textile Design* as "the most important book on textile designing ever published", and he described his other books with similar superlatives.

There are some differences in advertisements in books published in the United States and those published in England.

Publishers

Posselt published his books himself in Philadelphia under the name Posselt and Textile Publishing Company. This was not self-publishing as we now understand it. He established his own press. Some of his books also were published in London by Sampson, Lowe, Marston, & Co.

Projected Books Not Competed

There is no record of what might have been planned for volumes V and VII of *Posselt's Textile Library*.

Dictionary of Weaves, Part 2 was advertised for sale in *Fabric Analysis* (see Figure 1) but no copies have been cited.

¹ James Chittick, 1861 - ?; authored several other books on silk and on textile mills.

Dictionary of Weaves Part 2.

A COLLECTION OF ALL WEAVES FROM TEN TO SIXTEEN HARNESS

Six Thousand Weaves Conveniently Arranged for Handy Use. PRICE FIVE DOLLARS

TEXTILE PUBLISHING COMPANY 2154 NORTH 21st STREET PHILADELPHIA London, Eng.: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd.

Figure 1. Advertisement in Fabric Analysis

Since *Fabric Analysis* was published in 1920, a year before Posselt's death, *Dictionary of Weaves*, *Part* 2 may have been in progress but not completed before he died.

In Cotton Manufacturing, Part 1, he says

Subsequent volumes, to be issued regularly hereafter — one each year — will in turn take up:

Combing, Drawing and Fly Frames; Mule, Ring Frame, Winding, Doubling and Yarn Preparing Machinery; Designing, Weaving and Calculations; Dyeing and Finishing, respectively.

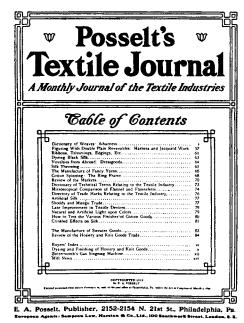
Part 2 covers combing, drawing, and fly frames. The other three volumes never appeared.

In *Silk Throwing*, Posselt says "The next volume of tis series of Technical Books will deal with 'The Manufacture of Spun Silk' ... ". This book was never published.

So, in all at least five planned books were never published.

Journal

Posselt's Textile Journal ran from October 1907 through December 1923, Vol. 1 - 33, No. 5. Figure 2 shows an advertisement for the *Journal* that appeared in one of Posselt's books.



lt's Textile Journal Posse E. A. POSSELT, Editor and Publisher From the standpoint of the practical information which it contains it is of value to every manufacturer, superintendent, overseer and operative, among whom it is widely circulated. It is the

facturer, superintendent, overseer and operative, among whom it is widely circulated. It is the leading and by far the most valuable of all textile trade publications.

Special features in every issue: Discussions on Designing and Fabric Structure; Cotton, Woolen and Worsted Spinning; Silk from the Raw Fibre to the Finished Fabric; Cloth Analysis and Calculations; Dyeing and Finishing Processes; Reviews of the Market and Suggestions as to the Creation of New Styles, Color Combinations, etc.; as well as a general report on the News of the Textile Mills.

Another interesting subject this Journal contains is the serial issue of the "Dictionary of Technical Terms Relating to the Textile Industry" as appearing regularly every month, nothing of its kind being published in any language.

Subscription, \$2.00 per year. Canada, \$2.50. Foreign, \$3.00 Sample copies mailed upon application. POSSELT'S TEXTILE JOURNAL, Philadelphia, Pa.

Figure 2. Advertisement in Narrow Woven Fabrics

During most of its run, *Posselt's Textile Journal* was edited by Posselt himself. *Posselt's Textile Journal* was absorbed by *Textile World* in 1923, which continues to the present day.

Textile World began in 1888 with the title *Textile Manufacturing World*. Its name varied over time and it absorbed several other journals in the field. See Figure 3.

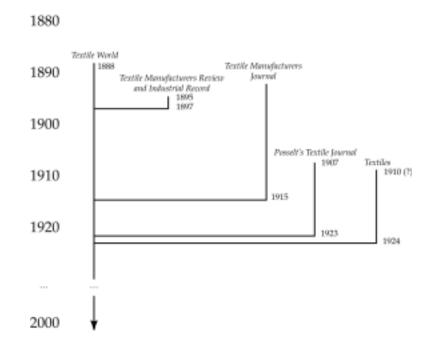


Figure 3. Posselt's Textile Journal and Related Publications

Posselt's Professional Activities

In addition to the professional activities listed in the 1900 biography at the beginning of this article and his journal, Posselt offered personalized instruction in textile design and specialized design services.

