

Dog Paw/Foot - A Transition to Tied Beiderwand

Gay McGeary

For the fifth article in my series on point twill related coverlets, the dog paw coverlets will be discussed. This pattern finds its origin in the German linen weaving books from the 18th century. Even more important, the dog paw block



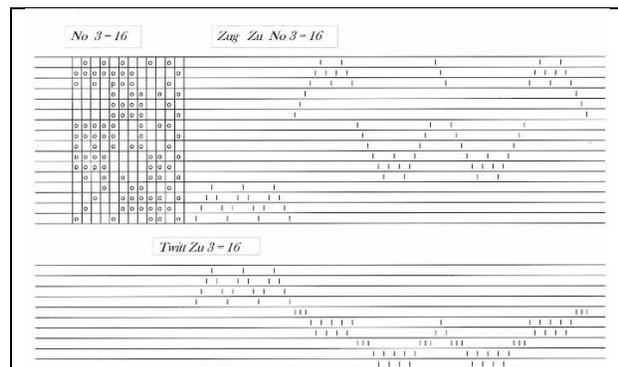
design shows the transition from the point twill patterns where the design is created with one thread incremental changes in the tie-up to block designs where two or more threads form a pattern block. The dog pattern is important because it is a block pattern formed with more than one weave structure.

This article will also include discussion concerning the transition from the multi-weave structure dog paw coverlets to the use of tied Beiderwand only for the same pattern. It will conclude with the use of a grouping of cross motifs in the corner of figured and fancy coverlets woven in the tied weave. Finally, dog paw coverlets were not woven on a simple two to four shaft loom, but represent the work of rural professional weavers using multi-shaft looms.

Description of the Draft

The dog paw draft, usually on 16 shafts, is characterized by a zig zag point twill threading. But here is where the pattern differs from the other point twill patterns. Instead of the incremental changes, it is formed with a variation of combined blocks.

With the dog paw pattern, multiple threads are used together as block pattern to create a five block design. But the dog paw pattern appears to use more than one weave structure. It has a plain weave foundation with float work blocks forming the dog paw. The weave structure is characteristic of tied Beiderwand with a ribbed appearance created with half tones. However, the large cross motifs separating the dog paws have float work blocks on the four sides with a diamond point twill pattern in the center.

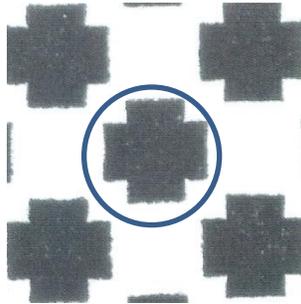


The Origin of the Block Design

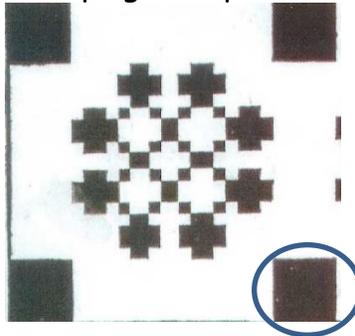
The source of the dog paw block pattern, made of two block cross motifs, originates with Johanne Michaels Frickingers' German linen book entitled *Nutzliches Weber-Bild-Buch (Useful Weaves Tie-Up Book)* published in 1767. Repetition of individual cross motifs are shown in his book as one pattern.ⁱ Another Frickinger pattern creates the cross motifs similar to the dog paw pattern but the grouping of crosses is separated by a single block not a large cross.ⁱⁱ Finally, in a third Frickinger design, there is a variation of the dog paw pattern that is separated by a large cross motif.ⁱⁱⁱ

