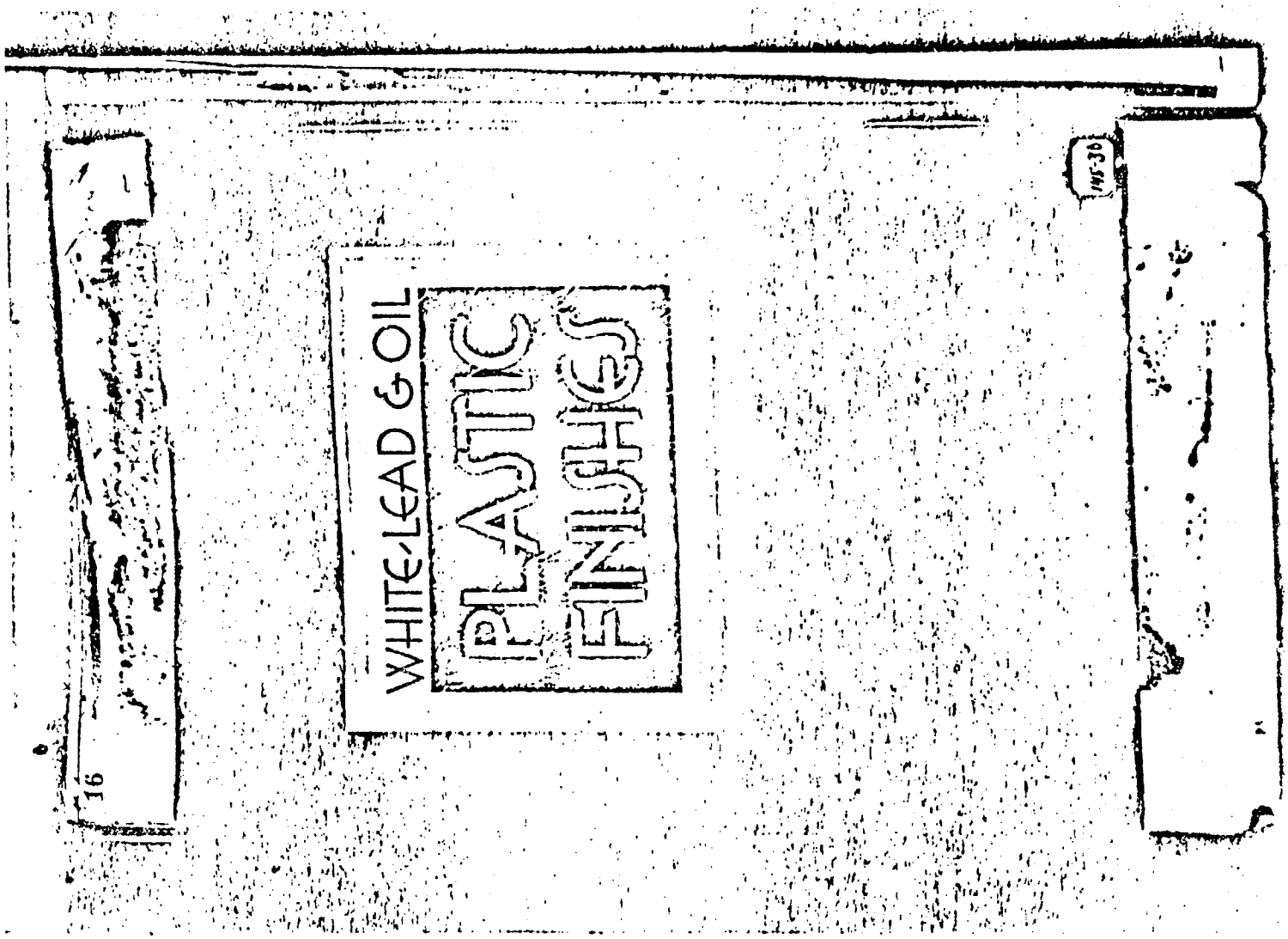
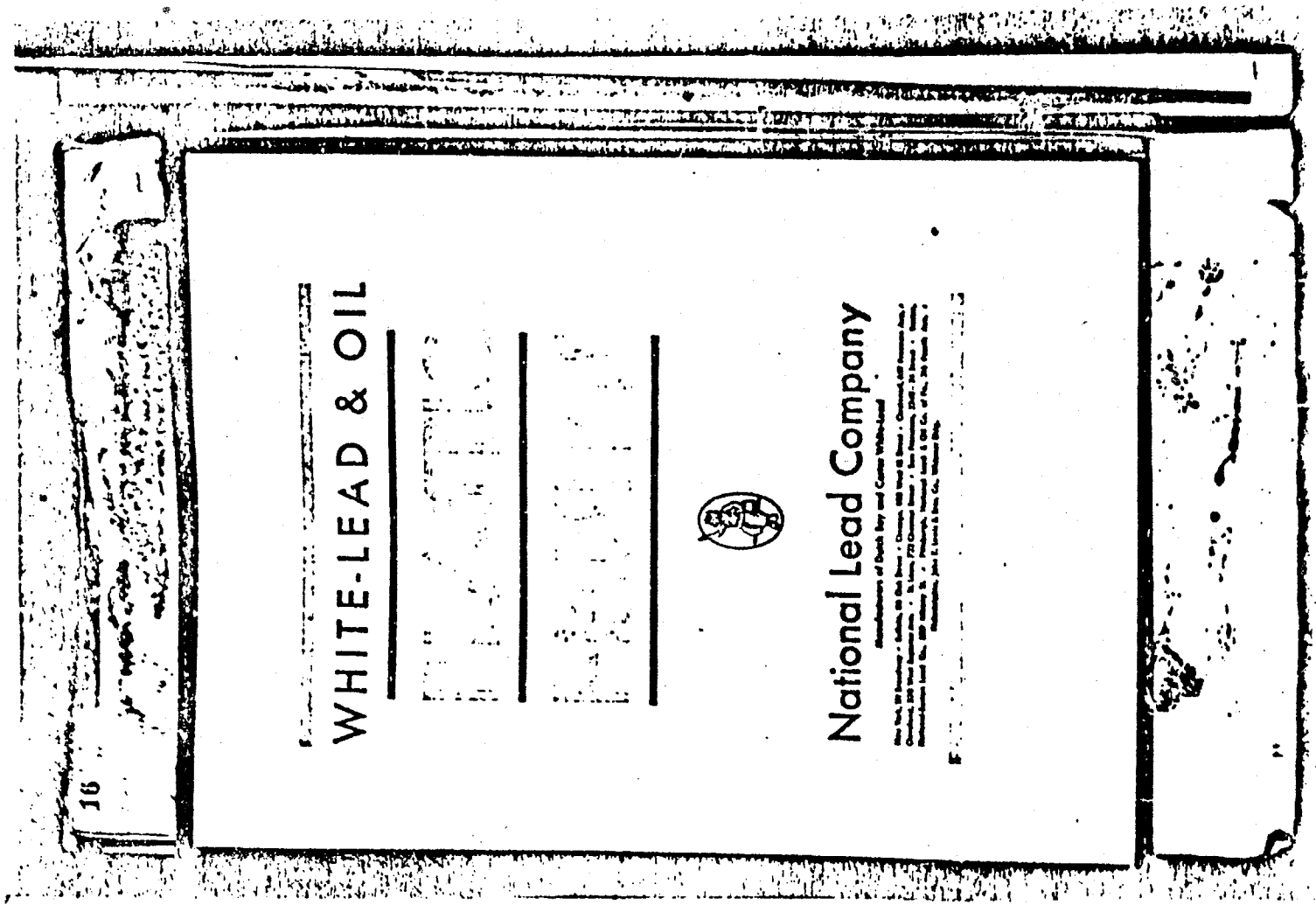
