

**Shuttle Craft Guild
HANDWEAVER'S
BULLETIN**



Portfolio
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The Shuttle Craft Guild
HANDWEAVER'S BULLETIN
Volume XXXIII, Number 11
November 1956



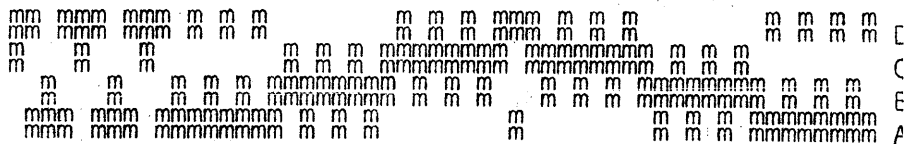
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PORTFOLIO: Border and Center Samples from the "Unconventional Colonial Coverlet" and Early American prepared flax and handspun linen.	

Shuttle Craft Guild members, in their willingness to share their discoveries with other weavers, have sent me countless little clever ideas to simplify the mechanics of weaving and for making useful short-cuts. When these come I am usually enthusiastic and think that I must mention the idea in an early Bulletin. Often we incorporate the idea into our own work, and pass it along to students, but in the way of things, the weaver's letter goes into a file for future use. Too often never quite the right subject or the right amount of space occurs for its use, and in the file it stays. I hope to correct this situation in the new SHUTTLE CRAFT.

We have planned a monthly paragraph entitled LEARNED AT THE LOOM for handling useful tid-bits of technique and information. This will be altogether a contributors column, and full authorship credit will be given for contributions. The suggestions must be written up as short-short articles and accompanied by any required diagrams or photographs. So those of you who have something useful to contribute whether or not you have mentioned it to me before, please write up your idea and send it to me immediately.

DRAFTS AND WOVEN PROFILES

It was mentioned last month that the best way to keep notes on a pattern is to weave them. But notes must be read, so the weaver must learn the woven language in order to read his draft off the woven sample. Weaving the pattern profile -- weaving each block in order -- was suggested as the best method for making the pattern draft notes, but this does not cover all instances since the weaver often wishes to read the draft off a piece which is not woven in profile. This presents no real problem, since in almost every pattern it is possible to find some place where all four blocks occur in succession. Simply use two rulers or two strips of heavy cardboard, one above the four blocks and one below, and perfectly parallel to the weft, in order to see the woven profile. It does not matter what size the blocks are woven, nor whether they are of different sizes, although when one is merely weaving the profile it is normal to weave each block the same size.



This represents a woven profile which has two shots on A (treadle 1), B (treadle 2), C (treadle 3), D (treadle 4) in order. The method for taking off the draft amounts simply to noting the order of the blocks with the number of threads in each one, and writing this information in common draft form. The only problem is that of counting the number of warp ends under each pattern block. Since the pattern weft covers the warp ends, this counting is done below or above the block. A textile magnifying glass (a lense mounted on a fixed-focus stand which marks off one sq inch of fabric) is useful here, and sometimes necessary. Since there are common or overlapping threads hidden under adjacent blocks, these must be considered in the

counting, so notice in this profile that in the relationship between any two block-lines some blocks overlap on one side only (have one hidden thread) and some overlap on both sides (have two hidden threads). The former are the straight succession blocks, the latter the turning blocks. Notice that all straight succession blocks have even numbers of threads, and all turning blocks contain odd numbers. Notice that one thread out from the end of a block there is always a half-tone, and every alternate thread is a half-tone as far as one thread from the end of the block just above or below. Since these halftones occur regularly, they make the easiest way for counting threads, and in straight succession blocks one considers the common thread the same as a half-tone.

Examine the first block of the profile and see that there are 3 half-tones above it, plus a common thread, making 4; since there is a thread between each of these, double this figure, which gives 8 ends in the block. It will be found that in straight succession blocks, one half-tone indicates a 4-thread, two half-tones indicate a 6-thread, three half-tones indicate an 8-thread, four half-tones indicate a 10-thread block, without exception; counting the half-tones either above or below the block. For turning blocks which have blocks on both sides, subtract one from this figure (see the fourth block of the profile shown) or, if the block is isolated like the four at the end of the profile shown, add one because there are no overlaps. If one uses a magnifying glass and actually counts the threads, these rules need not be memorized; one needs only to count all threads accurately. Check the drafts and profile diagrams given in the Bulletin for September to further prove these points.