Availability of Posselt's Publications

All of Posselt's books are available in the Digital Archives of Weaving Documents:

http://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books.html

The Complex Weavers Lending Library [2] also has copies of all of Posselt's books.

Many public and academic libraries have a few of Posselt's books, but none has all of them as of present OCLC listings [3]. Only 17 libraries have holdings of his textile journal.

Posselt's books occasionally are found in used bookstores and sometimes show up in online offerings. His book on Jacquards seems to be the most elusive. The price asked for a book varies from less than \$50 to several hundreds of dollars, depending on the book, its condition, and the bookseller. Except for the possibility of books not recorded here, Posselt's books should be considered scarce but not rare.

In looking for Posselt's books, care needs to be taken as to how their titles are listed. Several of his books have long complete titles. This sometimes causes confusion in identifying them, with different sources using different short titles. For example, the long title for Vol. IX of *Posselt's Textile Library* is Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Part 3. A Treatise Giving a Thorough Description of the Properties and Supply of the Fibres, as well as the Various Processes Required for Converting Wool, Cotton, Silk Fibre to Finished Fabric covering both Woven and Knit Goods. Giving also descriptive Illustrations of the Construction of the Most Modern Improvements to Preparatory Machinery, Carding, Combing, Drawing and Spinning Machinery, Winding, Warping, Slashing Machinery, Looms, Knit Goods Machinery in all its Varieties, Dyestuffs, Chemicals, Soaps. Dyeing, Drying, Bleaching, Mercerizing and Finishing Machinery for both Woven and Knit Goods including Supplies for the Various Departments of a Mill. Also Latest Improved Accessories Relating to Construction and Equipment of Modern Textiles Manufacturing Plants, Heat, Power, Transmission, Etc. for the use of Manufacturers, Mill Managers, Overseers, Students and Inventors.

This book is sometimes cited as *Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery*, sometimes as *Wool*, *Cotton*, *Silk*, and sometimes in other ways.

Copies of *Posselt's Textile Journal* are very hard to find, as is the case with other old textile journals that were not published in durable bindings.

References

1. National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 10 (1900), p. 21.

2. Complex Weavers Lending Library: http://complex-weavers.org/libintro.htm

3. Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (http://www.oclc.org/home/)

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Appendix A — Posselt's Books

Alphabetical by Short Title

Note: Page count includes pages of advertisements. Page count varies somewhat by edition.

1. Chittick, James and EA. Posselt. *A Glossary of Silk Terms*. New York: Cheney Brothers, 1915. 95 pages.

2. Posselt, EA. Cotton Manufacturing Part 1. Philadelphia, PA: Posselt, 1903. 227 pages.

3. Posselt, EA. Cotton Manufacturing Part 2. Philadelphia, PA: Posselt, 1903. 337 pages.

4. Posselt, EA. *Dictionary of Weaves: Part 1.* [*Lexicon der Gewebemuster Band 1; Manuel de Dessins du Tissage, Première Partie*] Hand Books for the Textile Industry, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: The Textile Publishing Company, 1914. 113 pages.

5. Posselt, EA. *Fabric Analysis*. Hand Books for the Textile Industry, Vol. 4. Philadelphia: The Textile Publishing Company, 1920. 282 pages.

6. Posselt, EA. *Narrow Woven Fabrics. Hand* Books for the Textile Industry, Vol. 2. Philadel-phia: Textile Publishing Company, 1917. 238 pages.

7. Posselt, EA. *Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Relating to Weaving* (Part 1). Posselt's Textile Library, Vol. III. Philadelphia, PA: Posselt, 1898. 220 pages.

8. Posselt, EA. *Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Relating to Weaving Part 2.* Posselt's Textile Library, Vol. VI. Philadelphia, PA: Posselt. 1898. 179 pages.

9. Posselt, EA. *Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Part 3*. Posselt's Textile Library, Vol. IX. Philadelphia: E. A. Posselt. 1898. 473 pages.

