

American coverlets of the nineteenth century, from the Helen Louise Allen textile collection.

Elvehjem Art Center

Madison, Wisconsin: Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin, 1974

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American Coverlets

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

FROM THE HELEN LOUISE ALLEN TEXTILE COLLECTION

ELVEHJEM ART CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

MADISON, WISCONSIN 1974

The exhibition and catalogue were
organized by the Elvehjem Art
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Resources and Consumer Sciences

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Introduction

Museums constantly reevaluate art forms, often discarding outdated criteria for determining worthiness, recognizing as a result the beauty, craftsmanship, and intrinsic qualities that were always there but are apparent only at a later time. This appraisal is evident particularly among those art museums that have studied, exhibited, and published American crafts. No longer are American crafts and the so-called decorative arts considered the Cinderella of the more aristocratic sisters: painting, sculpture, printmaking, etc.

This exhibition serves the museum visitor in several ways. There are many who will be impressed primarily by the colors, designs, and exceptional craftsmanship of these textiles. Other visitors will be interested primarily in the technical data available in the catalogue on the weaving of these coverlets. It is particularly interesting to me to appreciate the coverlets in a manner that is totally unrelated to weaving as an art or skill, recognizing the visual effects and similarity of some of the textiles to the Optical painting by the American artist, Richard Anuszkiewicz. This appreciation of woven coverlets by comparing them to other works of art would have been unthinkable by the nineteenth-century weavers or their clients, but today we

have the advantages of freedom in our criticisms and the intervening decades.

The catalogue is a scholarly and technical contribution to the understanding of the American handwoven coverlet. The museum is grateful to Otto C. Thieme and Joyce Marquess, who wrote the text and entries and conducted the research necessary to produce this publication. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Allen Fund and the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation that made this catalogue possible.

The coverlets in this exhibition and catalogue belong to the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection in the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Without Miss Allen's interest in textile history and her perseverance as a collector, there would be no exhibition of these American coverlets. The Elvehjem Art Center is proud to collaborate in this exhibition and catalogue. It is another example of cooperation, mutual support, and the sharing of expertise between the art museum and a department. The exhibition was shown at the Elvehjem Art Center: November 3, 1974-January 5, 1975.

Millard F. Rogers, Jr.
DIRECTOR

Acknowledgments

No exhibition evolves without the combined efforts of many people. The following colleagues made special contributions in a number of ways:

Ruth Harris, Curator of the Helen L. Allen Textile Collection; Professor Millard Rogers, Jr., Director of the Elvehjem Art Center; Henry Behrnd, Conservator-Craftsman of the Elvehjem Art Center; Ann Smith of the Historical Society of York County; Dena S. Katzenberg, Acting Curator of Textiles, Baltimore Museum of Art; and Christa Thurman, Curator of Textiles, the Art Institute of Chicago. Others include Professor Andrew Sihler, who offered comments on the manuscript; Lyn Jackson, Ruth Hornbein, Kathy Schmidt, and Sally Monogue, who aided in the preparation of the exhibition and the catalogue.

The contributions of Joyce Marquess were especially appreciated. She not only reconstructed the weave drafts but also willingly shared her extensive knowledge of handweaving techniques and structures, friendly advice, and encouragement.

O.C.T.

Historical Overview

With the relaxation of trade restrictions against cotton in the mid-eighteenth century, the stage was set for the revolution in the textile industry. Ever increasing supplies of raw materials were matched by inventions, and improvements upon inventions, until around 1800 cotton goods became so cheap in Europe that any large amount of hand labor entailed in their production was economically unwarranted. Great textile mills produced cloth faster and cheaper than handweavers could. It is no wonder that weavers viewed such inventions as the spinning jenny, the fly shuttle, the power loom, and the Jacquard attachment with such anxiety. Professional handweavers feared that these inventions would erase the need for their profession, but, as has usually been the case when technical innovations are assailed by a threatened craft, eventual acceptance was inevitable. Highly skilled handweavers found that they had to become part of the factory system, or turn to another vocation, or starve. There was one alternative remaining which many seemingly found more attractive than these three, namely, emigration to America. Opportunity called, for in America industrialization of the textile industry was comparatively much less advanced; indeed, settlement and trade patterns

enhanced the demand for numerous small operators rather than large centralized goods factories: settlers on the expanding frontier naturally preferred the locally-produced and comparatively inexpensive goods of highly skilled craftsmen to goods imported from a distance at great cost. Of course, many American households were self-sufficient in their day-to-day textile needs, but this offered no real competition with the highly skilled professional handweaver who had access to cheap thread and labor-saving devices.

Eventually the history of the textile industry in Europe was repeated in America, and handweavers once again were uncompetitive. It is as representatives of this last flowering of the professional handweaver, who began with traditional weaves and patterns and ended by embracing the new industrialization that had sent him to America in the first place, that the coverlets in this exhibition are more than decorative utilitarian items.

The industrialization of the European textile trade affected weavers from all countries. Of those who chose to come to America, the majority were from Germany and the British Isles: England, Scotland, and Ireland. The weavers who arrived before 1820 differed from those who came later. Those earlier arrivals were

steeped in the traditional designs and in traditional weaves. Doublecloth and so-called "overshot" were the most-used patterning weaves. Traditional patterns, which could be adapted to either weave depending on the number of the shafts available on the loom, were printed in pattern books dating back at least to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Overshot was popular for more than aesthetic reasons. Almost all overshot patterns could be woven on four-shaft looms. This was a great advantage as multi-shaft looms were expensive and the time spent setting up a loom figured in the total cost. Another reason for its popularity might have been that the pattern was produced by the most economical use of available materials, using a supplementary patterning weft on a foundation weave. In other words if the wool had to be dyed and spun by hand, it would be reasonable to make it go as far as possible. The obvious solution was to combine it with a relatively inexpensive cotton foundation fabric. Overshot coverlets are exceedingly numerous. This is not surprising considering their economy of material and simple loom requirements. Burnham builds a persuasive case for the Scottish origins of the weave in the United States and Canada. This is supported

by the fact that Scottish immigrants, known or presumed to include handweavers, settled throughout the Eastern United States from New England to the Appalachian Highlands.

The doublecloth weave would have been known to weavers from both Germany and the British Isles. It was expensive to produce in that it required sufficient material to weave two layers of cloth simultaneously. It also required many more shafts than did overshot; the simplest four-block pattern required sixteen shafts. The resulting coverlet was heavy weight and displayed a strong pattern definition much different than that of overshot.

Naming patterns seems to have been a weaver's prerogative, as identical patterns would be renamed in different localities. Patriots would have selected names such as "Whig Rose," "Federal Knot," "Indian War," "Braddock's Defeat," and "Washington's Victory." The various Fancies, Favorites, Delights, Beauties, Knots, Trails, and Chains attest to the interests and inventiveness of the weavers.

The weavers who came to America after 1820 differed from earlier arrivals in one major way: they often had first-hand knowledge of the Jacquard attachment for the loom. The attachment was invented by Joseph Marie

Jacquard in France and patented there in 1806. Examples had been smuggled into England and the first Jacquard attachment reached America sometime in the early 1820's. The Jacquard attachment, which could be put on almost any existing handloom, was an automatic shedding device which allowed each warp thread to be controlled individually. A series of pre-punched cardboard cards passed through the attachment and controlled the progression of shed changes. Once the system for interpreting a pattern draft into the punched cards was understood, the weaver could produce nearly any pattern he wished. Judging from the number of similar coverlets that were produced in a wide area, it is more than likely that prepunched Jacquard cards could be purchased by weavers unable or unwilling to punch their own. Large capacity attachments were soon available, and it was not unusual to have two mounted on the same loom. Jacquard-controlled coverlet patterns were distinctly different from traditional handwoven patterns. They were usually large-scale, complex, floral, and had an abundance of detail. The patterns produced before 1840 retained folk-like simplicity; from then on they increased in complexity.

The resources provided by

the Jacquard attachment were not altogether novel to the German and Scottish expatriate weavers, since both groups had traditions of complex pattern weaving controlled by drawlooms. For instance, seventeenth-century German weavers in Schleswig-Holstein produced a figured cloth known as *Beiderwand* in blue and white with patterns of birds, flowers, figures, and geometrics. *Beiderwand*—as the name implies—was a double-faced cloth requiring two sets of warps and two sets of wefts. However, the two sets did not interact to produce a true doublecloth. Scottish weavers were familiar with flat weave patterned carpeting known as Scotch ingrain. It was based on doublecloth and woven in Kilmarnoch, Scotland as early as 1723 and in Kidderminster, England in 1735. It too was produced on a drawloom. Comments here on eighteenth century Scotch ingrain patterns and coverlet patterns would be speculative, as no surviving pieces are known to this author; there are, however, demonstrable connections between nineteenth-century ingrain carpeting and coverlet patterns. Both were woven on looms with Jacquard attachments. Comparisons between American coverlets woven by Scottish weavers and contemporary ingrain carpeting reveal several de-

sign similarities, and as early as 1803, at least one weaver was reported to have three looms set up in his “factory”: one for plain cloth, one for coverlets, and one for carpets.

As the expanding American frontier opened the Midwest, professional weavers moved into settlements together with other immigrants from Europe. The majority of coverlet-producing weavers appear to have preferred the small towns or countryside of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. Usually they had an occupation in addition to weaving; many would farm in the summer and weave in the winter; a few taught school. Looms were typically set up in their homes, and advertisements were placed in local papers soliciting orders. The finished products were often customized with the name of the purchaser, and sometimes the name, date, and location of the weaver would also be included in the design. Other weavers set up factories, usually consisting of four or five looms—probably including at least one each for plain cloth, coverlets and floor coverings. Members of the weaver’s family, and weavers newly arrived from Europe, would supply the labor.

All materials for the coverlets could have been locally produced, but it is more likely that most of the cotton and linen yarns used were com-

mercially made; in fact, entire made-up warps were available for purchase. Wool yarn, however, is believed to have been for the most part locally produced. In the self-sufficient households of previous eras, one or another female member of the household was usually capable of spinning, dyeing, and weaving. A large number of family traditions hold that wool from the family sheep was prepared and dyed by the women with purchased indigo, madder, or cochineal dyestuffs. The colors available were quite varied; for example, one dye-book of the period states that madder alone gave brilliant red, mordanted with alum produced orange, and mordanted with soda lye gave rose. Occasionally even the cotton and linen warp threads were dyed, light blue or brown being the most common colors. After 1860 it became common for weavers to purchase wool yarn dyed with synthetic aniline dyestuffs; but, previously, wool yarns were commercially available and many weavers undoubtedly produced coverlets entirely from purchased materials. A weaver working steadily could produce three coverlets a week, though if required by rush order, one could be woven in a day. Cost varied: one weaver priced his work between \$3.50 and \$5 per coverlet, another charged \$10 to \$12 for doublecloth

coverlets. The reasons for these differences are unclear, but perhaps the choice of pattern or amount of customer-supplied materials made the difference in price.

Another producer of coverlets was the itinerant weaver. He traveled about often using community or family looms and no doubt introduced new pattern drafts to the nonprofessional weavers who continued to produce coverlets. In many frontier families one person, usually a woman, had the task of weaving goods for family use, and many coverlets are known to have family histories of this type. In areas where slavery was the source of labor, the weaving tasks would have been assigned to one of the family slaves.

The American Civil War (1861-1865) marked the beginning of the end of coverlet production. A number of causes can be surmised for this decline: scarcity of materials, deaths of weavers from old age or in battle, the lower prices of increasingly available factory-produced textiles, or even changing tastes. Whatever the causes, there was noticeable decline in coverlet production, and except for two or three weavers working west of the Mississippi, production almost ceased by the early 1870's. One brief resurgence of popularity came during the Centennial celebration of 1876, but the majority

of these coverlets were powerloomed in factories, and in any case, they never caught the public's fancy.

It is obvious that coverlets were more than just fugitives from the industrialization of the textile industry. Decorative and useful, boldly patterned in blue and white and red, they enlivened even the simplest of interiors, whether woven in the traditional overshot and geometric patterns or the complex and large scale designs of the Victorian era. Although coverlet material was used for rugs and curtains, its chief use was on beds, and in this function they were quite warm; perhaps this accounts for their popularity in areas with cold night temperatures. In any case, they were highly prized and were put into trousseaus, or given as farewell gifts to settlers moving further west. They received much wear, typically, and were often used until they fell apart. Probably a coverlet when new would enhance the householder's bed; continued wear would demote it to the hired man's and finally, in tatters, it could become a doormat. Many coverlets show wear and stains along the top edge, where they came into contact with face, hand, and hair oils, and often the bottom edges are damaged from having worn against the footboard and legs of the bed. Unex-

plained are the many worn spots in the middles of the coverlets.

In conclusion, coverlets are a part of our American heritage, reminding us of roots and traditions that have been shouldered aside by something often called progress. Since one of the by-products of the Machine Age is leisure time, it is a delectable irony that one of the newly discovered leisure-time activities is handweaving.

Otto Charles Thieme

Catalogue

A collection of coverlets might be catalogued by dates, by designs, by provenance, or by structure. As the majority of these coverlets lack exact dates, provenance, and utilize traditional designs, the organization of this catalogue is based on the analysis of coverlets in terms of weave structures proceeding from the simplest to the most complex. In order to provide a common basis for discussion, the terminology in this catalogue is based on Irene Emery's *The Primary Structures of Fabrics* (Washington, D.C., 1966). There are two basic weave structures: simple weaves and compound weaves. The simple weaves utilize only one set of warp threads and one set of weft threads. Each set is essential to the structure of the fabric and theoretically may not be removed without altering the nature of the fabric or destroying it altogether. Simple weaves may be divided into plain weave and float weaves. Float weaves may be subdivided, two prominent subdivisions being twill weaves and satin weaves. Twill weaves are characterized by a pronounced diagonal alignment of successive floats, while satin weaves exhibit an ordered but less pronounced diagonal alignment.

The first four coverlets in this catalogue are simple weaves, twills to be exact. These twill weave coverlets

might illustrate the confusion that exists in weaving terminology. No nineteenth-century references to twill weave coverlets are known. The current descriptive terms *twill diaper* and *twill damask* have been suggested to describe the weave structure of these coverlets. But the term *diaper* is unsatisfactory in that it has been traditionally used to describe an all-over repeating pattern, usually small scale. In other words, *diaper* refers to pattern and not structure. Furthermore, these patterns are large scale. Nor is *twill damask* appropriate. According to Emery, *damask* implies a single-fiber, monochrome patterned simple weave in which the pattern is produced by the pronounced warp float and weft float faces of satin weaves. (Certain twill weaves are also classified as damasks). None of our twill coverlets are of a single fiber and only one may be considered monochromatic. To further confuse matters, a York County, Pennsylvania coverlet dated 1850, in the Baltimore Museum of Art, has the words "damask coverlet" woven in. The structure of this coverlet, however, is clearly that of a compound weave and not a simple weave. Apparently the word *damask* was used to describe the design which in this case was similar to those used on true damask tablecloths, also

woven in Pennsylvania. The most accurate description of the structure of our coverlets, then, is simply *twill weave*.

The compound weaves used in these coverlets are of two kinds: those which have one set of warp threads and two sets of weft threads, and those which have two sets of warp threads and two sets of weft threads. In each case, one set of warp threads interacts with one set of weft threads to form a plain weave foundation fabric. The additional or supplementary sets of warp and weft threads are used to produce the pattern. In doublecloth, the second set of warp and weft threads forms not only the pattern but also a fabric in its own right. At least in theory, these supplementary patterning threads could be removed without altering the structure of the foundation fabric. Compound weave structures consisting of a plain weave foundation fabric and supplementary patterning wefts are derived from twill. Some of these twill derivatives are known by the familiar terms of "overshot" and "summer and winter." The second group of compound weaves used in coverlets include doublecloth and *Beiderwand*.

Theoretically any pattern can be handloomed. However, the Jacquard mechanism facilitates the weaving of fabrics with detailed, intricate

patterns. Coverlets requiring up to twenty-four shafts are usually presumed to be handloomed; coverlets with patterns requiring more than twenty-four shafts are ascribed to looms equipped with the Jacquard mechanism. These coverlets are usually woven with compound weave structures utilizing either supplementary patterning wefts, or extra sets of warps and wefts used in doublecloth and other various ways. Occasionally, a coverlet combines elements of both structures into complex weaves.

The outline for weave structure of the coverlets in this catalogue is as follows:

- A. SIMPLE WEAVES (one set of warps, one set of wefts)
 - 1. twill (catalogue numbers 1-3)
 - 2. point twill (catalogue number 4)
- B. COMPOUND WEAVES (hand-woven)
 - 1. one set of warps, two sets of wefts
 - a. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary patterning wefts in twill derivative (overshot) (catalogue numbers 5-9)
 - b. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary patterning wefts in twill derivative (summer and winter) (catalogue numbers 10-12)
 - c. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary

patterning wefts in twill derivative (catalogue numbers 13-17)

- 2. two sets of warps, two sets of wefts
 - a. doublecloth (catalogue numbers 18-25)
- C. COMPOUND WEAVES (Jacquard mechanism controlled)
 - 1. one set of warps, two sets of wefts
 - a. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary patterning weft (catalogue numbers 26-28)
 - 2. two sets of warps, two sets of wefts
 - a. doublecloth (catalogue numbers 29-35)
 - b. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary binding warp and supplementary patterning weft (catalogue number 36)
 - c. foundation fabric in plain weave, supplementary binding warp and supplementary patterning weft (*Beiderwand*) (catalogue numbers 37, 38)

All coverlets in this exhibition and catalogue are in the Helen L. Allen Textile Collection, School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences. Except as noted otherwise, the coverlets were included in the the Bequest of Miss Allen. The Allen accession number (e.g., W.L. US-1268) appears in each catalogue entry. For measurements, width of the coverlet precedes length.

American Coverlets

1

United States, 1800–1810

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed, 73" x 74½"

Twill weave, 16 shafts

WARP

linen, 2 ply, S twist, light blue, 22 threads per inch

WEFT

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 22 threads per inch

W.L. US-1268

Coverlets woven in twill weave with linen warps and wool wefts disappeared very early in the nineteenth century, probably because of cheaper, commercially produced cotton thread. The four-block pattern is a variation of "Whig Rose."

2

United States, 1830–1850

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed, 71" x 85½"

Twill weave, 16 shafts

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, natural, 30 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, brick red, 26 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark green, 26 threads per inch

WEFT

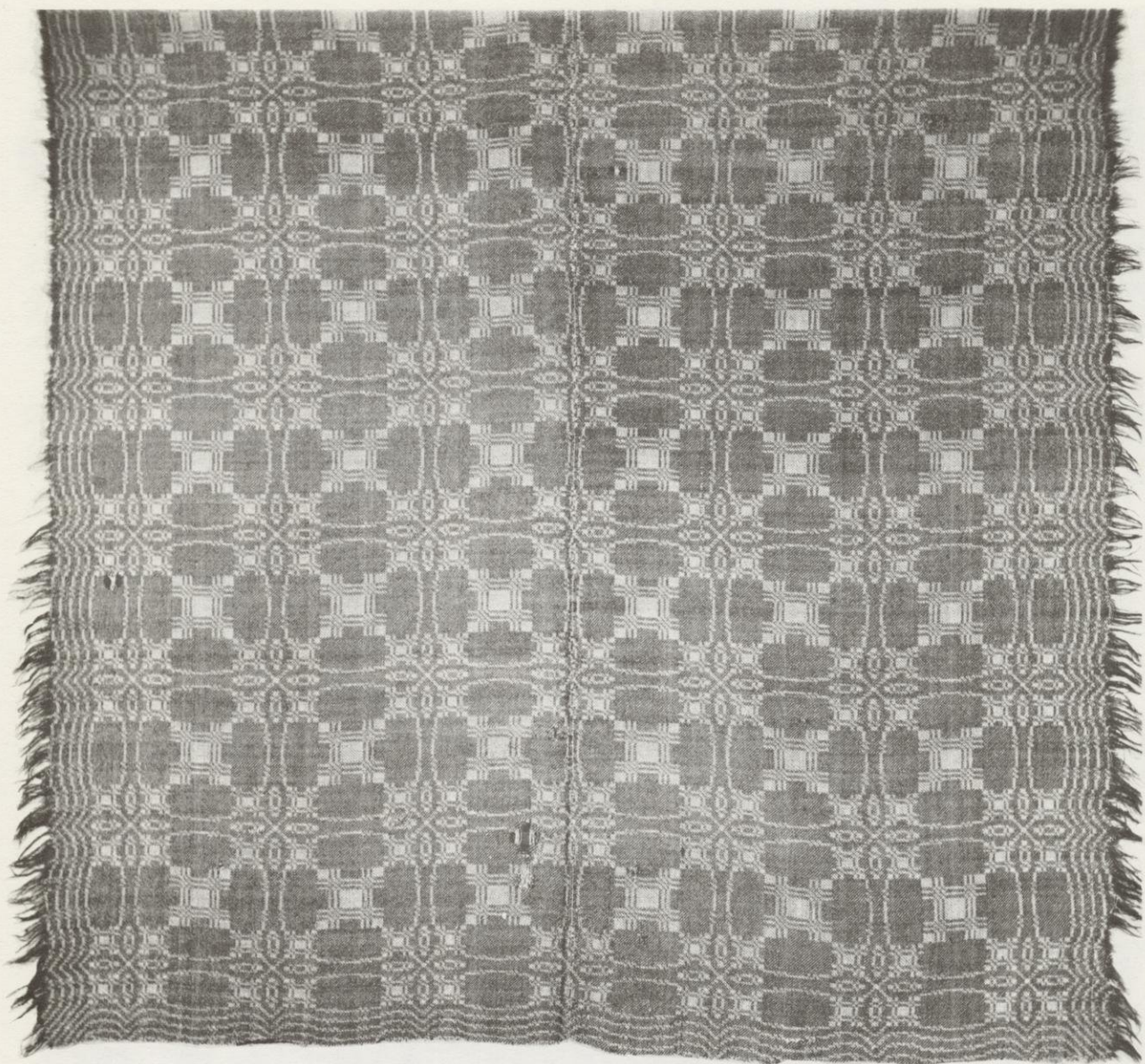
cotton, 3 ply, S twist, natural, 30 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, brick red, 26 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark green, 26 threads per inch

W.L. US-18

The striking four block pattern of this coverlet is a result of the juxtaposition of an equal width tricolor plaid, regularly placed green "snowball" motifs and thin white linear accents. Burnham points out that this type of coverlet appears to be most associated with the German settlements in Pennsylvania.





3

United States, 1830–1850

One loom width, self-fringed, $30\frac{1}{2}" \times 83\frac{3}{4}"$

Twill weave, 16 shafts

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 22 threads per inch
wool, 3 ply, Z twist, brick red, 21 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 22 threads per inch
wool, 3 ply, Z twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch

W.L. US-15

In this four block pattern the thin white lines of the plaid form a grid containing “rose” and “pine tree” motifs. Most early coverlets were woven with 1 and 2 ply threads; and by 1850 3 ply wool and cotton threads were easily available commercially. This coverlet is unusual in that the wool is 3 ply Z twist of singles in S twist. It is probably handspun.