Once one has learned how to count warp ends under each block, the draft is determined by two simple steps. The first step is listing each block in order,

with the number of warp ends each covers, working from right to left, after one complete pattern repeat has been determined and marked off with pins. Consider the blocks on the lowest row as A (1,2), the blocks on the second row as B (2,3), the blocks on the third row as C (3,4) and the blocks on the top row as D (4,1). Reading the profile on page 2 in this manner, the blocks list as follows:

A - 8 ends	The first thread of the first
B - 8 ends	block combines with the last block
C - 8 ends	to form the overlap, so the last
D - 3 ends	block which looks like 2 ends actually
C - 8 ends	has 3, as the pattern repeat would
B - 8 ends	show. The draft starts with 8 ends
A - 8 ends	on 1,2, which are followed by 8 ends
D - 3 ends	on 2,3; since the first thread of
A - 3 ends	the second block has already been
D - 3 ends	drafted as the last one of the first
A - 3 ends	block, one needs add only 7 ends.
D - 3 ends.	This situation continues throughout.

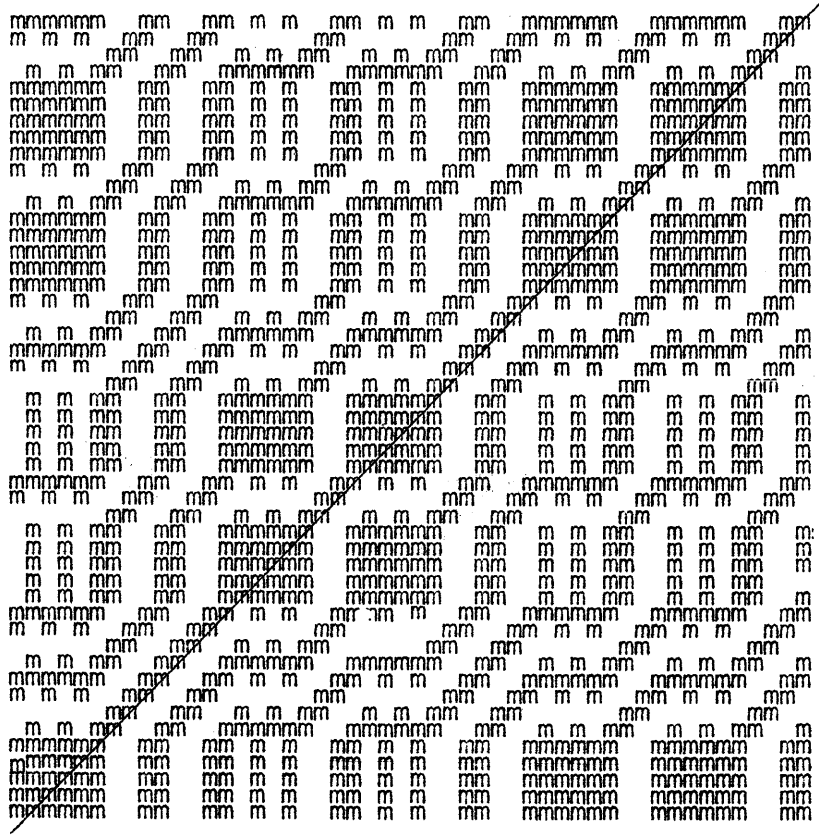
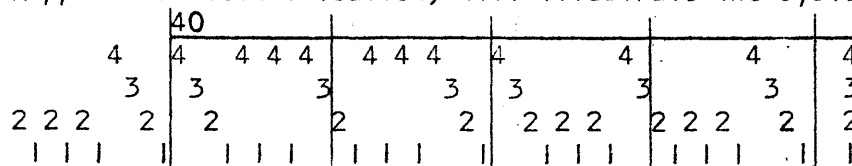
The figures listed above therefore compose themselves into a draft as follows:

54	D	A	D	A	A	B	C	D	C	B	A		
4	4	4					4	4	4	4	4	4	4
						3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
	3	3	3	3	8	8	8	3	8	8	8		

This is the simplest method for reading a draft off a textile woven in Overshot, or Hybrid (Overshot and Twill) techniques. Where twills occur, there will not be half-tones, as a study of the drafts and profile diagrams in the September Bulletin will show. Remember that these are woven or diagrammed profiles and not Profile Drafts of the type used for threading the Unit Weaves. These are sometimes called "working profiles" and they cannot be used as threading drafts without reinterpreting them in the above method.