10. Posselt, EA. *Silk Throwing*. Hand Books for the Textile Industry, Vol. 3. Philadelphia: Textile Publishing Company, 1918. 254 pages.

11. Posselt, EA. Technology of Textile Design. Philadelphia: E. A. Posselt, 1888. 326 pages.

12. Posselt, EA. *Textile Calculations*. Posselt's Textile Library, Vol. I. Philadelphia: E. A. Posselt, 1888. 170 pages.

13. Posselt, E. A. *The Jacquard Machine*. Posselt's Textile Library, Vol. IV. Philadelphia, PA: E. A. Posselt, 1888. 129 pages.

14. Posselt, E. A. *The Structure of Fibres, Yarns and Fabrics*. Two volumes bound as one. Philadelphia: E. A. Posselt, 1891. 389 pages.

Appendix A — Posselt's Books

Long Titles

Note: Numbers refer to the short-title list on previous page. Capitalization is as given in the books except when all caps are used.

1. A Glossary of Silk Terms Including a short history of silk; its origin, culture and manufacture.

2. Cotton Manufacturing Part 1. Dealing with the Fibre, Ginning, Mixing, Picking, Scutching and Carding; Giving a Complete Description of the Manufacture of Cotton Yarns from Planting the Seed to the Sliver Ready for Drawing or Combing, Explaining also the Construction of the Most Approved Modern Machinery Used in Connection with it.

3. Cotton Manufacturing Part 2. Combing, Drawing, Roller Covering and Fly Frames; Being a Complete Treatise on Modern Processes and Machinery Used in Connection with these Processes of Cotton Spinning, Giving also all the Calculations Required.

4. Dictionary of Weaves: Part 1. A Collection of All Weaves from Four to Nine Harness; Two Thousand Weaves Conveniently Arranged for Handy Use. [Lexicon der Gewebemuster Band 1. Eine Sammlung von allen Gewebemustern von vier bis neun-shäftig. Zewi Tausend Gewebemuster für den praktischen Gebrauch geordnet; Manuel de Dessins du Tissage, Première Partie. Une collection de Tours Genres des Dessins du Tissage de Quarte à Neuf Lisses. Deux Milles Dessins Classés à Convernance.]

5. Fabric Analysis Covering Wool, Worsted, Silk, Cotton, Artificial Silks, etc. from Fiber to Finished Fabric.

6. The Manufacture of Narrow Woven Fabrics: Ribbons, Trimmings, Edgings, Etc. Giving Description of the Various Yarns Used, The Construction of Weaves and Novelties in Fabric Structures; Also Descriptive Matter as to Looms, Etc.

7. Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Related to Weaving. Giving Descriptive Illustrations of the Construction and Operation of the Most Modern Makes of Looms, Jacquards, Spoolers, Winders, Dressers, etc., etc. Also Illustrating and Explaining the Latest Improvements in Shuttles, Temples, Pickers, Reeds, Heddles, Harnesses, etc., for the use of Manufacturers, Mill Managers, Designers, Overseers, Loomfixers, Students and Inventors.

8. Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Relating to Weaving (Part II), Being a continuation of Part I. Giving Descriptive Illustrations of the Construction and Operation of the Most Modern Makes of Looms, Jacquards, Warpers, Beamers, Dressers, Slashers, Winders, Spoolers, etc. Also Illustrating and Explaining the Latest Improvements in Shuttles, Temples, Pickers, Reeds, Heddles, Harnesses, etc. For the use of Manufacturers, Mill Managers, Designers, Overseers, Loom Fixers, Students and Inventors.

9. Recent Improvements in Textile Machinery Part 3. A Treatise Giving a Thorough Description of the Properties and Supply of the Fibres, as well as the Various Processes Required for Converting Wool, Cotton, Silk Fibre to Finished Fabric covering both Woven and Knit Goods. Giving also descriptive

Appendix A — Posselt's Books

Illustrations of the Construction of the Most Modern Improvements to Preparatory Machinery, Carding, Combing, Drawing and Spinning Machinery, Winding, Warping, Slashing Machinery, Looms, Knit Goods Machinery in all its Varieties, Dyestuffs, Chemicals, Soaps. Dyeing, Drying, Bleaching, Mercerizing and Finishing Machinery for both Woven and Knit Goods including Supplies for the Various Departments of a Mill. Also Latest Improved Accessories Relating to Construction and Equipment of Modern Textiles Manufacturing Plants, Heat, Power, Transmission, Etc. for the use of Manufacturers, Mill Managers, Overseers, Students and Inventors.