4

United States, 1840–1860

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed, $73\frac{1}{2}" \times 93\frac{1}{2}"$

Point twill weave, 12 shafts

WARP

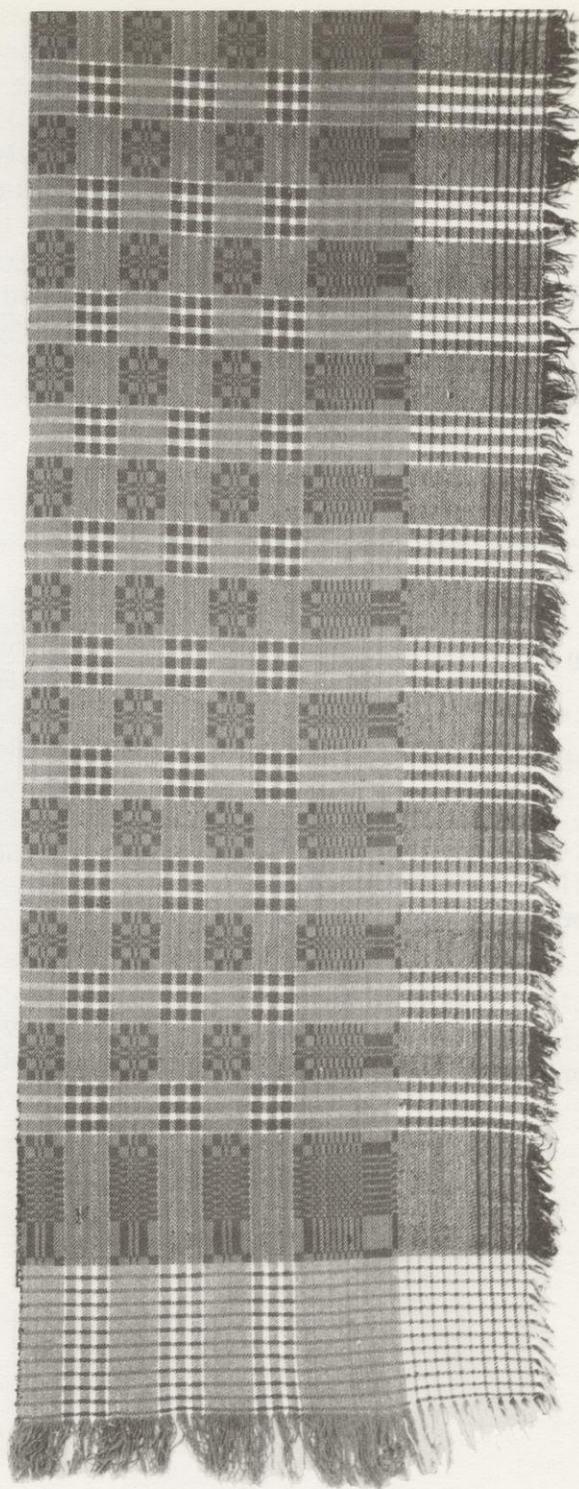
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, light blue, 20 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red orange, 20 threads per inch

WEFT

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 21 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, light blue, 21 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red orange, 22 threads per inch

W.L. US-1083

This is one of two all-wool point twill coverlets in the Allen Textile Collection. The other is colored dark blue, yellow and brownish red. Canadian tradition holds that this type of coverlet functioned as horse blanket and was produced until late in the nineteenth century. The pattern produced by solidly colored shapes and areas of small patterns is made even more striking by the unusually intense colors.





5

United States, 1830–1850

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 71½" x 89"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (overshot), 4 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 29 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 28 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 28 threads per inch

W.L. US-2171

Purchase, Allen Textile Fund

Only two motifs are used in this four block pattern "star" and "table;" a coverlet pattern can be simple yet effective. It is a variation of a pattern commonly called "mon-mouth." In examining the weave, asymmetrical blocks occur occasionally. They are not necessarily mistakes.

6

United States, 1820–1830

Two loom widths joined, applied fringe, 85½" x 96½"

Inscription: W III, embroidered in cross-stitch

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (overshot), 4 shafts

WARP

linen, 2 ply, S twist, buff, 19 threads per inch

WEFT

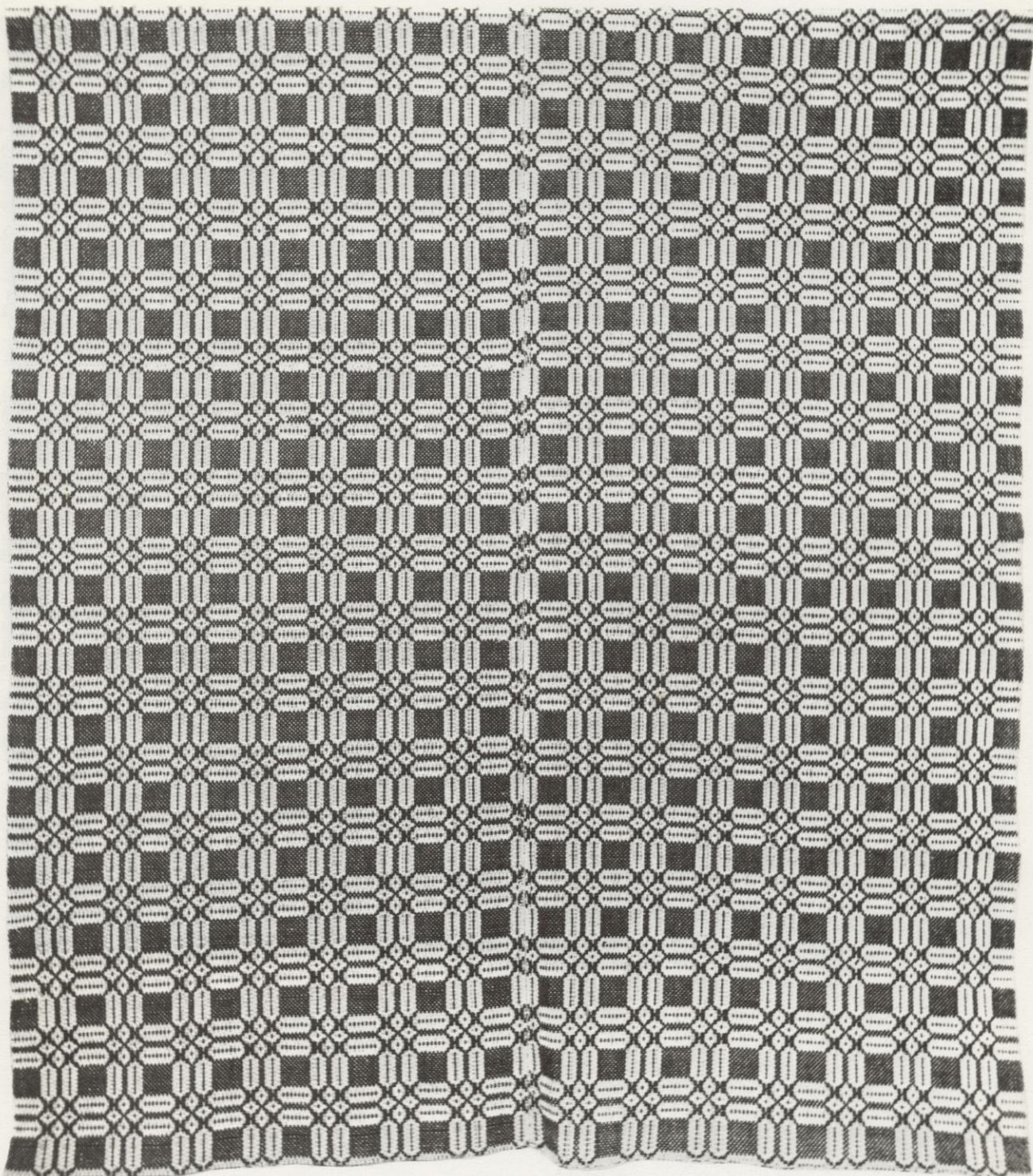
cotton, 2 ply, S twist, buff, 17 threads per inch

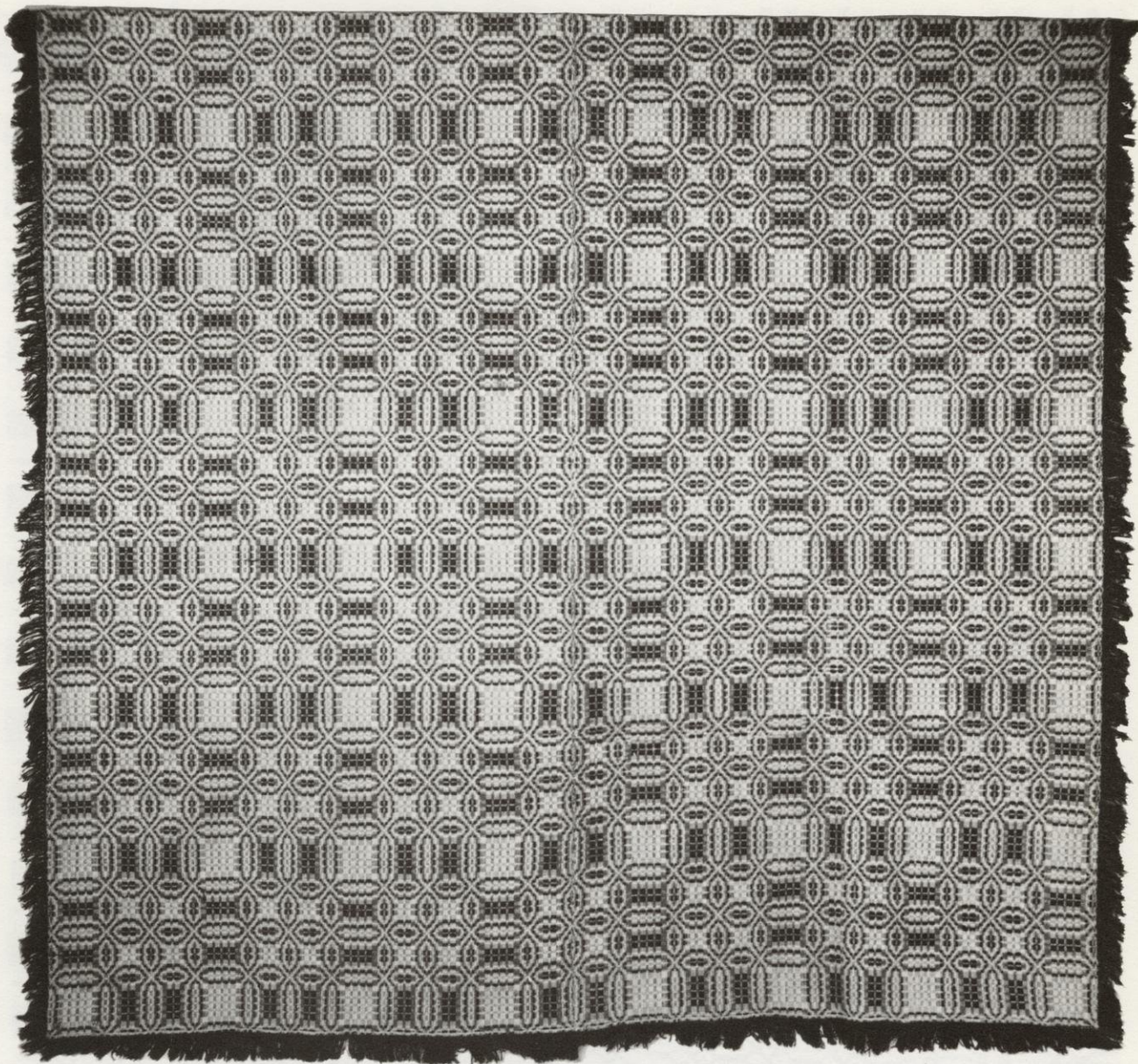
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red-brown, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, chrome green, 17 threads per inch

W.L. US-16

American coverlets utilizing linen were never common, and almost all examples are dated before 1830. The combination of three fibers is very unusual as are the colors of the wool wefts which are used in alternate blocks throughout the four block pattern.





7

United States, 1810–1830

One loom width, no fringe, $28\frac{1}{2}$ " x 91"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (overshot), 4 shafts

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 45 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 37 threads per inch

wool, 1 ply, Z twist, dark blue, 37 threads per inch

W.L. US-27b

The utilization of fine single-ply threads and a high number of threads per inch results in crisp pattern delineation. This panel originally was joined to two others in the Allen Textile Collection, making up a three width coverlet. All three panels suffer distortion by shrinking.

8

United States, 1810–1830

Three loom widths joined, no fringe, $87\frac{1}{8}$ " x 104"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (overshot), 4 shafts

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, buff, 50 threads per inch

WEFT

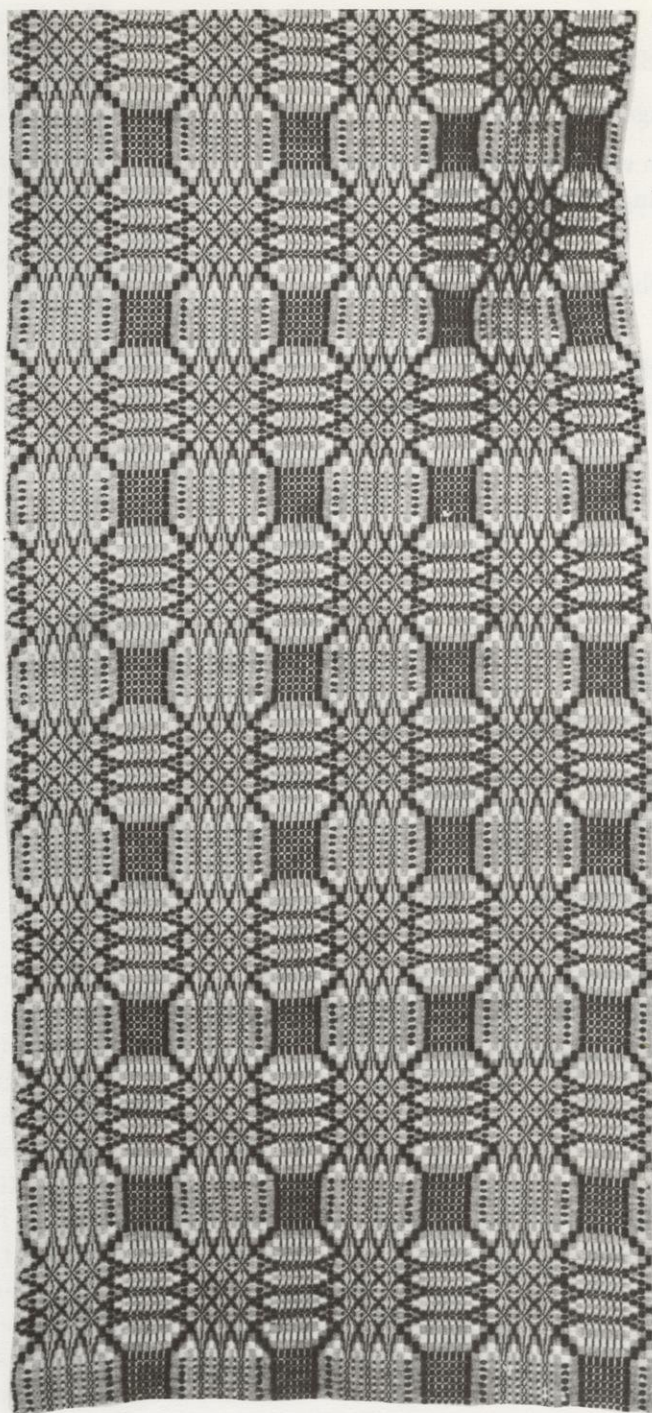
cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, buff, 50 threads per inch

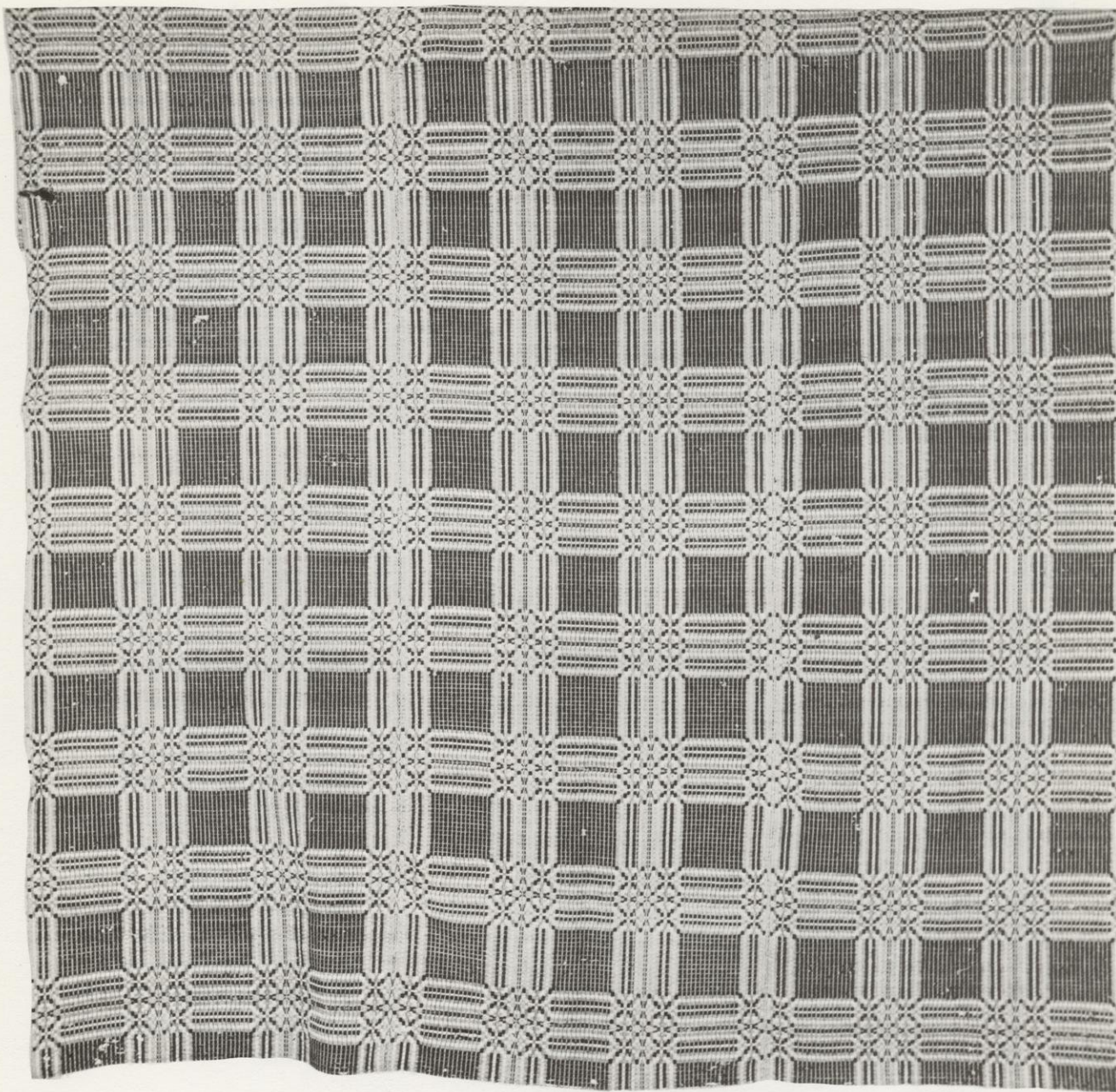
wool, 1 ply, Z twist, dark blue, 50 threads per inch

wool, 1 ply, Z twist, brick red, 50 threads per inch

W.L. US-149

In comparing the four block patterns of this coverlet and catalogue no. 5, it is interesting to note how the same basic combination of motifs can be manipulated to produce different effects. The pattern of catalogue no. 5 emphasizes constant visual movement between areas, while this pattern is based on stable compartmentalization. The placement of the red color was well-planned for maximum effect. The three panels of this coverlet were cut from a length at least 10 yards long. During weaving it was beaten more tightly at the beginning than at the end. Uneven beating is sometimes an indication of a nonprofessional or inexperienced weaver.





9

United States, 1830–1850

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, $60\frac{1}{2}" \times 74\frac{1}{2}"$

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (overshot), 4 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 24 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 22 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch

W.L. US-1680

Gift of Forest and Lenore Middleton

This coverlet contains “overshot” structure in both its usual appearance and in a variation which resembles “summer and winter.” Not all coverlet patterns are models of taste and refinement. The strangely proportioned “wheel” and “table” motifs in this four block coverlet compete for visual dominance. The result is aggressive and somewhat unsettling.