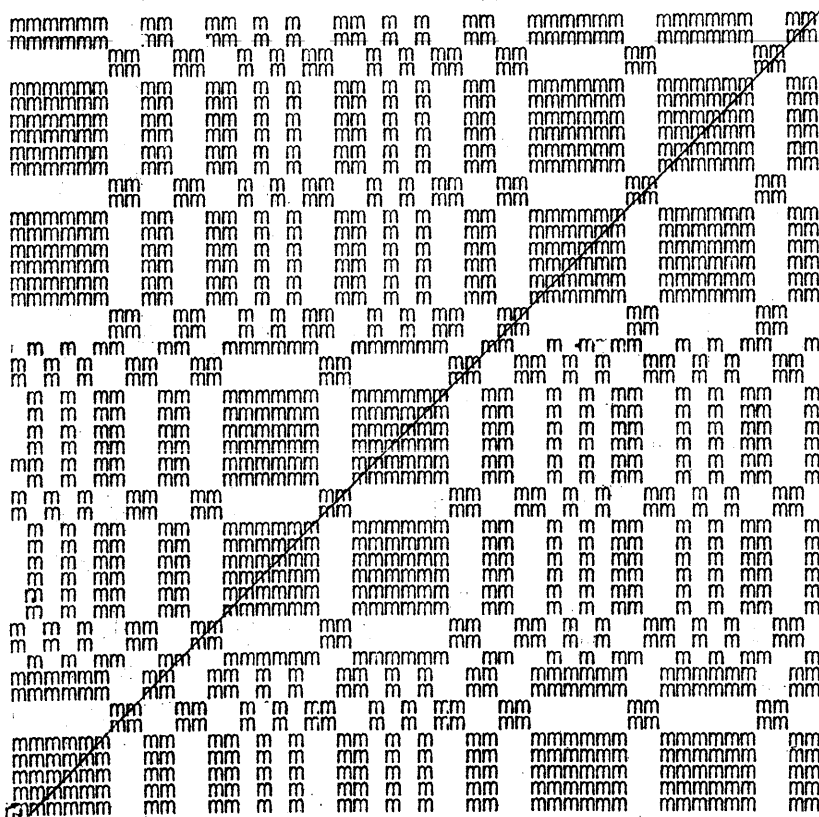
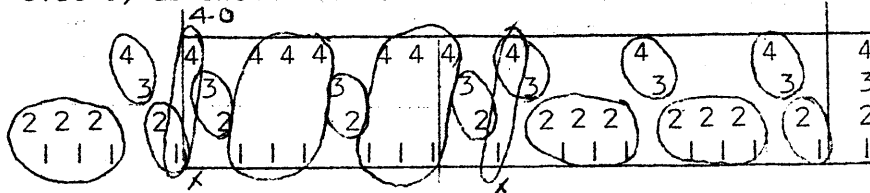
DRAFTS on "OPPOSITES"

There is another type of Overshot or Hybrid draft which has not been mentioned in the last three Bulletins even though many examples which would fit into the class were given. These are drafts containing "opposite" blocks. The draft below, which we shall call Clear Lake Ripples for identification, will illustrate the system.



This is the normal thread-by-thread development.

However, there is another way to make a woven-as-drawn-in development of a draft like this: one may eliminate as far as possible the twills which separate blocks and weave exact squares of the opposite blocks, as shown below.

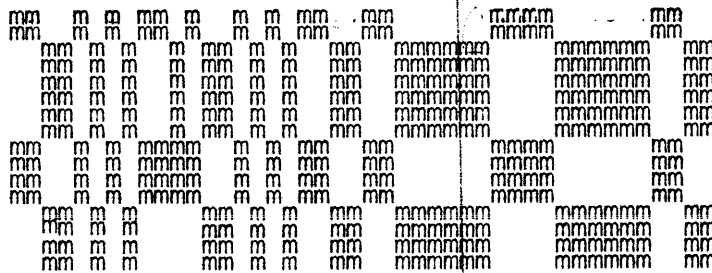


This type of development is based on "opposite" combinations. There are two pairs of opposites: 1,2 and 3,4 are opposite, or compensating, as are 2,3 and 4,1. When there is no block between two opposites, the separating twill may be dropped and