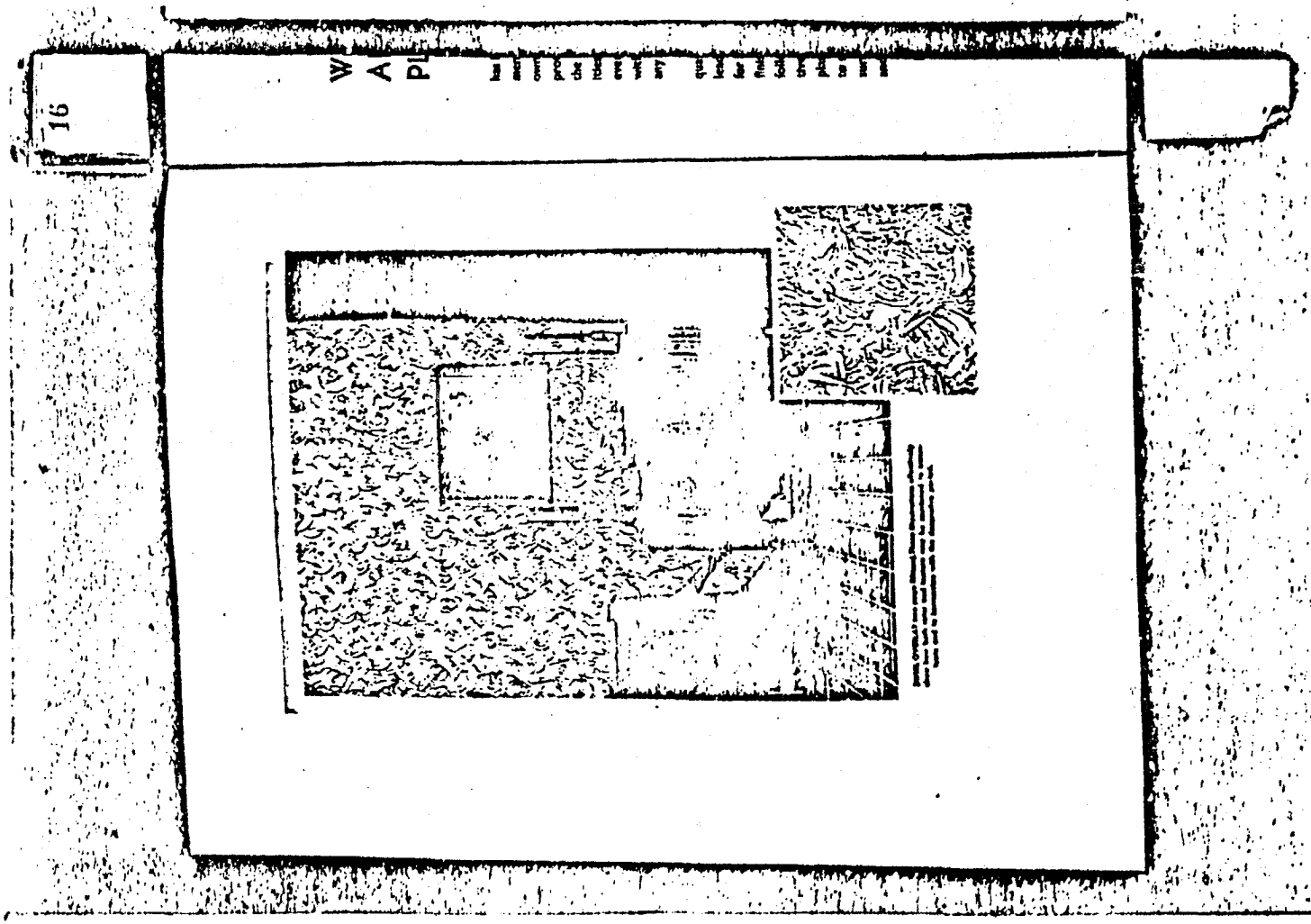






