

TYPES OF OVERSHOT PATTERNS

By OSMA COUCH GALLINGER

To analyze the types of Overshot Patterns, visualizing each one as a repetition of a single motif or as a combination of several connected motifs, gives one a keen appreciation of the great beauty of the patterns that form our Colonial heritage. These patterns were figured out by our ancestors without the aid of books, and not only their association in the history of our country but their inspiring beauty of balance and proportion have endeared them to us for all time. As American weavers we are interested in perpetuating the best forms that have come through with the revival of our craft. Not the least important factor in the preservation of these is the Shuttlecraft Book of American Handweaving by Mary Meigs Atwater, giving as it does a practically complete coverage of all the pattern types fabricated in the early days of our country.

In surveying the various kinds of patterns in the Shuttlecraft Book, we find that we can make a skeleton outline of each pattern on check paper. By this we do not intend to actually picture the development of the draft, but to outline the geometrical forms that appear so clearly after developing the draft on check paper. Such an outline enables one to see at a glance the character of each separate motif, and also to see clearly the way the motifs are connected to form the complete pattern. It aids the weaver also in placing the pattern at once in its correct group or family.

There are, in the art of Colonial Pattern weaving, such typical figures as the Cross, Diamond, Star, Rose, Wheel, Table, etc. The way in which two or more of these separate motifs are combined, determines the nature of the final composite pattern. It is perfectly possible for the weaver, after he or she becomes familiar with the manner of drafting each figure, to make original combinations to the end of securing more varied pattern arrangements. Just as the musician takes such chords as the Tonic, Dominant and Sub-dominant, and connects them with their proper resolutions to form a tune, the weaver may also take such motifs as the Star and Cross and connect them to form a pattern as delightful to the eye as the improvised harmony is to the ear. The procedure is to familiarize oneself with the appearance on check paper of a woven Star, Rose, Cross, Diamond, Wheel, Table, etc., and to recognize at a glance the woven counterpart of each. After this, one may plan roses, stars or diamonds directly on the check paper as desired, and from this plan, work out the corresponding draft that will cause the same effect in cloth.

In this article we have attempted to make a survey of the patterns in Series I and II of the Shuttlecraft Book, giving a simple scaffold diagram of each type motif used, as well as diagrams of the geometrical forms produced by combining them. The titles of the series are as follows: Series I. Diamond and Cross Family, Shuttlecraft Book, P. 158; Series II. Star and Rose Patterns, P. 167; Series III. Wheel Patterns, P. 175; Series IV. Radiating Patterns, P. 188; Series

V. The Patch Patterns, P. 195; Series VI. Miscellaneous Patterns, P. 200. The many lovely patterns contained in these series are too clearly explained and beautifully diagrammed to need further explanation. Our purpose has been rather to assemble the bare forms that make up the patterns, without the addition of the half-tones, to enable the student to see at a glance the plan beneath each lovely Colonial pattern. By comparing the various forms assembled at close range, he or she should be able to place any example of Overshot weaving that comes to hand in its proper series. A good exercise for a Guild of Weavers would be to plan a meeting for the display of as many varied types of overshot patterns as possible, and to test the members, letting them guess in turn the class name of each piece, by referring to these diagrams or the pictures in the Shuttlecraft Book.

SERIES I. DIAMOND AND CROSS FAMILY. Group (a) Simple Figures. (Shuttlecraft Book, P. 158)

Figures No. 1 and 2. In the simple Diamond or Cross figures, one finds either just a single cross — the result of a threading of several adjacent blocks and their reverse — or an all-over pattern of diamonds formed by the repetition of several cross formations. The blocks are written adjacent in a typical draft in our Figure No. 1 (see adjoining circles), and when woven appear as steps in diagonal diamond forms, as shown in Figure No. 1, under Series I, small sketch at left. This simple type of pattern consists of two or more adjacent blocks and a reverse. One can analyze the pattern in No. 1, by following the blocks in circles: 1st block, 1 & 2; 2nd block, 2 & 3; 3rd block, 3 & 4, this acting as the reverse block or point of a diamond. This particular pattern, then, has three blocks with a reverse on the third. Note that when the draft is repeated, there is also a reverse point on the 1 & 2 block. Follow the detailed development of the draft in the enlarged sketch.

A simple repeating Diamond pattern may also be made up of two separate groups of blocks alternating with each other, as in Series I, Figure No. 2. Here we have a figure on only two adjacent blocks — 1 & 2, 2 & 3, 1 & 2 — alternating with a figure on two other adjacent blocks — 3 & 4, 4 & 1, 3 & 4. We can also have a small figure on opposites alternating with another figure on opposites — 1 & 2, 3 & 4, 1 & 2, alternating with 4 & 1, 2 & 3, 4 & 1. The effect of such alternation is shown in the small sketch marked No. 2, Effect of Diamond on Opposites.

SERIES I. Group (b) CROSS AND TABLE PATTERNS. (See Shuttlecraft Book, P. 158.)