the blocks woven as exact squares (as many pattern-weft shots as warp ends) since there are no common threads for which to compensate. The blocks are circled in the way they have been developed. This type draft may be woven perfectly regularly as long as only two main pattern blocks are used, as would be the case if this draft ended at thread 24. The well known Monk's Belt pattern is another example of the two-block opposite draft. However, when the second pair of opposite blocks is introduced into the draft, an irregularity is unavoidable. There will be one overlap wherever this shift occurs, as illustrated on the draft by the twill combinations marked "x", and on the development by the two single shots which show an overlap on the diagonal line. The weaver has some choice here in selecting just where to make the distortion, so the single shot is usually placed where it will make the nearest possible symmetry.

(As we all know, hindsight is better than foresight, and I now see that this pattern would be improved if the blocks between the two pairs of 6-thread blocks had four instead of two ends. So I suggest this draft as an improvement.)

44										
4	4 4 4	4 4 4	4		4 4		4	4		
3		3 3		3 3		3 3		3	3	
2		2 2		2	2 2 2		2 2 2	2	2	

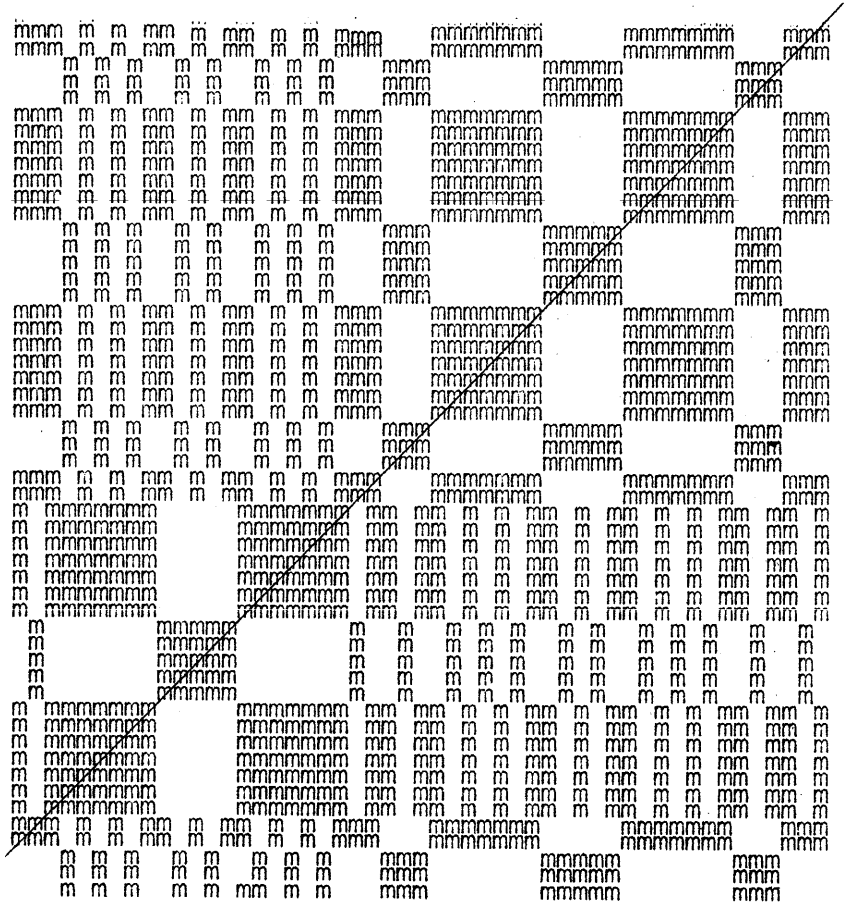


This partial development shows how the half-tones are removed from blurring the edges of opposite

blocks, and group themselves at some other place in the pattern, adding the strength and sparkle which is characteristic of Opposites drafts. Notice in the developments on pages 6 and 7 that the half-tone areas are broken by two-thread floats. These two-thread floats are known as "accidentals" since they are not part of the pattern draft but are accidental to straining the technique to make it include two pairs of opposite blocks. Mrs Atwater's SHUTTLE CRAFT BOOK OF AMERICAN HANDWEAVING illustrates several examples of old coverlets woven on opposites drafts. See pages 47, 140, numbers 1, 2 and 6 on 141, and drafts on pages 193 to 199.