10. Silk Throwing Giving the Most Complete Data ever Published on the Various Processes Raw Silk is Subjected to When Converting it into Yarn.

11. Technology of Textile Design Being a Practical Treatise on the Construction and Application of Weaves for all Textile Fabrics, with minute reference to the latest Inventions for Weaving, Containing also An Appendix showing the Analysis and giving the Calculations necessary for the Manufacture of the various Textile Fabrics.

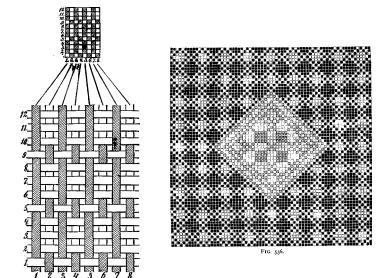
12. Textile Calculations, Being a Guide to Calculations Related to the Construction of all Kinds of Yarns and Fabrics, The Analysis of Cloth, etc. with Numerous Illustrations.

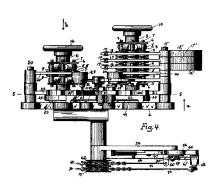
13. The Jacquard Machine Analyzed and Explained, The Preparation of Jacquard Cards and Practical Hints to Learners of Jacquard Designing.

14. The Structure of Fibres, Yarns and Fabrics. Being a Practical Treatise for the Use of All Persons Employed in the Manufacturing of Textile Fabrics. In Two Volumes. Volume 1. Being a Description of the growth and manipulation of Cotton, Wool Worsted, Silk, Flax, Jute, Ramie, Chinagrass and Hemp. Volume II. Dealing with all the manufacturers' calculations for every class of material, also giving minute details for the structure of all kinds of Textile Fabrics. Containing also an appendix of Arithmetic specially adapted for Textile purposes, and a Glossary giving Explanations of the Most Frequently Used Technical Terms.

Appendix B — Example Illustrations from Posselt's Books

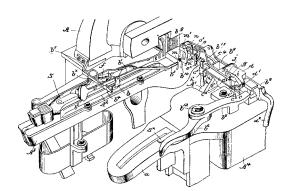
Note: Illustrations are one-half size.



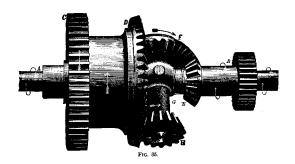


Textile Machinery, Part 1

Technology of Textile Design



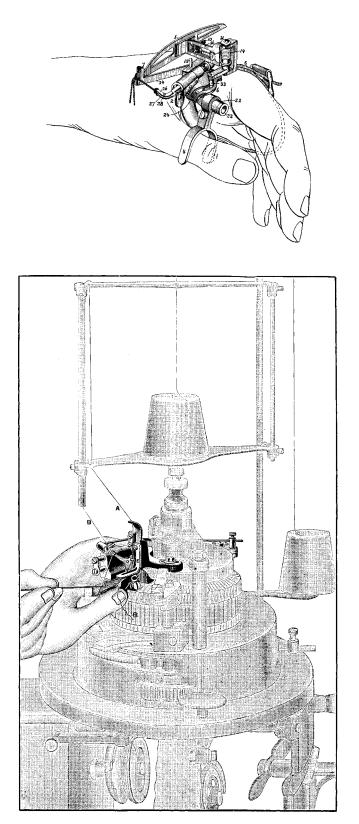
Textile Machinery, Part 2



The Structure of Fibres, Yarns and Fabrics

Appendix B — Example Illustrations from Posselt's Books

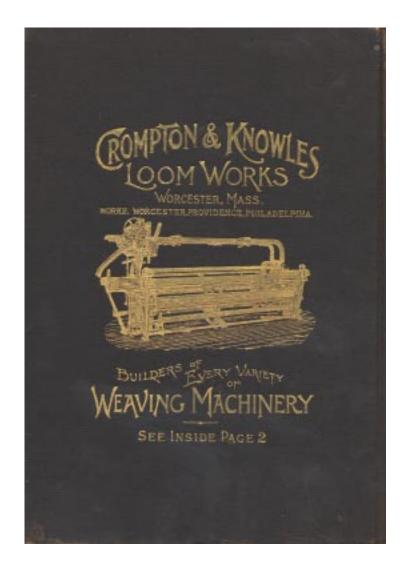
Note: Illustrations are one-half size.