10

United States, 1800–1830

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, $74" \times 82\frac{1}{2}"$

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (summer and winter), 6 shafts

WARP

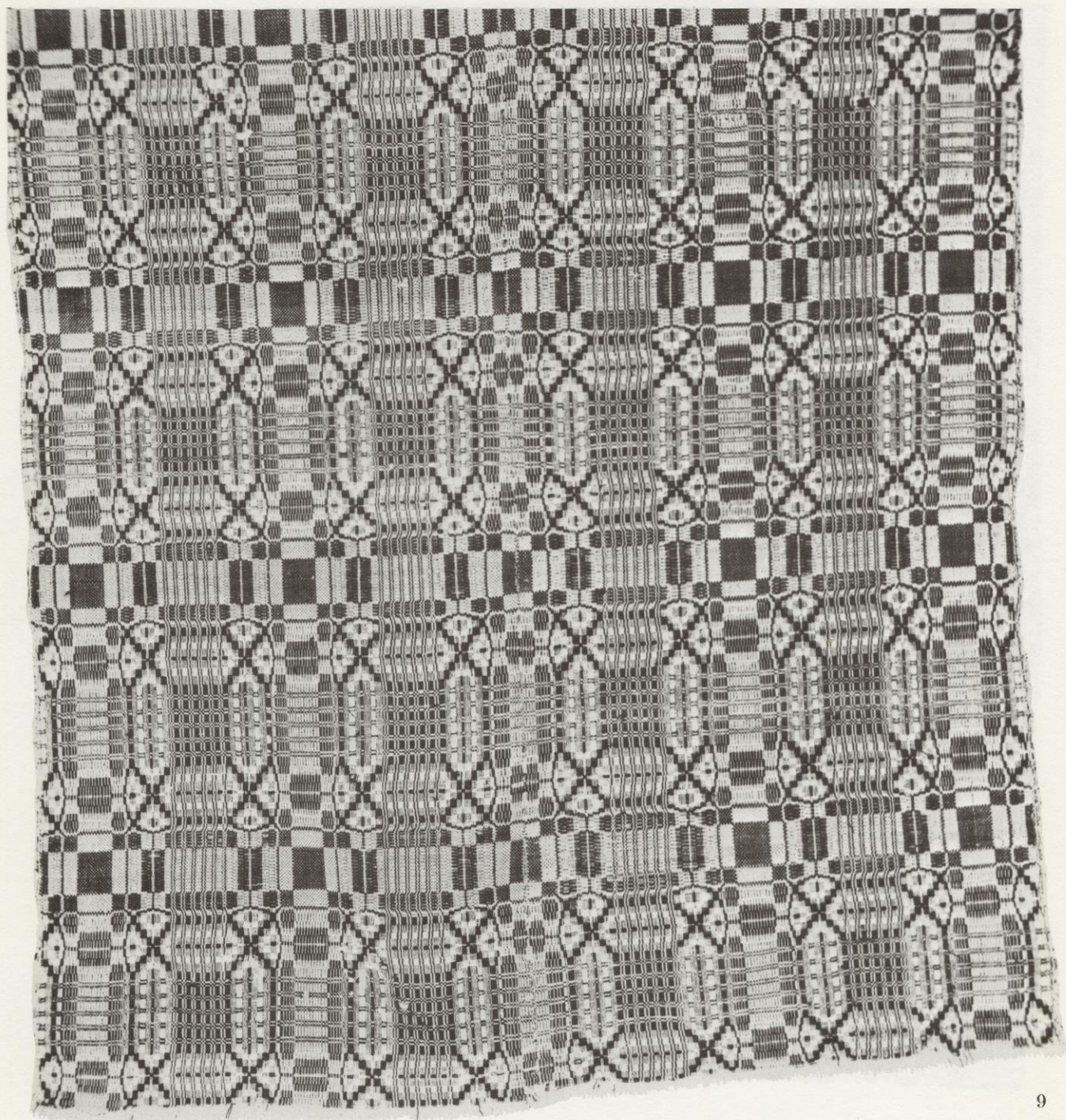
cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 19 threads per inch

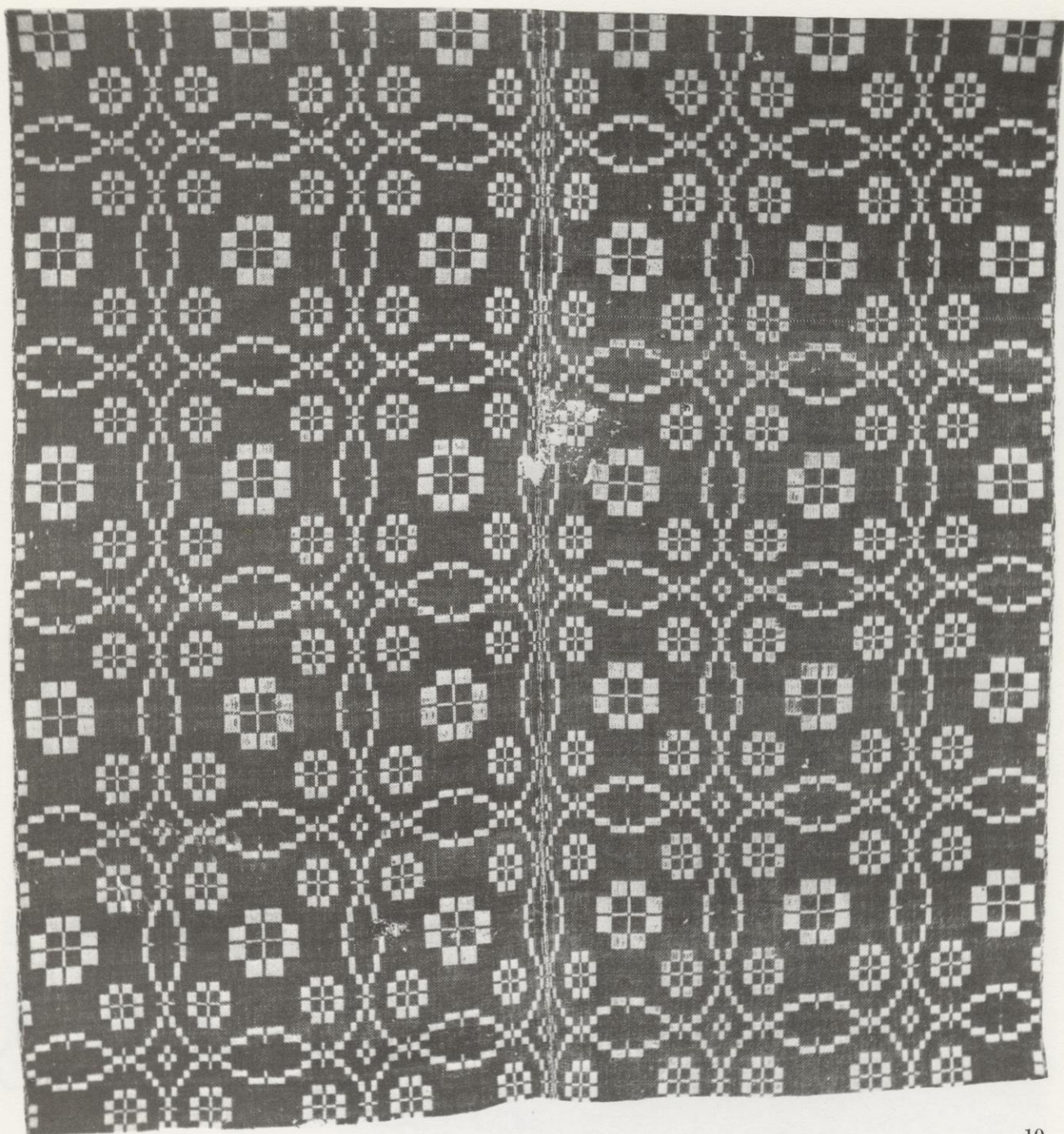
WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 21 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 21 threads per inch

W.L. US-151

The “Whig Rose” motif, basis of countless variations, is seen here in its most traditional form. It appears in German pattern books as early as 1723 and was, no doubt, a standard hand-weaver’s pattern. When European weavers brought it to this country in the late eighteenth century, it was renamed to honor the members of the patriotic party that supported the American Revolution. It is woven in unusually large scale in this coverlet.





11

United States, 1810–1835

Two loom widths joined, one selvage not present, applied fringe on two sides, $68\frac{3}{4}$ " x 93"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (summer and winter), 6 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 24 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 29 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 28 threads per inch

W.L. US-1004

This four block pattern is very reminiscent of geometric doublecloth patterns (compare catalogue no. 19). These three coverlets woven in the so-called "summer and winter" weave illustrate that most geometric patterns could be interpreted in a number of weave structures. Each of these coverlets could have been woven in "overshot," "summer and winter," and even doublecloth.

12

United States, 1800–1835

One loom width, applied fringe, 36" x 94"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts (summer and winter), 6 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 26 threads per inch

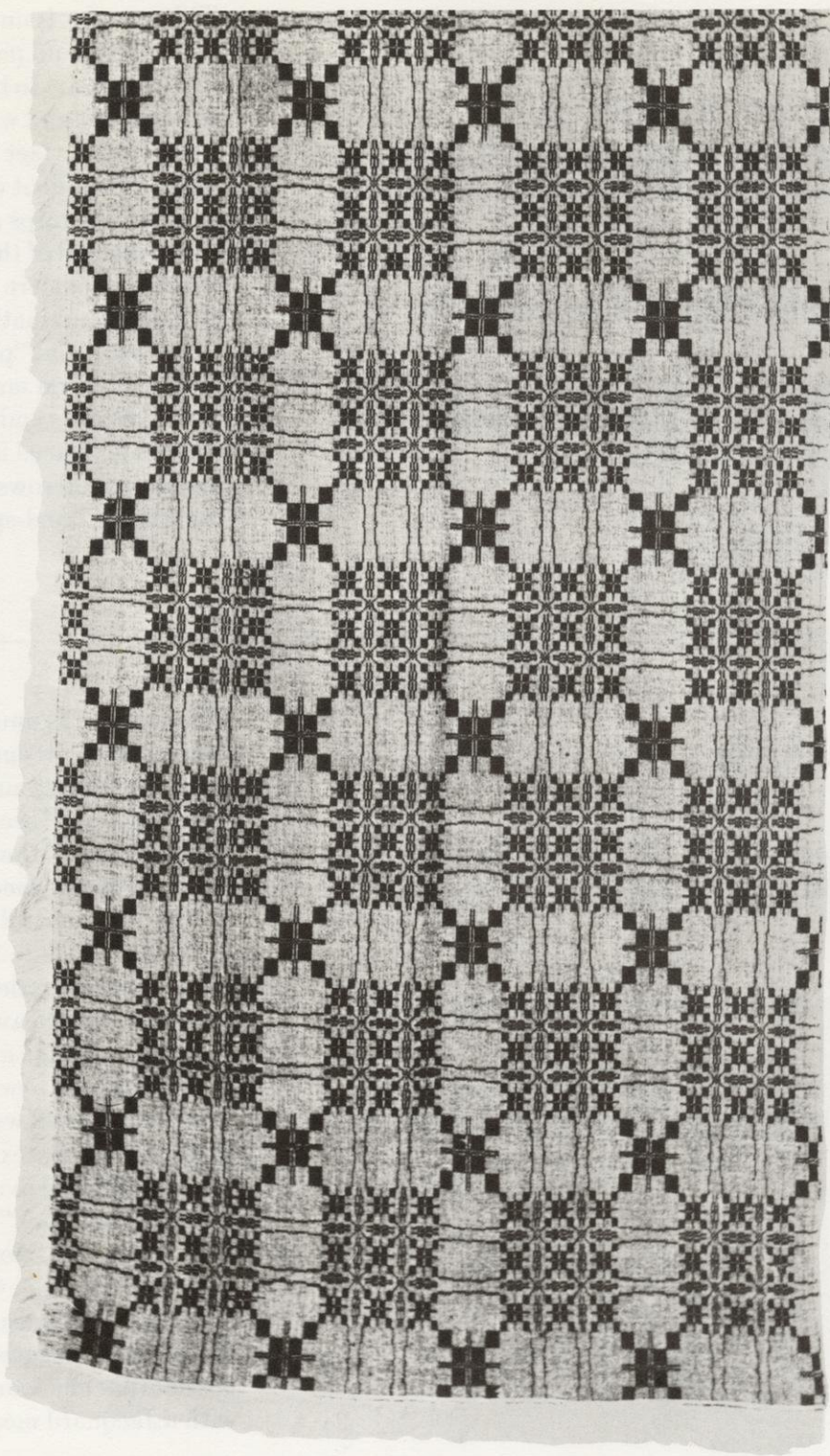
WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 30 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, Z twist, dark blue, 30 threads per inch

W.L. US-1063

This simple yet effective four block pattern is based on the "star" motif seen both in a large scale star and in tables of nine small stars. It is a traditional handweaver's pattern.





13

United States, 1800–1840

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 65½" x 91"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts in a twill derivative, 12 shafts

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 32 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 24 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, S twist, dark blue, 24 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, S twist, pink, 24 threads per inch

W.L. US-2204

Purchase, Allen Textile Fund

This coverlet is unusual in both weave and pattern. The weave appears to be the same as "summer and winter" except for the fact that the weft threads float over groups of both five warps and three warps instead of the usual three. The pattern is an uncommon combination of the "snowball" and "pine tree" motifs found on many double-cloth coverlets and large squares all placed in alternating horizontal rows. The wool is probably hand-spun.

14

United States, 1820–1850

One loom width, applied fringe, 35" x 82"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts in a twill derivative, 17 shafts

WARP

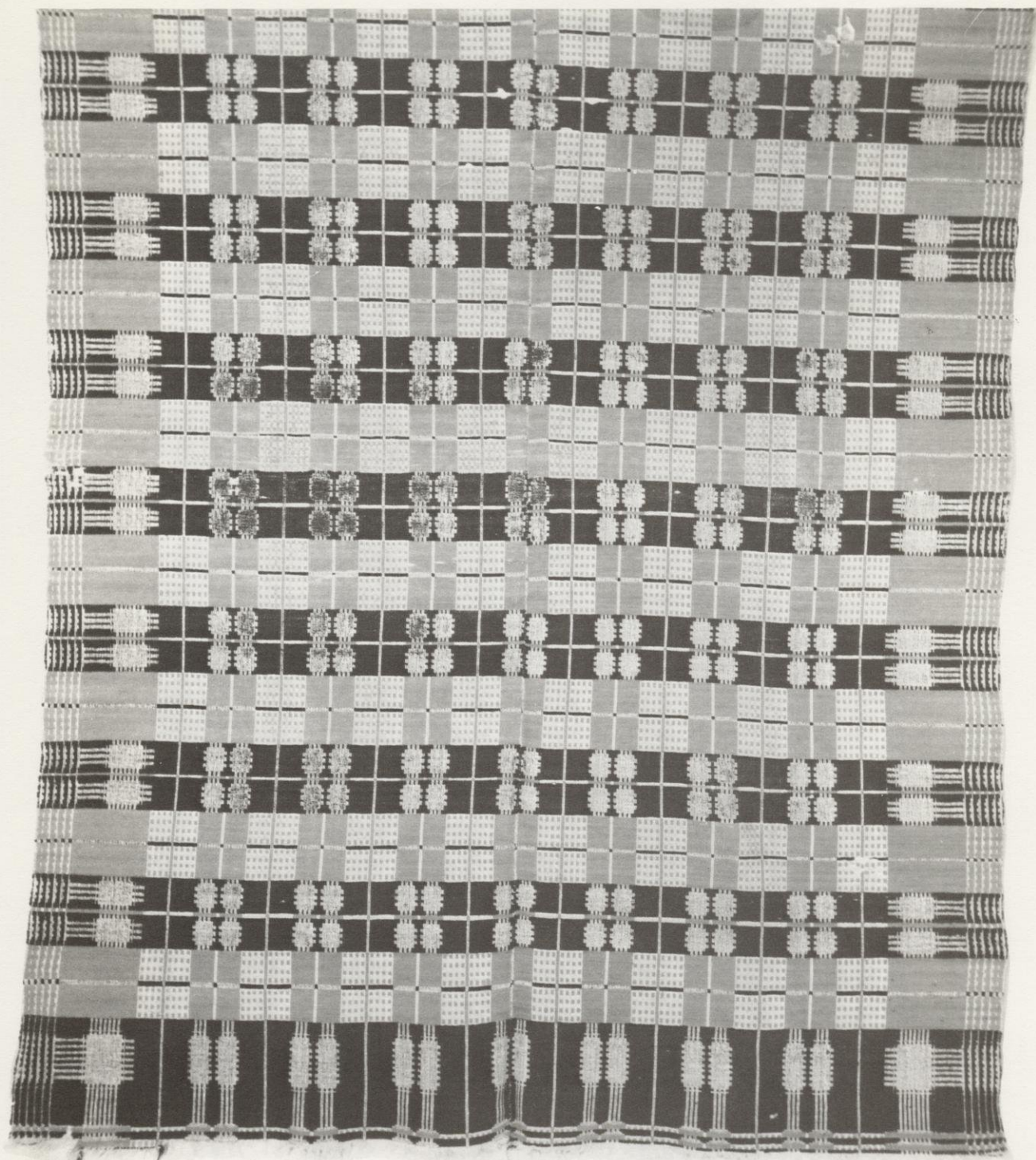
cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 34 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, paired, natural, 48 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, Z twist, pale red-orange, 24 threads per inch

W.L. US-1782

This coverlet is unusual in terms of both design and structure. The traditional "rose" and "pine tree" are combined with a "flower" that is commonly found in Jacquard mechanism-controlled patterns from the late 1830's and 1840's. This coverlet pattern may be a handweaver's attempt to combine motifs both traditional and new. The use of several related weaves further complicates the pattern: traditional overshot is found in the "rose," straight twill in the tiny "flower," and twill derivatives in the "flower." The unusual number of shafts suggests the possible use of a loom fitted with a Jacquard mechanism.





15

United States, 1820–1860

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed, 67" x 91½"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts in a twill derivative, 21 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 24 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 21 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 21 threads per inch

W.L. US-70

This pattern is unusual in that it is made up of three size variations of the same floral medallion. It relates in structure to catalogue no. 14.

16

United States, 1830–1840

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 60½" x 91"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts in a twill derivative, 18 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 32 threads per inch

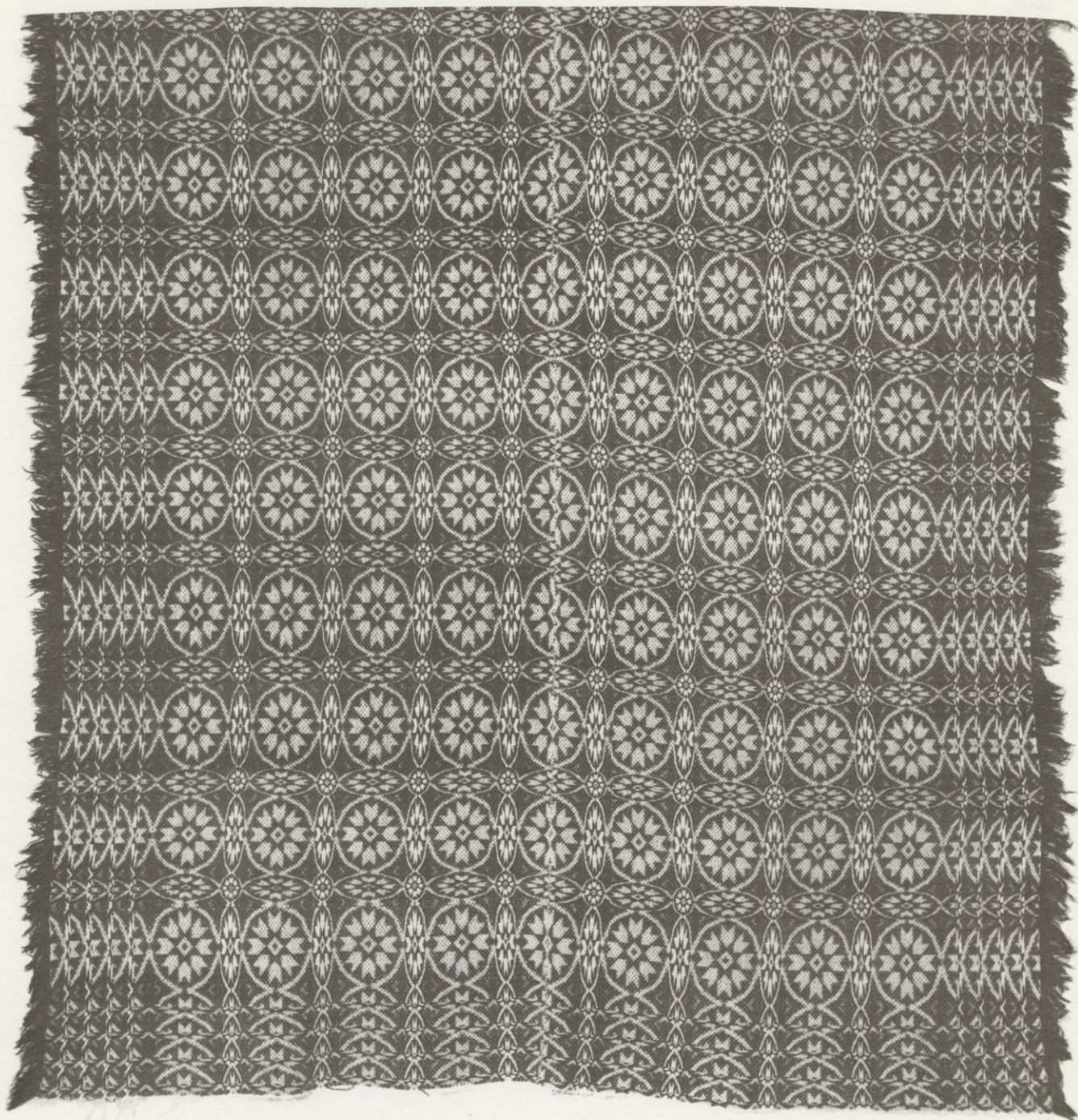
WEFT

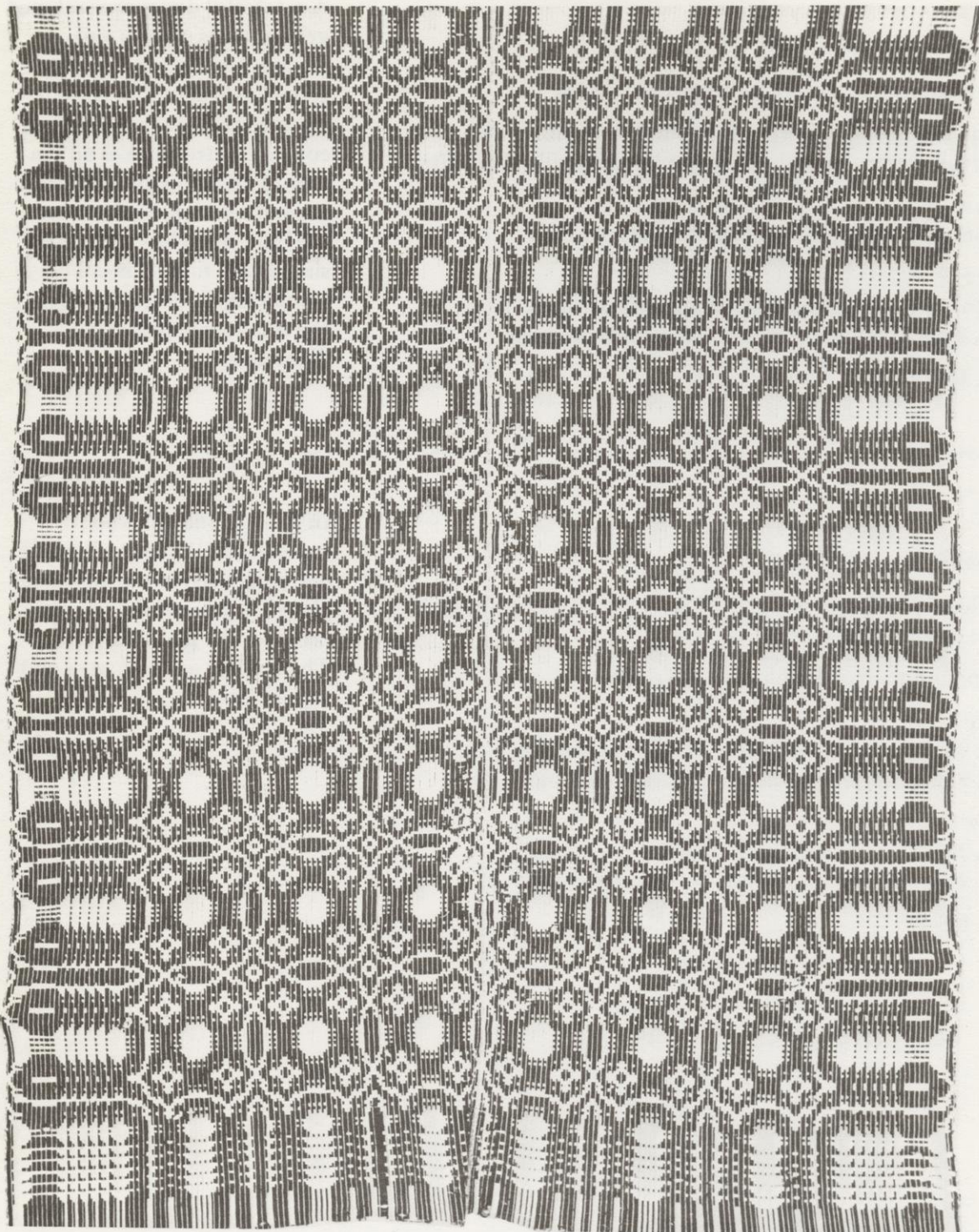
cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 24 threads per inch

wool, 1 ply, Z twist, dark blue, 24 threads per inch

W.L. US-68

Coverlets of this weave are uncommon, due, perhaps, to the unusually long weft floats which tend to snag. The eight block pattern is a variation of the "Whig Rose" with a "snowball" center and "pine tree" border. The vibrating quality of the surface is a result of the thin vertical lines.





17

United States, 1820–1860

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 74" x 87 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts in "point twill," 10 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 25 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 22 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 22 threads per inch

W.L. US-36

A masterful designer combined grid systems of lines and squares to produce this patterned field set off by a well-planned textural border. This coverlet pattern takes advantage of an ambiguous figure-ground relationship between the blue and white geometric shapes and lines. The all-over complexity is heightened by the small scale point twill diamonds.

