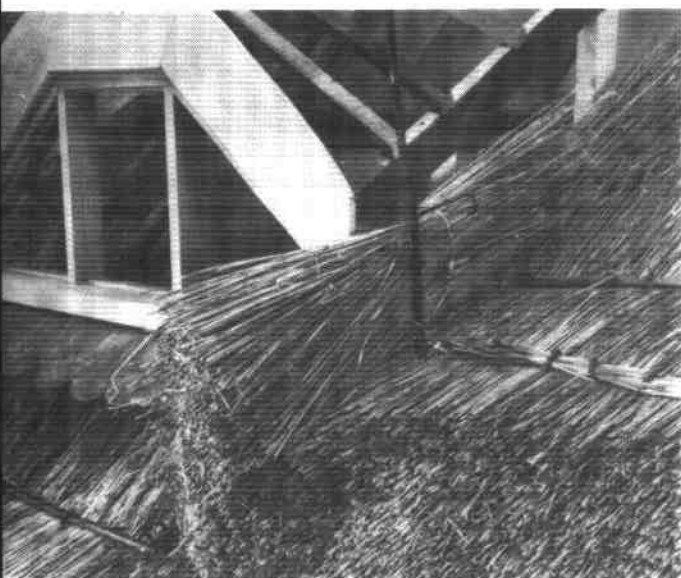




The second course is completed beyond the window.

No further main courses are carried through, and it will be seen here that the third course finished against the window-frame.

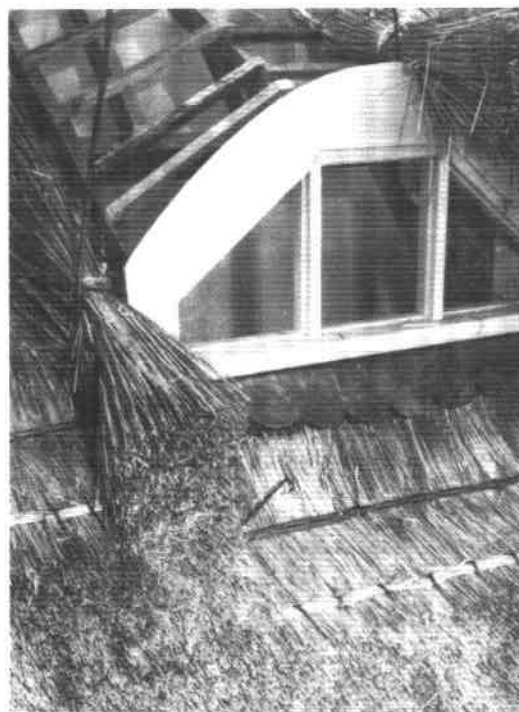
It now becomes necessary to set the eaves over the window. Allowing sufficient overhang for cutting, the wads are laid and a sway is started.

**Combed wheat reed**

The fourth main course now joins up with the eaves-wadds.

The eaves-wadds are carried over to the centre of the window and the tying-in method is resumed on reaching the battened portion.

The eaves are started on the left-hand side after the corresponding main courses have been laid and fixed.





All the eaves-wadds are now tied in over the window. The upward pressure of these wadds is exaggerated by the tilting fillet in the window construction. This pressure, combined with that of the next course, makes a tight eave.

The brow-course is carried over and swayed down. Ample back-filling is applied to the top of the course.

A further course is now carried over the window and fixed with a hazel sway. The courses which follow have been previously described and until the ridge area is reached, are merely repetition work.

## Combed wheat reed



For other windows, the work of cutting the eaves is commenced in the centre, proceeding from left to right.

The left-hand side is cut with the eaves-hook and the shape of the window is clearly defined.

Moving to the cavity in front of the window, a method which may be used to bring this area into line with the main work is described. A tight course is laid with the reed reversed to provide the thickest part uppermost, and is held in position by a temporary sway.





When the whole course is laid it is hooked in with a hazel sway, and for extra strength, a twisted bond is sparred in if desired.

After removing the temporary sway the ends of the course are levelled off with the shearing-hook.

The next course to be laid provides the thickness for the ornamental pattern which will give an artistic finish to this type of window. For a plain finish this course would not be necessary.



## Combed wheat reed



The position of the pattern course, and how it is fixed with twisted bond sparred in is shown.