Textile Machinery, Part 3

Appendix B — Example Illustrations from Posselt's Books

Note: Illustration is one-half size.



Gold Embossing Appearing on the Back of Several of Posselt's Books

Appendix C — Example Advertisements from Posselt's Books

Note: Illustrations are one-half size.



Silk Throwing

Appendix D — Business Letter

🏕 BOOKS BY MAIL, FREE OF POSTAGE, TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD. REMITTANCES SHOULD BE MADE BY DRAFTS OR P. O. ORDERS, OR IN REGISTERED LETTERS. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MONEY LOST, WHEN OTHERWISE SENT.

E. A. POSSELT, JUST PUBLISHED The Structure of PUBLISHER, Fibres, Yarns, and Fabrics. BY E. A. POSSELT. CIRCULARS SENT TO ANY ADDRESS Head Master Textile Department Pennsylvania 2152 NORTH 21st STREET. ON APPLICATION. Philadelphia, Ha 28 1800 -France, Dear Sir As you remarked a Few days ago, when at the house here you TWO VOLUMES IN ONE. QUARTO. and gee no in a around and those Few days having again that we beg to remind you psed preciated well be ap resence Ya ow ternoon, or in other 0 would be much pleased & words we Mr. Posselt New Friends of * * * your who the number o at the pchool when En him if he Knows of any HANDwoarding the neighborhood of period he could recommend. Do For

Museum and School of Industrial Art, and Grad-uate of the Government Advanced Weaving School, Reichenberg, Austria.

THE MOST COMPLETE BOOK EVER PUBLISHED ON TEXTILE MANUFACTURES.

BEING A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE GROWTH AND MANIPU-LATION OF COTTON, WOOL, WORSTED, SILK, FLAX, JUTE, RAMIE, CHINA-GRASS AND HEMP; AND DEALING WITH ALL MANU-FACTURERS' CALCULATIONS FOR EVERY CLASS OF MATERIAL. ALSO GIVING MINUTE DETAILS FOR THE STRUCTURE OF ALL KINDS OF TEXTILE FABRICS.

CONTAINING ALSO AN ARITH-METIC SPECIALLY ADAPTED FOR TEXTILE PUPOSES.

OVER 400 ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE LATEST DESIGNS AND INVEN-TIONS OF AMERICAN AND ENGLISH TEXTILE MACHINERY

HANDSOMELY BOUND IN CLOTH. PRICE, TEN DOLLARS.

* * *

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Technology of Textile Design.

NOW ON ITS THIRD EDITION.

THE MOST COMPLETE WORK ON DESIGNING AND WEAVING FOR ALL TEXTILE FABRICS EVER PUBLISHED.

BEING A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE CONSTRUCTION AND APPLICATION OF WEAVES FOR ALL TEXTILE FABRICS, WITH MINUTE REFERENCE TO THE LATEST INVENTIONS FOR WEAV-ING, AND CONTAINING OVER 1000 ILLUSTRATIONS OF WEAVES AND LOOMS.

IN ONE VOLUME. QUARTO. OVER 300 PAGES. HANDSOMELY BOUND IN CLOTH.

PRICE, FIVE DOLLARS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Jacquard Machine

Analyzed and Explained.

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE PRE-PARATION OF JACQUARD CARDS, AND PRACTICAL HINTS TO LEARN-ERS OF JACQUARD DESIGNING, WITH 230 ILLUSTRATIONS AND NUMEROUS DIAGRAMS. SOMELY BOUND IN CLOTH.

PRICE, THREE DOLLARS, THE ONLY WORK IN THE ENG-LISH LANGUAGE THAT TREATS EXCLUSIVELY ON THE JACQUARD MACHINE.

March 9, 2002; last modified March 13, 2004

Appendix D — Business Letter

Know of any ouch blace? Hofsing we may see four tomorrow (Iniday) at 2 at this address. we are Jowns Fruly-6 A Josser Eer Thie I kunt

15