Figures No. 3 and 4. In this type pattern, there is a simple Cross alternating with a Table. A Table is a square section of weaving formed by the repetition of two adjacent blocks or two blocks on opposites, and usually ending with the one first used. For instance, the 1 & 2 block may alternate with the 2 & 3 block, the table ending with the 1 & 2. One of the blocks may be much larger than the other — for in-

stance, the succession — 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, — 3, 2, 3, 2, and repeat, makes a 1 & 2 block of 8 threads, and a 2 & 3 block of 4 threads. In combining a Table with a Cross, the Table may occur at either of the reverses or points of the Cross. In No. 3 a Table might have occurred at the center of cross, at point marked by arrow. The Table often starts with the threading that might otherwise have formed the point. Suppose our Cross starts with a 1 & 2 block, then a 2 & 3, a 3 & 4 and a reverse on 4 & 1. Instead of this simple reverse point made of one block, we may have a Table arranged as follows at the point; a 4 & 1 block, then a 1 & 2, all repeated 4 times, and ending with the 4 & 1 block. After the Table the pattern reverses, and we have a 3 & 4 block, then a 2 & 3 and a 1 & 2. Similarly a Table could have been developed at the 1 & 2 block which forms the other reverse of the Cross, and this Table might have been the 1 & 2 block alternating with the 4 & 1 block and finishing with a 1 & 2 block. Sometimes there is a Table at each reverse point, as in Figure No. 4, where a small Table is shown taking the place of the simple reverse block at the point. Instead of a Table too, one may have an enlarged single block at the point of reversing. Such patterns as Orange Peel and King's Delight come in this group.

SERIES I. Group (c) DIAMOND AND TABLE PATTERNS. (See Sh. Bk. P. 161)

Figure No. 5. In this type, a Diamond figure alternates with a Table. Additional crosses may be present, as in our illustration, Series I, Group (c) No. 5. There are a number of popular bedspread types in this group — Bonaparte's March, Rose of Sharon, Governor's Garden and Star of the Sea. In our sketch we have marked the Cross, Diamond and Table. Either the Diamond or the Table may be as large or as small as desired, and one may occur where the other has been placed, and *visa versa*. This is a very effective type pattern.

SERIES II. STAR AND ROSE PATTERNS. Group (a) Simple Figures. (See Sh. Bk. P. 167)

Figures No. 6 and 7. The Star and Rose patterns form a very charming group. Among the simple figures are such popular examples as Sweet Briar Beauty, Cleveland Web, Dog Tracks and Winding Vine. A Star is a figure which when woven is composed of a group of five blocks placed horizontally across the warp, and five in the same proportions showing vertically, formed by the weft. Several typical stars are shown in the sketch at the right of Series II, Group (a) Simple Figures. On the draft of a Star, the five successive blocks are formed by the alternation of two adjacent blocks, such as 1 & 2, 2 & 3, 1 & 2, 2 & 3 and 1 & 2. The star shown at A, for instance, would be written: (1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2,) (3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2) (1, 2, 1, 2) (3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2) (1, 2, 1, 2, 1) with the usual overlapping of the blocks. The shape of a Star is more or less implied by its own name, for it has symmetrical parts balanced on all sides of a center, and is not like a Table, a rigid square with solid repeated parts. It has the charm of varied proportions, with usually two large blocks on either side of one small center block. Sometimes the center is broken up into three small blocks, as shown at C and D. Again the largest blocks may be at the four corners, with the parts between broken up into smaller blocks, as at B. There is always an uneven number

of blocks to provide for the center block, and a symmetrical arrangement on each side. A Star may have any uneven number of blocks — 5, 7, 9, etc. There must always be at least five, and rarely more than nine.

In Figure 6 we have a Star (and this may be any Star) alternating with a Cross. Starting at the center of the Cross, our draft would be written: the 1 & 2 block (4 thds.); 2 & 3 (4 thds.) 3 & 4 (4 thds.) 4 & 1 (4 thds.) followed by a Star with 1 & 2 (8 thds.); 2 & 3 (8 thds.); 1 & 2 (4 thds.); 2 & 3 (8 thds.); 1 & 2 (8 thds.); then continuing with the Cross — 4 & 1 (4 thds.); 3 & 4 (4 thds.); 2 & 3 (4 thds.) and repeat all.

The same pattern woven Rose fashion would appear as shown in Figure 7.

SERIES II. Group (b) STAR AND TABLE PATTERNS. (See Sh. Bk. P. 169).

Figure No. 8. In this type, a Table alternates with a group of Stars. Again instead of the Star at the center of the group of five, a Cross might have occurred. Here we find such patterns as Virginia Snow-Ball and Federal Knot.

SERIES II. Group (c) ROSE AND TABLE PATTERNS. (See Sh. Bk. P. 172)

Figure No. 9. In this type, a Table alternates with a group of Roses. This pattern may be written like that shown at No. 8, but is woven with the blocks in reverse position to form a Rose — instead of a Star — group at the center. The Morning-Glory pattern is an example.

SERIES II. Group (d) STARS AND ROSES WITH A TABLE. (See Sh. Bk. P. 174)

Figure No. 10. In this type pattern a Table alternates with a section of Stars and Roses. Coming under this group are such lovely patterns as Queen's Delight.

SERIES II. Group (e) CLUSTER OF STARS WITH A DIAMOND. (See Sh. Bk. P. 174)

Figure No. 11. Our diagram shows the plan of the Four-Leaf Clover Pattern, found on P. 174 of the Shuttlecraft Book, and listed as No. 63. Only a quarter of the pattern plan is shown here. It consists of Tables surrounding a central section of four stars. Just one Table and one Star are shown. The four Stars are connected by a Cross at their center, shown at lower left corner of sketch. A Diamond formation occurs between Table and Star.

SERIES III. WHEEL PATTERNS. (See Shuttlecraft Book P. 175.)