WHITE-LEAD AND OIL PLASTIC FINISHES

For generations white-lead has been acknowledged by painting craftsmen, by architects, and by property owners generally as the standard of paint protection. So many instances are there of the long-wearing, weather-resisting qualities of white-lead paint that practically everyone can cite personal experience with it that is a stronger argument than any claims we might make.

In addition, however, to its qualities as an exterior protector, white-lead paint has long been used inside both for its durability and for the beauty of the finish that it produces. In the pages that follow is described white-lead's comparatively new role in interior decoration—plastic paint. Whether you have occasion to specify plastic paint or to use it we are sure that you will find the text interesting and the photographs instructive.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Wall decoration, like furniture and clothing styles, has its recurring cycles. Textured or plastic paint finishes, for example, are in a way simply a development of an old order of decoration in fairly common use some forty or fifty years ago. In those days it was called *relief* work and was usually done with a syringe-like affair that deposited a plastic mixture on the walls and ceilings in whatever pattern was desired. This type of decoration prevailed for several years and can still be seen in some of the older residences.

There followed next an era of smooth-surfaced walls decorated in dark sombre colors, with deep greens and turkey reds predominating. These were the days of mission furniture. But people quickly tire of decoration that is not cheerful and this period soon passed to be succeeded by walls tastefully painted in flat and semi-gloss or eggshell finishes tinted to the lighter and more pleasing colors.

Later developments brought the ever-interesting Tiffany-blend, the figured and mottled effects such as the crumpled rag and sponge mottle finishes, and the similar forms of decoration used in countless homes today.

WINDOW TYPES [one page illegible]

The revival of the plastic finish idea came during the past three or four years. It started in the far west, probably inspired by the rough plaster effects in the old Spanish missions so plentiful in California. Then it "took on" with the rest of the country and in short order assumed the proportions of a fad.

As happens in the case of most fads, there was before long a tendency to overdo plastic work. It was carried to the extreme, both in color and texture. Much bizarre and excessively high relief work was done which was neither appropriate nor practical. As a consequence, the inevitable reaction set in and the demand today is for conservatively colored plastic finishes of stippled texture which combine the three-dimensional effects of the old relief work with present-day standards of beauty and cleanliness.

It is this new type of low-relief plastic work that is finding such favor with prominent architects and decorators as well as with those property-owners who are interested in well decorated interiors. You see it now in the fashionable hotels and restaurants, in shops and theatres, and in well-planned homes.

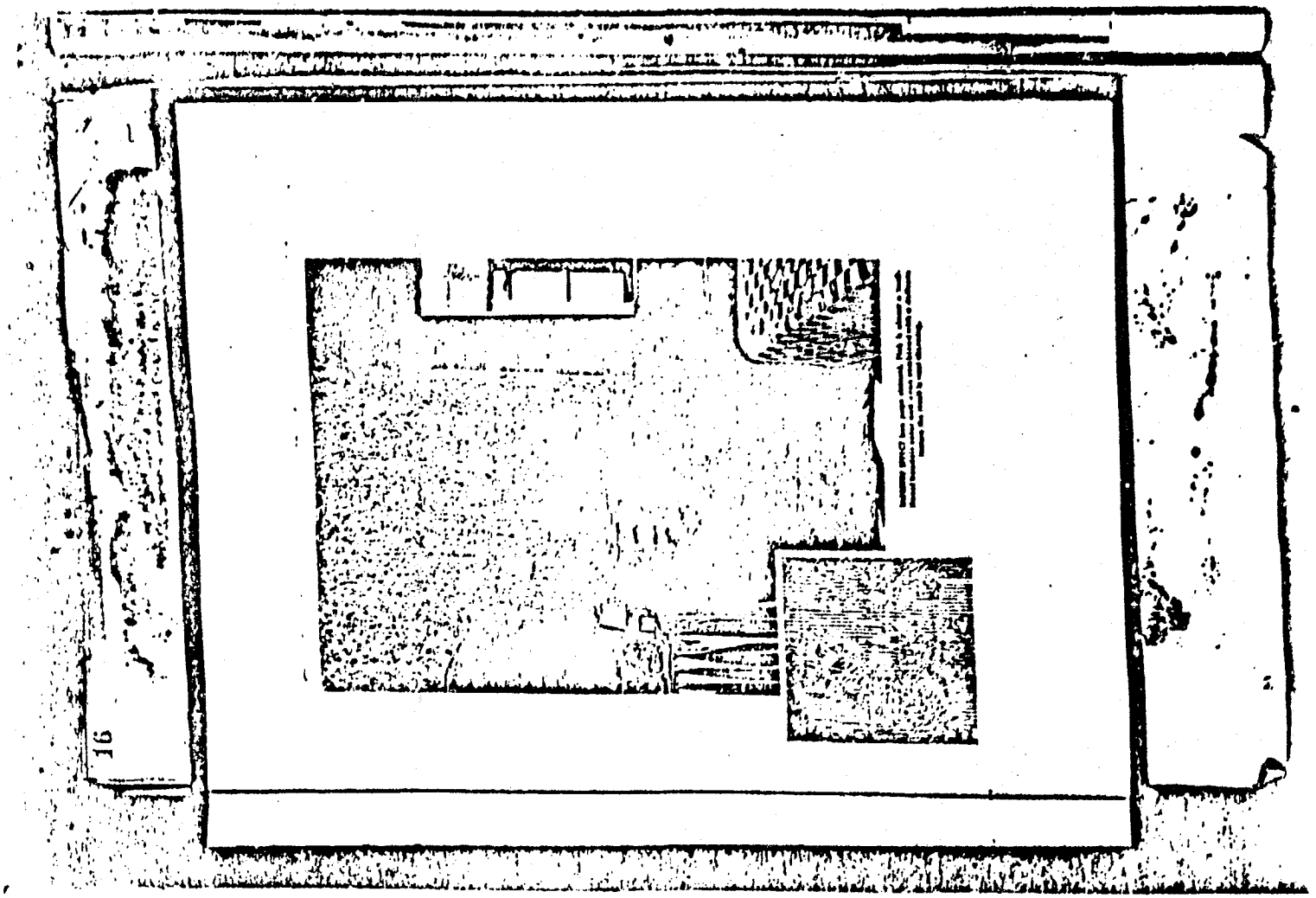
To take care of the different requirements, a wide choice of textures or designs have been developed and one of the purposes of this booklet is to show some of them.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN PLASTIC PAINT