The finishing course is worked right under the lead. A handful of reed is folded over at the small end.

A tight knuckle is made.





The reed is worked tightly underneath the lead apron and held in position with a temporary sway.

The lead apron may now be dressed neatly on the thatch and this is followed by the process of fixing the hazel liggers.

The liggers and cross-rods are sparred in according to the design chosen.



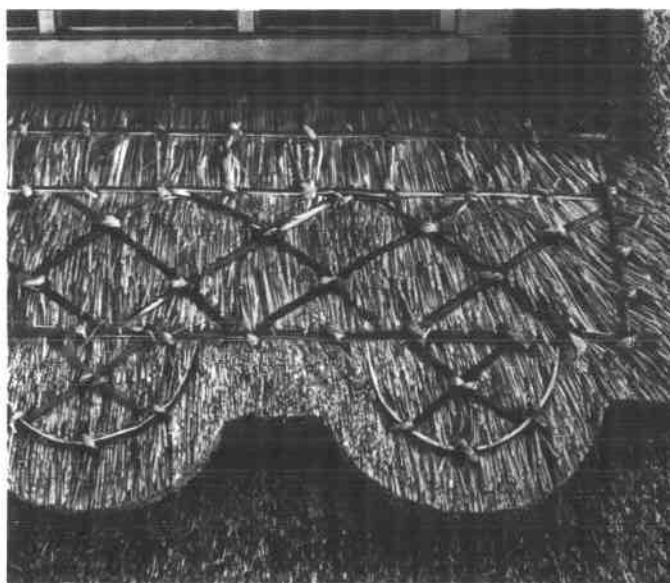
## Combed wheat reed



After the first cut round the scallop is made with the small knife, the shears are used to trim the pattern into shape.

A side-rake is often useful as a straight-edge when cutting.

A section of the finished apron is seen in greater detail. If a plain finish is preferred, the final course of reed which is worked under the lead, would be fixed down with two liggers. The lower ends of the course would then be sheared off flush with the main coating.







The illustration shows an impression of the completed window. This would not normally be finished until all the coating is laid and would, in fact, be one of the last jobs.

There are many variations of the type of window which occurs in thatch, thereby presenting unlimited scope to the architect. In most cases the principles of construction would be fundamentally the same.

Before any of the courses of reed reach the apex of the roof, a good tightly made roll or dolly needs to be fixed. The process of making this roll of any required length is described in the chapter on water reed thatch on page 173.

A method of tying the roll to the apex, which involves the use of strong tarred cord, is now shown. The cord is passed underneath the batten and pulled very tight, whilst pressure is applied with the right hand.

**Combed wheat reed**

Whilst retaining the tension with the left hand, the cord is passed under the tie, thus locking the stitch.

The cord is now carried over the roll and under the batten on the other side and the procedure is repeated.

Using the short-handled knife, the end of the roll is cut off to the required length.

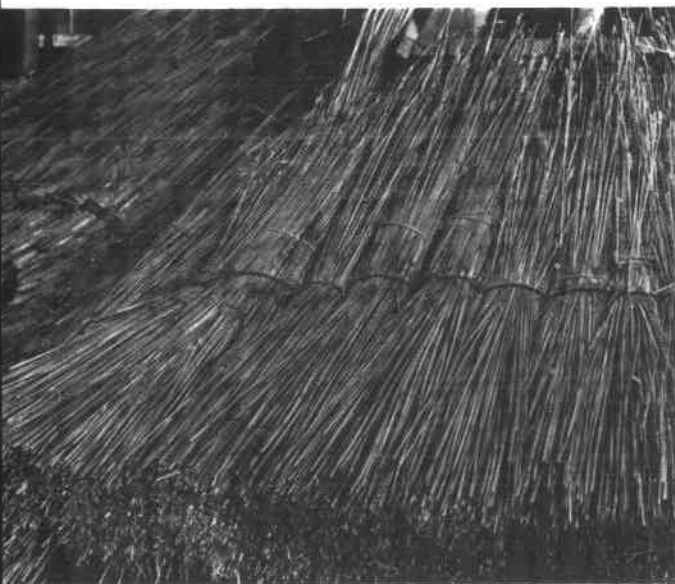




The roll serves the two-fold purpose of (a) providing extra springing to the top course of reed; and (b) a tight base into which spars may subsequently be driven.