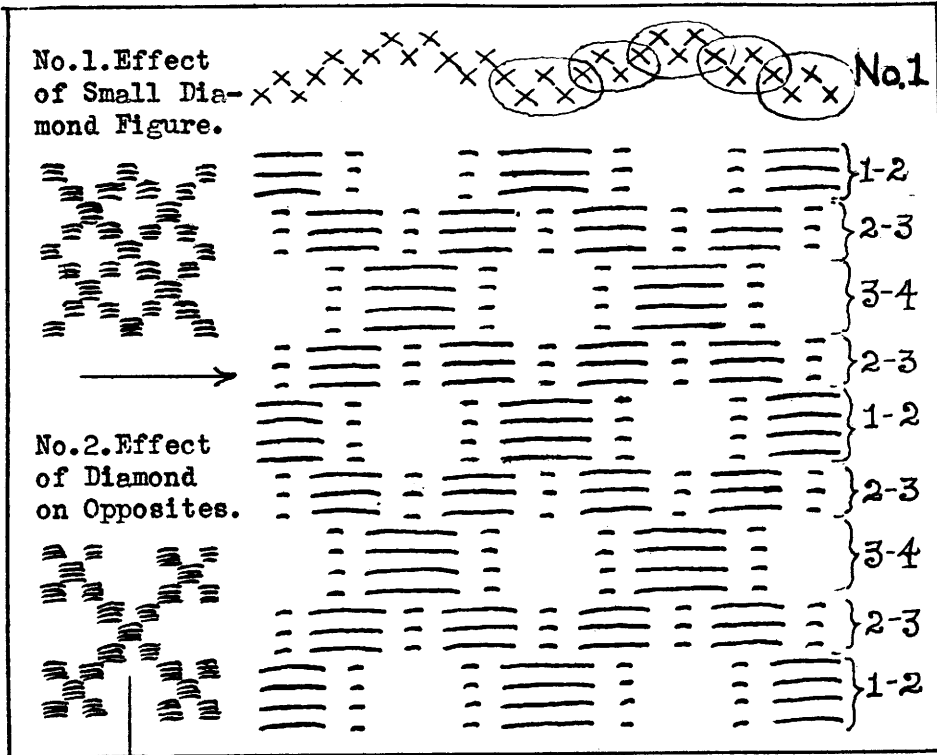
The sample pattern of this group shown here is from Group (b) Single Wheels with table, Pattern No. 82, "The Arrow", (See Sh. Bk. P. 179).

The Wheel Patterns are listed as follows:

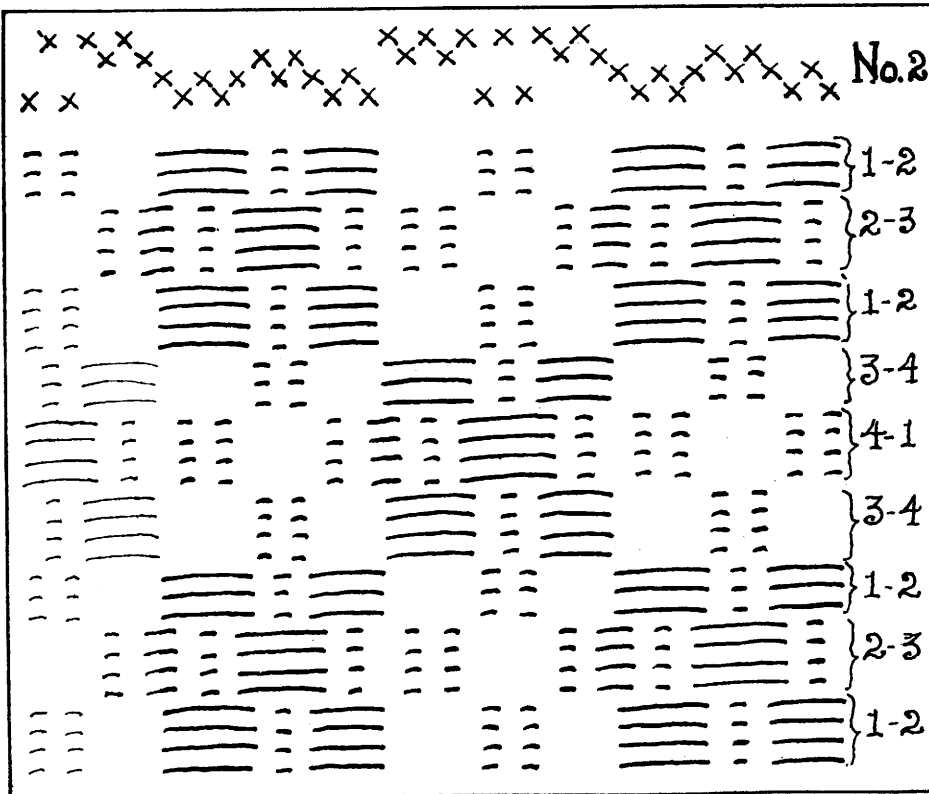
- (a) Star and Wheel Patterns with a Cross or Diamond.
- (b) Single Wheels with Table.
- (c) Clusters of Star-and-Wheel Figures with a Table.
- (d) Wheel-and-Rose Patterns.
- (e) Wheel-Patterns with both Stars and Roses.

There are many lovely examples, as one realizes when one follows the pages of the book from one lovely wheel design to another. Examples are "The Whig Rose", "Wheel of Fortune", "Chariot Wheel" and "Sun, Moon and Stars". In this type, the succession of blocks produces a curving base line which approaches corner figures at left and right, as shown in the sketch of the Arrow pattern in this article, see

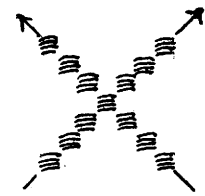
SERIES I. DIAMOND AND CROSS FAMILY. (Shuttle-cr. Bk. P.158)
 GROUP (a) SIMPLE FIGURES. Below: Small Diamond Figure.