Frickinger Block Patterns

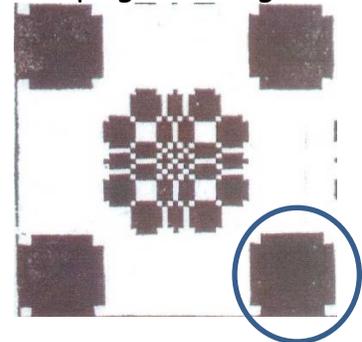
Repetition of cross motifs



Grouping with plain block



Grouping with large cross



The Manuscripts

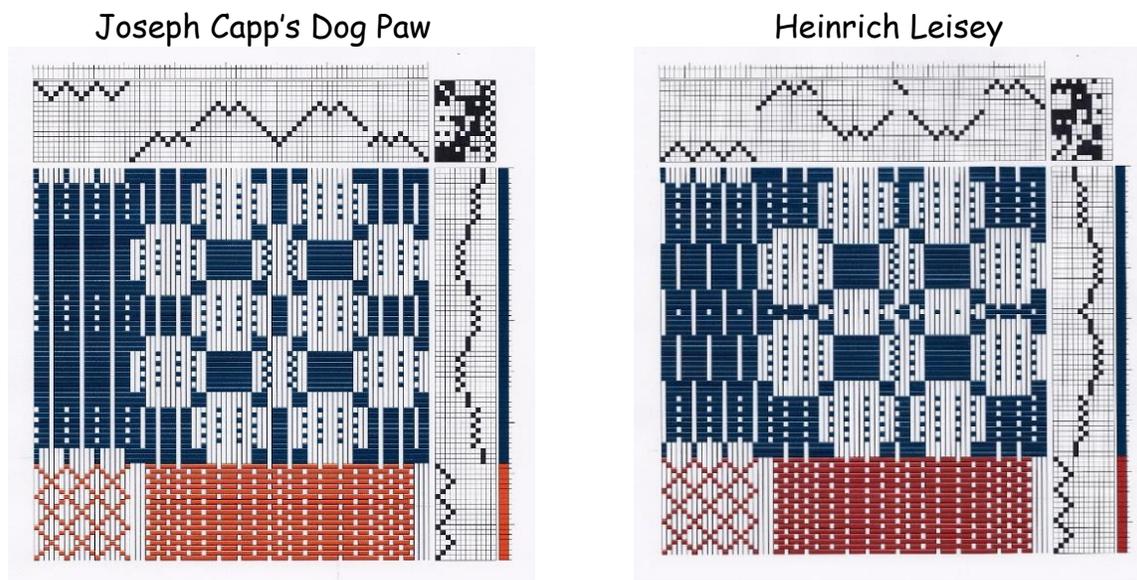
Eight Pennsylvania German weavers included dog paw patterns in their handwritten nineteenth century manuscripts. They include:

- David Bender – Westmoreland Co.^{iv}
- Christian Frey – Adams County^v
- Heinrich Leisey – Lancaster Co.^{vi}
- Joseph Capp – Lebanon Co.^{vii}
- Johannes Schmidt/John Smith – Lebanon Co.^{viii}
- Cyrus Uhler – Lebanon Co.^{ix}
- Jacob Angstadt – Union County^x
- Benjamin Endy – Berks Co.^{xi}

The pattern drafts found in the eight weaver's manuscripts are very similar. The weavers included the usual threading draft and tie-up, but five manuscripts show the treading draft as well. They felt the treading was needed, because the dog paw is not form by weaving "as drawn in." Look at the draws later in this article and you can see the difference between the threading draft and treading draft. The

former looks like a point twill weave, while the later looks like a float work treadling except for the separating cross. Six of the weavers include a draft using 16 shafts with 12 shafts for the dog paw and four shafts for the large separating cross. Two of the weavers include a 20 shaft draft with the additional four shafts added to the formation of the main dog paw pattern. However, all eight use ten treadle to weave the pattern and two for the plain weave, which produces a similar pattern for all the drafts. Christian Frey uses only one block square to separate the individual dog paw designs. There is slight variation in the size of the large cross motifs for the remaining drafts. Four of the manuscripts provide information about the colors to use. The tie-up for the Jacob Angstadt pattern does not work. Only two of the drafts provides a name for the pattern. Bender calls it "dog foot" while Angstadt calls it "dog pote" with the German for "Pfote" meaning paw. All of the manuscripts date from 1818 to 1846.

Drawdowns from Weaver's Pattern Manuscripts



As you can see, the drawdowns from two of the weavers' manuscripts result in similar patterns. You have to look closely to see the differences. The main difference is in the center of the pattern. Two cross motifs are formed in the center of Capp's pattern, while only squares are located in Leisey's pattern. Look at the drafts. You will see Capp threaded his large separating cross motif on shafts 13-16, while Leisey used the lower four shafts and threaded on shafts 1-4. While the drafts do look different, the drawdowns have similar results for the pattern.

The Coverlets

While the pattern is found in many manuscripts, extant coverlets are not plentiful. Three of the coverlets I observed were woven with similar designs to the Joseph Capp drawdown shown above. In one the pattern was woven with dark blue wool as show at the beginning of this article, while two of the coverlets were woven with dark blue, medium blue and red. Two had borders on the two sides and bottom which were designed with the repetition of blocks 1-5. The third coverlet include a tree motif for its border. The dark blue coverlet was framed on three sides with a tape fringe, while the other two have wool weft fringe on the two sides and a heading woven in cotton with cotton fringe at the bottom.