The plastic paint used to produce the new artistic, low-relief textures should meet certain very definite specifications. Let us consider what these specifications are and then compare them with the properties of white-lead and oil plastic paint.

1. *The plastic paint should be of such a character that it can be readily colored to the effect desired.* With white-lead and oil plastic paint, the exact color treatment wanted can be had either by tinting the paint with colors-in-oil before it is applied or by color-glazing it afterwards.

2. *The plastic paint should be easy to apply and texture.* White-lead and oil plastic paint is applied with a paint brush, the same as any wall paint. It is then ready to be textured, the textures being produced with such simple tools as a paint brush, a sponge, a whisk broom, etc.



3. *The finish should be durable.* As is well-known, white-lead makes an extremely durable paint. White-lead and oil plastic paint does not become brittle—does not chip or peel off.

4. *The finish should be washable.* A white-lead and oil plastic finish is not harmed when it is washed. It withstands washing just as do all interior finishes obtained with white-lead and linseed oil.

5. *The plastic paint should be easy to prepare and be usable for many days after it is mixed.* The materials used in making white-lead and oil plastic paint are easily mixed and remain fresh and usable for weeks after mixing.

6. *The plastic paint should set up slowly enough to allow time for brushing smooth areas.* White-lead and oil plastic paint, while it dries overnight, can be worked over the entire side wall of an average interior by one man without danger of premature setting up.

7. *The plastic paint should give good coverage.* White-lead and oil plastic paint has good hiding qualities. A pound will cover one square yard of surface, on the average.

8. *The plastic paint should give a finish free from suction so as not to require sizing.* White-lead and oil plastic paint dries to a hard, dense film which makes sizing unnecessary. It gives a complete job on application, though the finish may be glazed, waxed or varnished if desired.

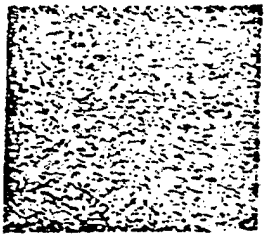
9. *The finish should dry uniformly throughout.* There is no "surface film" on a white-lead and oil plastic paint coat. It dries hard throughout even when heavily applied.

These are points that should be checked over with any plastic material intended to produce the modern low-relief textures. White-lead and oil plastic paint meets them all and in addition has all the other advantages of an oil paint. It adapts itself perfectly to this new field of decoration and makes possible highly decorative, practical and economical textured finishes.

USING WHITE-LEAD AND OIL PLASTIC PAINT

White-lead and oil plastic paint is mixed from materials familiar to all painters and carried in every up-to-date paint shop—white-lead, whiting, linseed oil and drier. It may be applied to practically any surface that is in condition to receive paint. This includes plaster, wall board, fabric wall coverings, brick, concrete, wood and glass. One coat of plastic is sufficient for texturing.

GOTHIC SCROLL [illegible]