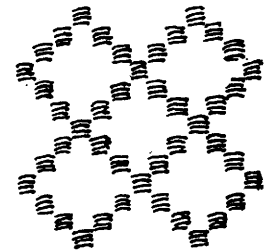
No.2. A DIAMOND PARTLY ON OPPOSITES.
 (See Shuttlecraft Book, Pattern No.4, P.158)



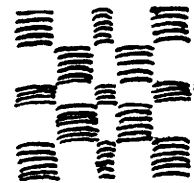
WEAVING MOTIFS



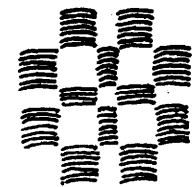
CROSS



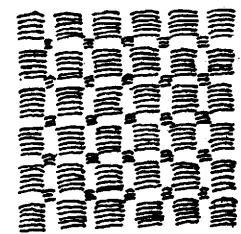
DIAMOND



STAR



ROSE

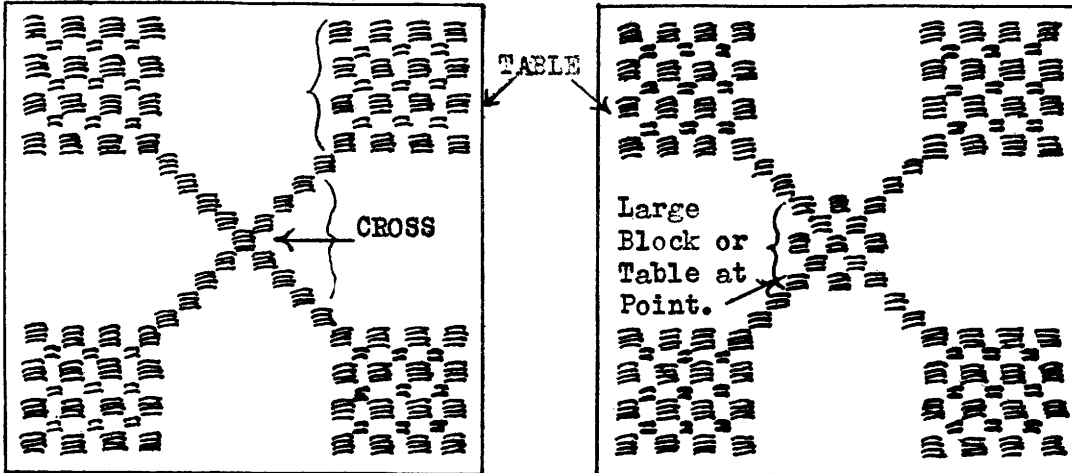


TABLE

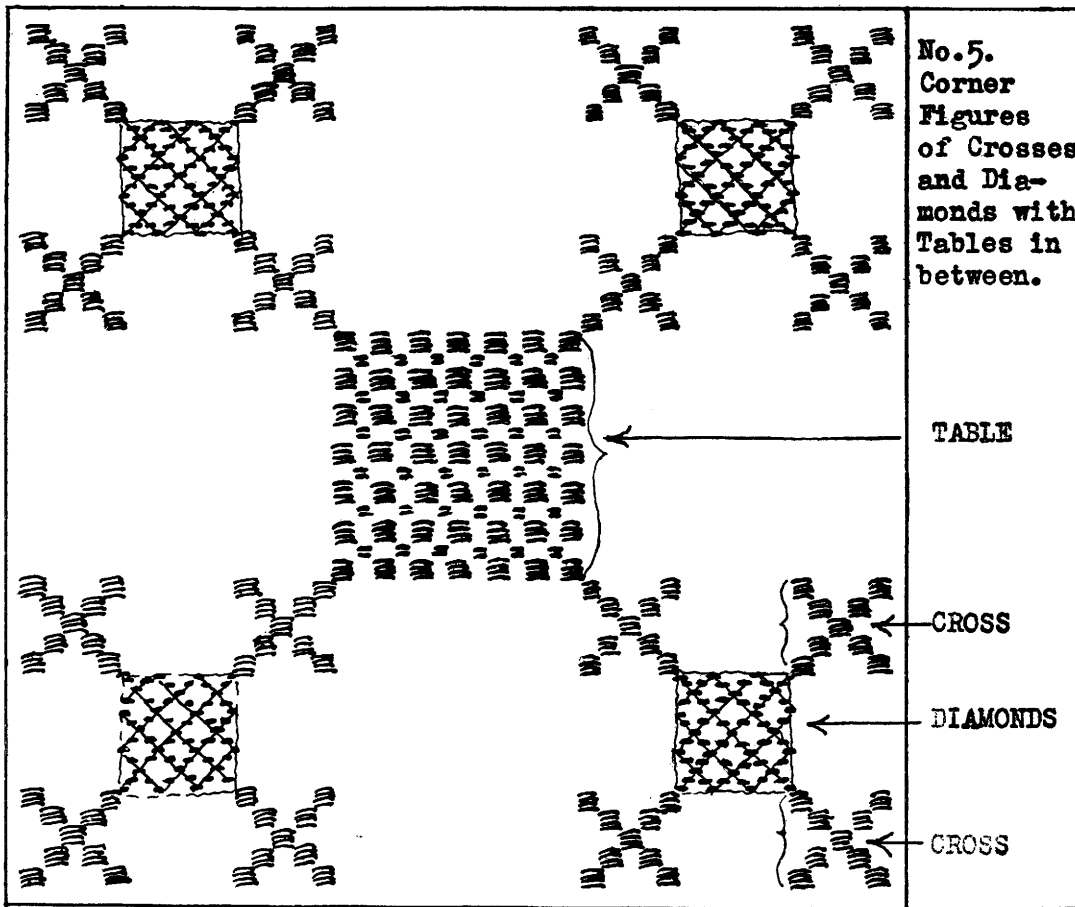
SERIES I. Group (b). CROSS AND TABLE PATTERNS. (Sh. Bk. P. 158)

No.3. Tables Joined by Crosses.