Two Coverlets Woven with Capp Style Pattern

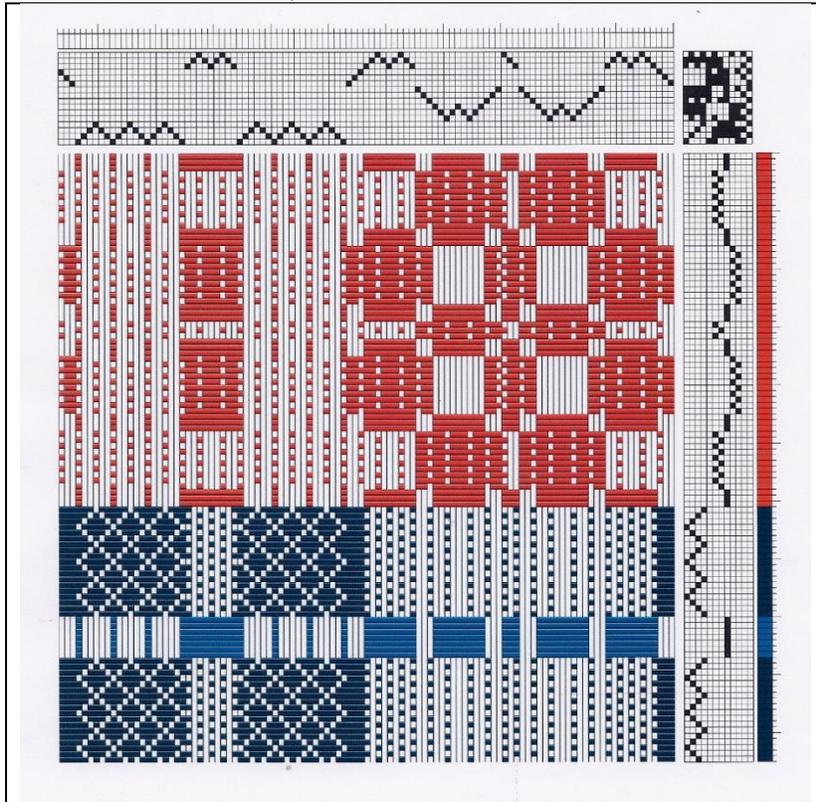


Light Blue Ground Cloth Coverlet



I found a dog paw coverlet at a local auction that did not fit the dog paw template. The central paw motif was designed in the Capp style, but the separating cross motif was very large. It also had a nicely designed tree border on three sides. Another unusual feature was light blue cotton the ground cloth which is usually a natural color.

eBay Coverlet



Shown on the left is a drawdown I did from a dog paw coverlet I found on eBay. It is a gorgeous coverlet. It is unusual because the design includes a grouping of four square block motifs as the separating motif between the paw figures. The squares are woven in the four shaft point twill weave forming three diamonds across and down.

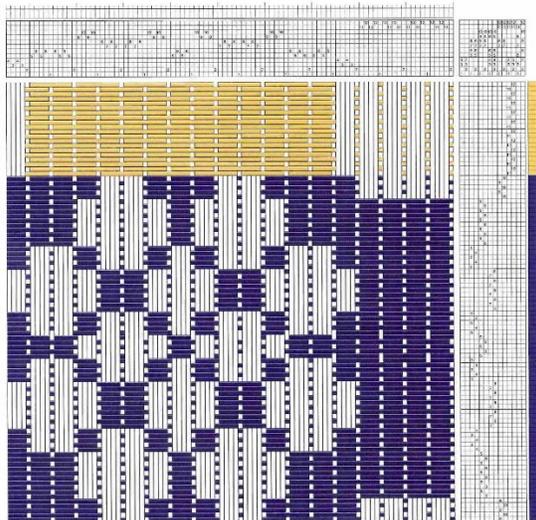
The Transition to Tied Beiderwand

As I mentioned in my introduction, I see the dog paw combination of weave structures as a transition from the point twill patterns to the tied Beiderwand coverlets. It was easy for me to see the relationship, because early on in my research I found the coverlet on the right. At first I thought I had found a dog paw coverlet. I was disappointed when I realized my error, but a couple of months later I did find a true dog paw coverlet.