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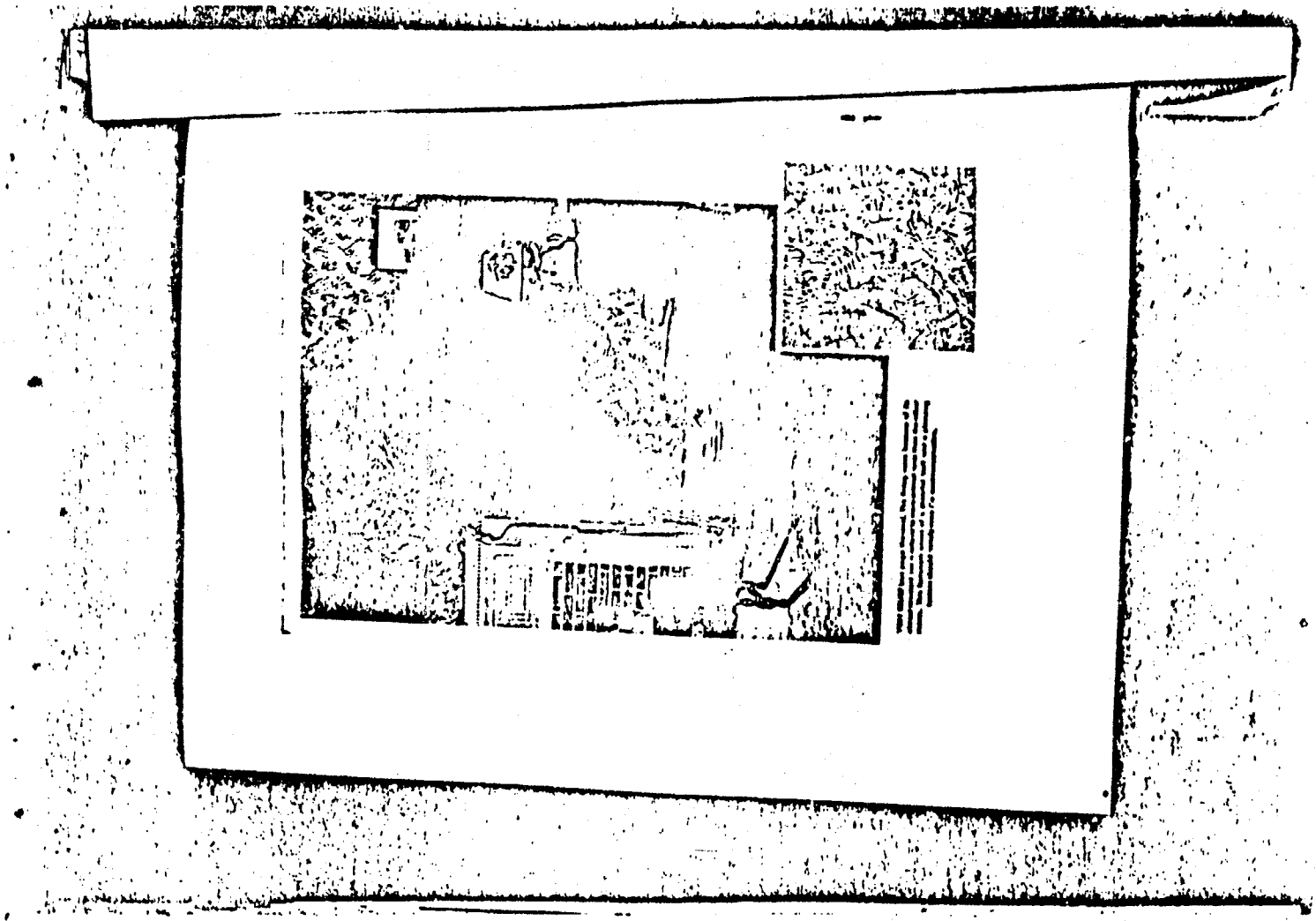
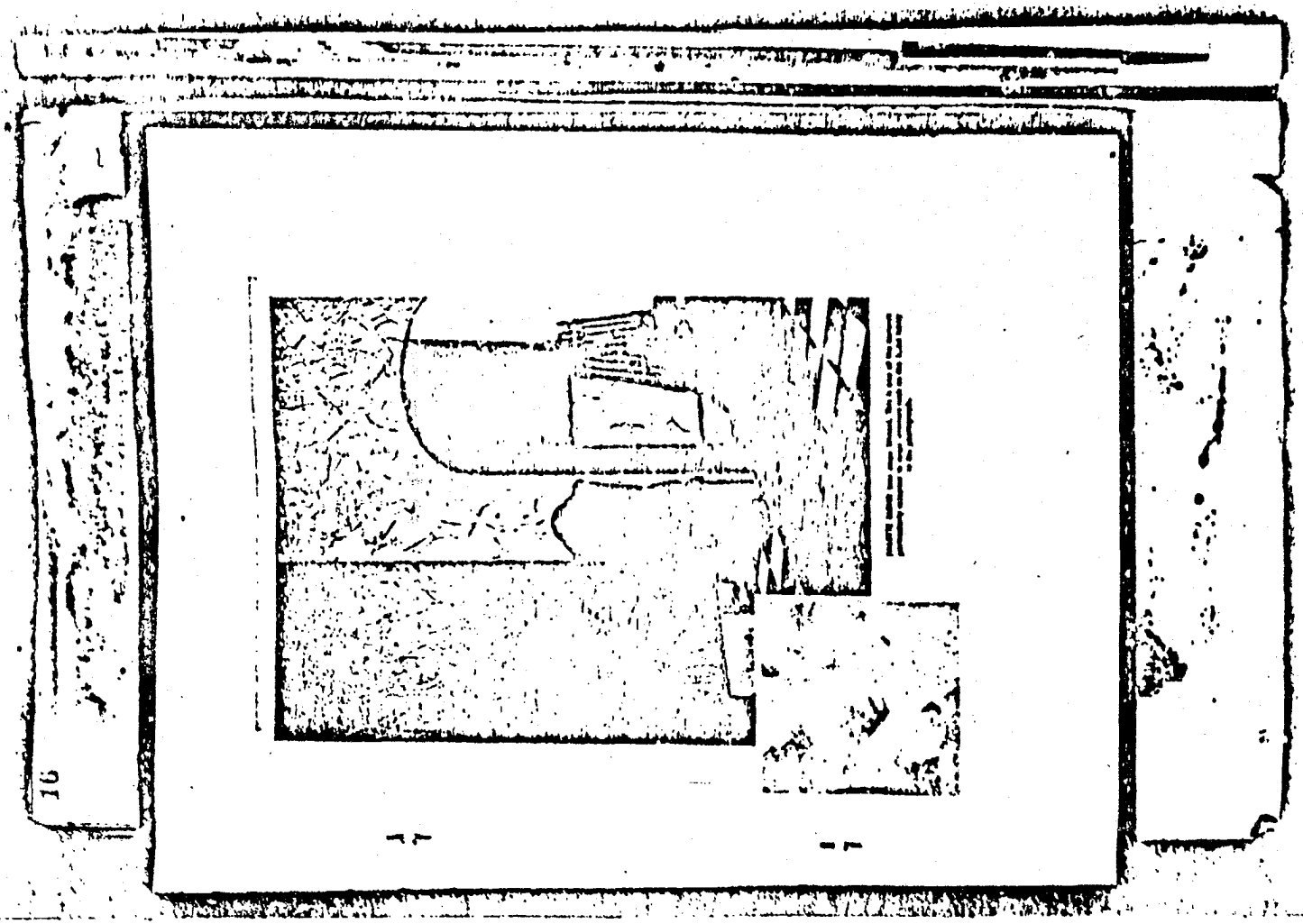
In applying white-lead and oil plastic paint to an old painted wall, no preparation is necessary except to clean off any greasy deposit that may have accumulated. On a new plaster wall, it is necessary to prime the surface first just as on any paint job on new plaster. On fabric covered walls all loose fabric should be pasted or nailed back with nails driven through a tin disk. The plastic paint will effectively cover and hide the nail heads.