18

United States, 1810–1840

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed at the bottom, applied fringe on sides, 64 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 73"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 16 shafts

WARP

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, brick red, 17 threads per inch

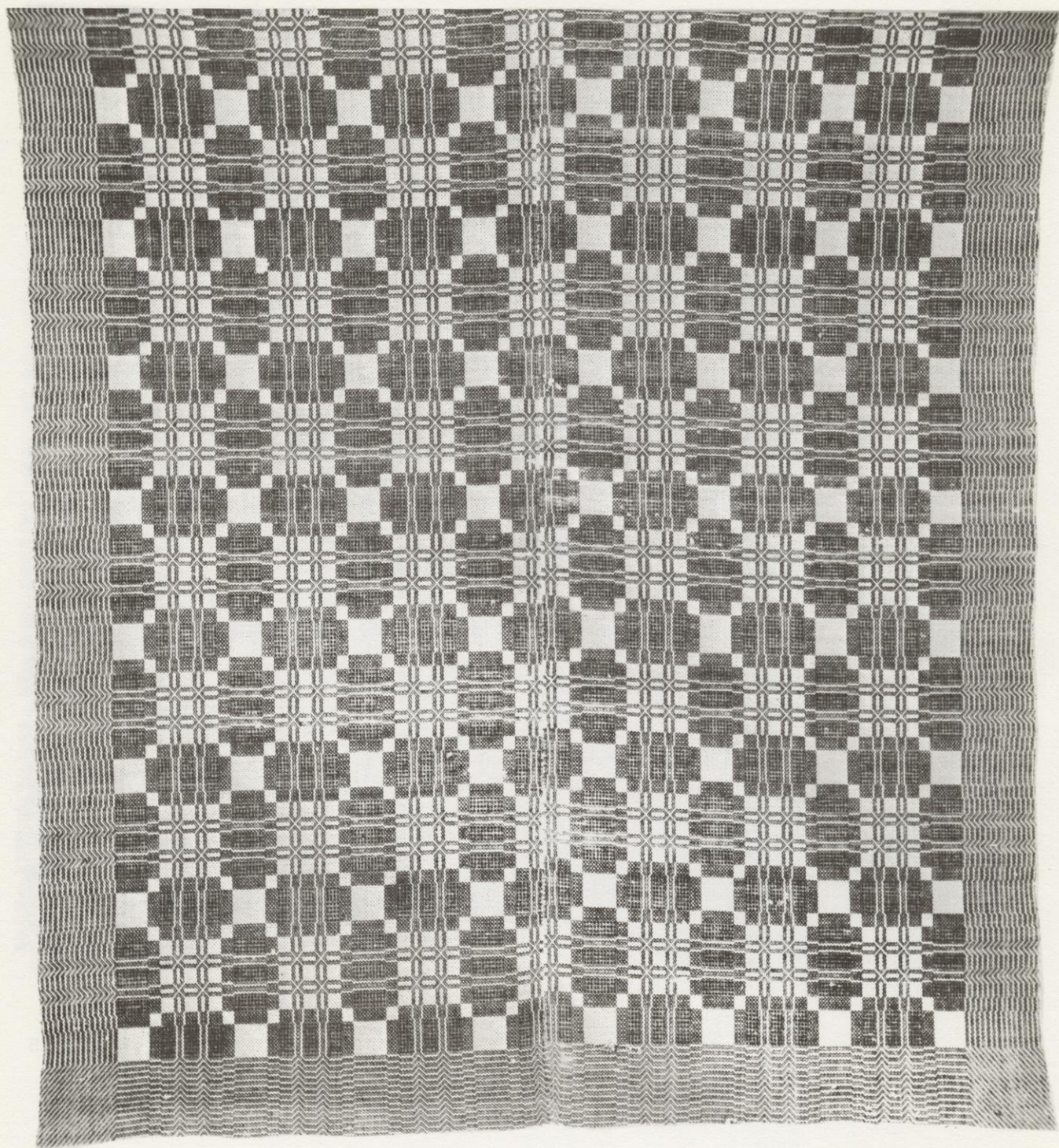
WEFT

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, brick red, 18 threads per inch

W.L. US-17

In this unusual all-wool coverlet the "pine tree" motif normally used in the border is placed in groups of fives and becomes the main pattern. The borders are half trees and tops of trees.





19

United States, 1820–1840

Two loom widths joined, self-fringed on bottom, applied fringe on sides, $67\frac{3}{4}$ " x 81"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 16 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 19 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 17 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 17 threads per inch

W.L. US-1085

This untraditional and unusual coverlet pattern is seldom found. The four block pattern, however, is similar to others of the period and to sections of number 13 in this catalogue.

20

United States, 1820–1840

Two loom widths joined, self fringed on three sides, 69" x 79"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 16 shafts

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 19 threads per inch

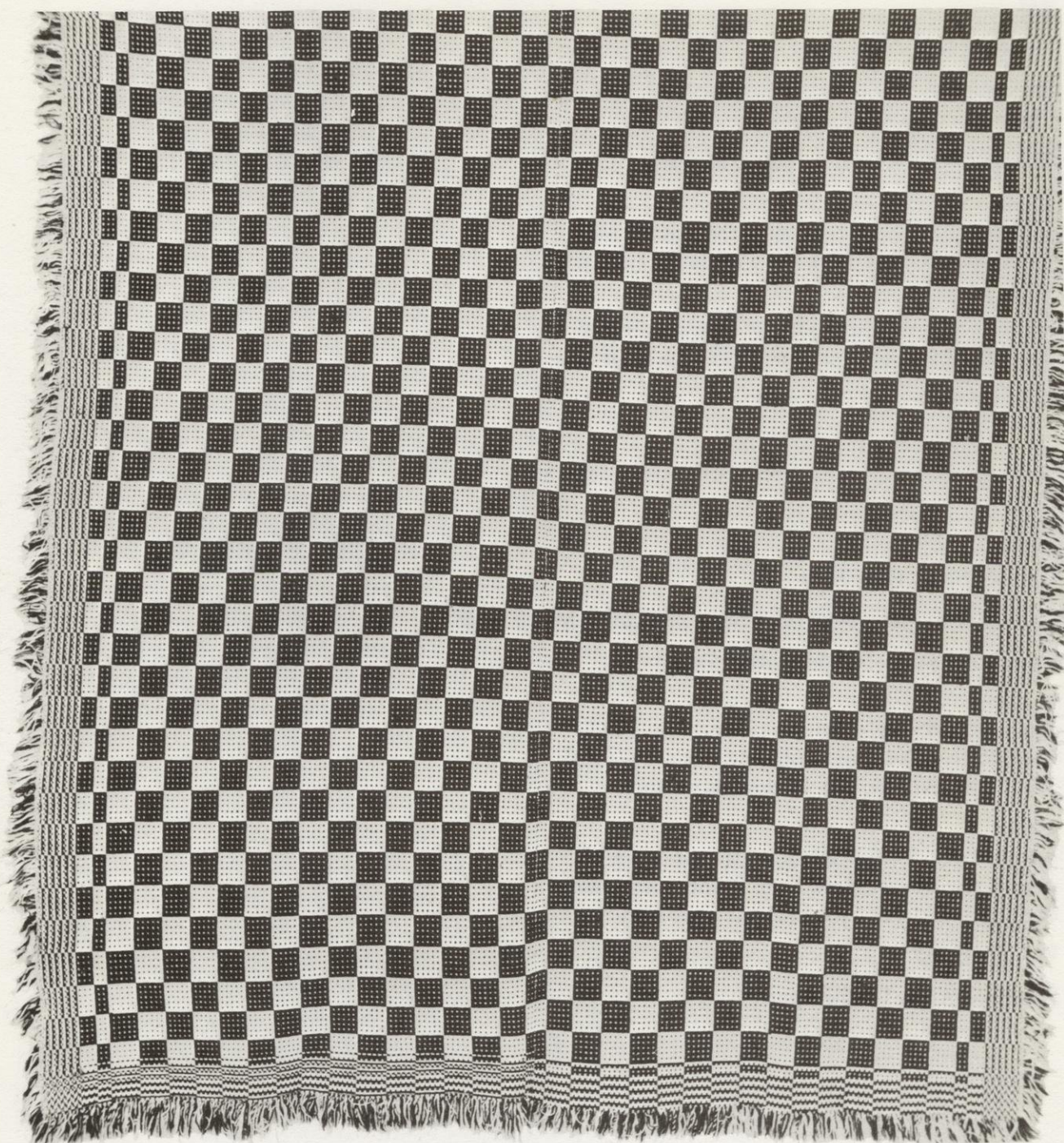
WEFT

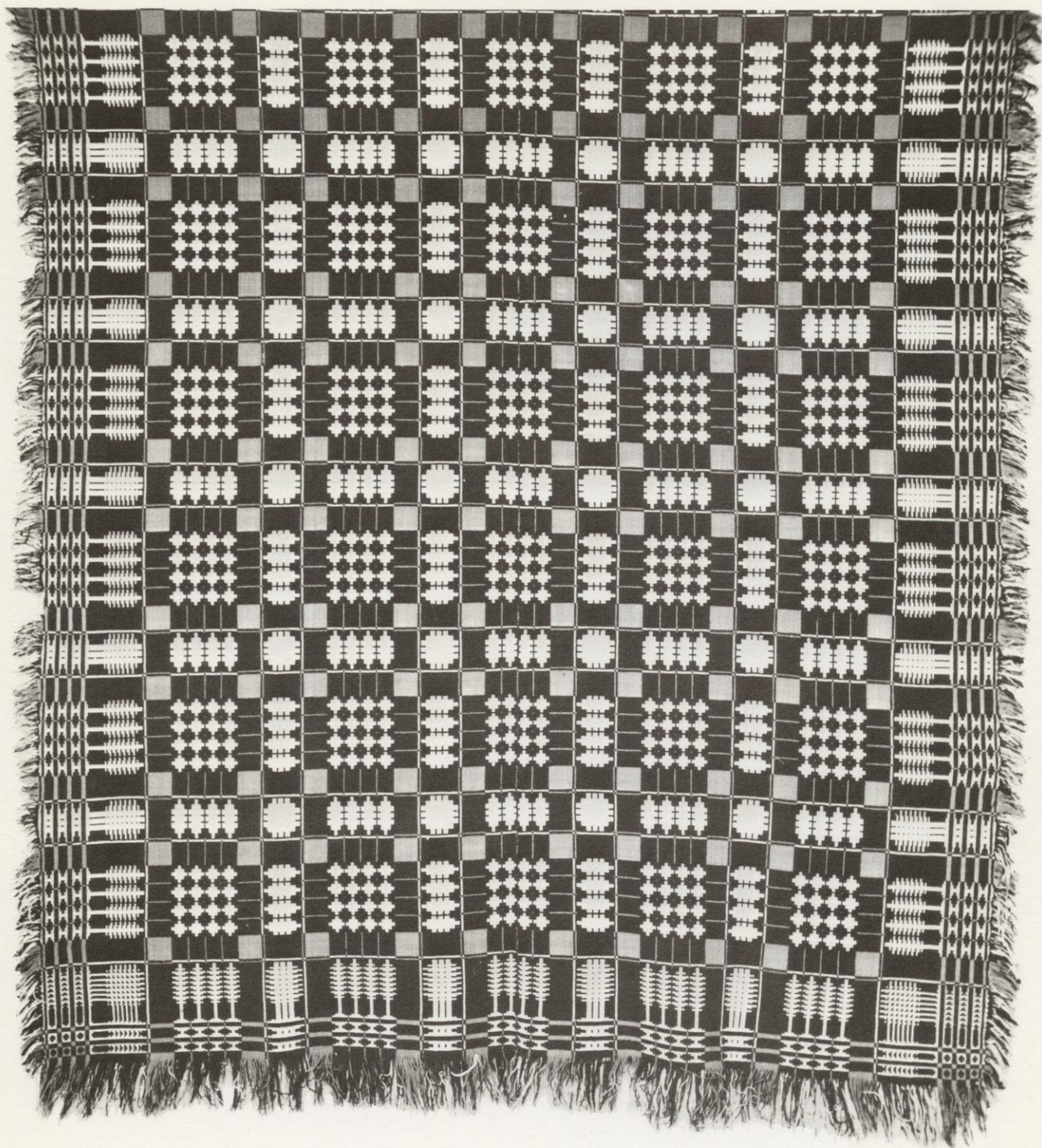
cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 19 threads per inch

W.L. US-2164

Purchase, Allen Textile Fund

Strong visual rhythms of the white "snowballs," "diamonds," and "lozenges" vie for attention with red squares. The thin grid work helps to unite these elements and give stability to the pattern.





21

United States, 1810–1840

One loom width, raveled end, 35" x 81"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 20 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 16 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red brown, 16 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red brown, 16 threads per inch

W.L. US-13

A variation of the traditional "Whig Rose" motif is interpreted in this five block doublecloth coverlet. The single "rose" has been replaced with four "snowballs." Geometric patterns woven in doublecloth, such as this one, were most popular between 1810 and 1840.

22

United States, 1830–1840

Two loom widths joined, self fringed, 70½" x 81"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 20 shafts

WARP

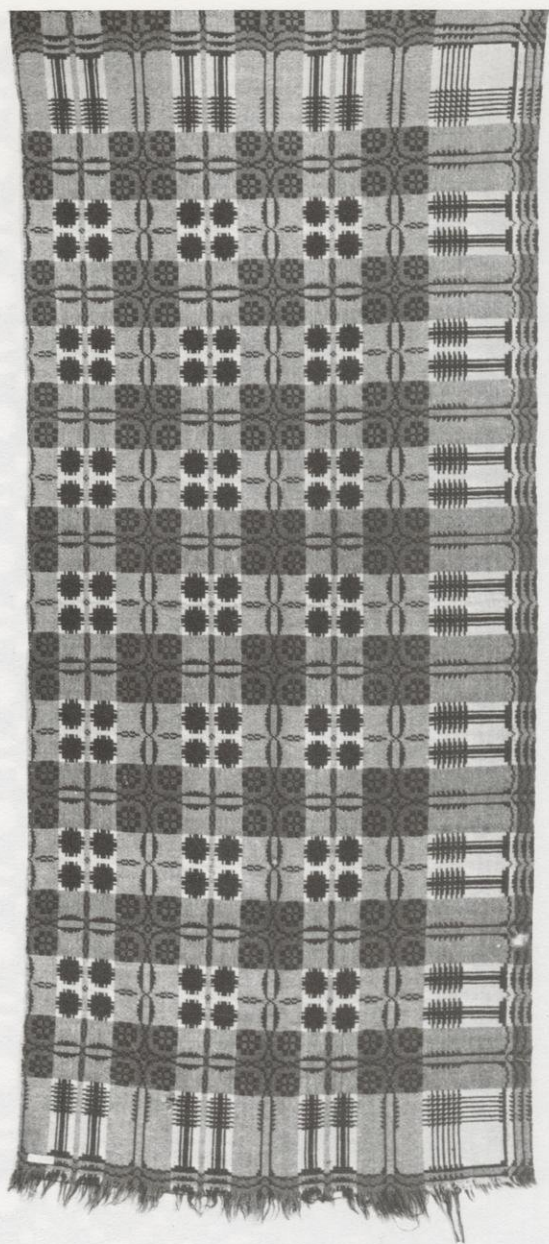
cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 18 threads per inch

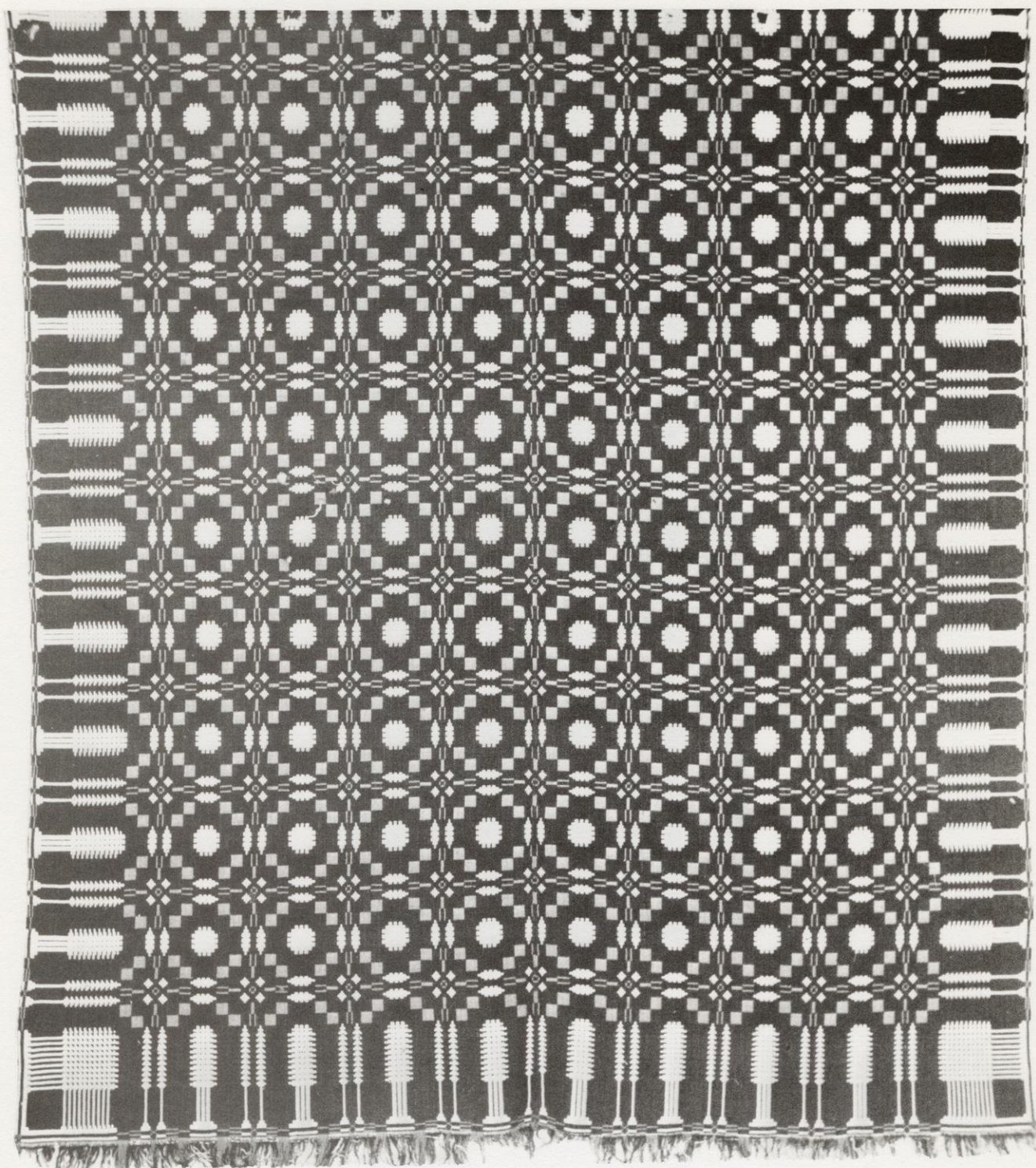
WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 17 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 17 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 17 threads per inch

W.L. US-14

The designer of this coverlet based his pattern on the traditional "Whig Rose" motif. By the addition of the red squares and sensitive placement of the white shapes, a new exciting five block pattern was achieved.





23

United States, 1820–1840

Two loom widths joined, self fringed on three sides, 67" x 75"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 20 shafts

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark red, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 19 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 17 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 17 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark red, 17 threads per inch

W.L. US-7

The allover five block pattern is made up of three different "table" motifs in white, each set off by squares and lines in red. The border is an unusual grove of "pine trees."

24

United States, 1810–1840

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 72" x 75½"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 24 shafts

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch

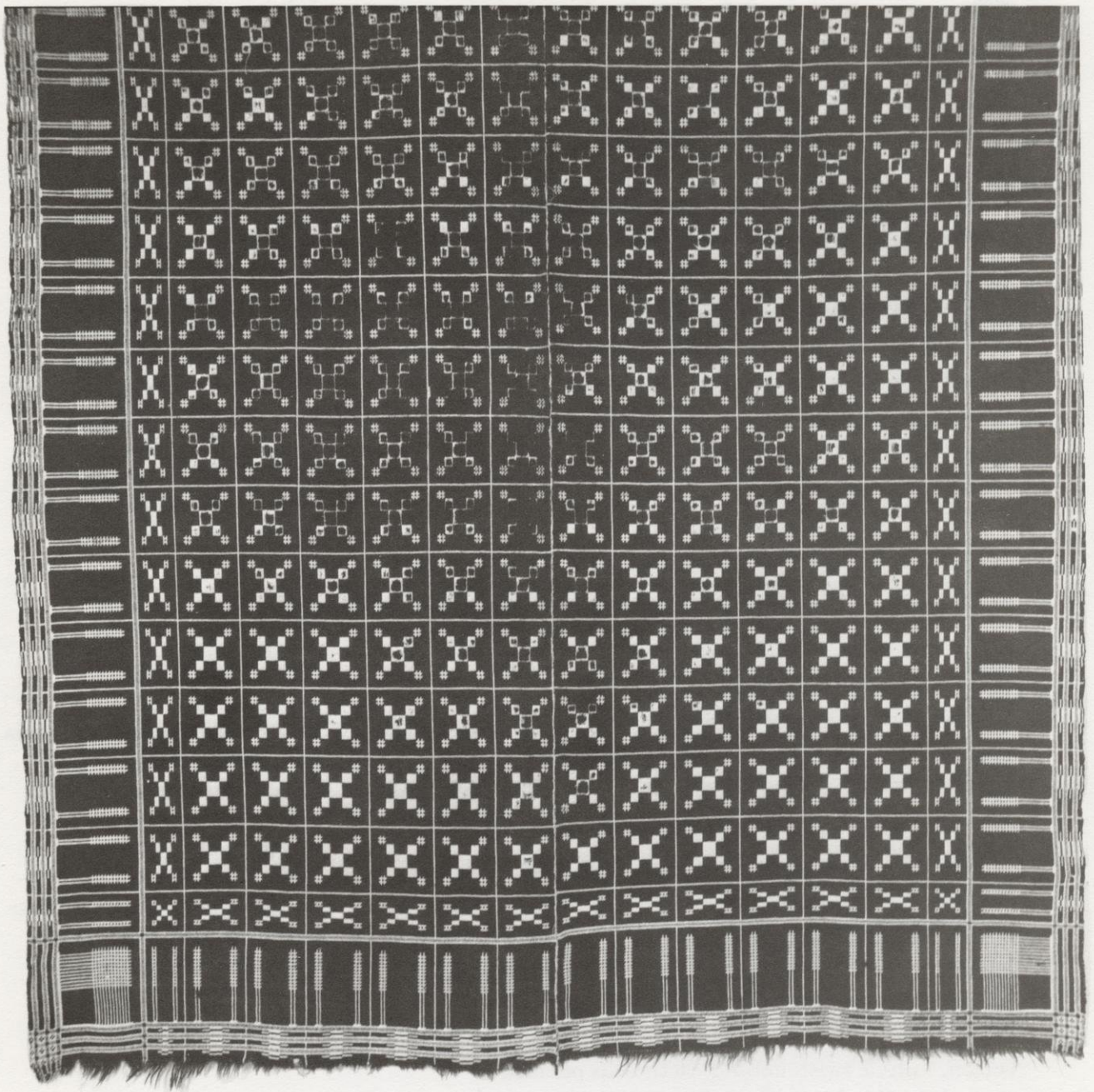
WEFT

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch

W.L. US-1005

This unusual six block pattern divides the coverlet into squares and places a "cross" in each one. The "pine tree" motif in the border is unusually thin. This deceptively simple coverlet pattern was woven on a 24 shaft loom, a large and difficult machine to handle by even a professional weaver.