A comparison of the developments on pages 5 and 6 will show that a definitely asymmetrical pattern has been changed to an almost-symmetrical one through weaving-as-drawn-in on opposites, instead of in the more conventional manner. An asymmetrical irregularity still remains, even though a slight one, but it is possible to redraft such a pattern so that it is perfectly symmetrical. This is done by drafting every block with an odd number of threads instead of an even number of threads. Notice that in the draft used previously all of the directional movement is forward. There is not a single reverse block in the draft, which means that there is not a single block with an uneven number of threads. In this other type of draft which is given on page 9, as adapted from the previous one, every single block is a reverse or turning block as every one has an odd number of threads. It is, of course possible to write a draft which is a combination of these two methods, but this will not be illustrated here. It would make an excellent project for the weaver who wishes to do a little study project on the opposite drafts. (Take a standard Overshot pattern and convert it to opposites by composing the block order A, C, B, D, instead of A, B, C, D.)

48														
4 4 4			4 4 4			4 4			4 4 4			4 4		4
			3 3			3			3 3			3		3
2	2 2 2						2	2 2		2	2 2 2		2	2



Both the draft and the development here have perfect symmetry. Even the accidentals and half-tones fall into symmetrical arrangement. This draft too would be perfectly symmetrical if woven-as-drawn-in in the conventional manner instead of on opposites.

BORDERS FOR OVERSHOT PATTERNS

On occasion a border on all four sides of an article woven in Overshot is desirable. Such a border can be produced, with the side and end borders identical, if the pattern is woven-as-drawn-in and the balance of the weaving is perfect. Any deviation from these two will cause distortions which make the borders a design error rather than an advantage.

The weaving-as-drawn-in must start exactly at the right selvage and the 45 degree diagonal followed throughout, in order to form the borders. The corners of the article will be squares which exactly reproduce the border draft, while the borders along the sides and ends will be a pattern variation, usually stressing long lines or chain-like figures, which develop automatically and frame the pattern. Because of the variation nature of the borders, it is extremely important that the border pattern is harmonious with the main pattern.

There are several ways for designing a border. The safest system is to select from the main pattern draft one small motif and repeat it over and over to the desired border width. Another system is to select a small, simple motif such as a Diamond, a Table, or a Twill Succession of blocks, and thread it as the border. In doing this it is important that the same technique be used in the border as the main pattern. If the pattern is pure Overshot, use only Overshot blocks in the border, or if it is Hybrid, make the border Hybrid. There is a practical as well as a designing reason for this, since the two techniques beat in differently and often require different warp settings, and the textures formed by the two are somewhat different.

There are some excellent examples of both good and bad border arrangements shown in Mrs Atwater's

SHUTTLE CRAFT BOOK OF AMERICAN HANDWEAVING. On page 73 is an example of a border made by repeating one of the motifs of the main draft. This is the easiest type of border to design, since the last border-motif repeat will flow naturally into the main pattern without a break or distortion. And from the design point of view, a border of this type is always good, and therefore safe. On page 123 is shown a particularly effective border composed of a Table drafted on the two same blocks used for one of the "dog tracks" with the edge block from the other "dog track" at each side. But the point which makes this border truly distinctive is the use of three Twill Successions of blocks between the border and the main pattern (blocks A,B,C,D, repeated three times, four ends on each block on the right side, the blocks in D,C, B,A order on the left side). Similarly good is the design on page 126 in which one full repeat of the pattern is threaded backwards at the edge, then the two connecting blocks at the end of the pattern are repeated over and over as a broad "table" which forms the border, followed by the required number of full pattern repeats and the "mirror image" of the border on the other side. This photograph will reward study. The photograph on page 120, on the other hand, is one to study as an example of what not to do in designing a border. This shows a simple Diamond used as a border, but the Diamond does not harmonize with any element of the main pattern, and it is joined to the pattern so awkwardly that the border looks pieces of another fabric cut and applied to the edges. This is unfortunate, because the pattern contains a six-block double-diamond which would have served handsomely as the border.

Occasionally, though rarely, the main pattern is used as the border and the body of an article is threaded to some small, simple repeat figure. This type of designing is more modern than Colonial in spirit, since it has the quietness and simplicity more in keeping with modern interiors.