White-lead and oil plastic paint is not a putty or a patching plaster and is not intended to hide extensive defects in the surface. It will, however, cover minor breaks such as small nail holes, fine cracks or rough patches without any preliminary treatment. If the holes are large they should first be filled in the usual way with putty or patching plaster.





PREPARING WHITE-LEAD AND OIL PLASTIC PAINT

If heavy paste white-lead is to be used mix as follows:

100 pounds Dutch Boy or Carter* white-lead (heavy paste).
22 pounds dry whiting
1½ gallons Dutch Boy flatting oil
1 gill drier

Use half the flatting oil to thin the white-lead and the remainder to thin the whiting. Then mix the two together thoroughly, adding the drier. Tinting colors may be put in if required. This formula makes about 5½ gallons of paint which will cover approximately 840 square feet of wall surface. The exact spreading rate depends on the depth of the texture employed.

Soft paste white-lead may also be used for white-lead and oil plastic paint in which case use this formula.

100 pounds Dutch Boy or Carter* white-lead (soft paste).
44 pounds dry whiting
1½ to 2 gallons Dutch Boy flatting oil
1 gill drier

Thin the whiting with the flatting oil and mix thoroughly with the white-lead, adding the drier and such tinting colors as may be required.

This formula makes about 7½ gallons of paint which will cover approximately 1,160 square feet of wall surface depending on the depth of the texture used.

TEXTURES THAT MAY BE SECURED

After the white-lead or oil plastic paint has been applied to a workable area with an ordinary wall-brush, it may be textured into various designs. The more conservative effects may be used almost anywhere and are particularly appropriate for entrance halls, living rooms and dining rooms of private homes. They also are attractive in bedrooms when rendered in delicate tints. Such finishes are the Fan Swirl, Grass Cloth, Basket Weave, Water Wave, Vein Relief, Willow Twig, Fretted Texture, Heather and Tapestry effects.

The other designs, as far as their use as all-over treatments is concerned, are better adapted to large interiors, such as the hotel lobby, the theatre, the restaurant and the club room. Obviously, very bold or block designs are out of place in the average home interior.

BASKET WEAVE

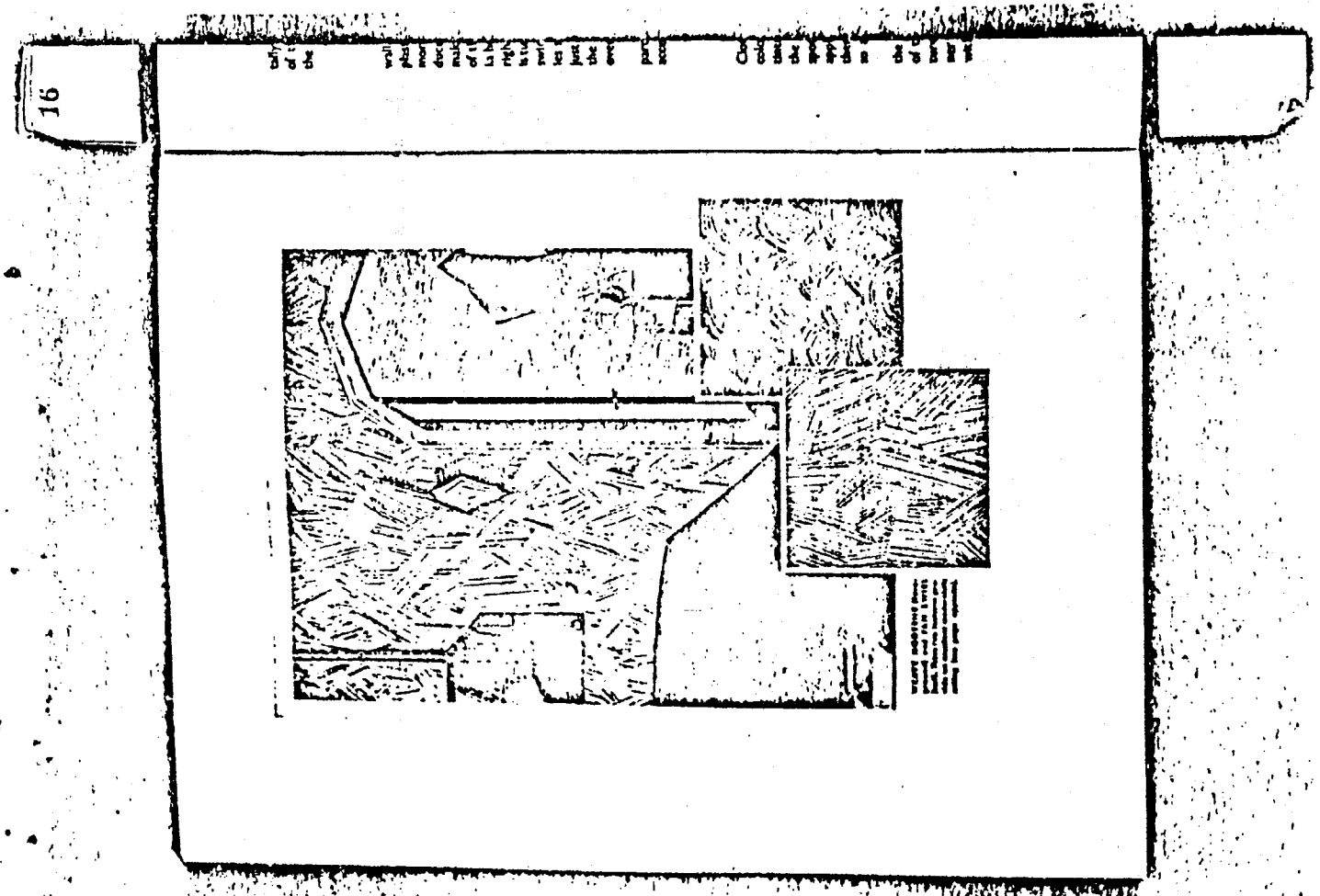
FERN EFFECT [text cropped]