No.4. Crosses Bet. Tables with Table or Block at Reverse Point.



SERIES I. Group (c) DIAMOND AND TABLE PATTERNS. (Sh. Bk. P. 161)



No.5. Corner Figures of Crosses and Diamonds with Tables in between.

TABLE

CROSS

DIAMONDS

CROSS

arrows. The center of the figure may be a Star, Rose, Diamond or Table, and the four corners may be either Stars, Roses, or Diamonds.

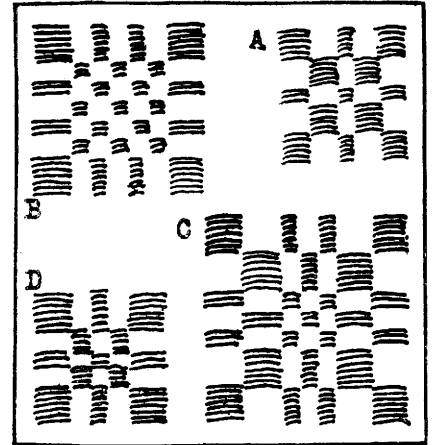
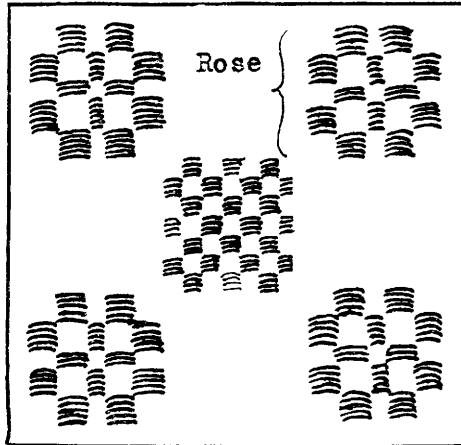
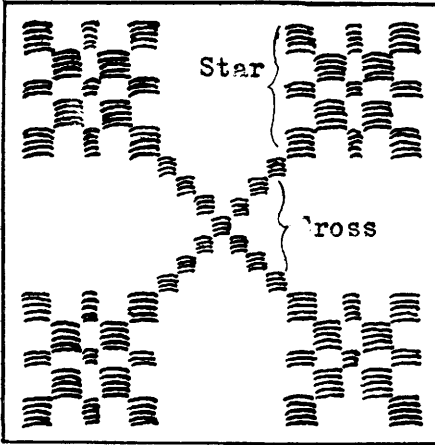
SERIES IV. THE RADIATING PATTERNS. (See Shuttlecraft Book, P. 188.)

The sample pattern shown here is from Group (c), Pat-

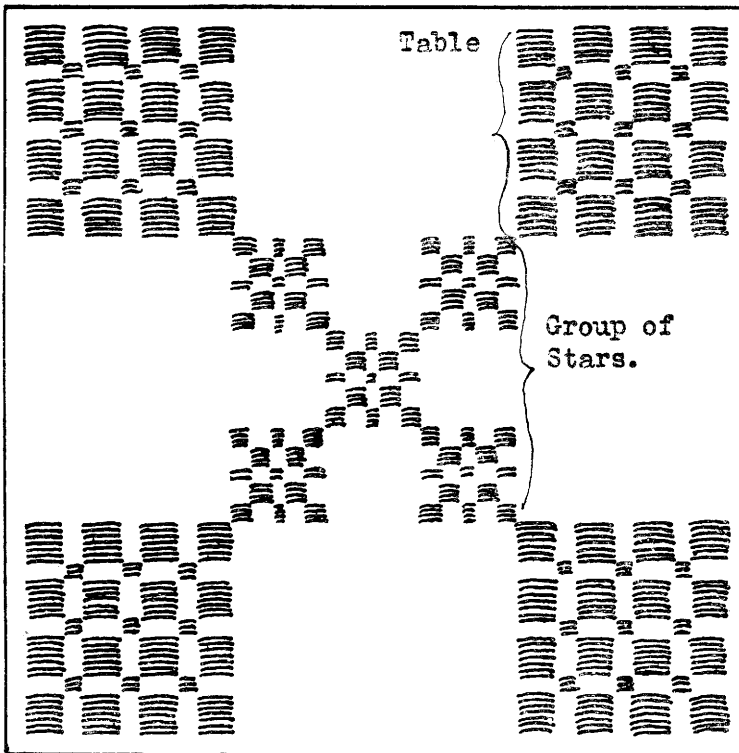
terns Based on the Blooming Leaf Figure, Pattern No. 113, "Blooming Leaf from Arkansas", (See Sh. Bk. P. 191). This pattern shows four radiating leaves with a block at their center, and the four leaf groups occur around a main central table, shown at arrow. This pattern is particularly