A COLONIAL COVERLET with MODERN SPIRIT

While thinking of the problem of the traditional use of the Overshot weave and the adaptation of border designs, my mind went to an old coverlet which I have had packed away in moth balls for many years. Bringing it out to light was a revelation. My attitude had evidently been that I was so familiar that I had forgotten about it. It is an old coverlet which had been in my mother's family, though identified as having "come from Kentucky" rather than woven by some ancestor. I remember it from way back, and even took it to college where it made a good, tough bedspread of quiet, pleasant design. On looking at it now I see such modern simplicity that I am giving an interpretation of the draft, with arrangement

Thread the 2-end selvage, then repeat the 16-thread motif 21 times.

16					
4	4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3	3
			2	2	2

		Edge repeat				Selvage			
54	50	40	30	20	10				
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
			3	3	3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Then thread this border motif three times, but ending the last repeat on thread 45.

Repeat this motif 37 times, but on the last repeat omit the last 3 threads. The center seam edge is

16			
	4	4	4
3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2

never threaded with a selvage. The center motif is of course identical to the edge one, but the direction is reversed because of its relation to the border. One particularly interesting point is the single "opposite" block at each side of the border, which puts a pleasant but subtle emphasis on the border.

Here is the complete threading schedule for a two-strip coverlet in this pattern. (There is occasional objection to the two-strip coverlet because of the seam down the center, but in this case the seam does not disfigure and because of the charming border arrangement a 3-strip coverlet with two seams would be neither feasible nor attractive.)

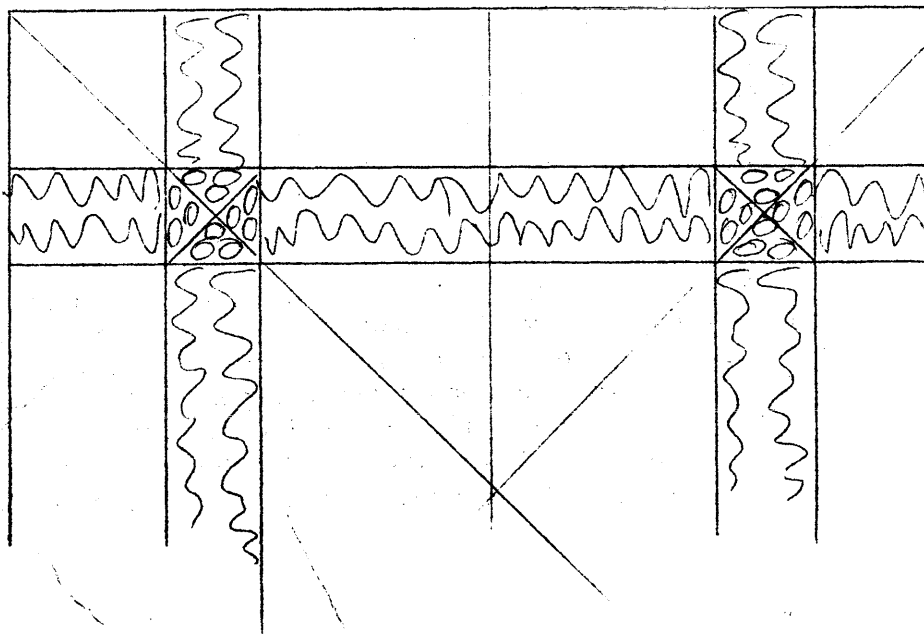
Warp of 20/2 cotton or 40/2 linen.

36 inches wide
30 ends per inch
 1080 warp ends

Threading schedule:

Selvage (1, 4)	2 ends
Edge (21 repeats of 16-ends)	336 ends
Pattern Border (2 repeats, 54)	108 ends
Border balance (first 45 ends)	45 ends
Center threading (37 repeats -3)	<u>589 ends</u>
TOTAL warp ends	1080

The design arranges in this fashion:



AN UNCONVENTIONAL COLONIAL DRAFT

Notice that it was mentioned that the draft and design just given is an "interpretation" of the old coverlet. This is a draft which I arrived at many years ago, when I was first studying Mrs Atwater's SHUTTLE CRAFT BOOK, and looked down at the couch cover I was sitting on to make an application of the drafting points I was trying to learn. At the time I thought I was "correcting the mistakes" and smoothing up the draft, though I was never satisfied that I had taken the draft correctly. Perhaps that is the reason the coverlet has remained folded away all these years. The draft as given is logical and good and will weave to a **very pleasant** coverlet with strong simplicity.