Many effective panel treatments are possible with all the textures but probably the most appropriate for this purpose are the Fan Swirl, Fern Effect, Tapestry Texture, Weave Moderne and the Waving Reed.

The same rules of color harmony applying in other decorative work should be followed in the case of plastic finishes. Plastic paint, however, should be tinted a little lighter than paint for straight wall-painting work because a textured finish breaks up the light so that shadows are cast making the surface appear darker than it is actually.

BASKET WEAVE

Drag the wide edge of a whisk broom down the plastic paint until a square is formed. Now place the whisk broom immediately below the left edge of the square and then draw it horizon-



tally across the wall until the right edge of the square above is reached. Repeat the process alternately over the wall.

FAN SWIRL

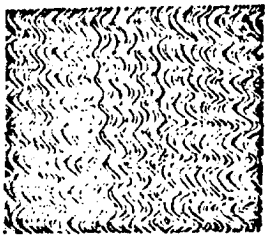
Starting at the top of the wall, place a whisk broom against the wet plastic paint and give the wrist slightly more than a half turn to the right to produce a circular effect. Repeat the process, making another similar figure at the right of the first one. The whisk broom is held in horizontal position. The bristles at the right act as the axis upon which the broom is turned. After several of these fan-shaped swirls have been executed, a second series should be worked below the first and just close enough to enable the sweep of the whisk broom to carry the pattern up over the lower part of the first line.

The Fan Swirl texture is particularly striking if a glaze is added to accentuate the high points.

GRASS CLOTH

The beauty of the Grass Cloth effect depends as much on the colors used as on the texture. A coat of tinted plastic paint is first brushed on in the usual way. While this coat is still wet, spots of plastic paint of various colors are applied here and there. A whisk broom is then drawn vertically across the surface so as to blend the colors.

Another way to produce the Grass Cloth finish is to put on a coat of tinted plastic paint. This is then textured with a whisk broom in the manner described and, when dry, is glazed with colors thinned with floating oil.



WAVED WAVE [illegible]

WEAVE MODERNE

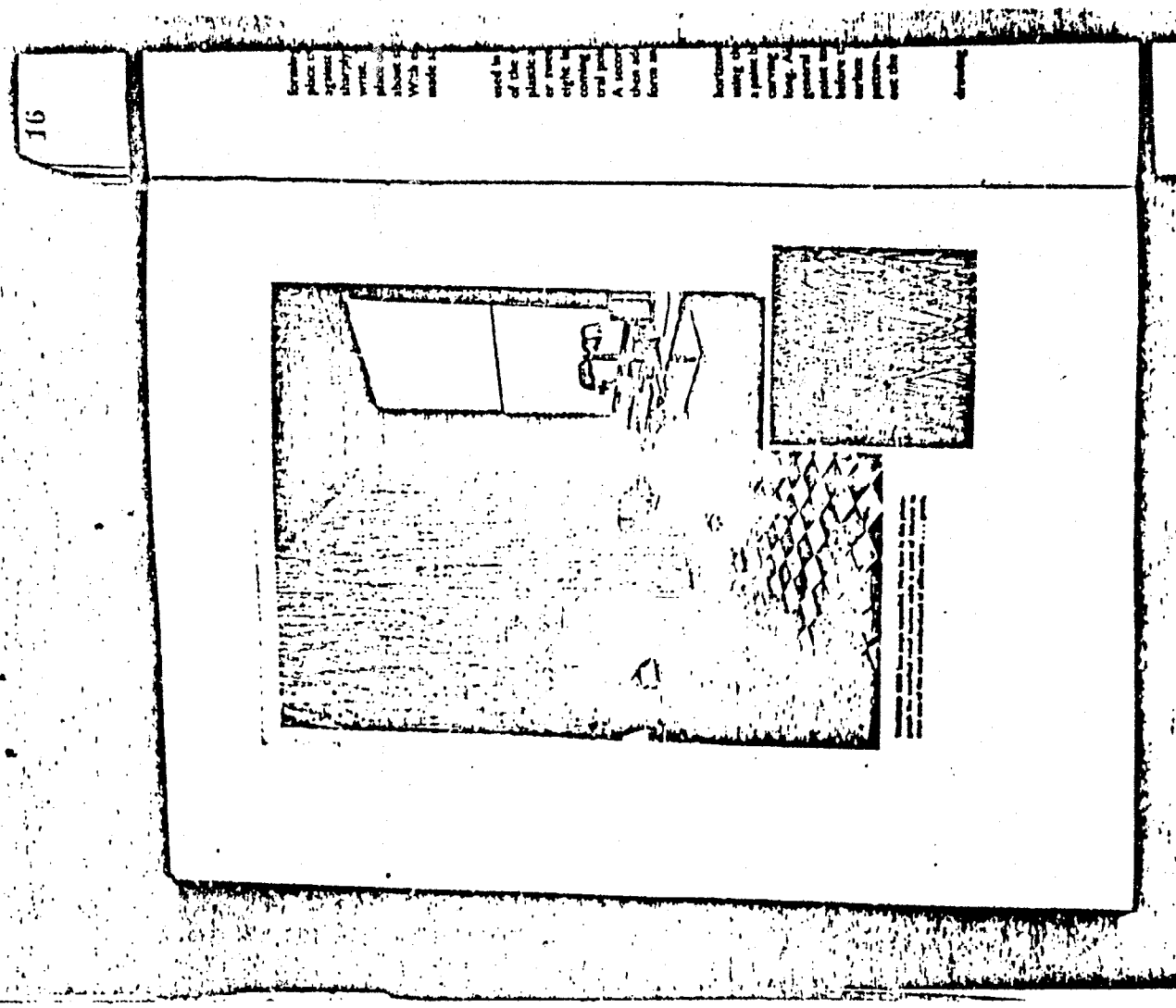
This effect is produced simply by drawing a whisk broom through the plastic paint at various angles as shown. The broom sweeps should be fairly long and overlap so as to form an interesting series of intertacing diagonal lines. Particularly effective results may be had with this effect by glazing with gold, silver, bronze or some other metal color.