When dealing with the half-hip it is usual to complete both barges up to the level of the eaves-board. The eaves of the hip are then started by tying the first wadd right on the angle of the hip-rafter.

Leaving the angle of the hip these eaves-wadds gradually turn until they are in line with the centre rafter.

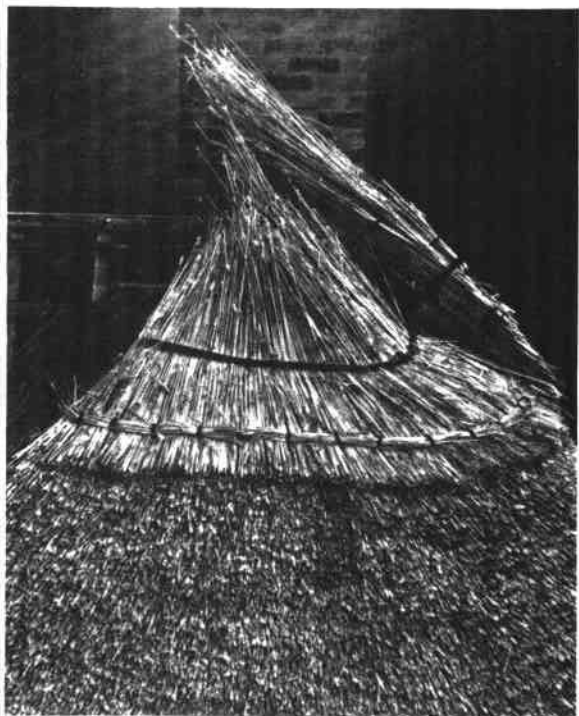
**Combed wheat reed**

From the vertical position of the centre rafter, the eaves-wadds now turn in the opposite direction, whereupon they join up with the left-hand barge, in line again with the angle of the hip-rafter.

The first and second courses are now carried round the hip. It is important that the tops of each course of reed always point towards the apex of the roof following the run of the rafter.

The brow-course in the half-hip now turns the second angle, where it merges into the main roof.





The second course is also carried round the hip and is swayed down.

As the top of each course gets narrower, it becomes even more necessary to keep the reed pointing towards the apex, at the same time keeping the face tight.

We now see the position of the courses as they sweep round the hip, with their tops pointing towards the apex.

**Combed wheat reed**

The final course now remains to complete the coating of the hip, as the previous courses have now merged into the main roof.

Before any more reed is laid round the hip, the tops which oversail the ridge-roll on the first side must be dealt with. They can either be cut off, or better still, twisted in as shown.

The handful of reed is twisted and folded back.