25

United States, 1820-1840

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 76" x 78"

Compound weave: doublecloth, 24 shafts

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 24 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 24 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 22 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 22 threads per inch

W.L. US-22

It is interesting to note the difference in pattern complexity in this coverlet and the preceding. Both are six block patterns and were woven on a 24 shaft loom; yet one is very simple, the other very complex. It has been suggested that this coverlet may have been woven on a loom with a Jacquard attachment or other mechanical device. The scattered numerous mistakes in the weaving indicate that this was not so, as mechanical shedding devices added to a loom would tend to assure exact repetition even of mistakes.

26

United States, Pennsylvania, 1834

Inscription · PHILIP NAGEL, DOVER
TOWNSHIP, 1834

Two loom widths joined, self fringed on two sides, 67" x 83½"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with
supplementary patterning wefts, jacquard mechanism
controlled weave

WARP

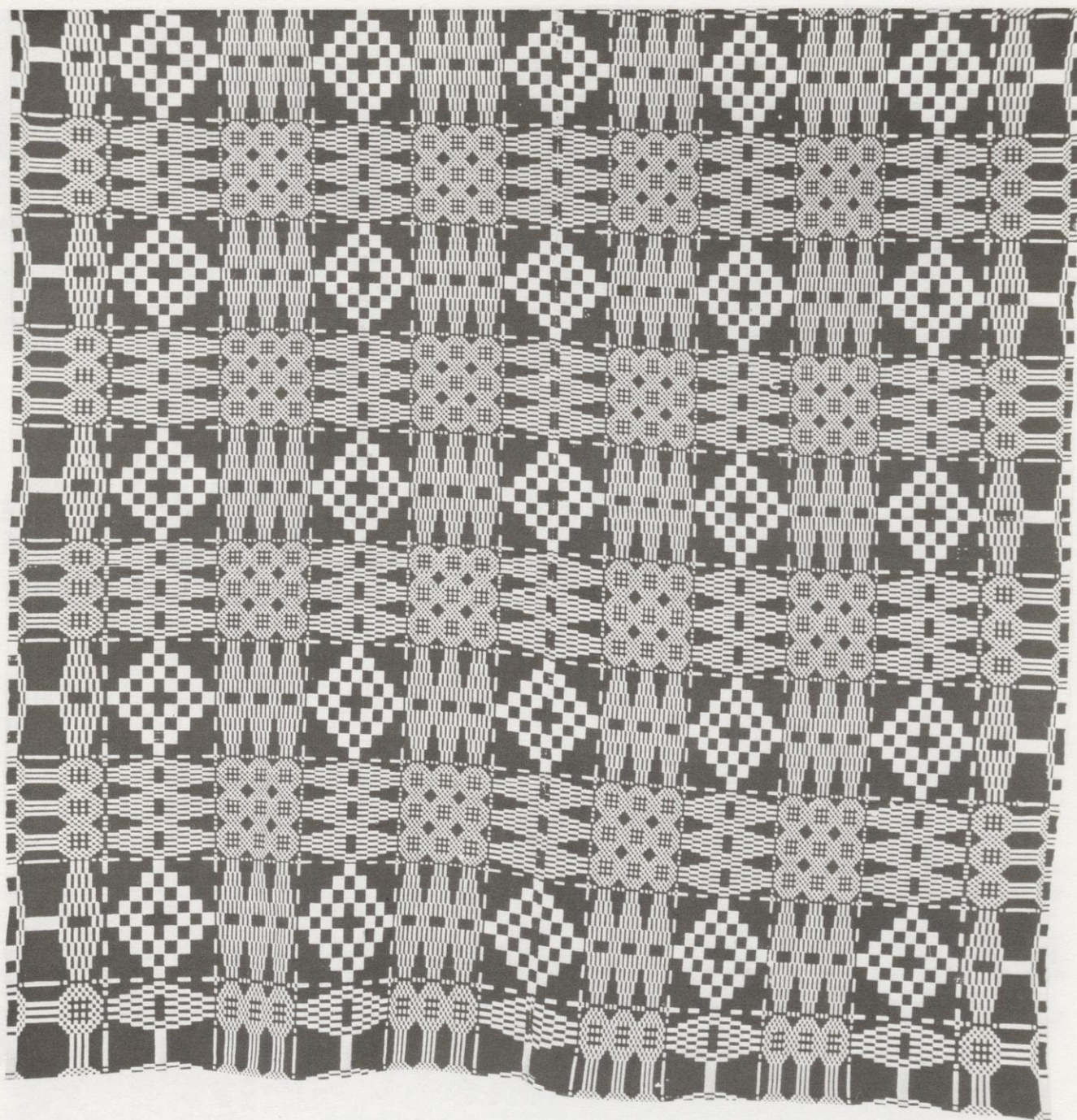
cotton, 3 ply, S twist, natural, 26 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 26 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, yellow ochre, 27 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, rose, 27 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 25 threads per inch

W.J. US-708

Philip Nagel is listed as a weaver on the tax lists of Dover Township, Pennsylvania from 1834-1836. He is not listed later. Two other coverlets are known to have been woven by him in 1834 and 1837. The pattern of this coverlet is rather unusual in that it appears to be made up of a series of motifs usually found in borders. The weft stripes are the width of these motifs.





27

United States, Ohio, 1849

Inscription: DANIEL BURY. CORNERSBURGH OHIO. 1849

One loom width, self fringed on three sides, $69\frac{1}{2}$ " x $83\frac{1}{2}$ "

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, natural, 38 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 24 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 22 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, wine red, 23 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, yellow ochre, 22 threads per inch

W.J. US-2168

Purchase, Allen Textile Fund

Coverlets signed by Daniel Bury show that he was weaving in New Portage, Ohio in 1939 and 1841. By 1849 he had moved his operation to Cornersburgh, Ohio where he wove several coverlets with this pattern. Similar to catalogue no. 26, this coverlet combines colored weft stripes with vertical stripes similar to border patterns. The use of the fly shuttle, a device which mechanically shoots the shuttle back and forth, enables the weaver to utilize the full width of his loom. The side borders appear to be samplers of common border motifs and are in an unusually long repeat. It is probable that Bury's loom had two Jacquard attachments mounted on it, one for the main pattern and one for the border.

28

United States, New York, 1840–1850

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 70" x $91\frac{1}{2}$ "

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary patterning wefts, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, natural, 25 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 25 threads per inch

wool, 1 ply, S twist, salmon red, 25 threads per inch

W.J. US-52

This well-planned pattern is based on large medallions and a variation of "birds of paradise." It is similar to coverlets woven in New York between 1840 and 1850. The pattern relates to ingrain carpet patterns. Another coverlet, identical to this one, is in a private collection.





29

United States, New Jersey or New York, 1830

Inscription: MVH. Dec 21 1830

Two loom widths joined, self fringed on bottom, applied tassels on two sides, 68" x 91¼"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 18 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 18 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 22 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 22 threads per inch

W.J. US-1341

David Haring wove in Bergen County, New Jersey, from 1800–1835, and this coverlet is attributed to him on stylistic grounds. A number of motifs on the coverlet are identical or similar to others found on coverlets attributed to him. Although Haring's trade mark, a rose in a square, does not appear here, the flower in the main pattern is very similar to it. This is the earliest coverlet with a woven-in date in the Allen Textile Collection.

30

United States, New York, 1842

Inscription: DELHI. 1842.

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 75¼" x 94"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

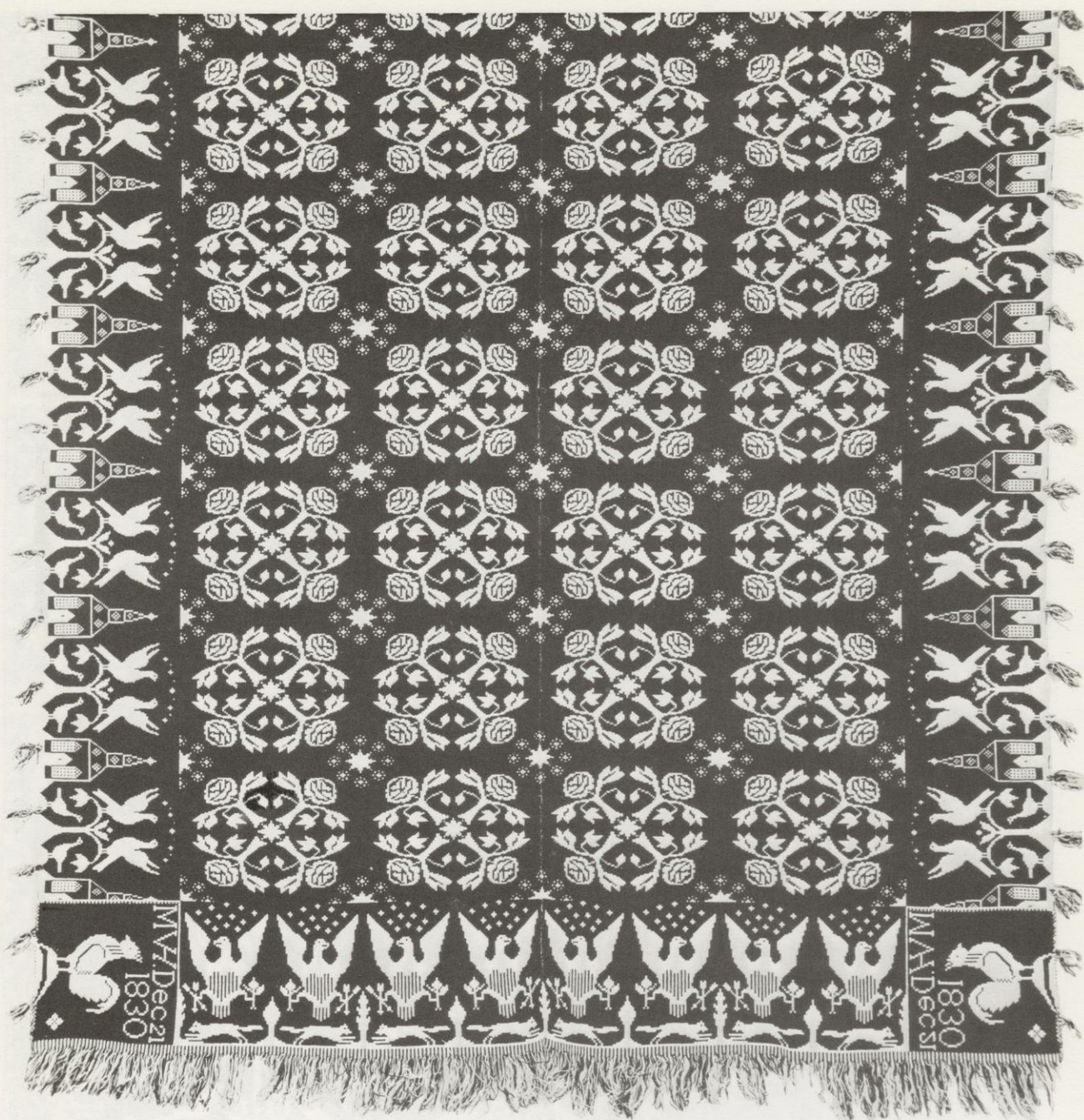
cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 21 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 21 threads per inch

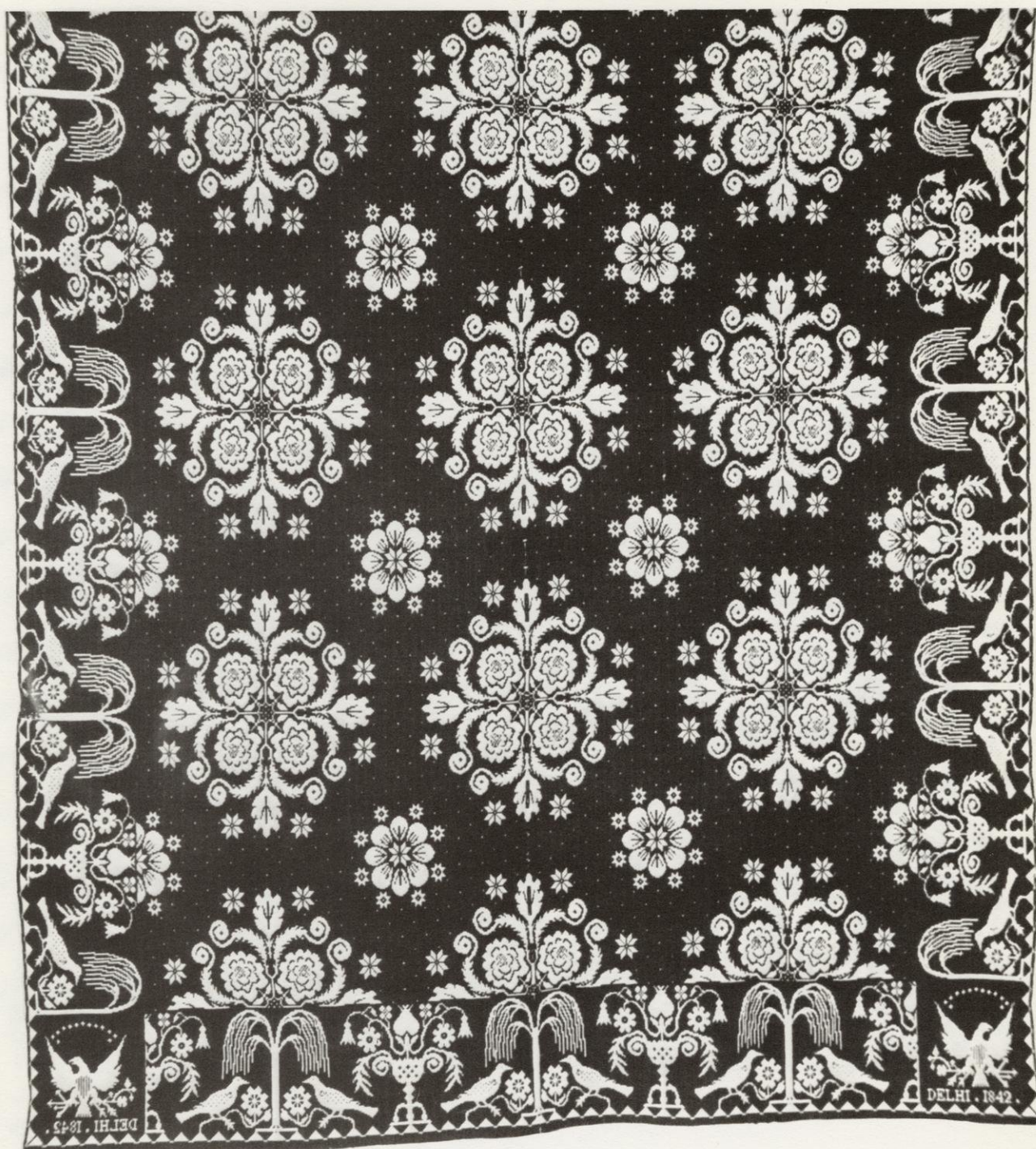
WEFT

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch

W.J. US-28

Delhi is the county seat of Delaware County, New York. Other coverlets with the identical corner squares date from 1844 and 1852. The designer of this coverlet carefully planned for unity between field and border patterns in that the small medallions become the top of the border bouquets. It is truly a double-faced coverlet for the ends are finished off in such a way as to indicate no front or back side.





31

United States, New York, 1845–1850

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 78" x 88½"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, S twist, red, 20 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 2 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 1 ply, S twist, red, 20 threads per inch

W.J. US-32

An identical patterned coverlet is in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago but in blue rather than red wool. Coverlet weavers often repeated popular patterns, perhaps changing colors and date. There are a number of coverlet patterns related to this one which date from the same period.

32

United States, Ohio, 1840–1855

Two loom widths joined, self fringed, 74" x 83¼"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, natural, 19 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 19 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, natural, 21 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 21 threads per inch

W.J. US-1825

Gift of Mrs. Helen Burkhart

This coverlet exhibits some of the few motifs that have accepted names, specifically "Birds of Paradise," "Penelope's Flower Pot," and "Boston Town Border." Many variations of these motifs exist and appear to have been mostly woven in Ohio between 1840 and 1855.





33

United States, New York, 1850–1860

Two loom widths joined, no fringe, 82" x 92½"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 20 threads per inch
wool, 3 ply, S twist, dark blue, 20 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, white, 17 threads per inch
wool, 3 ply, S twist, dark blue, 17 threads per inch

W.J. US-2205

Gift of Mrs. Julian Hanks Mailer

Unlike most, this coverlet gives very few clues as to its date and source. The tiny pattern in the narrow border stripes is similar to those found in the 1840's through 1860's. The field pattern is unusually large and the border is rather rigid when compared to others of that date. It is most akin to coverlets woven in New York and Indiana during this time. The coverlet is unusually wide, 56" to 72" being most usual.

34

United States, Pennsylvania, 1865–1870

One loom width, self fringed on sides, applied fringe on bottom, 80½" x 93½"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

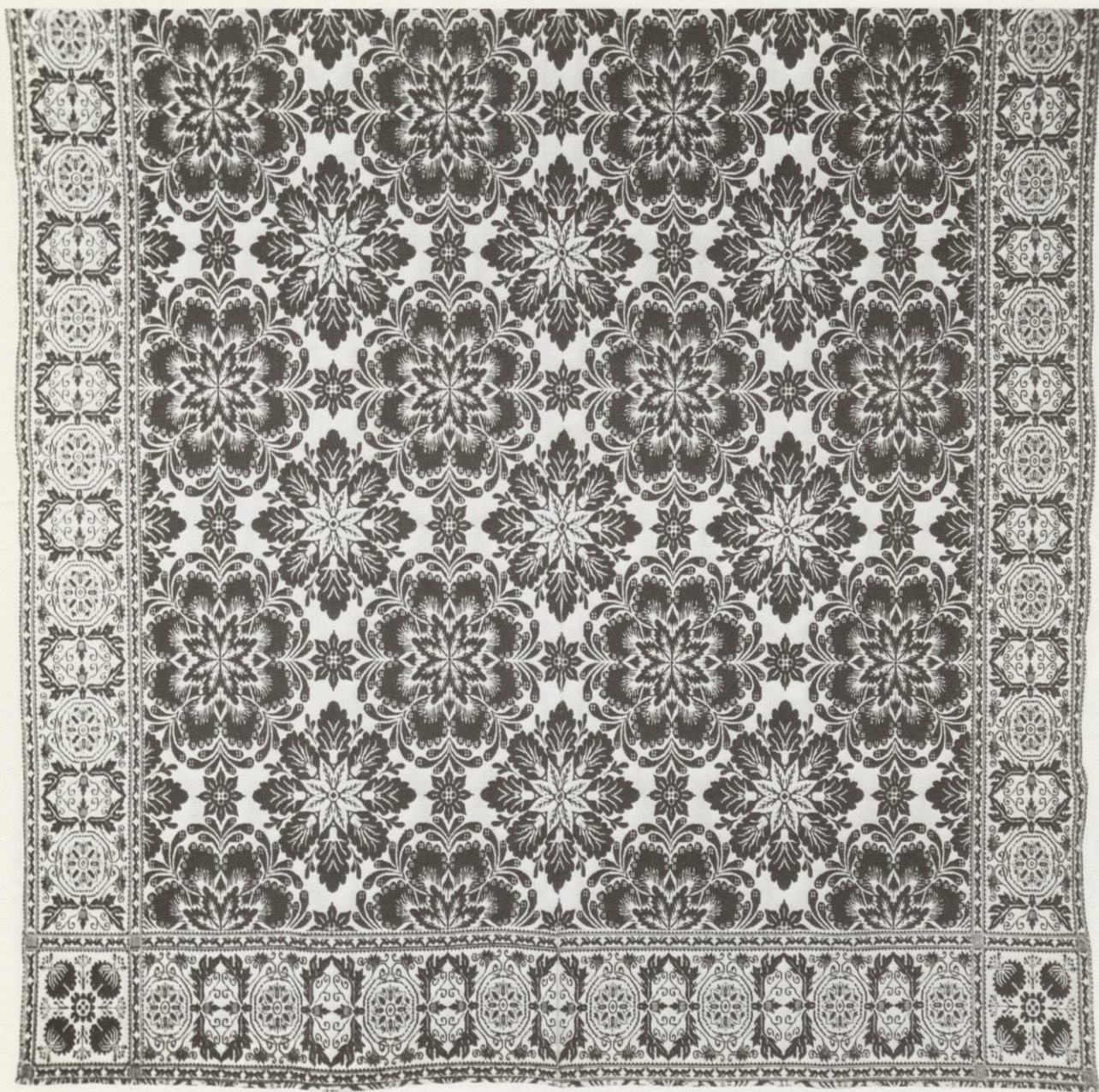
cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, light blue, 27 threads per inch
cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, light blue, 14 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, light blue, 16 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 16 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 16 threads per inch
wool, 2 ply, S twist, green, 16 threads per inch

W.J. US-1084

Though at first glance this coverlet and catalogue no. 38 appear to be very different, they share several similarities. Both have a central motif surrounded by guard bands before the border. Both have similar motifs in several of the guard bands. Perhaps they were patterns produced by commercial houses on pre-punched cards, for the hand-weavers could purchase them and add the border of their choice. In any case, the heaviness of the pattern would tend to date this coverlet later. Although full loom width coverlets were woven in the 1840's, the pattern of this coverlet is more typical of the later dates.





35

United States, Pennsylvania, 1865–1880

One loom width, self-fringed, worn away, 73" x 79"

Compound weave: doublecloth, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, in groups of 3's and 4's, white, 22 threads per inch

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, tan, 12 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, blue, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark green, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, purple, 17 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 17 threads per inch

W.J. US-69

Although full width coverlets were woven in the late 1840's, and borders without corner squares were designed in the 1850's, the all-over design of this coverlet suggests a later dating. The soft twist and strong colors of the wool also suggest a commercial product and a later dating. The coverlet has the same general qualities as many that were produced in Pennsylvania during the Centennial Era. The two thin vertical stripes were the result of a threading mistake corrected during the weaving. The fact that the mistake ran through almost one third of the coverlet suggests that it may have been a factory-woven product. A professional hand weaver would have noticed and corrected the mistake almost at once.