But now, with the help of a textile magnifying glass and a number of years experience in analysis, I have found that this coverlet is the most intriguing one I have ever seen. Investigation of my library reveals nothing like it in any of the books which give Colonial coverlet patterns. The threading deviations which I had originally thought were errors are now revealed as very clever and unconventional adjustments made to add a depth of texture and a charm of pattern which **are different** from the usual Colonial Overshot coverlets. These differences are a curving of blocks, particularly in the half-tone areas, resembling huck texture more than Overshot, and a texture irregularity surrounding the main pattern blocks which serves to emphasize them. These deviations are **not hit-and-miss** as threading or draft errors would be, but occur regularly, with designed intent.

The warp and tabby of this coverlet are homespun linen, evidently set at 40 ends per inch (now measuring about 42), and the pattern weft is homespun wool, indigo dyed. The warp and tabby are perfectly balanced and the fabric is very firm -- obviously durable. After long debate I have finally put shears to this coverlet, and Portfolio subscribers will find generous

threads lie more loosely and have a tendency toward curving, as in the linen weaves. Notice that the motif which is repeated for the edge and the center is not a perfectly symmetrical pattern. This lack of symmetry cannot be considered as an error, since it add a very charming, though hardly distinguishable effect. The 10 and 12-thread blocks are feasible because of the closer than normal warp set.

This exceptional threading technique opens up a new designing field which we hope many weavers will find stimulating for experiments and applicable to projects.

Threadbender
My dear Guild member: Newsletter

Since the announcement last month of new plans for the Shuttle Craft Guild and the Bulletin, the number of letters and long-distance telephone calls we have had about this have shown a gratifying interest among Guild members. The last announcement was not very complete, because the plans themselves were not complete at that time. Now I can be more comprehensive.

Every day, as new phases of this progressive move develop, we become a little more enthusiastic about what lies ahead. When you see the results of these changes for the first time in January, I'm sure you will feel the same enthusiasm.

The enclosed letter, which was sent to a group of non-members, will explain what the new Bulletin will be, and save words here. Mr Veren and I feel confident that every current Guild member will be highly gratified by the expansions in the Bulletin, and that many additional weavers will wish to subscribe. In fact, the plans are so elaborate that they could not be carried through unless we were

confident that subscriptions will triple during 1957. Therefore I am also enclosing an order blank which I hope you will pass along to some other weaver who will wish to subscribe. Do not overlook putting your own name at the bottom so that we can give you the \$1.00 or \$2.00 renewal credit which Guild members receive for new subscriptions (\$1.00 if regular edition, \$2.00 if Portfolio edition).

This new system will require more concentration on the monthly Bulletin, which means elimination of several activities. There are two things connected with this which we regret -- but they must be. We shall be unable to take students for summer instruction. And, we shall have to move from this beautiful but isolated spot, to the city, to be near the publisher and other facilities. The city will be San Francisco, and we shall move about Christmas time. All personal correspondence and letters relating to the correspondence courses (which will be continued), weaving problems, questions about looms, equipment, yarns and other technical matters, will be sent to me as in the past. All subscriptions, renewals and orders will go to the new Business Manager, Mr Boris Veren, Coast Route, Monterey, California. These address changes will be effective January first 1957, and my new address will be in the December Bulletin. Of course all mail sent to Kelseyville will be forwarded, so don't worry.

The Shuttle Craft Guild, after 1956, will be a decentralized organization in that Mr Veren will take care of all business from his present address of Coast Route, Monterey, Calif. (Mr Veren's service has always been altogether mail-order, and he has no shop open to the public.) Mrs Wilma Widener will be doing the project and portfolio weaving, as now, and remaining here on Clear Lake. (She will no longer be handling routine correspondence, and I know that many Guild members will miss her charming letters.) Martin (Mr Tidball) will handle the photography, which we plan to make extensive, and the art work, but this as a "second job" rather

than the full-time work he has done with the Guild for the past several years. And I shall be working in our apartment-home in San Francisco, with my typewriter and files but no studio -- just a home weaving-room similar to what any well-equipped home weaver might have.

All of these changes will lead to greater efficiency which will benefit every Shuttle Craft Guild subscriber through increased quantity of information in the Bulletin, and greatly enhanced quality in the method of presentation. The handweaving field needs a monthly "journal" of a somewhat technical nature, which concentrates on giving actual weaving directions, instructions, and designing. And the objective "testing bureau" approach for looms, equipment, and yarns which the Shuttle Craft Guild has always done in a limited way, needs to be greatly expanded to help both experienced and potential weavers. And we believe that the new, expanded Shuttle Craft Guild can give it.