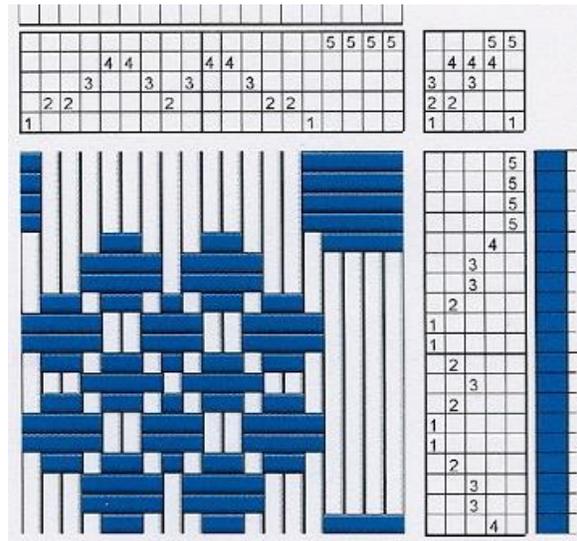
Tied Beiderwand Sorrel Blossom



Drawdown of Tied Beiderwand Coverlet



Profile Block Drawdown



Above on the left is the drawdown of the tied Beiderwand coverlet pattern. On the right is the profile block design for the tied Beiderwand coverlet. It would be easy to mistake it for a dog paw coverlet.



I have found a half dozen of the tied Beiderwand type coverlets in slightly different patterns. The one shown on the left is one of my favorites. It reminds me a lot of the Frickinger pattern I labeled "Grouping with large cross." However, the separating motif is a square not a cross.

Below is an analysis of a coverlet I prepared before I purchased Fiberworks to do my drawdowns. It is a variation of the tied Beiderwand - Sorrel Blossom style pattern.

Coverlet Fabric Analysis

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Weave Structure: *Beiderwand 4-1 tied*

Pattern: *Sorrel Blossom*

Border: *3.5" border on 2 sides, 4" at bottom*

Fringe: *Wool weft on two sides*

Size: *69" wide by 93" long; woven in two halves*

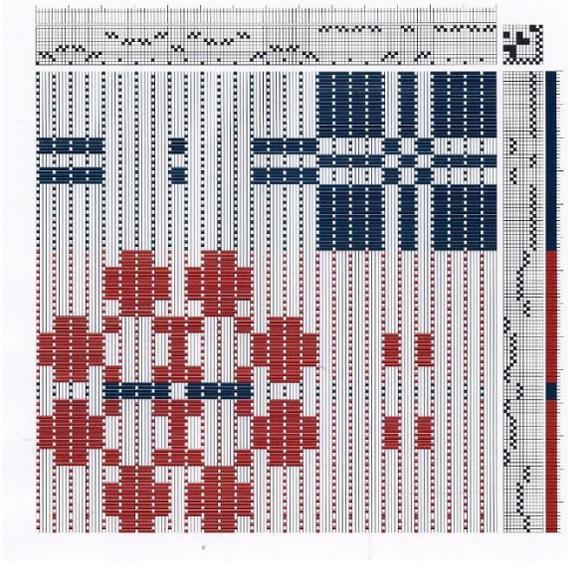
Warp: *Two-ply unmercerized cotton at 26 ends per inch*

Weft: *Single-ply unmercerized cotton and two-ply wool at 26 picks per inch*

Owned By: *Gay McGeary, purchased as Birthday gift in April 2006 from Bedford Street Antiques, Carlisle, Pennsylvania*



On the second sheet of my analysis, I included a profile block design of the pattern along with the tie-up and threading substitution for each block. This is a clear explanation of the Tied Beiderwand weave structure. You can see each pattern block requires two shafts. There is a tie-down on shaft 1 on one side of the pattern block and a tie-down on shaft 2 on the other. The threading for the pattern blocks starts with an even numbered thread or an odd numbered



thread depending on whether the tie-down is the odd number "1" or the even number "2" so that the plain weave will be maintained. Examine the tie-up in my analysis shown above and you will see that two treadles are required to weave each block. See the thread by thread drawdown on the left and you will see how the two treadles are used. They are alternated to create a brick like effect similar to the single treadling for the summer and winter weave. Vertical lines are formed in the background, created by the tie-down threads. It is

important to weave with alternate tie-down treadles when the weaver switches from one block to another.