Continued on page 21

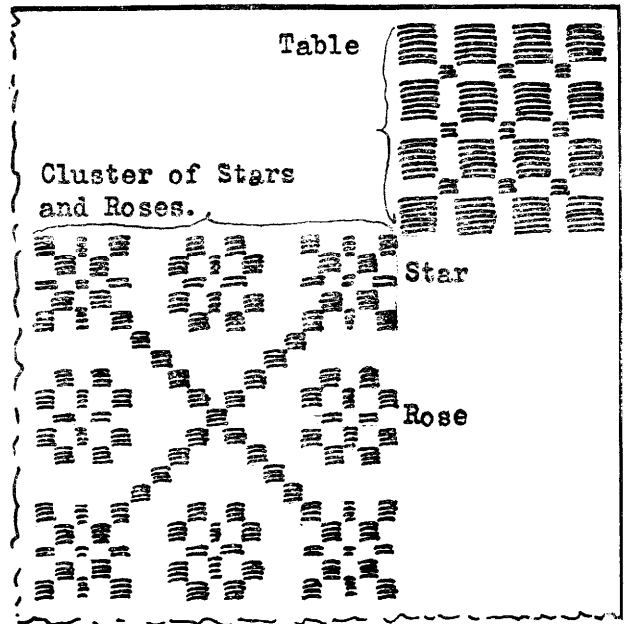
No.6. Stars Joined by Crosses. No.7. Same, Woven Rose-fashion. Group of Typical Stars.



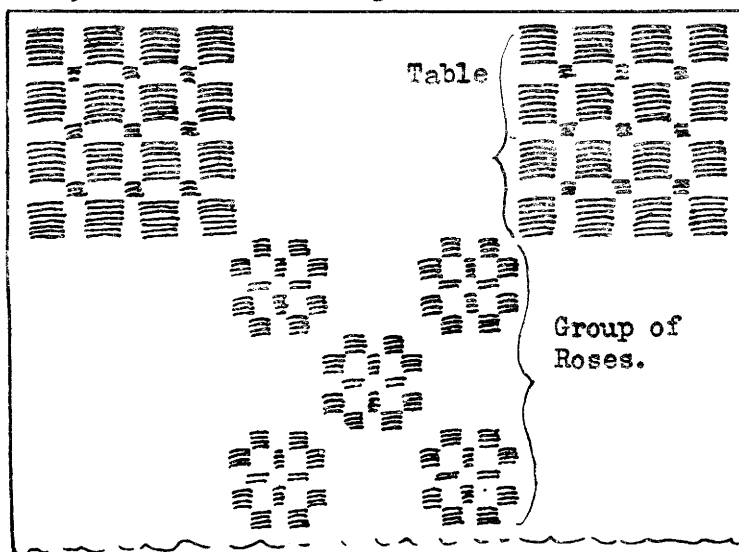
Group (b) STAR AND TABLE PATTERNS. (Sh. Bk. P. 169)
No.8. Tables with Group of Stars Between.



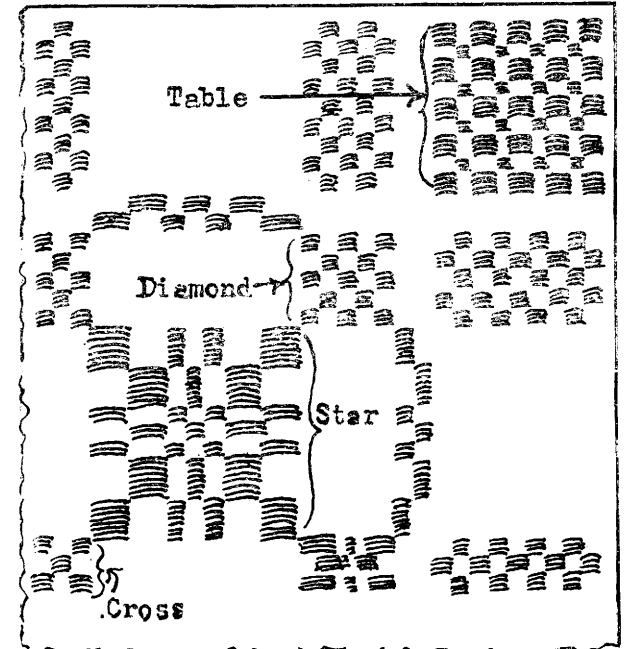
Group (d) STARS AND ROSES WITH A TABLE.
No.10. (See. Sh. Bk. P. 174)



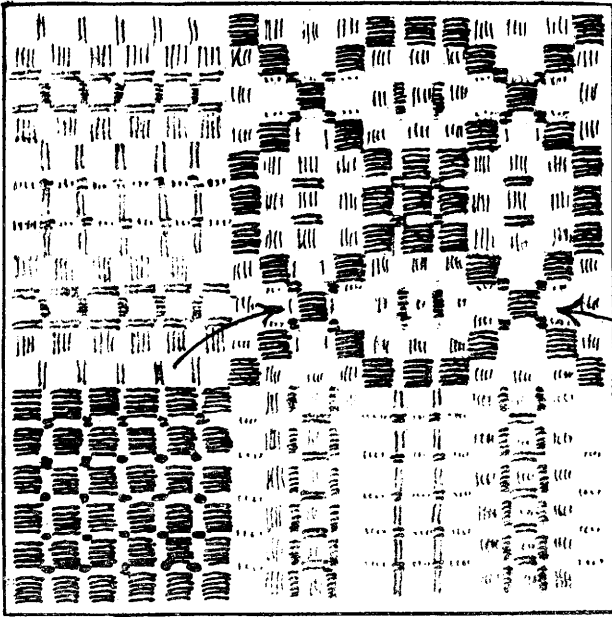
Group (c) ROSE AND TABLE PATTERNS. (Sh. Bk. P. 172)
No. 9. Tables with Group of Roses Between.