Three weeks ago I was in Salt Lake City helping Alice Atwater with the sad job of sorting, evaluating and deciding on the suitable disposition of the many collections left by Mrs Atwater. There were manuscripts, drawings, library, rare textiles, collections of textiles from all over the world, her own experimental and sample weaving, oddities such as primitive looms, and all the thousand things which she had collected over her period of forty years in the handweaving field. The collections are priceless, and present a remarkable picture of a personality.

Mrs Atwater had generously arranged long ago, for me, as the one whom she selected to carry on the Shuttle Craft Guild, to have first choice of all of these treasures before the collections were otherwise disposed of. It was a difficult choice. However, the wheels are now in motion for all of the collec

tions to be purchased intact, including the remarkable library, and placed where they will be available for handweavers now and in future generations to see and use. This would be such a significant contribution to the handweaving field and such a suitable memorial to one of the greatest artists and contributors to modern handweaving, that I shall do everything I can to help the plan mature. The members of Mrs Atwater's family are likewise anxious to have these things kept together and permanently available to handweavers.

Consequently, I selected for the Shuttle Craft Guild only the samples, mounted for teaching purposes, which were the experimental work done for Mrs Atwater's Bulletins (the first twenty-three years of publication, through August 1946). These, we have agreed, belong permanently with the Shuttle Craft Guild. Having these samples will make it possible for us to give photographs of Mrs Atwater's own beautiful weaving, when we reprint the rare articles from her early Bulletins.

The letters which have come to Mrs Atwater's daughters since her passing have brought them much comfort. It is possible that many people have wanted to write, but have been unsure of the address. Letters may be addressed to: Mrs Alice Atwater, 6150 South 23rd, East, Salt Lake City 7, Utah.

Two minor errors in the August BULLETIN have been called to my attention. Pattern #12, Delight, has 26 rather than 30 ends. Pattern 17, Ferns and Flowers, has 50 rather than 52 ends. It is gratifying that so many people have expressed pleasure in the Bulletins for August, September and October. There have been so many orders for the special Portfolio of samples which was made up for these three Bulletins that we have had to make an addi-

tional copies. They are still available at \$3.50 each. These special Portfolios are for the subscribers to the regular edition only, as the Portfolio-edition subscribers already have the samples and the information which accompanies them. The special Portfolio does not include the drafts, as these are in the Bulletin.

Portfolio samples for this month on a six-harness Overshot had already been prepared, and the article on one of the most fascinating projects we had done for years, when I discovered this old coverlet which has been at hand as long as I have and much longer. This discovery was so exciting that I made a quick change, which I hope you enjoy as much as I did. The other projects on the six-harness Overshot can wait for December. My mother's reaction when she sees the current Portfolio might be problematical, since she had given this coverlet to me as the one of her six offspring who would appreciate it most, but I feel fairly confident that she will enjoy having it shared with many other handweavers instead of being folded in a chest.

Last week Mr Veren with us, going over the Guild systems and making plans for our future cooperative effort. How fortunate that the Shuttle Craft Guild will be able to benefit from his many talents as well as from accurate, orderly way of handling business matters. Mr Veren has many splendid ideas for bringing new things to Guild members, and his many connections with foreign authors and publishers will bring some unusual features to SHUTTLE CRAFT.

After Jan 1, 1957,
 orders and correspondence
 to me, renewals
 and orders to:
 Boris Veren,
 Coast Route, Monterey, Calif.

Sincerely yours,
 Artist Tidball
 Kelseyville, Calif.

From a treasured, old Coverlet, woven in Kentucky, no one knows how long ago, the sample shows both the simple main design and part of the very interesting border. This is the unconventional pattern draft given on page 15. If you study the sample through a magnifying glass, you will detect the unusual thread arrangement at the edges of the blocks. This would be worth trying in heavier materials which would emphasize the texture effect.

The flax is from one of those boxes which old attics contain. My mother told me it was prepared, and also the linen yarn spun by her great aunt, a spinster who was also the weaver of the family in pre-Civil War days. This is the same kind of linen thread as was used for the warp and tabby in the coverlet.

Sometimes a bit of the past can be instructive as well as nostalgic.

BULLETIN for
November 1956.