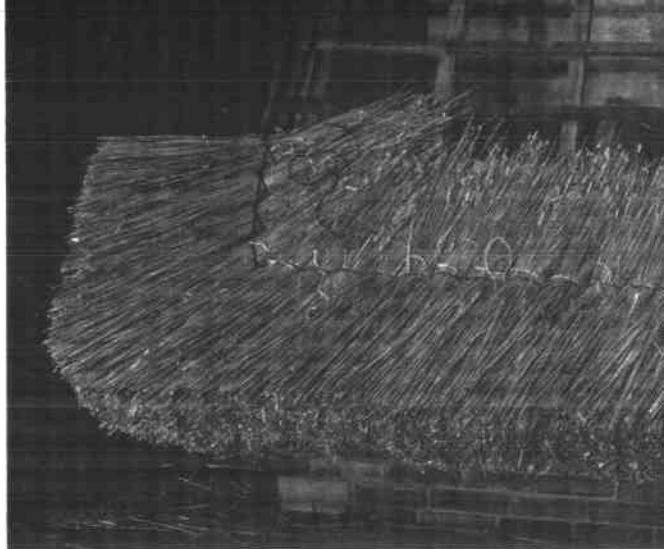




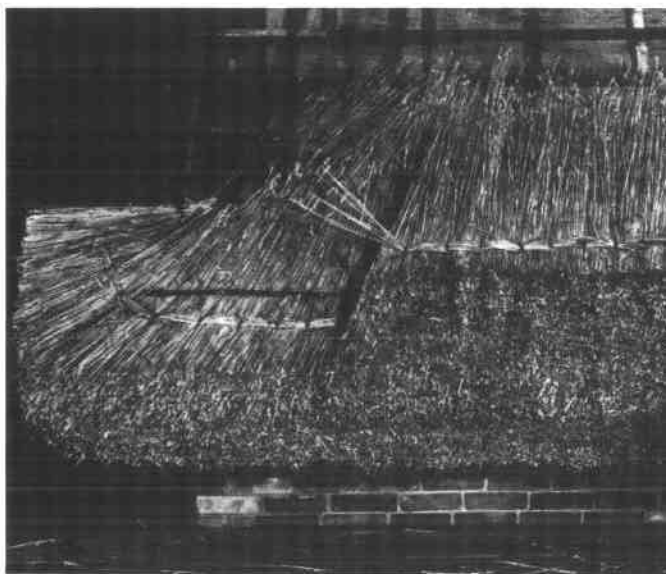
The twisted knuckle is forced against the previous twist.

The knuckle is then pressed firmly home and a twisted reed sway is sparred into the roll to secure the twisted tops.

Here we see the tops of the first side twisted in and sparred down. The lower reed sway is the temporary one and will be removed.

**Combed wheat reed**

Before dealing with the final stages of the work involved in laying and finishing the ridge, mention must be made of the left-hand barge. It is, of course, a repetition of the right-hand barge in reverse, but the reed must start turning well before the corner is reached.



The wadds are tied in as previously described and each succeeding course fades away in the barge.

Special care is required as the wadds reach the top of the gable. In the example illustrated, a cap-end will be formed in reference to a pointed finish. The ridge-roll is cut back, and the apex formed by the junction of the two barge-boards is removed to the level of the ridge-board.

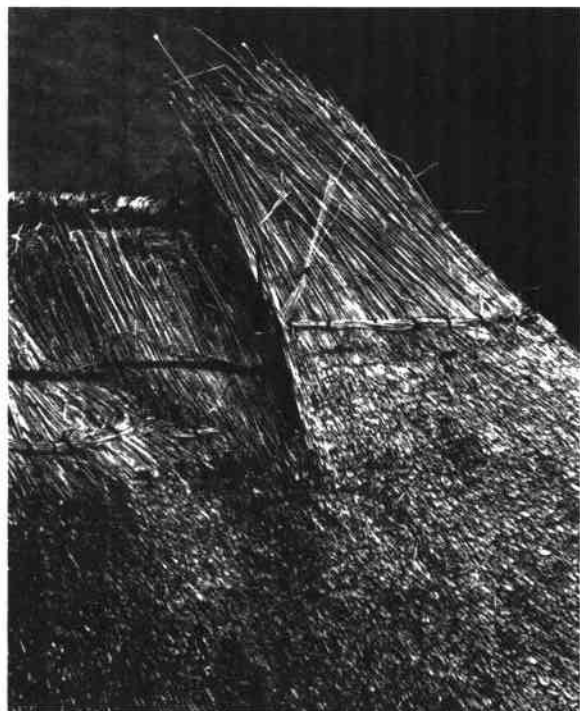


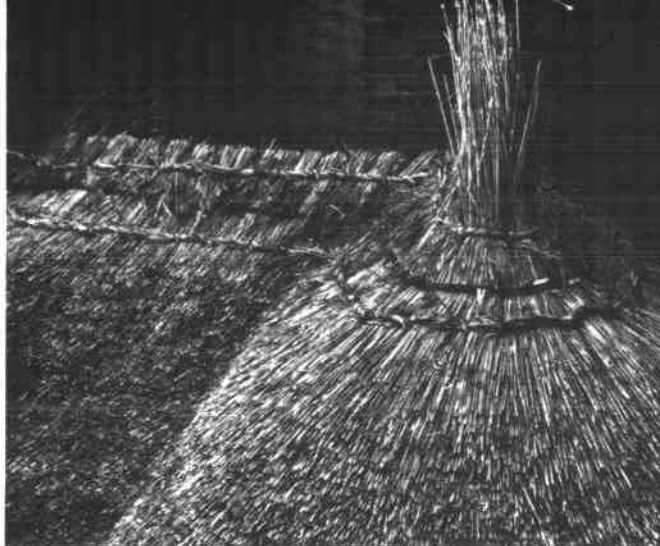


The wadds in the two barges are now joined and those in the centre portion form a small eave for the cap-end.

