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Now you need a hook. You can buy one, or you can make one as Maisie's father did many years ago. He whittled a lovely hardwood handle. Then he drove a nail into the center of one end. He cut off the head and filed the raw end into a hook. The principles of hooking burlap or rag strips are essentially the same\* You will have to work above and below at the same time. Maisie uses a windowsill and the back of a chair to rest her frame high enough to sit upright and hook comfortably. You can start anywhere, with any color, any part of your pattern or picture. This is not what matters. What does matter is that you maintain the same distance between loops (the same number of burlap strands) in all directions, and that you pull each loop to the same height. You hold the hook in the right hand and poke it down through the burlap. The cloth strip is looped snugly over the index finger and held there by the middle finger and the thumb. This gives you control on the tension of the cloth and maintains the fold in the lighter material. You actually feed the cloth to the hook. This is not easy. You will have to discover your own way of just turning the hook so that it takes a firm hold of the cloth. You raise the hook, drawing a loop of cloth above the surface of the burlap, holding back slightly with your left hand • and this not only helps the hook hold onto the material, it gives you the control to raise the loop only so high, or to draw it back down again if it is too high. Do not release the hook from the loop until the height is just right, Maisie maintains a space of two strands of burlap between every loop (See drawing 9) and keeps straight rows, top to bottom and left to right; some hookers prefer to stagger their rows (10). When doing a form (such as the blocked stars of the large burlap rug), Maisie first hooked the outline of each block and then filled in, maintaining the space of two burlap strands in all directions. 1-? = ' 13 There are several ways to finish your rug. Some people baste back about 1 1/2" of the burlap edge, then hook through the double thickness. The usual way is to simply finish off with regular rug binding sewed all around, Maisie often turns the burlap under a turn or two and crotchets the edges all around with yarn. CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE/15