WATER WAVE

Beginning at the top of the wall, simply draw a whisk broom or paint brush slowly downward, at the same time moving it from left to right to produce a series of wavy lines.

VEIN RELIEF

To produce this effect, simply stroke the wet plastic paint sharply all over with the flat side of a brush.



SWIRL OVERLAY

There are two ways of forming this interesting figure. One is to place the flat side of a coarse fibre sponge against the plastic paint, pulling the sponge sharply away after a quarter twist of the wrist. The second method is to use, in place of the sponge, a flat block of wood about six inches square and an inch thick. With either tool the markings should be made so that the swirls overlap.

GOTHIC SCROLL

A serving spoon is the tool used in producing this pattern. The bowl of the spoon is pressed against the wet plastic and moved spiral-fashion. The outer sweep of the spiral should be six or eight inches in diameter, the spiral becoming smaller as it approaches the central point from which the spoon is lifted. A second spiral, overlapping the first, is then added and the process continued to form an all-over treatment.

WAVING REED

First drag a graining comb horizontally across the plastic paint. Then, using the rounded end of the handle of a paint brush or putty knife, make upward curving lines a foot to a foot and a half long. All the lines should have the same general curvature and taper off at the point to resemble reeds bending slightly before the wind. The "reeds" should interlace to provide a uniform all-over pattern. The use of a glaze will bring out the texture strikingly.

THATCHED REED

This effect is obtained by drawing the rounded end of the handle of a brush or putty knife through the plastic paint to establish vertical and diagonal markings, closely interlaced. These, in the final finish, should suggest the matted grass effect of closely woven thatch. The texture is emphasized if a glaze is applied.

WAVING REED

WILLOW TANG

This design is made by placing a rolling pin against the plastic paint and simply rolling the pin upward.

FRETTED TEXTURE

Just tamping the wet plastic paint uniformly with a coarse fibre sponge produces the Fretted Texture.

PALETTE BLEND

The Palette Blend is produced by brushing on a coat of plastic paint in the regular way and then applying spots of plastic paint of another color

while the all-over coat is still wet. This done, the two colors are blended together by placing a straight edge against the surface at various places and giving the tool a quarter twist. The straight edge may be celluloid, wood or metal. Care should be exercised to hold it very lightly against the surface so that too much plastic paint is not piled up. The two colors used should give a good contrast. About three times as much paint will be needed for the undercoat as for the spots.

TRAVERTINE

First apply a cream-colored plastic paint uniformly over the surface. Then press a sponge lightly here and there so that the sponge markings will be evenly distributed and spaced from four to eight inches apart. The markings should measure about three inches in width and be longer horizontally than vertically. Such markings can readily be made by grasping the sponge tightly. A straight edge is finally drawn lightly across the textured plastic paint from left to right so as to smooth down all points raised in stippling.

After the textured paint has set, it is marked off into blocks. This is accomplished by cutting parallel lines spaced about a quarter of an inch apart and then lifting out the plastic paint between the lines.

It is customary to use a thin glazing coat in the case of the Travertine effect. The liquid glaze may be made with flatting oil, burnt umber and burnt sienna.

HEATHER EFFECT

Against the plastic paint, place the bowl of a spoon (or an electric light bulb) rolling it slightly from right to left as it progresses down the wall. Continue on in this way until an all-over pattern is secured.

CAENSTONE

This texture is secured simply by stippling cream-colored plastic paint in a uniform manner with a stippling brush and then glazing. The blocking off is done in the same way as in the case of the Travertine effect.

FERN EFFECT

To make each "fern" motif, press the end of a palette knife (one approximately an inch wide) into the plastic paint and move the blade rapidly back and forth, progressing upward in a graceful curve, left or right, and tapering off to a point. This not only gives the cross lines in the figure but piles up the plastic paint at the sides in such a way as to produce an outline resembling a leaf. Each motif should range in length from one to two feet and its widest part should not be more than five inches. The "stem" is produced simply by drawing the knife point down the center of the motif. Note particularly how the various fern leaves overlap. The more dense the grouping of the "ferns," the better will be the effect. A glaze is generally used with the fern effect.

TAPESTRY EFFECT

This effect is obtained simply by dragging a graining comb through the plastic paint to give a series of vertical lines and then striking the paint lightly here and there with a sponge or a wad of paper. Glazing with gold, silver or bronze gives a rich, beautiful finish.