The Sorrel Blossom block design is also used for double woven coverlets. The central motif is a round grouping of cross motifs. A single square motif combines with variations to the cross motif to create an interesting design. A double row of tree motifs is designed with variations of the inside cross and then the outside cross.



Owned by the National Museum of the American Coverlet

To further illustrate the transition from the combination weave in the dog paw pattern to the Sorrel Blossom pattern used for tied Beiderwand and double woven coverlets, I present the figured and fancy coverlet use of the Sorrel Blossom design. It is found in the cartouche in the bottom corners of the coverlet and sometimes the top.

McCarl Collection, St. Vincent College,
Latrobe, Pennsylvania



The figured and fancy coverlet on the left is woven in tied weave. Nine repeats of the cross motifs are used for the cartouche. A geometric design, the cross motifs, are combined with rounded more flowing motifs found in figured and fancy coverlets.

For this final article in my series on point twill related coverlets, I transitioned from star motifs used in point twill coverlets to the windows coverlets with nine windows instead of nine stars to the dog paw patterns which still shows the block design in the tie-up. I grouped the dog paw coverlets with the other point twill coverlets, because the drafts are written in the zig zag fashion running up and down the scale of shafts. The pattern is small because of its limitation in the number of shafts in the progression. However, the weavers enlarged the block design by using the tied Beiderwand weave with pattern blocks which can easily be used to enlarge the motifs. With this weave structure point progressions of the dog paw coverlets transitioned to block progressions with multiple threads.

The Nine Star, Rose & Star, Stars & Flowers, Windows and Dog Paw were part of the repertoire of the nineteenth century Pennsylvania German weaver of geometric coverlets.

Listing of Point Twill Related Patterns
Found in
Pennsylvania German Weavers Manuscripts

Weaver	County	Nine Star	Rose & Star	Stars & Flowers	Window	Dog Paw
David Bender	Westmoreland		X	X	X	X
Henry Small	Franklin		X		X	
Cristian Frey	Adams	X	X	X	X	X
Jacob Biesecker	Adams	X	X	X	X	
Abraham Serff	York	X		X	X	
Adam Minich	York				X	
Heinrich Leisey	Lancaster					X
Jacob Angstadt	Union					X
Joseph Capp	Lebanon				X	X
Johannes Schmidt	Lebanon				X	X
Cyrus Uhler	Lebanon	X			X	X
Benjamin Delong	Berks				X	
Benjamin Endy	Berks				X	X
Jacob Schmidt	Bucks				X	

As indicated in the title, above is a listing of Pennsylvania German Weaver's Manuscripts, the county of origin and the type of point twill related patterns they wove. As you can see each weaver did not include all the types except for Christian Frey whose manuscript was labeled his "Coverlits Book," while Cyrus Uhler titled his manuscript with a more general title: " Draught & Cording Book." Biesecker's manuscript contain four types, with Bender, Serff and Uhler showing three types, and the remaining manuscripts show two or one type. The Window and the Dog Paw patterns were the most popular in the type of Point Twill weaves included in the early manuscripts.

All of the categories of point twill weaves/patterns would have been woven by professional weavers which is not only evident in the inclusion of the drafts in their manuscripts, but also because they required eighteen or more shafts. Their legacy of coverlets demonstrates their creativity. While they wove similar types, the drafts and resulting coverlets patterns showed their individuality especially in the border techniques.

ⁱ Frickinger, Johann Michael. *Weber-Bild—Buch (Weaving Pattern Book (1767)* p. 40 of Digital Archive on Weaving, Handweavers.net.

ⁱⁱ Ibid. p. 56.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid. p. 73.

^{iv} Owned by the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Copy from the Complex Early Books & Manuscript Study Group, Complex Weavers.

^v Privately owned, reprint in Tandy and Charles Hersh, *Rural Pennsylvania German Weaving 1833-1857 and the Christian Frey and Henry Small, Jr. Patterns Books.* (2001).

^{vi} Owned by Landis Valley Museum, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Copy from the Complex Early Books & Manuscript Study Group, Complex Weavers.

^{vii} Owned by American Textile History Museum, Lowell, Massachusetts.

^{viii} Owned by Trish & Donald Herr. Copy in the Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Wilmington, Delaware

^{ix} Owned by Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pennsylvania. Copy found on Handweavers.net

^x Owned by The Thousand Island Art Center, Clayton, New York. Reprint found in Ruth Holroyd's *Jacob Angstadt His Diaber Book.*

^{xi} Owned by Berks History Center, Reading, Pennsylvania.