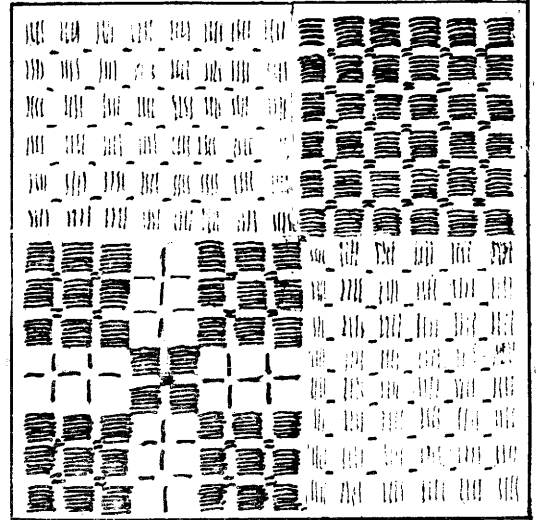
Group (e) CLUSTER OF STARS WITH A
No.11. DIAMOND. (See Sh. Bk. P. 174)



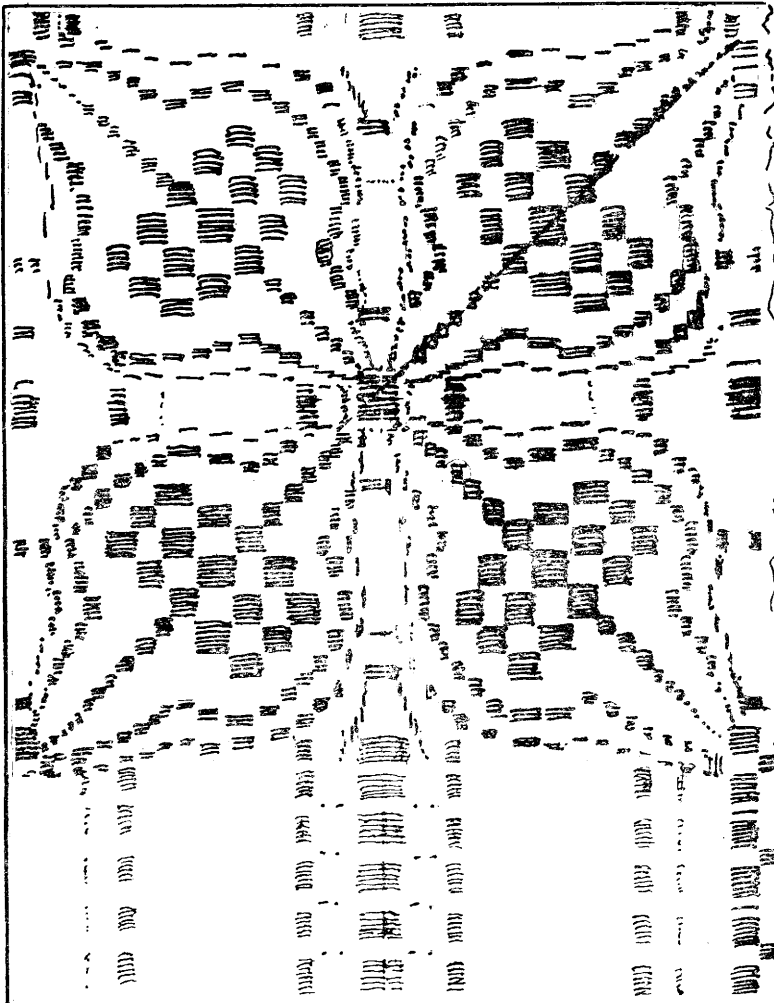
SERIES III. WHEEL PATTERNS. Sample Pattern,
 "The Arrow", Pat.No.82, See Sh.Bk.P.179.
 from Group (b) Single Wheels with Table.



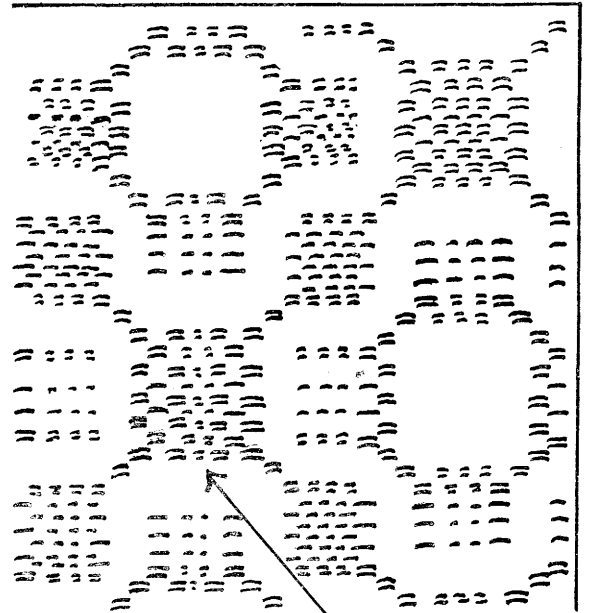
SERIES V. PATCH PATTERNS. Sample Pattern,
 "A Patch-Pattern from Kentucky", Pat.No.
 131, See Sh.Bk.P.197.



SERIES IV. RADIATING PATTERNS. Sample Pattern,
 "Blooming Leaf from Arkansas" No.113, P.191.



SERIES VI. MISCELLANEOUS. Sample Pattern,
 "No Name", Pat.No.146, Sh.Bk.P. 200.



Center of "No Name"
 Repeat.

Center of "Blooming
 Leaf from Arkansas."