36

United States, Pennsylvania, 1853

Inscription: J + BROSEY J + GIBBLE 1853

Two loom widths joined, self fringed on sides, applied fringe on bottom, 77½" x 84¼"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with supplementary binding warp and extra patterning wefts, Jacquard mechanism controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 3 ply, S twist, light blue, 24 threads per inch

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, light blue, 13 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, light blue, 24 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark blue, 24 threads per inch

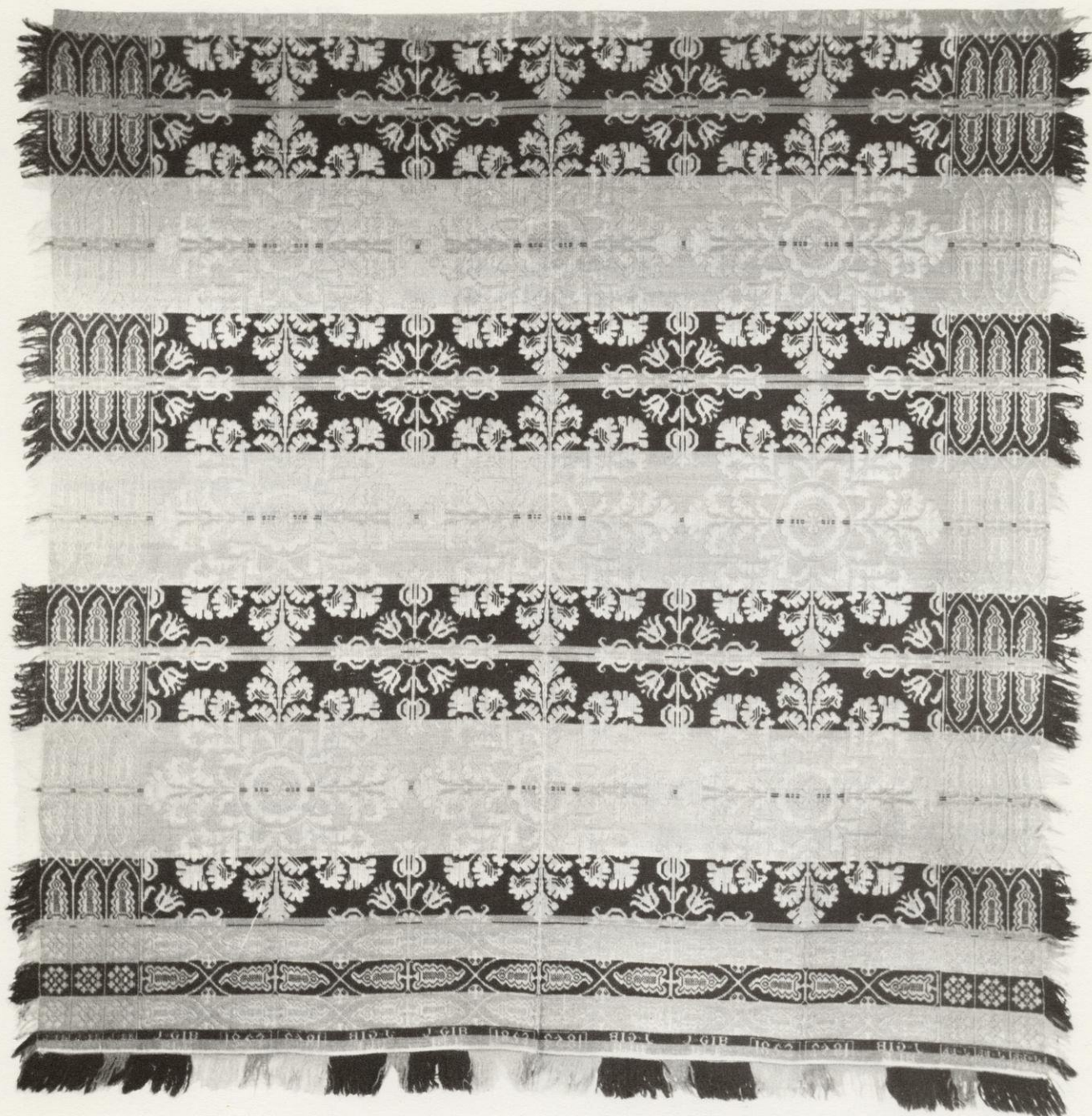
wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 24 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, olive green, 24 threads per inch

W.J. US-1351

John Brosey wove in Manheim Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, during the years 1851–1852.





37

United States, Pennsylvania, 1850-1865

Inscription: MANUF. BY H. F. STAGER + : SON. FAST.
COLORS. MOUNT JOY. LANCASTER COUNTY. PENN.

One loom width cut and rejoined, self fringed on two sides,
74" x 76½"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with
supplementary binding warp and extra patterning wefts
with areas of doublecloth, (*Beiderwand*) Jacquard mechanism
controlled weave

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, in groups of 2's and 3's, white, 58
threads per inch

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 8 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, white, 19 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, blue, 19 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 19 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, pale green, 18 threads per inch

W.J. US-29

Of the forty Stager coverlets known, none are dated, but all give the full location. Blue, green and red colored wefts were common as were the guarantees of "Fast Colors," "warrented" and even "latest improved warrented." Three separate inscriptions are recorded: "H. Stager," "H.F. Stager and Son" and "F. Stager." H. Stager was weaving in Mount Joy already in 1843. The number of coverlets produced by the Stagers along with the inscriptions indicate that they ran a family weaving factory.

38

United States, Pennsylvania; 1850-1870

One loom width, no fringe, 87½" x 84"

Compound weave: plain weave foundation fabric with
supplementary binding warp and extra patterning wefts
with areas of doublecloth, (*Beiderwand*) Jacquard mechanism
controlled weave.

WARP

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 30 threads per inch

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 7 threads per inch

WEFT

cotton, 1 ply, Z twist, natural, 29 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, red, 15 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, dark olive green, 16 threads per inch

wool, 2 ply, S twist, light olive green, 15 threads per inch

W.J. US-2206

Purchase, Allen Textile Fund

This coverlet pattern was popular in the U.S. and Canada. At least three are known with identical centers, but different borders. A number of them were woven at the Globe Factory, Bedford County, Pennsylvania. With a large number of weaving mistakes, this coverlet lacks the craftsmanship evidenced in most.





Coverlet Drafts & Weaves

A theoretical threading draft is included for each handwoven coverlet in this catalogue. It is assumed that coverlets which require up to twenty-four shafts may be handwoven, although it is impossible to determine for a fact whether they are woven on looms with or without mechanical attachments. Those which have more complex patterns would certainly have been more easily woven with a mechanical addition to the loom, such as a dobby head which provided for the automatic selection of shafts in a predetermined sequence. Drafts were reconstructed on the principle that all warp threads which behave in exactly the same way (that is, all rising or not at the same time in any given row) may be threaded on the same shaft. Certain common weaves that follow a predictable sequence, such as overshot, were reconstructed by studying the progression of the blocks and the number of threads in each block. Unfamiliar weave structures were plotted thread by thread on squared paper in order to determine threading, tie-up, and treadling directions. There are numerous threading possibilities for any design, all of which would weave exactly the same patterns if the tie-up and treadling directions were altered accordingly.

Technical information in

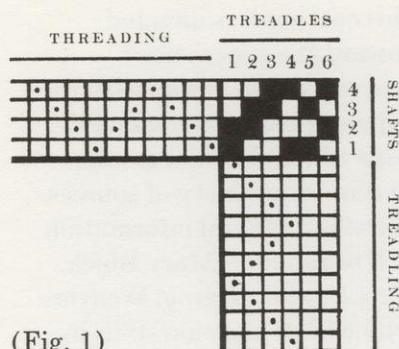
this catalogue is directed toward the experienced weaver. Readers who wish to expand their weaving knowledge will find valuable information in a variety of sources. Excellent general information will be found in Mary Black, *New Key to Weaving*. Weavers who wish to develop skills in pattern drafting should refer to *Weaves and Pattern Drafting* by John Tovey. Information on weaving and drafting overshot and summer and winter will be found in *The Shuttlecraft Book of American Handweaving* by Mary Atwater. *Designing and Drafting for Handweavers* by Berta Frey is excellent for the study of block-weave designing.

There are many acceptable methods for writing weave drafts. The form which will be used in this catalogue is as follows (Fig. 1):

Threading: Each horizontal space represents one shaft. The corresponding numbers will be found at the far right. Dots show the order in which warp ends are "drawn in" or threaded on the shafts. Threading directions are always read from right to left.

Tie-up: The box in the upper right hand corner indicates which shafts are controlled by which treadles. The treadles are numbered across the top.

Treadling: The column below the tie-up indicates row by row



(Fig. 1)



(Fig. 2)

which treadle is to be depressed in order to weave the pattern.

Owing to limitations of catalogue space, tie-up and treadling directions may appear separately rather than being attached to threading drafts.

Profile, short, or block drafts:

Where groups of warp threads behave in a predictable fashion for certain weave structures, a profile draft serves as a shorthand method of presenting threading information. Rather than indicating directions thread by thread, a solid blacked-in area represents a group or block of warp ends. Letters at the far right designate the blocks. Assigning letters to blocks is just as arbitrary as assigning shafts to warp ends; it is the overall consistency of threading (or blocks), tie-up, and treadling orders which determines the coverlet pattern (Fig. 2).

Some weaves are written as threading drafts and some as short or profile drafts. Most of the twill derivatives are given as threading drafts, as they may be unfamiliar structures. Overshot is also presented as a threading draft. Profiles are used for summer and winter, for block weaves based on twill, and for doublecloth.

Treadling sequences are included only if they are not "as drawn in," that is, following the same progression as the threading sequence.

A description of the coverlet weaves follows:

SIMPLE WEAVES: one set of warp threads and one set of weft threads, each of which contributes equally to the structure and pattern of the fabric.

Catalogue Numbers 1-3; Twills, W.L. US-1268, 18, 15.

Areas or blocks of warp-faced twill contrast with areas of weft-faced twill to form complex geometric patterns. This weave is variously known by the terms "twill diaper," "twill damask," "turned twill," "counter-changed twill" and "double-faced twill." Each block requires four shafts. Each coverlet in this collection has a four-block pattern, requiring a sixteen-shaft loom.

Catalogue Number 4, Point twill, W.L. US-1083.

A twelve-shaft twill which reverses regularly on shafts one and twelve. Each weft thread is offset from the one in the previous row by one warp thread.

COMPOUND WEAVES: (a) one set of warp threads, two sets of weft threads.

In the case of every coverlet of this type in this collection, one weft weaves with the warp to form a plain weave foundation fabric of linen, cotton, or

a combination of the two. The secondary pattern weft is wool, heavier in diameter than the plain weave weft. All of these compound weaves are based on twills and twill derivatives. In every case, alternating rows of plain weave are to be woven between pattern rows, although this is not indicated in the weaving directions.

Catalogue Numbers 5-9; Twill Derivative (Overshot), W.L. US-2171, 16, 27B, 149, 1680.

One of the most common and easily recognizable twill derivatives is overshot. Virtually all overshot patterns require only a four-shaft loom. In overshot weaves, the pattern weft floats over two or more warp threads to form the design. The length of the float, and hence, the width of the block, is limited only by the imagination of the designer and the use to which the fabric is to be put. To avoid snagging, floats in these coverlets are usually no more than a half inch long. In a properly designed overshot draft, odd and even threads always alternate so that a good plain weave may be woven. In W.L. US-27B, this rule was periodically disregarded and the ground weave is consequently full of flaws.

Catalogue Numbers 10-12; Twill Derivative (Summer and Winter) W.L. US-151, 1004, 1063.

Another readily identifiable twill derivative is summer and winter. Characteristics of this weave are that pattern wefts always float over or under three warp threads, and are tied down by the fourth. The design is composed of contrasting areas in which the pattern weft appears predominately on either the face or reverse side of the fabric. As traditionally woven, the tie-downs alternate in every other row so that the weft floats form a bricklike appearance. Shafts one and two are reserved for the tie-downs, and each block requires one additional harness. Therefore, a four-block pattern requires a six-shaft loom. Plain weave is woven in rows of shafts one and two together alternating with rows of all the remaining shafts. Many similar designs may be woven in either overshot or summer and winter, but as summer and winter never has long floats, the width of the blocks is not limited.

Catalogue Number 13; Twill Derivative, W.L. US-2204.

At first examination this coverlet appears to be summer and winter weave. However, the weft floats over groups of five warp ends rather than

three. The structure is such that two shafts (one and two) are reserved for tie downs, and each block requires two additional shafts. This five-block pattern requires a total of twelve shafts. In drafting, care must be taken to alternate odd and even shafts in order to weave the plain weave foundation. For example, block A would be 1, 4, 3, 2, 3, 4, etc. The smallest possible block unit is three warp ends. A complete threading draft is not included, due to limitations of catalogue space. It is suggested that summer and winter be used for this design, requiring only seven shafts. Tie-up directions are given for summer and winter weave.

Catalogue Numbers 14, 15; Twill Derivative, W.L. US-1782, 70.

These coverlet weaves are closely related to that in W.L. US-2204, having the same brick-like appearance based on weft floats of five threads and alternating tie-downs on shafts one and two. The threading drafts of W.L. US-1782 and 70 are very similar, the difference in design being primarily in the tie-up. They combine features of block weaves with those of straight-draw twills. Tie downs are introduced to prevent long floats in areas with large motifs, and omitted for the smaller motifs. The com-

plexity of these designs would suggest that some mechanical device, such as a dobby head for controlling shedding sequences, may have been used.

Catalogue Number 16; Twill Derivative, W.L. US-68.

Again, the tie-downs are on the first two shafts, however, they occur together every ninth and tenth threads. Blocks each require two additional shafts, are usually four threads long, and usually two blocks are woven together. Weft floats are over four, five, or nine warp ends (one or two blocks plus one tie-down). This eight-block pattern requires eighteen shafts. In his book *Keep Me Warm One Night*, Burnham suggests another system for this type of weave, which involves two sets of heddles, one for the ground weave and another for the blocks.

Catalogue Number 17; Twill, W.L. US-36.

This is a ten-shaft point twill. The primary difference between this weave and that used in W.L. US-1083 (Catalogue number 4) is that the pattern weft in this coverlet is woven in a twill sequence on a plain weave ground.

COMPOUND WEAVES: (b)
Two sets of warp threads and two sets of weft threads.

Catalogue Numbers 18-25; Doublecloth, W.L. US-17, 1085, 2164, 13, 14, 7, 1005, 22.

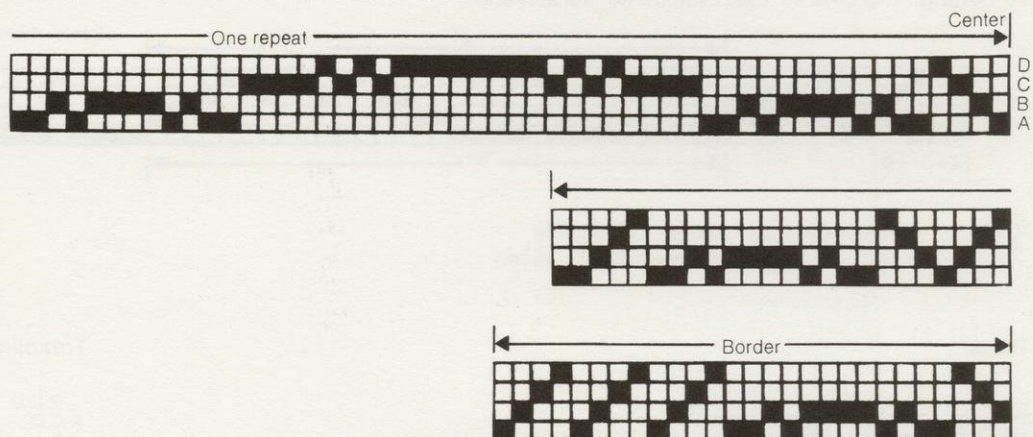
In this category is doublecloth, in which one set of warps forms a plain weave with one set of wefts, so that two complete fabrics are woven. Designs are based on geometrics of four, five, or six blocks. Each block requires four shafts, hence these coverlets require from sixteen to twenty-four shafts. One layer in each of these coverlets is of indigo blue wool warp and weft. The other layer is a solid color unless indicated otherwise in the threading directions. The second layer in one coverlet (W.L. US-17) is red wool warp and weft. In all of the remaining doublecloth coverlets, the second layer is composed mainly, if not entirely, of white cotton warp and weft. In those coverlet drafts which indicate threading and treadling in red and white, the red is wool.

Joyce Marquess

SIMPLE WEAVE: TWILL

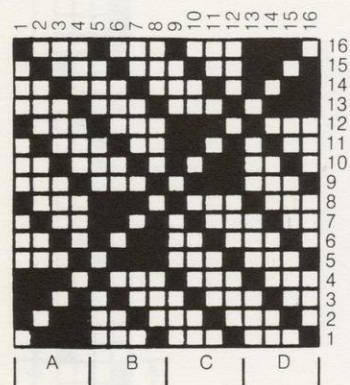
W.L. US. 1268

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Treading: As drawn in
Seven repeats

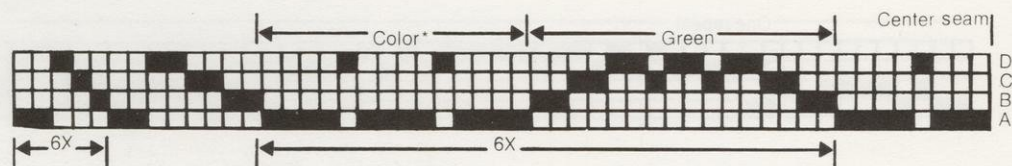
Tie-up



SIMPLE WEAVE: TWILL

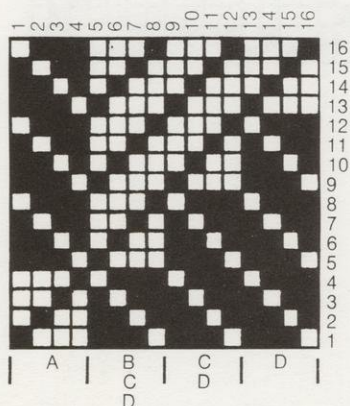
W.L. US. 18

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.

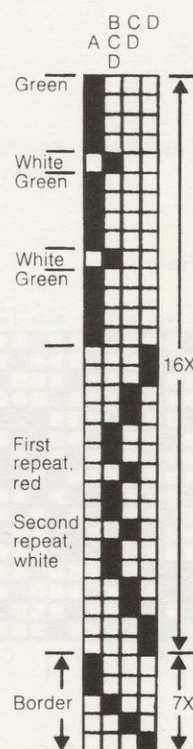


*Color: First repeat, "A" is red, "D" is white
Second repeat, "A" is white, "D" is red

Tie-up



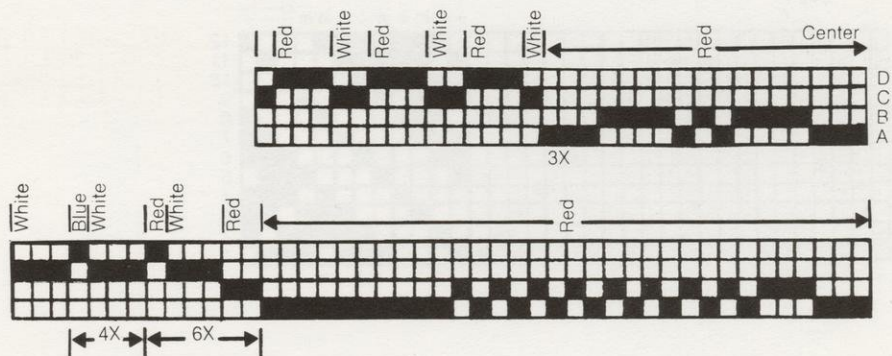
Treading



SIMPLE WEAVE: TWILL

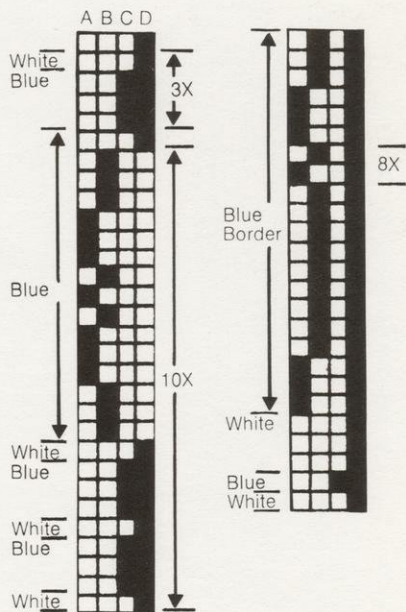
W.L. US. 15

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Tie-up: Same as W.L. US. 1268

Treading

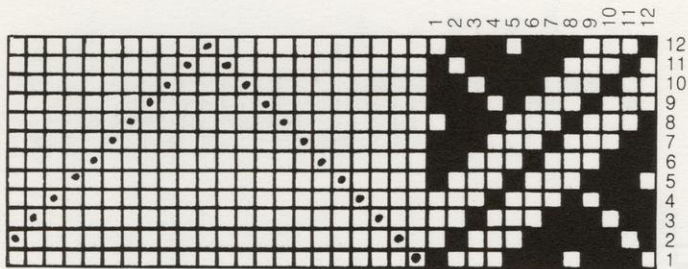


SIMPLE WEAVE: POINT TWILL

W.L. US. 1083

Threading

Tie-up

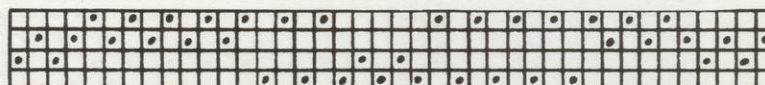
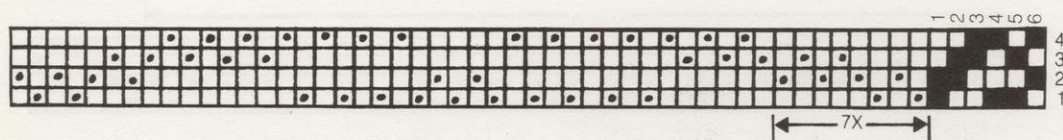


COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—OVERSHOT

W.L. US. 2171

Threading

Tie-up



Threading: Four repeats

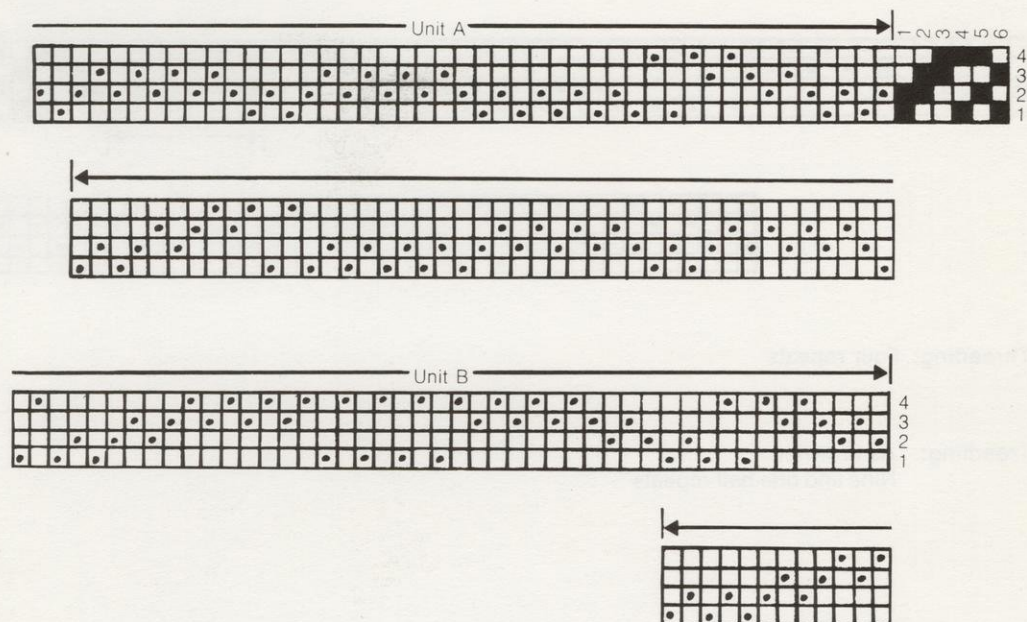
Treadling: As drawn in
Nine and one half repeats

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—OVERSHOT

W.L. US. 16

Threading

Tie-up



Threading: Unit A 1X
 B 2X
 A 1X
 B 2X
 A 1X
 B 2X
 A 1X
 B 1X

Treading: As drawn in
 All "A" and "C" blocks red
 All "B" and "D" blocks green
 Eight repeats for length

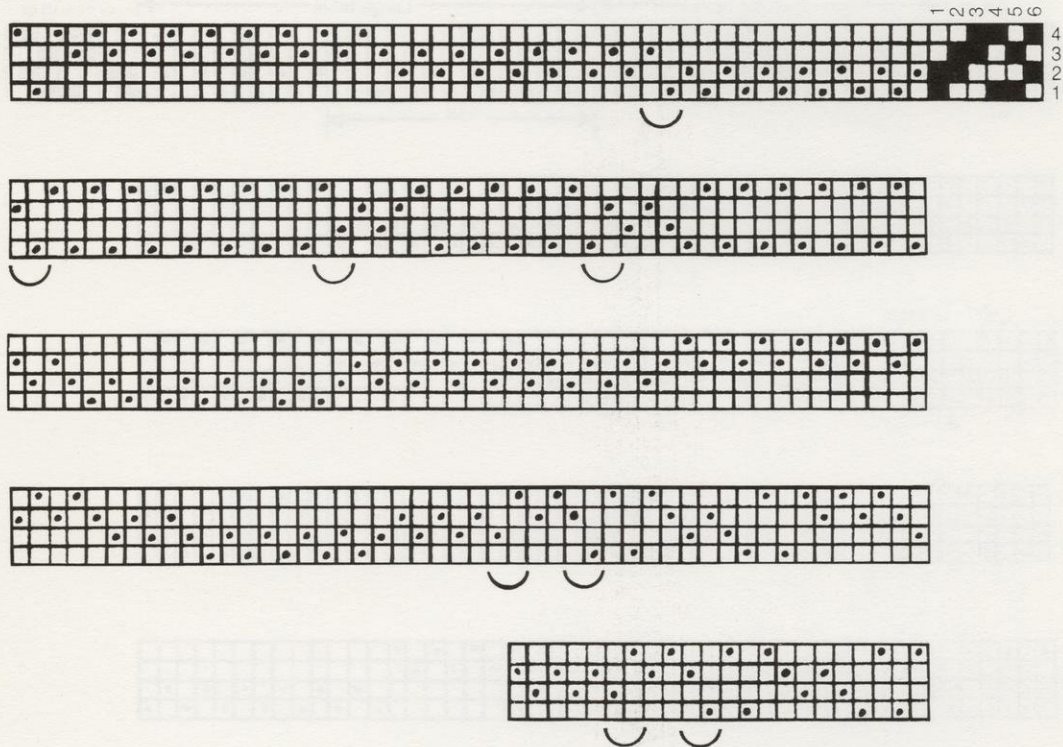
Cat. no. 6

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—OVERSHOT

W.L. US. 27B

Threading

Tie-up



Threading: Four repeats. The original coverlet has many threading mistakes (bracketed), which should be corrected to make good plain weave. Two odds or two evens should never occur together.