The top course on the second side is seen in relation to the twisted tops of the first side.

Now that the final course of coating is laid on the second side, these tops also are twisted in and sparred down.



**Combed wheat reed**

All the tops are now twisted in except the tufted end which will be drawn into the next roll.

Before the pattern courses are laid it is suggested that the surface is lightly sheared to a depth of approximately 2' (600 mm) from the sway. This will simplify the process of finishing off after the pattern is cut.

The second roll is now applied. This is fixed by driving spars through into the first roll.



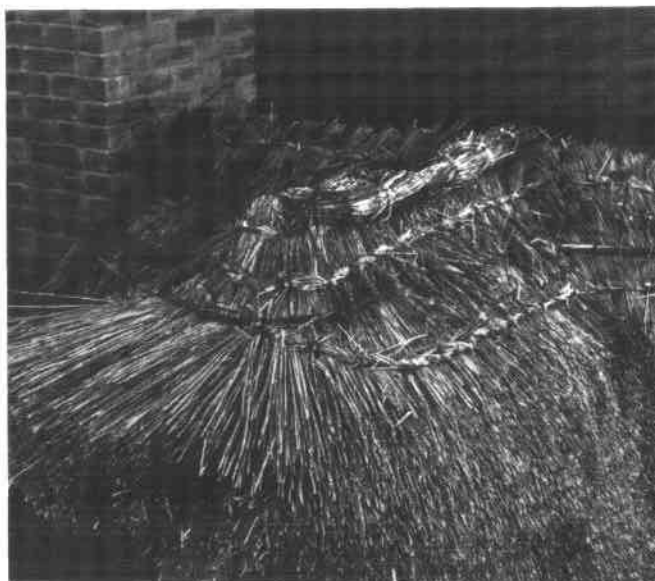


The tufted end is tied in and trimmed and the work of laying the pattern course proceeds.

The pattern course is laid by taking a good handful of reed and folding over the small end.

It is then laid at the appropriate level beside the previous bunch and firmly held with the needle.

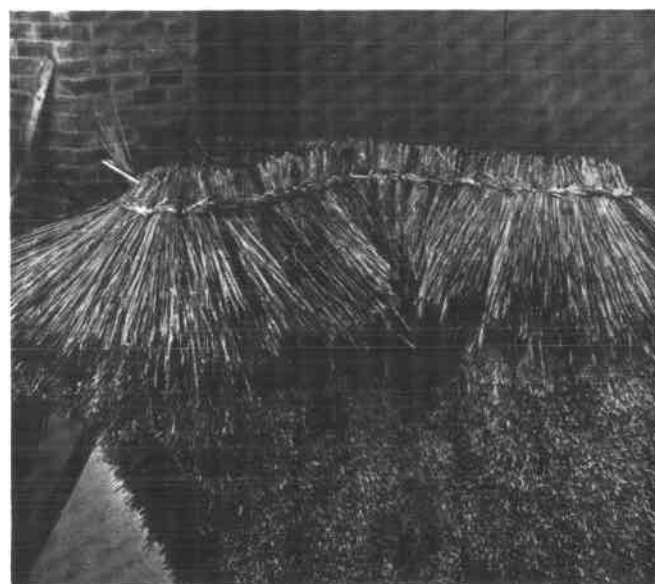
## Combed wheat reed



To secure this pattern course a twisted reed sway is sparred down.

An impression of the cap-end before the pattern course is laid.

The cap-end and the hip-end after the pattern course is laid.





The third and final roll is now sparred down. This not only provides a narrow top but also makes a firm, level base upon which to lay the ridge-course.

In laying the ridge-course, the needles play a special part. One needle is set centrally in the apex and against this, pressure is exerted as the course is tightly worked into shape.

One method of laying a turnover ridge is to take a good double handful of reed and part it in the middle.



Half of the reed is reversed in order to make both ends of equal thickness.

The bunch is then bent across the knee to form an angle.

It is then placed in position underneath the top ligger, which has already been started.





The needle is used as a lever to compress the bunch.

The needle resumes the vertical position and the same process is repeated throughout.

Approaching the valley the ridge-course must be kept in line with the reed of the previous course.