Osma Ballinger
 Hartland - Mich-

FIGURE NO. 9

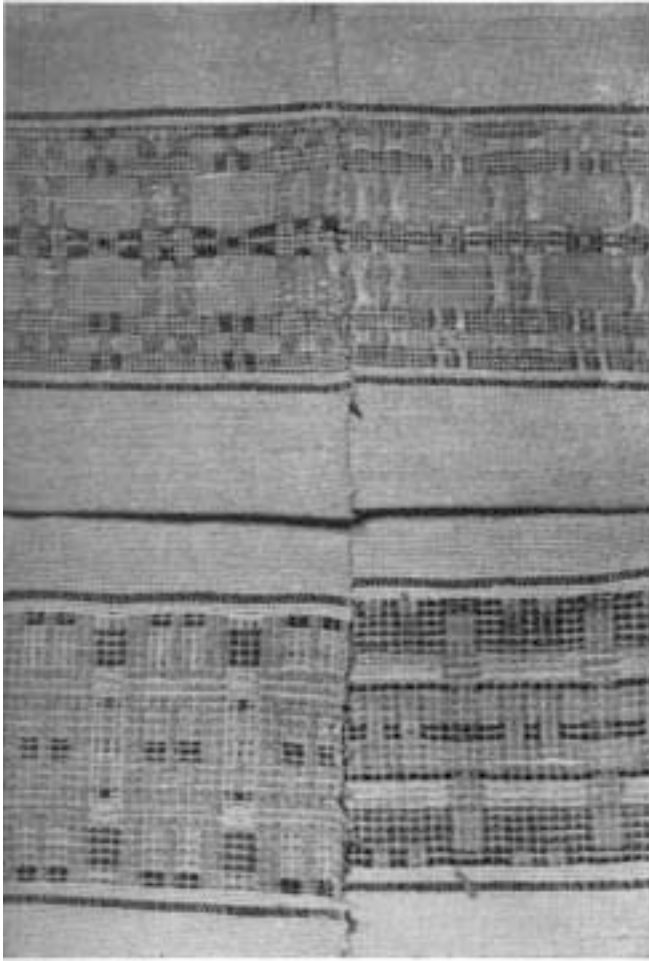


FIGURE NO. 10
Original variations of the weave.

would of course be all right for bags or for anything in fact where there was to be a lining. Weave this as follows: — Plain weave with heavy linen floss as desired, then 2 shots of dark blue, use 40/2 linen for the fine plain weave shots

after each pattern shot, — 345-4x green, 36, 3x blue 345-4x green, 356-10x blue, 456-2x green, 346-2x dark blue, center of the border, repeat back to the beginning in reverse order for the rest of the border.

Figure No. 10 shows another different method of weaving. Here again is an opportunity to use several colors, and to combine blocks of two colors on the same row of weaving. Use one shot of one color on one shed, then one shot on another shed, then fine plain weave tabby. It's very simple and easy to do and has many possibilities. Note that only one tie harness is used with the pattern block combinations, namely harness one in this case. To weave this piece proceed as follows; — Plain weave in white linen floss as desired, then 2 shots of dark blue, 3 shots of white. Then use alternate shots of 40/2 linen tabby between patterns.

1356—blue once	}	repeat 3x
1456—light green once		
134—dark green once	}	repeat 8x
1456—medium blue once		
136—light green once	}	repeat 2x
1456—medium blue once		
134—yellow once	}	repeat 3x
156—medium blue once		
134—yellow once	}	repeat 2x
156—medium blue once		
1346 dark blue once	}	repeat 6x
1356—light green once		
146—medium blue once	}	repeat 4x
1356—dark blue once		
1456—light green once		Center repeat back to beginning in reverse order for rest of border.

Another material which would weave up well in this way is Bernat's fabri yarn. It beats up especially well, and can be used double for the pattern shot and single for the fine plain weave between the pattern shots. This would be excellent for chair seats or upholstery fabric especially on a dark warp.

TYPES OF OVERSHOT PATTERNS (Continued from page 15)

good for pillow tops with four clusters of leaves about the central table.

The Radiating patterns are listed as follows:

- (a) The Sunrise Figure with Tables.
- (b) The Sunrise Figure in Various Combinations.
- (c) Patterns Based on the Blooming Leaf Figure.
- (d) The Bow-Knot Figure.

In these patterns there is always a central figure with radiating leaves or veins. Examples are "The Sunrise Coverlet", "Lee's Surrender", "Star of Bethlehem" and "Double Bow-Knot".

SERIES V. THE PATCH PATTERNS. (See Shuttlecraft Book, P. 195.)

The sample pattern shown here is from Group (c) Four-Block Patch Patterns, Pattern No. 131, "A Patch-Pattern from Kentucky", (See Sh. Bk. P. 197). One repeat only of the pattern is shown.

The Patch Patterns are listed as follows:

- (a) Two-Block Patch Patterns.
- (b) Three-Block Patch Patterns.
- (c) Four-Block Patch Patterns.

In these patterns the blocks of any one portion or group of blocks are written on opposites. The result is a span or expanse of rigid square forms resembling Stars or Tables connected at their points by other small blocks or small Tables. The entire plan of these patterns adheres strictly to square outlines and blocks on opposites. Examples are "Monk's Belt", "Doors and Windows", "Leopard Skin" and "Four o'Clock".

SERIES VI. MISCELLANEOUS—PATTERNS NOT READILY CLASSIFIABLE UNDER PRECEDING HEADS. (See Shuttlecraft Book, P. 200.)

The sample pattern shown here is from Group (c), Pattern No. 146, "No Name", (See Sh. Bk., P. 202).

These patterns are listed as follows:

- (a) The Sunflower Patterns.
- (b), (c), Miscellaneous.

In all of these patterns there is a peculiarity in the connection between figures, and the general pattern formation does not adhere to the regular plans of types given above. There are some interesting examples, such as "Ladies' Delight or Sunflower", "Job's Trouble" and "Indiana Frame Rose."