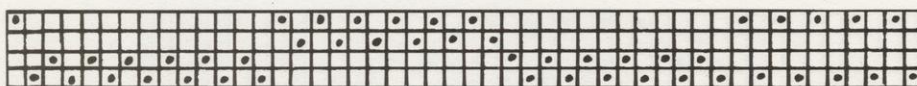
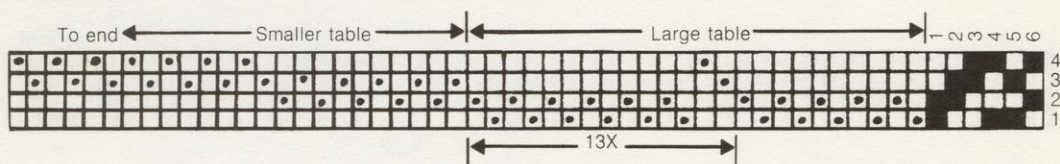
Treading: As drawn in
Eleven repeats

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—OVERSHOT

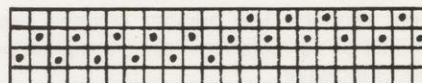
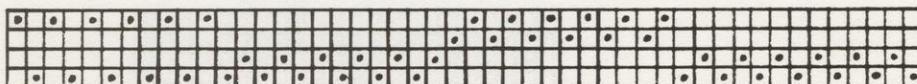
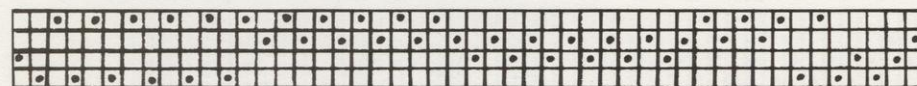
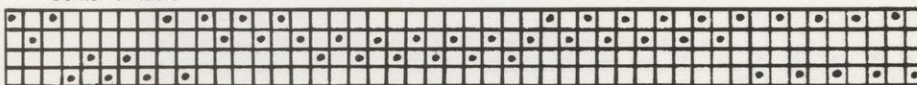
W.L. US. 149

Threading

Tie-up



Center of table



Threading: Three repeats plus beginning to center of table

Treading: As drawn in. Pattern on opposites (do not treadle 2-3 or 1-4 combination unless there are more than two in sequence).

Color: All "A" blocks red
All "B", "C", "D" blocks blue

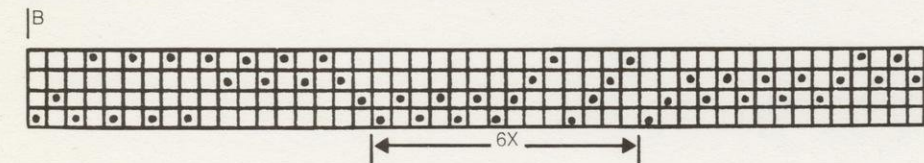
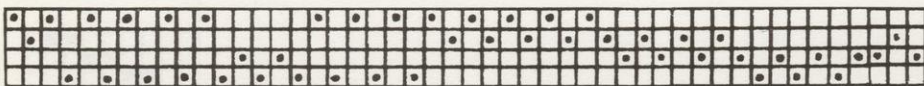
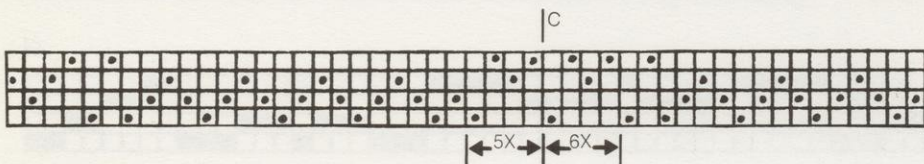
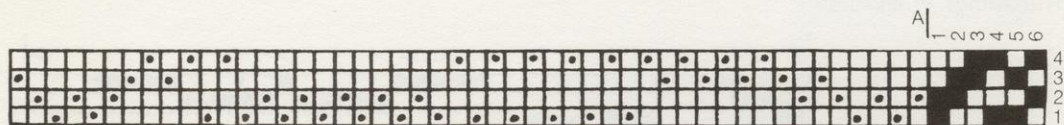
Cat. no. 8

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—OVERSHOT

W.L. US. 1680

Threading

Tie-up



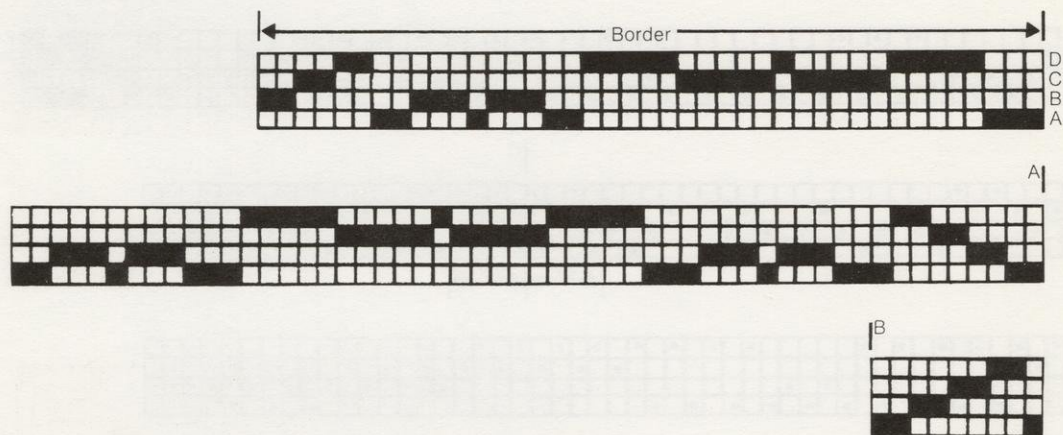
Threading: A to B twice
A to C once

Treading: As drawn in
Four and one half repeats for length

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE— SUMMER AND WINTER

W.L. US. 151

Threading: Profile draft



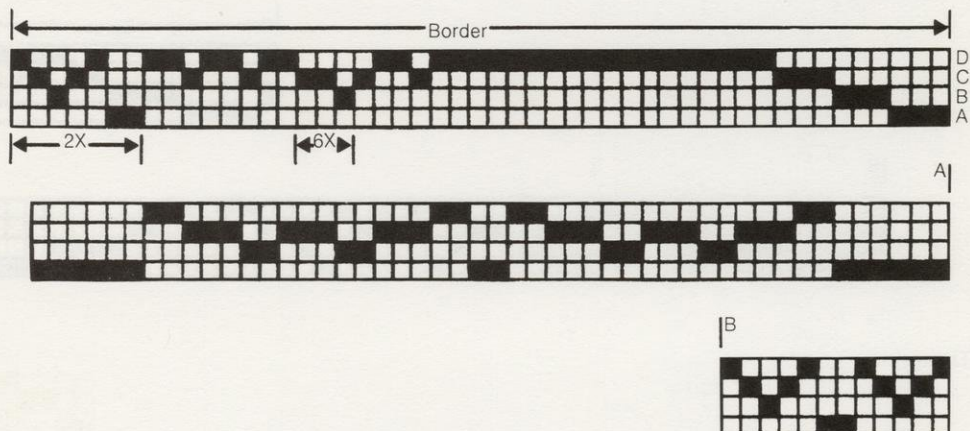
Threading: Border
A to B two times

Treadling: As drawn in
Five times for length

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—
SUMMER AND WINTER

W.L. US. 1004

Threading: Profile draft



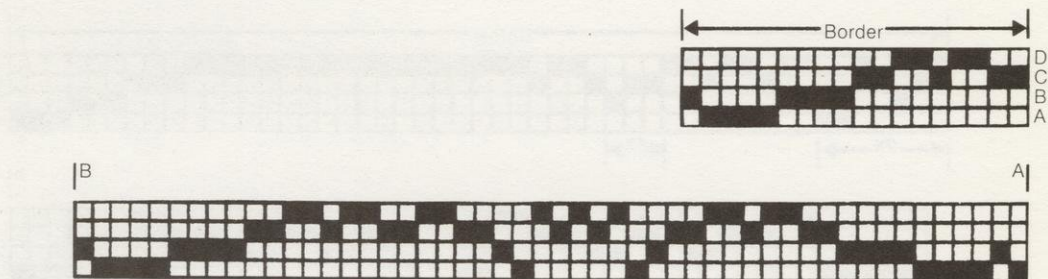
Threading: Border
A to B three times

Treadling: As drawn in
Eight times for length

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE—
SUMMER AND WINTER

W.L. US. 1063

Threading: Profile draft



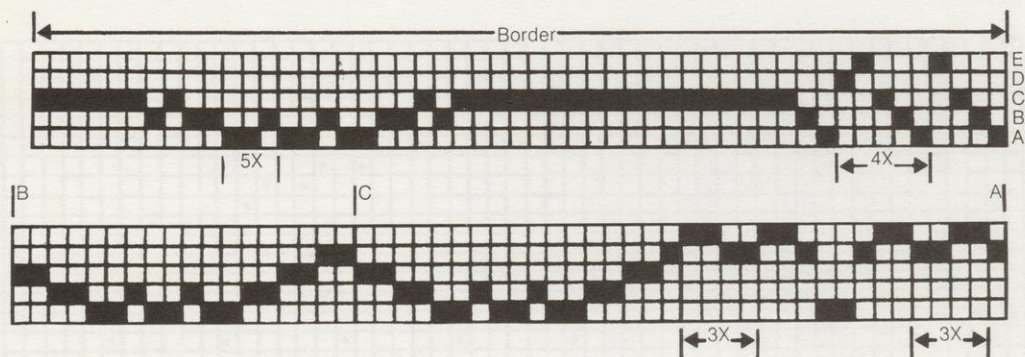
Threading: Border
A to B four times

Treading: As drawn in
Ten repeats for length

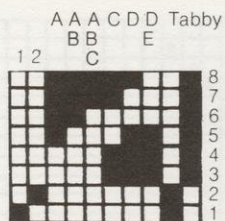
COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE

W.L. US. 2204

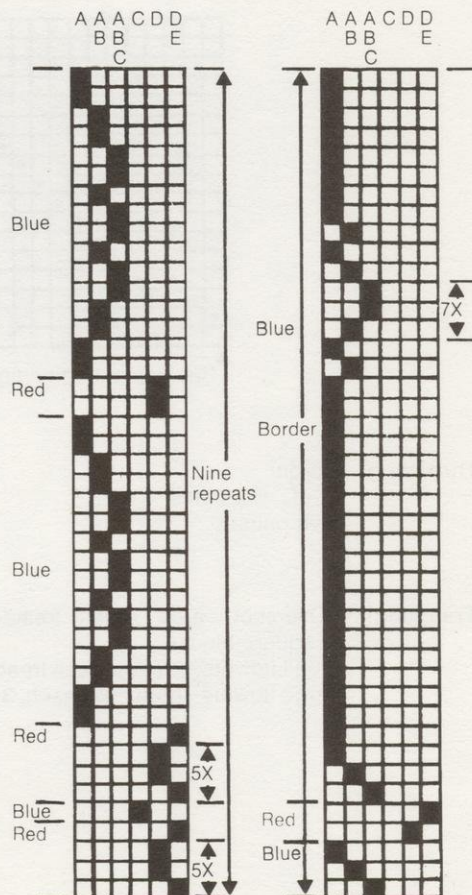
Threading: Profile draft



Tie-up (for summer and winter)



Threading: A to B three times
A to C one time

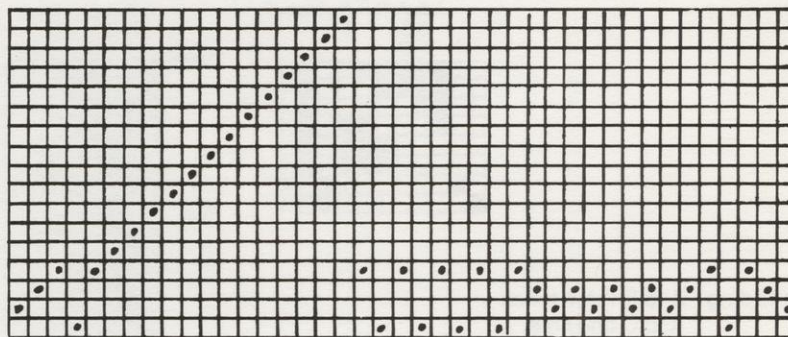
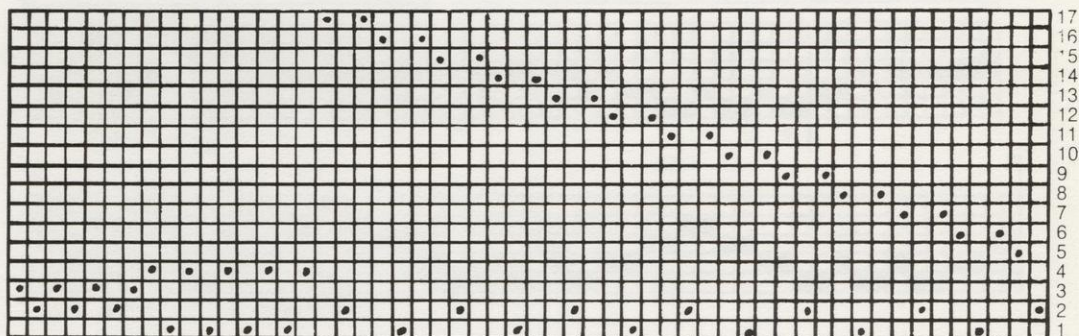


Cat. no. 13

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE

W.L. US. 1782

Threading

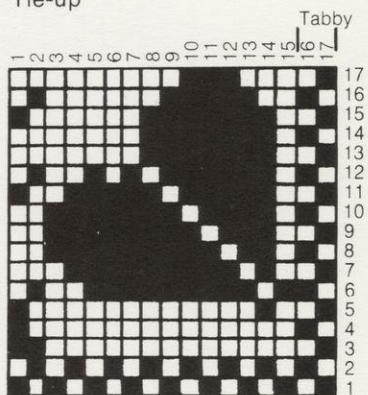


▲ Reverse to beginning for whole unit.

Threading: Border
1 – 17 five times
Five units

Treading: "Overshot" area – repeat treadles 1 and 2
to square blocks
Small flowers: one row each treadle 3 – 15 – 3
Large flowers: three rows each, 3 – 15 – 3

Tie-up



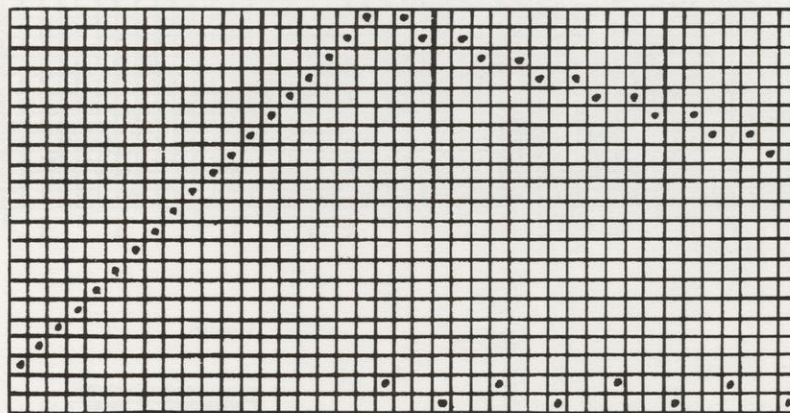
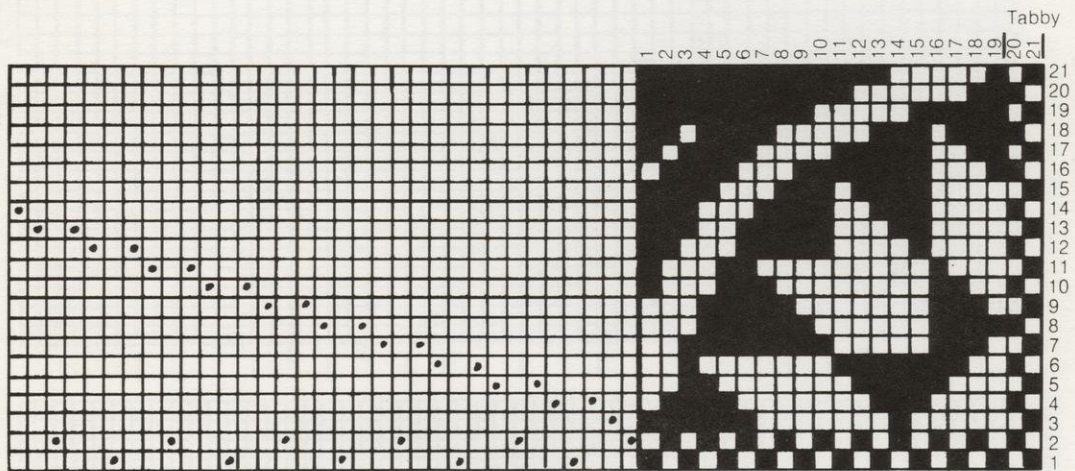
Cat. no. 14

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE

W.L. US. 70

Threading

Tie-up



▲ Reverse to beginning to complete unit

Threading: Four and a half units

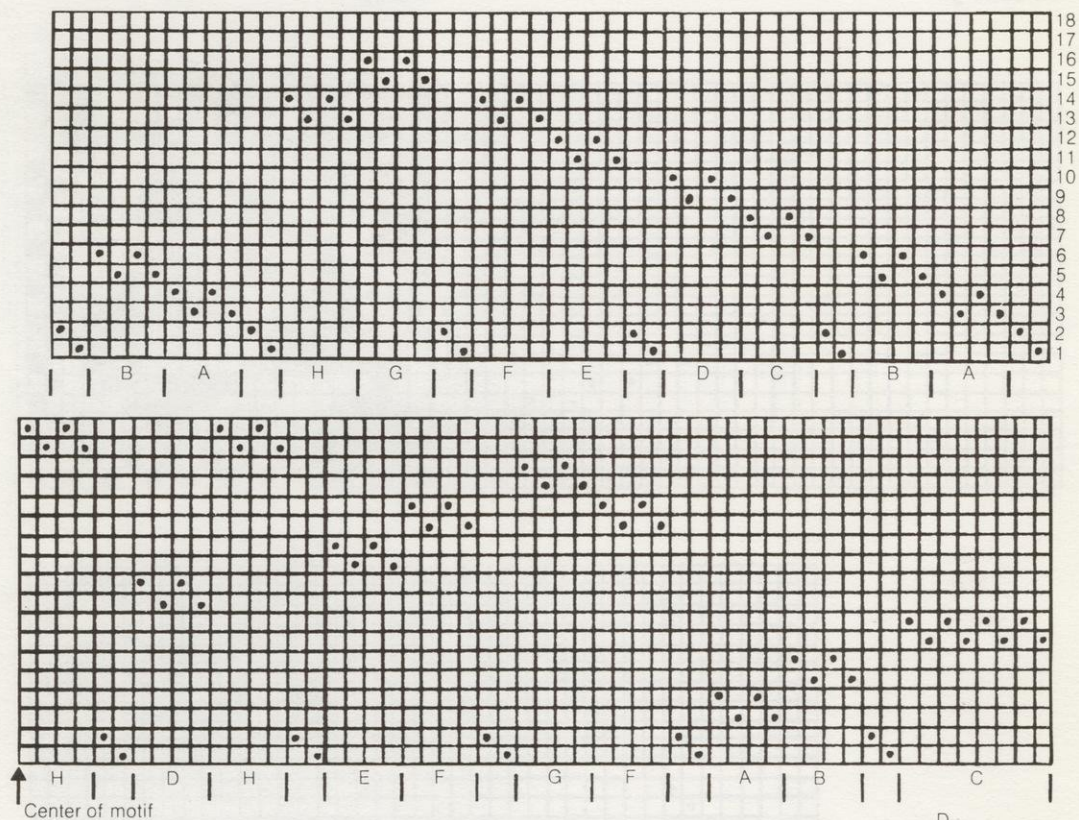
Treadling: 1 – 19 – 1, One row each for short unit
Three rows each for large unit

Cat. no. 15

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, TWILL DERIVATIVE

W.L. US. 68

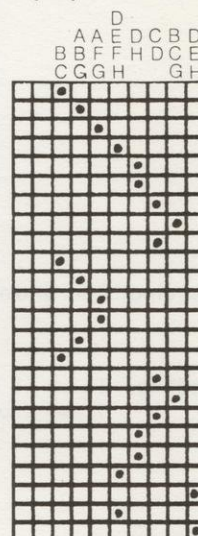
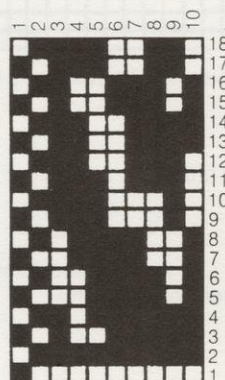
Threading



Tie-up

Reverse to beginning to complete.
Reverse order of *blocks* (i.e. 3,4,3,4)
to maintain odd-even sequence for
tabby.

