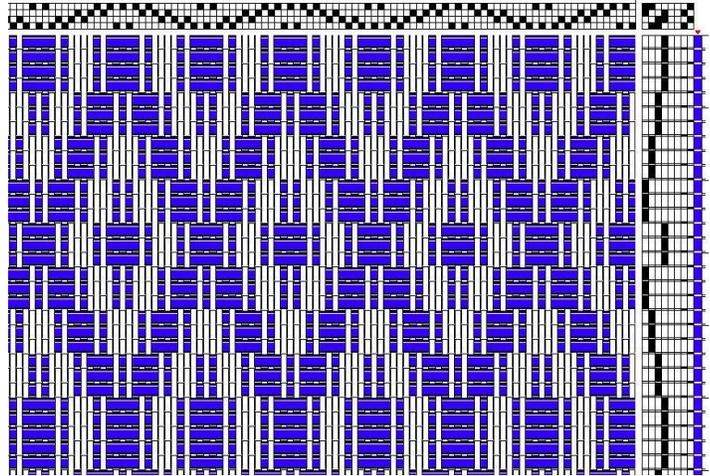


## The Shuttlecraft Bulletins on Italian Weaves

Mary Meigs Atwater write about “Italian Pieces” in the October 1926 and March 1927 Bulletins. When I think of Italian weaving, I usually think of weaving overshot or crackle in the Italian Manner, that is, without tabby, treadling 1, 2, 3, and 4 for overshot to give a raised effect as written by Grace Corbett Reed, available on the handweaver.net website. The book, *Joy of Handweaving* by Osma Tod (published 1977) describes weaving crackle or overshot in the Italian Manner particularly good for upholstery fabrics and decorative articles like pillows, runners, purses and heavy drapes.

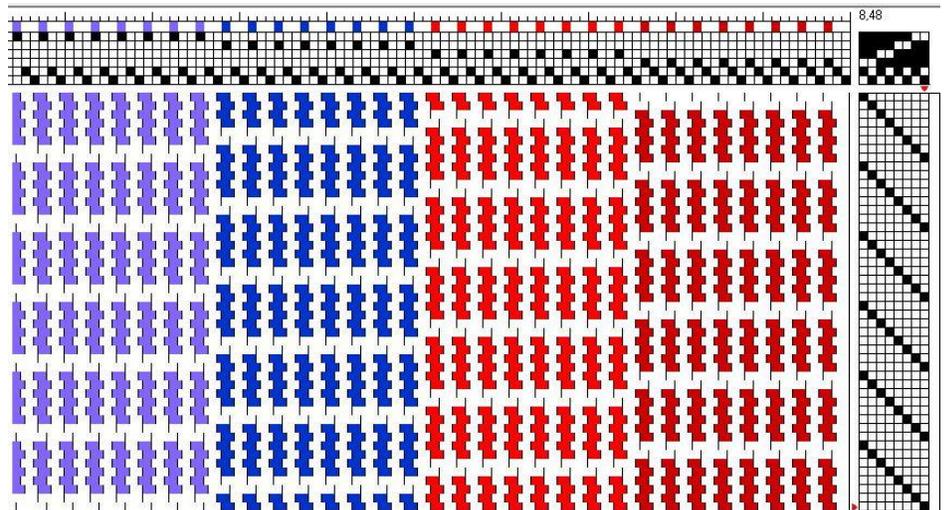
But in the 2 Bulletins, Mary refers to specific pieces either sent to her by guild members who had acquired them in Italy, or pieces analyzed by Guild members. One is on Italian towels woven in a diamond or Russian diaper pattern in a white cotton warp set quite close (48 ends/inch) and woven with blue or white cotton, 8 ends in a bundle alternating with a fine white cotton “binder” . This might look something like the figure here.

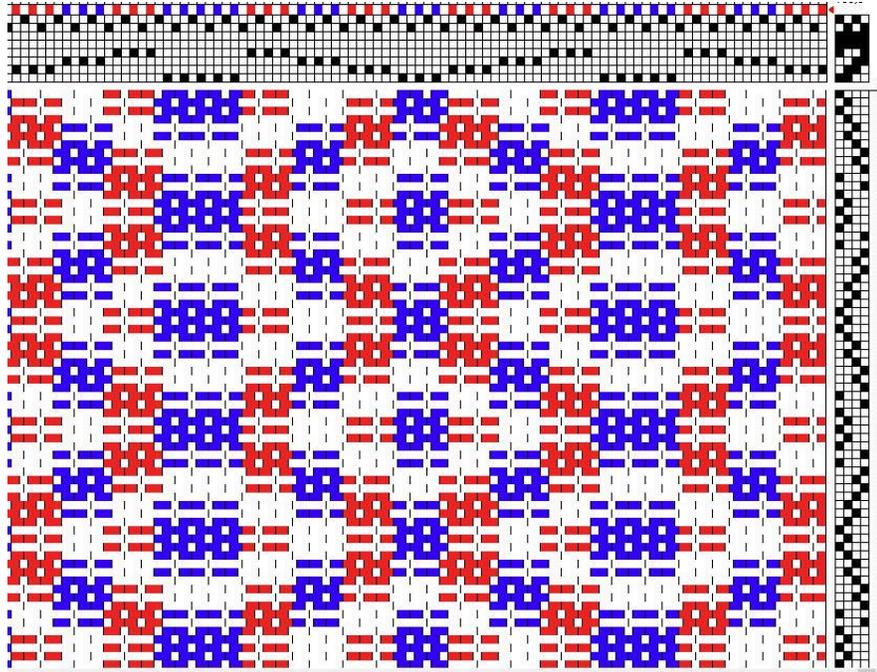


She also describes a runner woven in blue and white stripes, ½ to ¾ inches wide in the weft, with 5 ends bundled together in each pick, starting with 2 ½ to 3 inches in plain blue, with little design rows done by treadling 1, 2, 1 twice each in the diamond threading. This would be worth weaving up a sample to see.

In the March 1927 Bulletin, the Italian piece that was sent to Mary is warp faced, she recommends 2 warps, a pattern and a ground with a colored warp for the pattern. If 20/2 cotton is used it is to be sleyed at 60 ends/inch, 30 ends per inch for the pattern threads and 30 ends per inch for the background. From the way she describes the warp, it sounds like an overshot pattern is turned and set denser than usual to achieve a warp faced fabric.

I drafted up the one warp threading she describes with 8 ends for each of the pattern shafts, 3-6 and 8 ends for the background plainweave on shafts 1 and 2 and the figure here is the result. Not very illuminating.





Then, I took a simple overshot pattern, another diamond figure from the Shuttlecraft Book of Handweaving, turned it and clicked on the warp faced illustration and got the results in figure 3, also not very satisfying.

Those in the Guild who have some experience with turned drafts may wish to read through the description and see what you may make of it. . 🌸*Maureen Wilson*