Treadling: Weave each pattern row four times
Reverse to complete motif

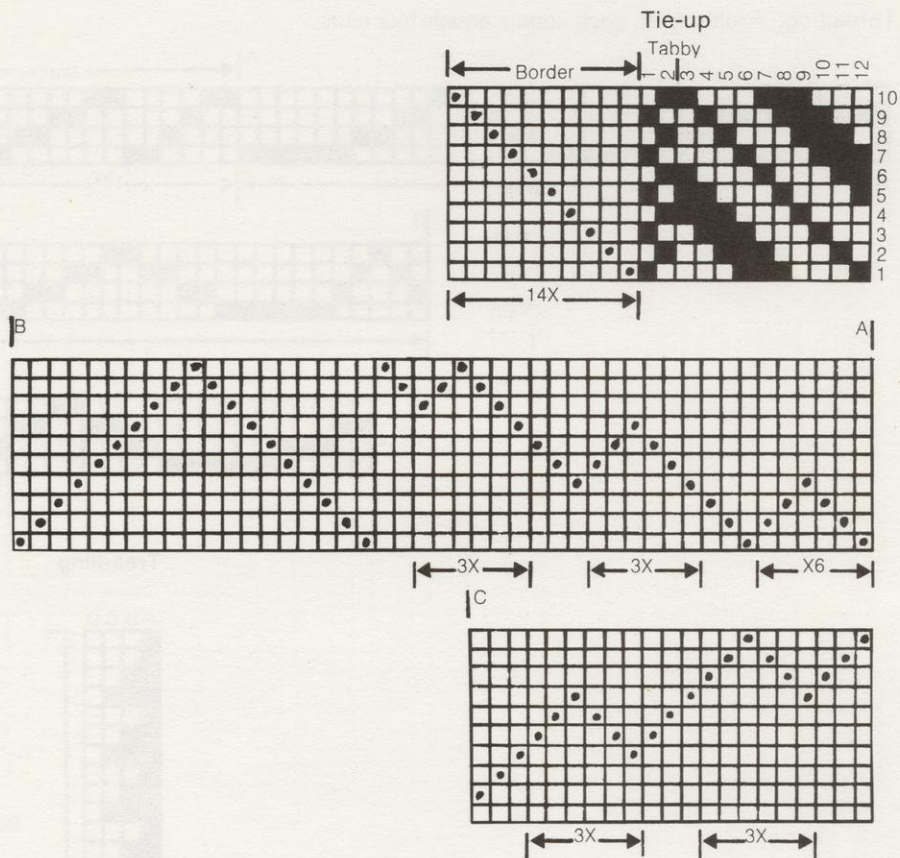


Cat. no. 16

COMPOUND WEAVE: SUPPLEMENTARY WEFT, POINT TWILL

W.L. US. 36

Threading



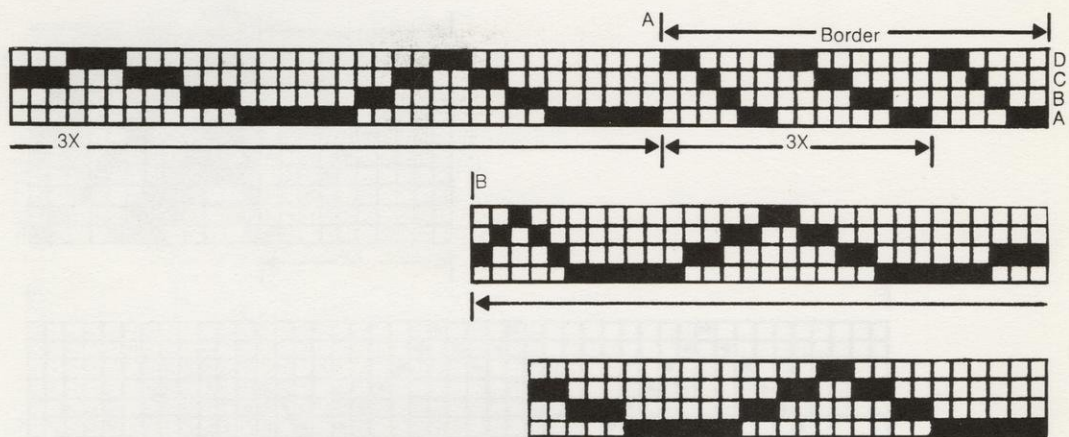
Threading: Repeat A to C three times
A to B one time

Treadling: As drawn in to square blocks
Tabby shot between each pattern weft

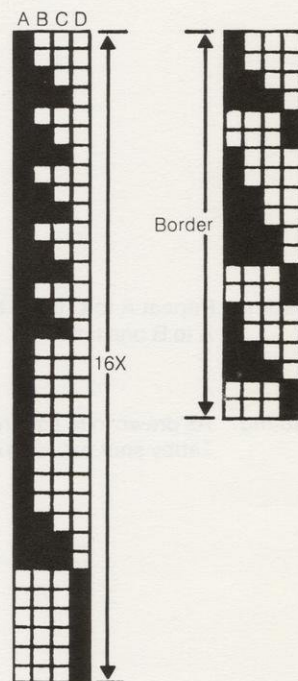
COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLE CLOTH

W.L. US. 17

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



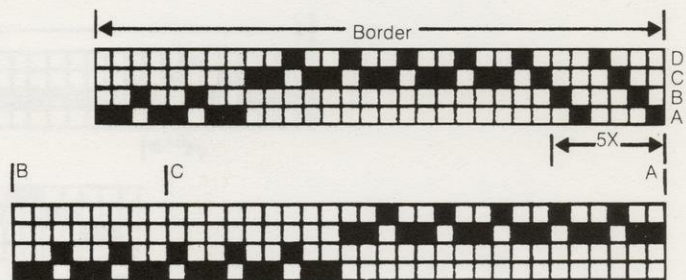
Treading



COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

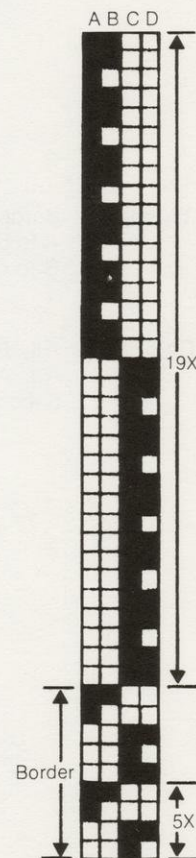
W.L. US. 1085

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Threading: Border
A to B seven times
A to C one time

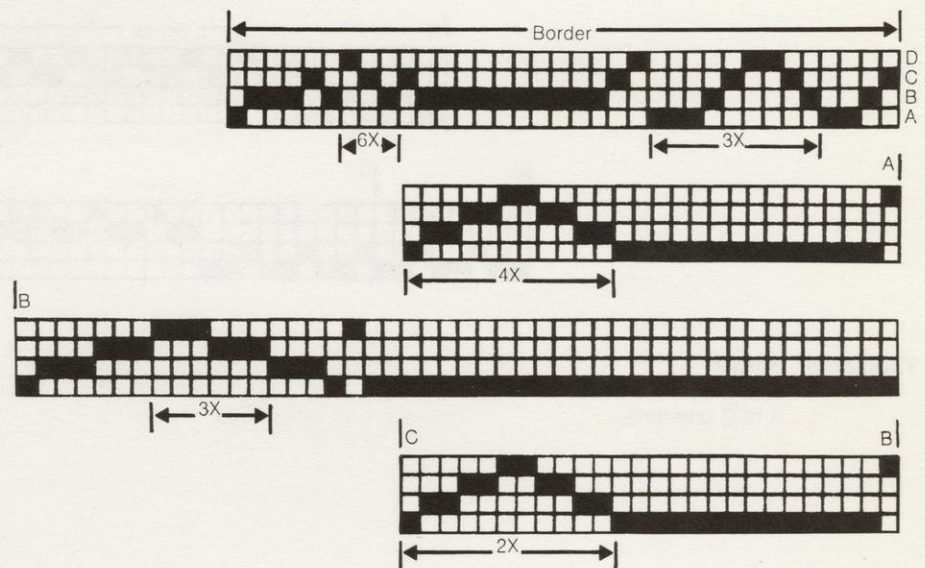
Treading



COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

W.L. US. 2164

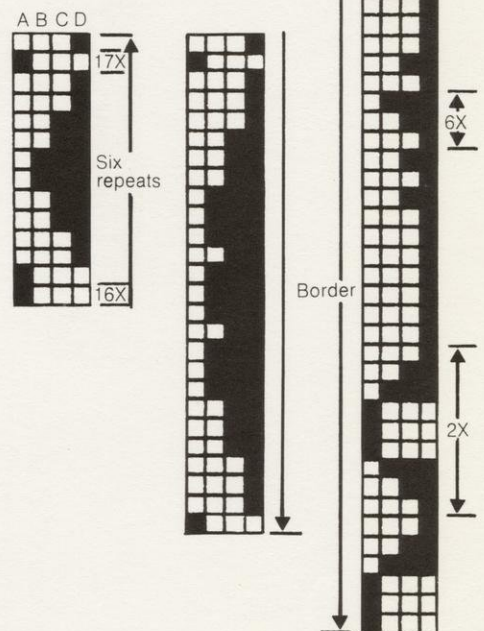
Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Threading: Border
A to B two times
B to C one time

Color: All "B", "C", "D" blocks white
All "A" blocks red
Second layer all blue

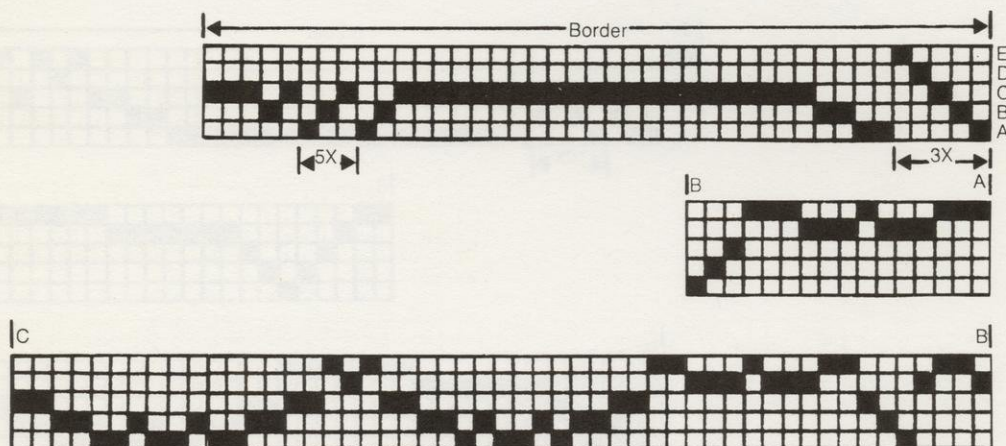
Treading



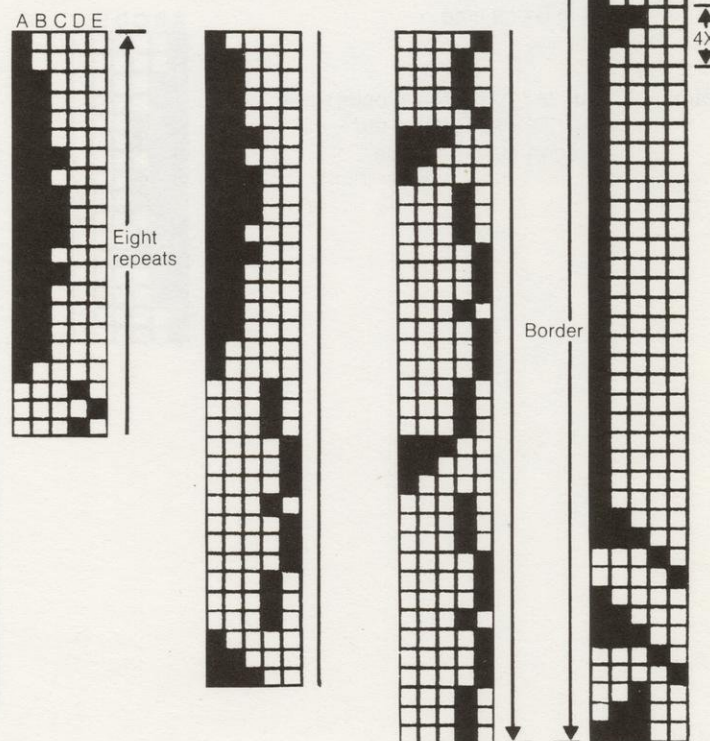
COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

W.L. US. 13

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Treading



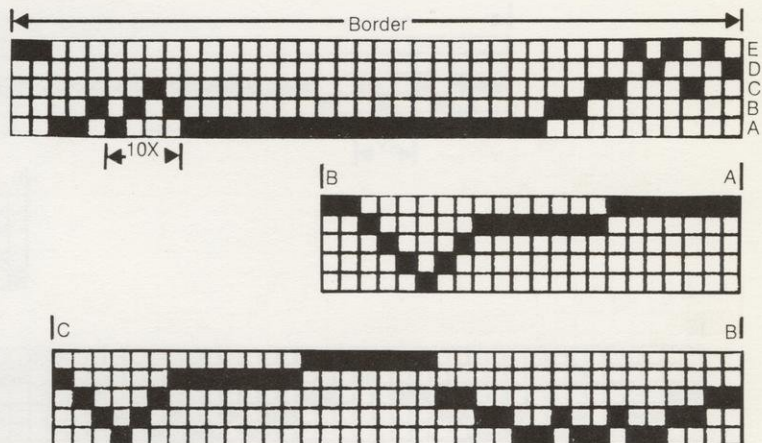
Threading: Border
A to C three times
A to B one time

Cat. no. 21

COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

W.L. US. 14

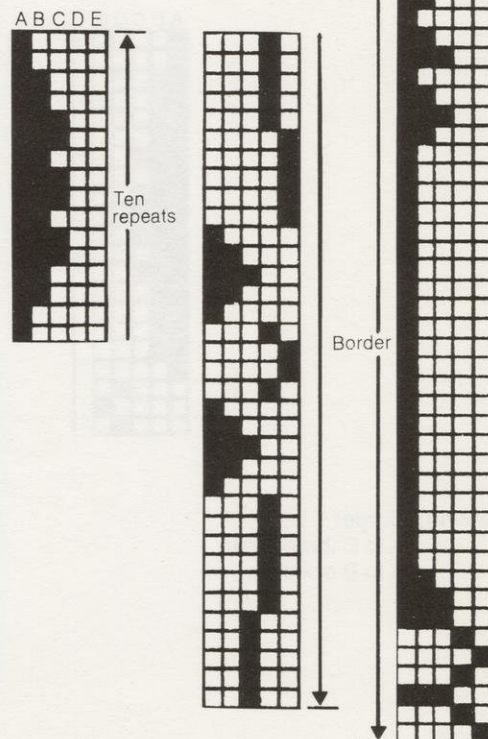
Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Threading: Border
A to C four times
A to B one time

Color: All "A", "B", "C" blocks white
All "D", "E" blocks red
Second layer all blue

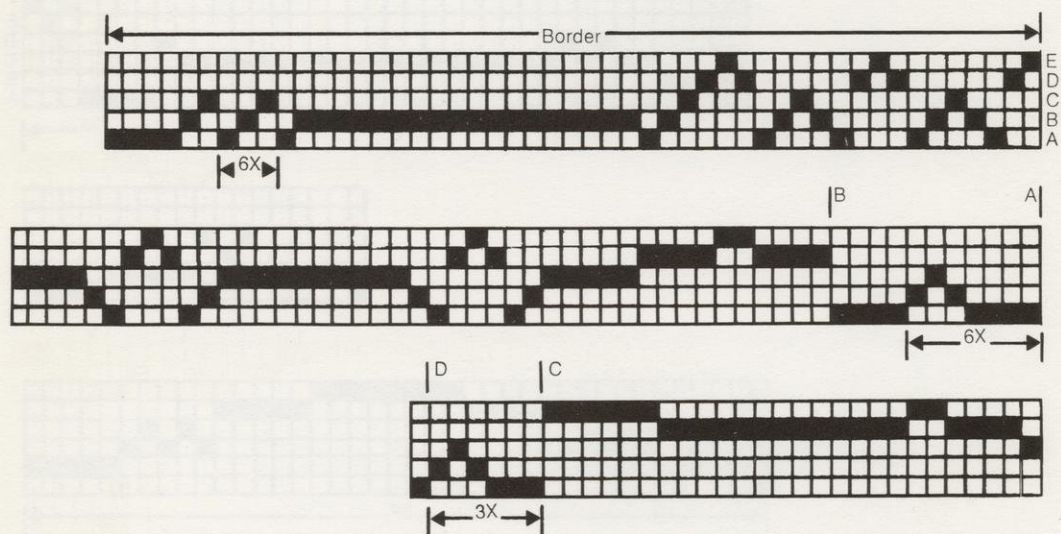
Treadling



COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

W.L. US. 7

Threading: Each square equals four ends.

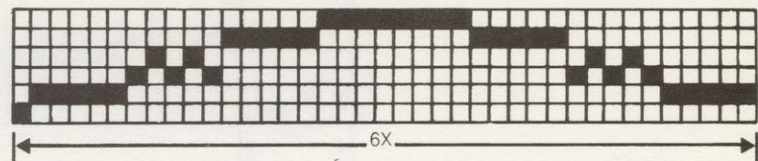
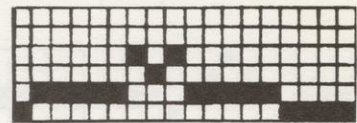
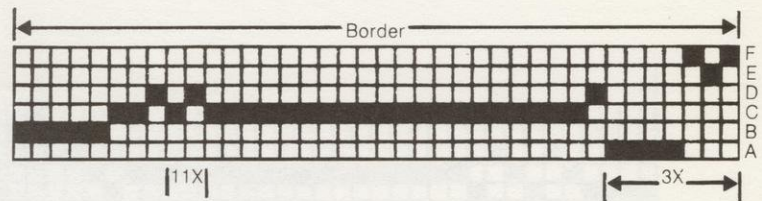


Threading: Second layer all blue
 All "D", "E" blocks red
 All "A", "B", "C" blocks white

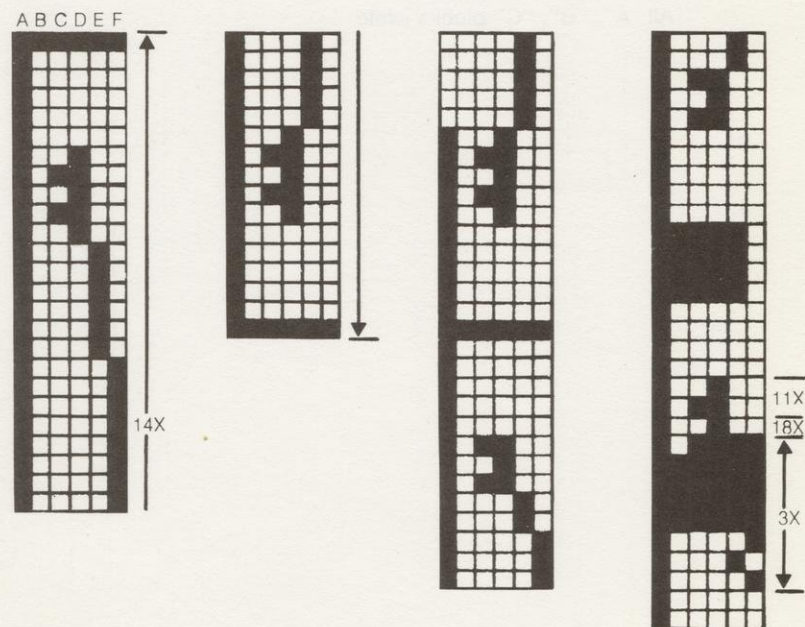
COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

W.L. US. 1005

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



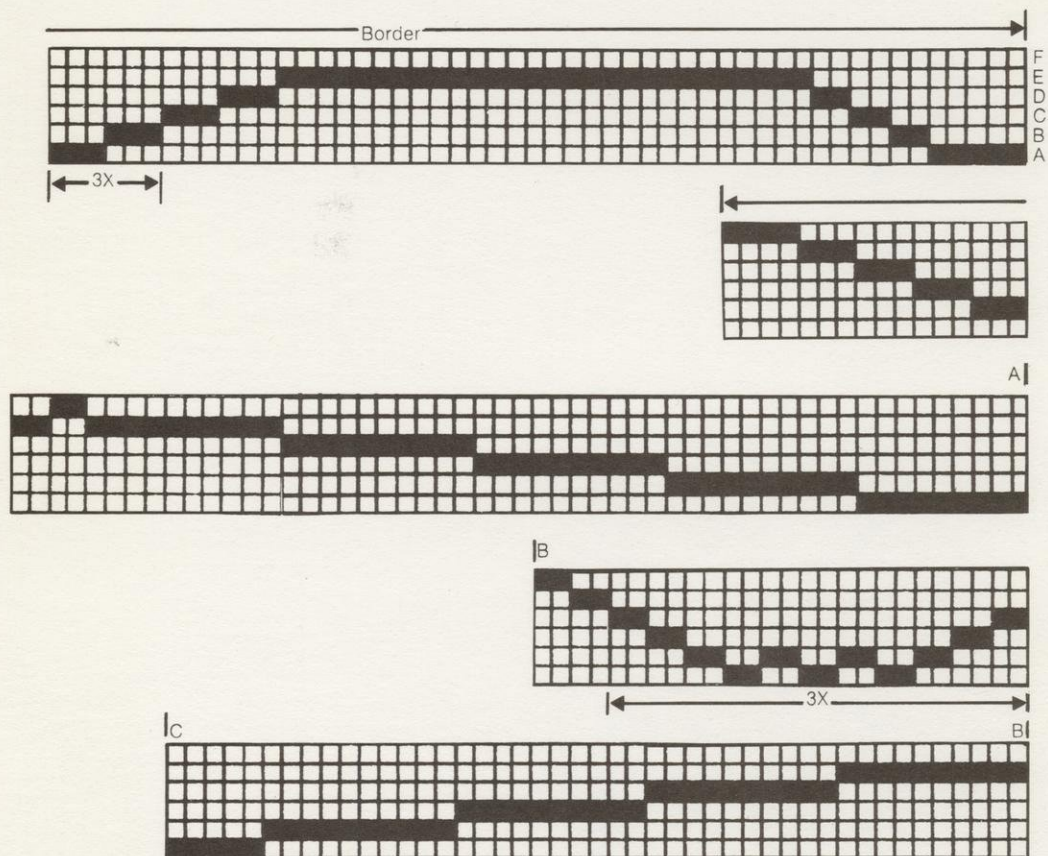
Treading



COMPOUND WEAVE: DOUBLECLOTH

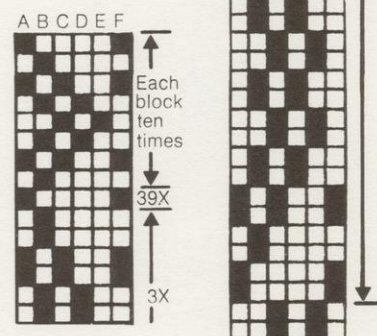
W.L. US. 22

Threading: Profile draft. Each square equals four ends.



Threading: Border
A to B two times
B to C one time

Treading



Cat. no. 25

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